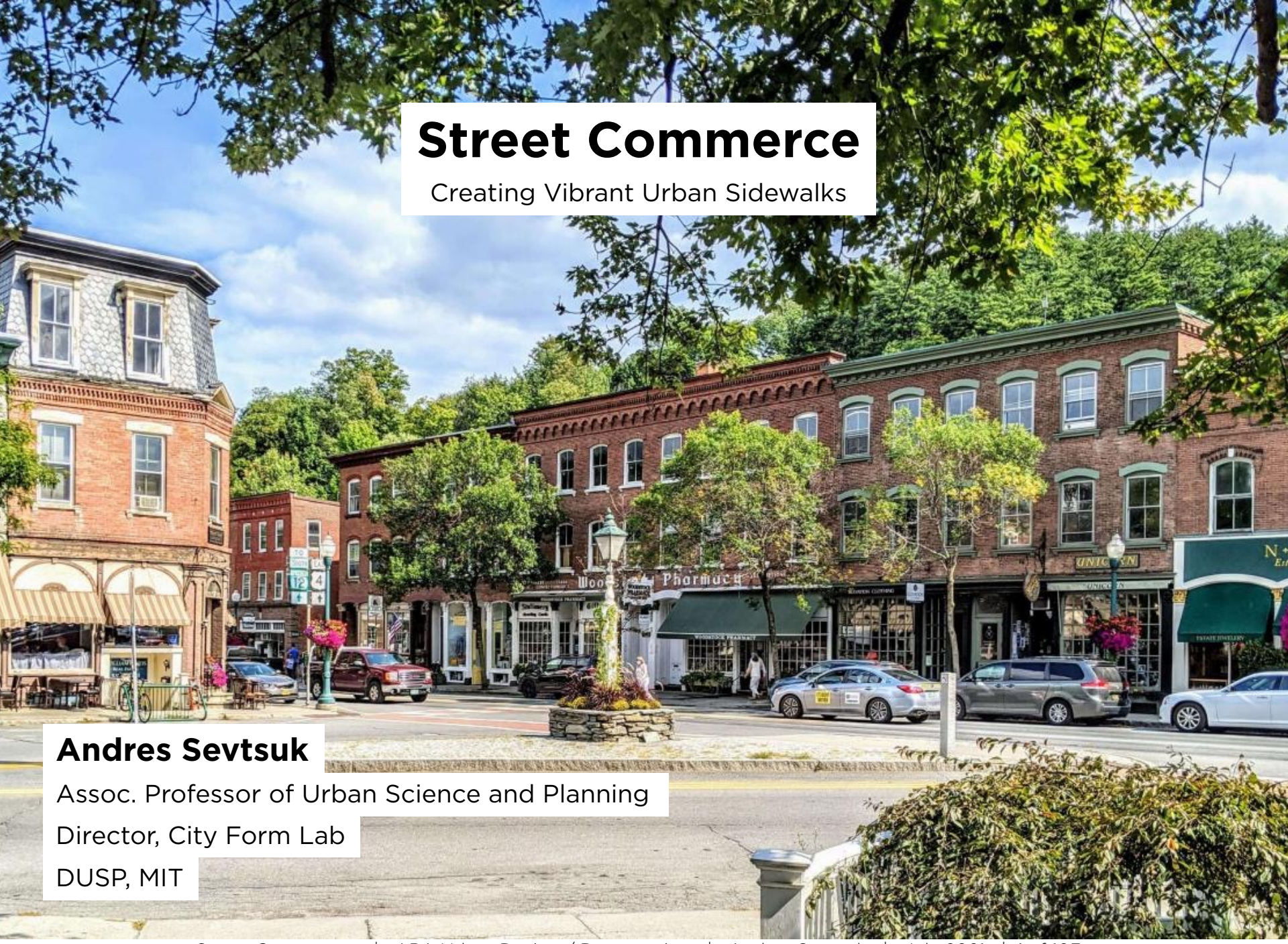


Street Commerce

Creating Vibrant Urban Sidewalks

Andres Sevtsuk

Assoc. Professor of Urban Science and Planning

Director, City Form Lab

DUSP, MIT

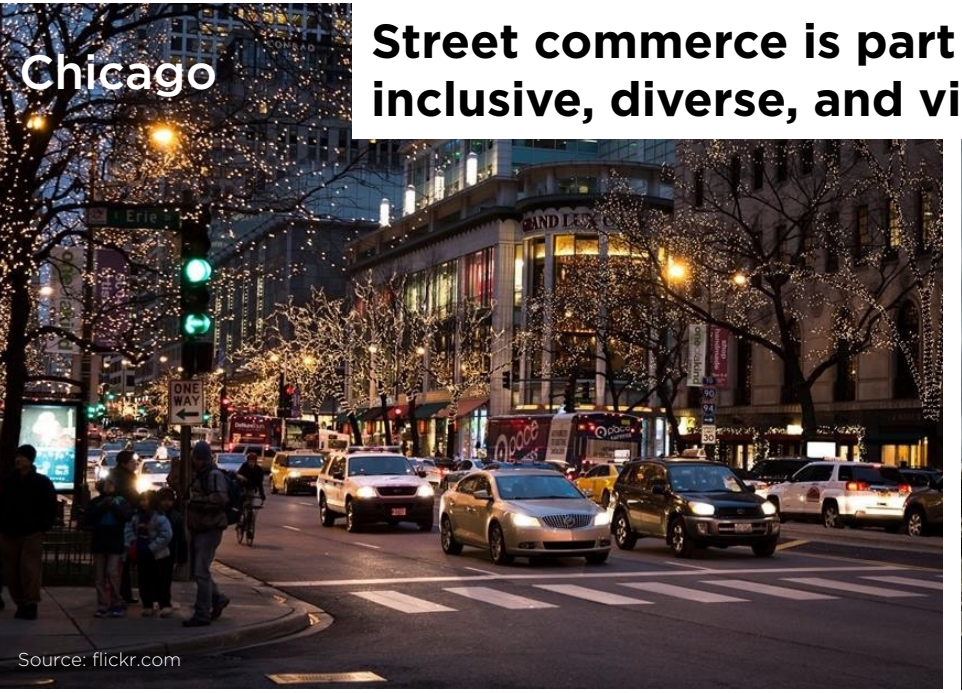

Los Angeles
TACOS
ALPIQUE
Source: foodandwine.com


Boston
Source: cbslocal.com


Chicago
Source: flickr.com


London
Source: dezeen.com

Street commerce is part and parcel of building inclusive, diverse, and vital local economies.



Many functions of streets

Few urban spaces where such different constituents meet

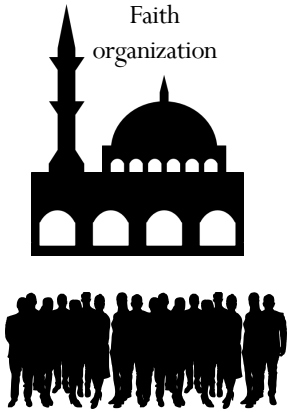
Child


Tech Entrepreneur

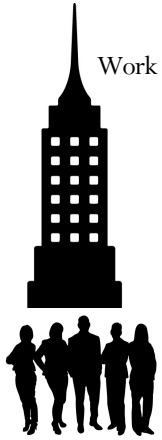
Homeless couple


Restauranteur

Faith organization

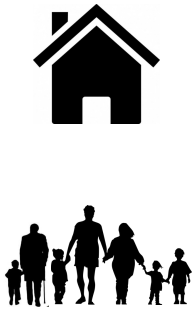


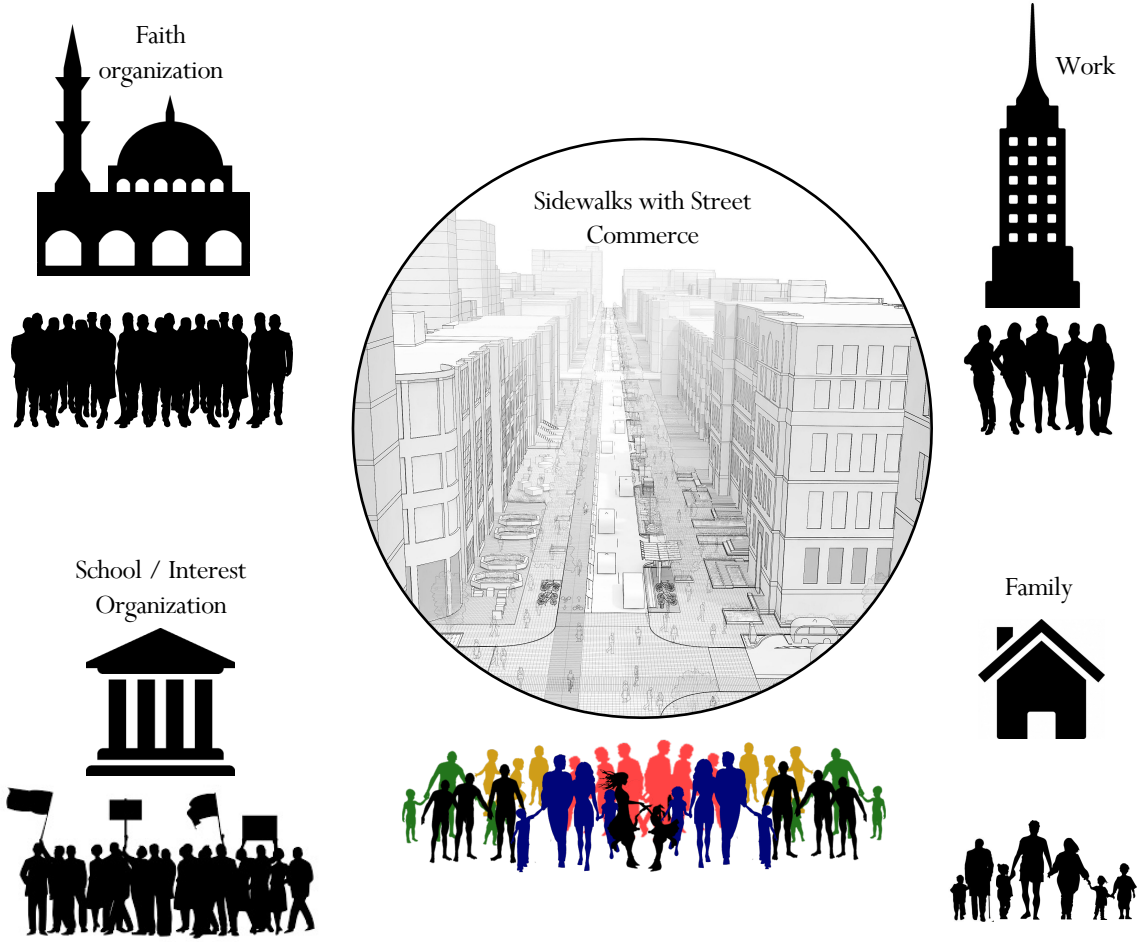
Work



School / Interest Organization

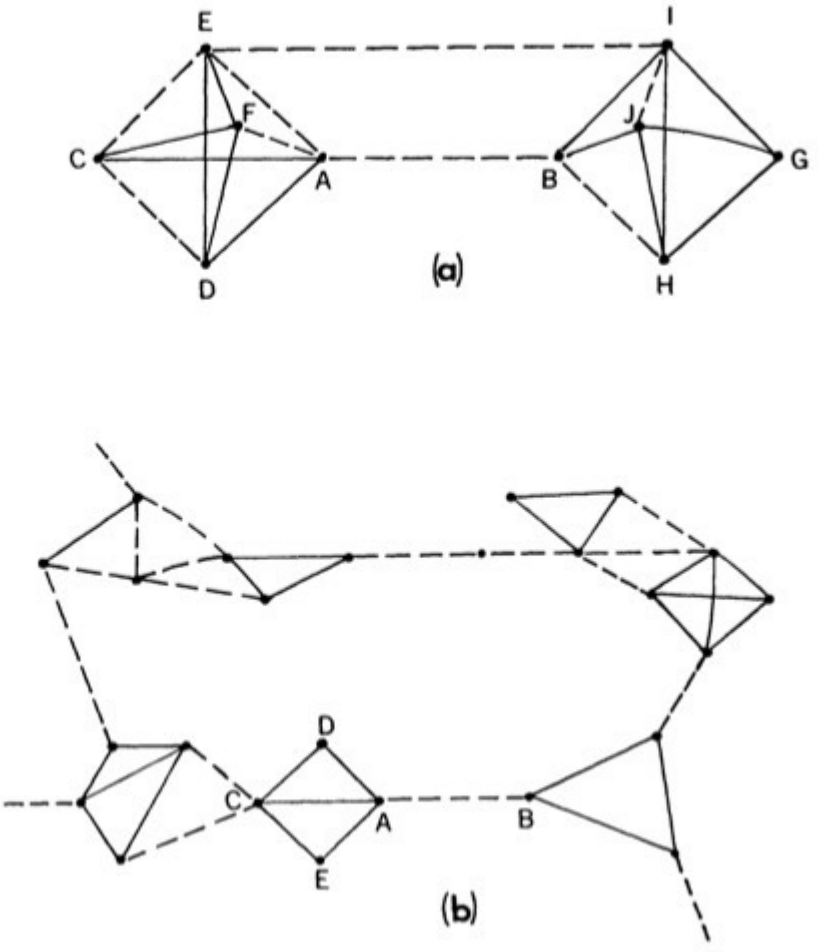
Family




Faith
organization
Work
Sidewalks with Street
Commerce
School / Interest
Organization
Family

a. Social ties and equity

Strength of Weak Ties
Granovetter 1973



People are more likely to find a job via someone they meet twice a year than someone they see more than twice a week.

a. Social ties and equity

Strong ties
e.g. workplace

Weak ties
e.g. conference

Latent ties
e.g. dense street

No ties
e.g. busy road

b. Environmental

Over 2/3 of all trips in the US are for shopping, personal, family, and social purposes. Amenity clusters—agglomerations of retail, food and beverage, and personal service establishments—that are accessible on foot or by public transit, play an important role in reducing daily transportation energy consumption.

c. Economic

A significant share of revenues generate by small, locally owned stores reverberate back into the local economy via subcontracting from local providers, payments and benefits made to local employees.

Paris

This article is more than 1 year old

Paris mayor unveils '15-minute city' plan in re-election campaign

Anne Hidalgo wants to create self-sufficient communities with amenities nearby, to cut pollution and stress

Kim Willsher *in Paris*

Fri 7 Feb 2020 01.00 EST

▲ Anne Hidalgo, mayor of Paris, wants to encourage self-sufficient communities, with shops, schools and workplaces just a walk or bike ride away. Photograph: Martin Bureau/AFP via Getty Images

The Paris mayor, Anne Hidalgo, has made phasing out vehicles and creating a "15-minute city" a key pillar of her offering at the launch of her re-election campaign.

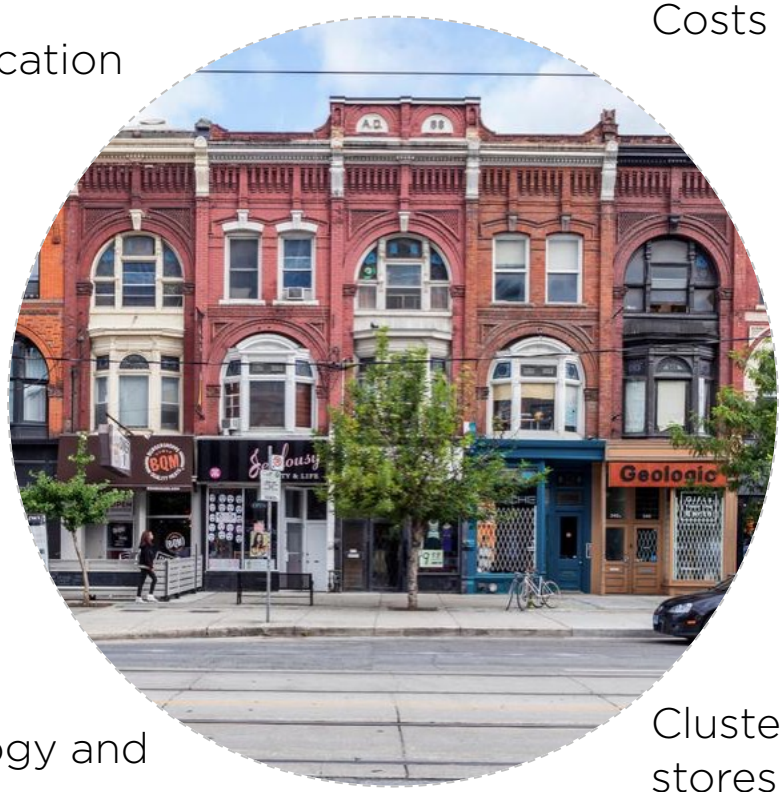
The Socialist politician wants to encourage more self-sufficient communities within each *arrondissement* of the French capital, with grocery shops, parks, cafes, sports facilities, health centres, schools and even workplaces just a walk or bike ride away.

Factors affecting street commerce

Demographics

Costs

Location



Regulation and Zoning

Urban Form and Land Use Patterns

Transportation and Mobility

Organizing between stores

Technology and E-Commerce

Clustering between stores

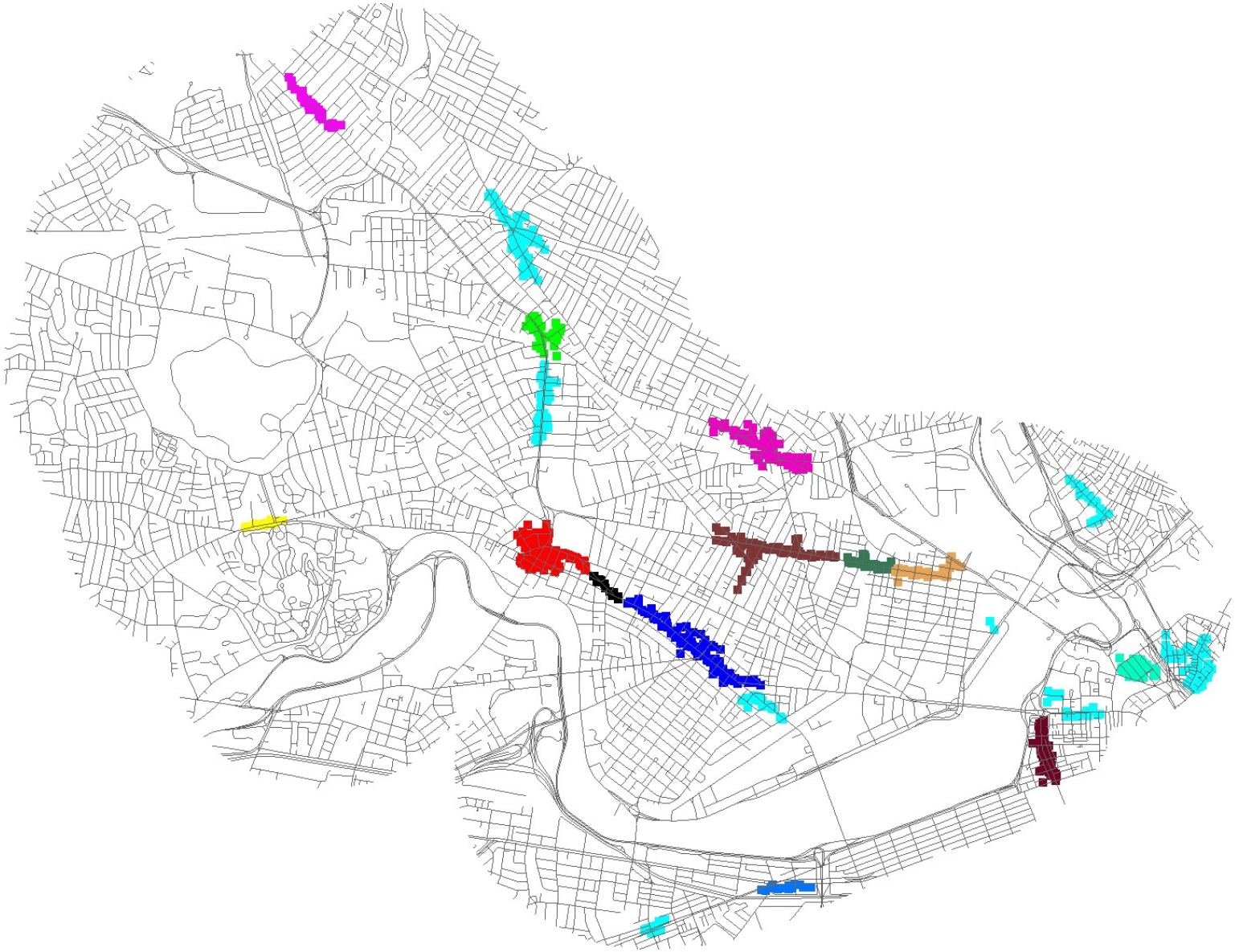
Building and street typologies

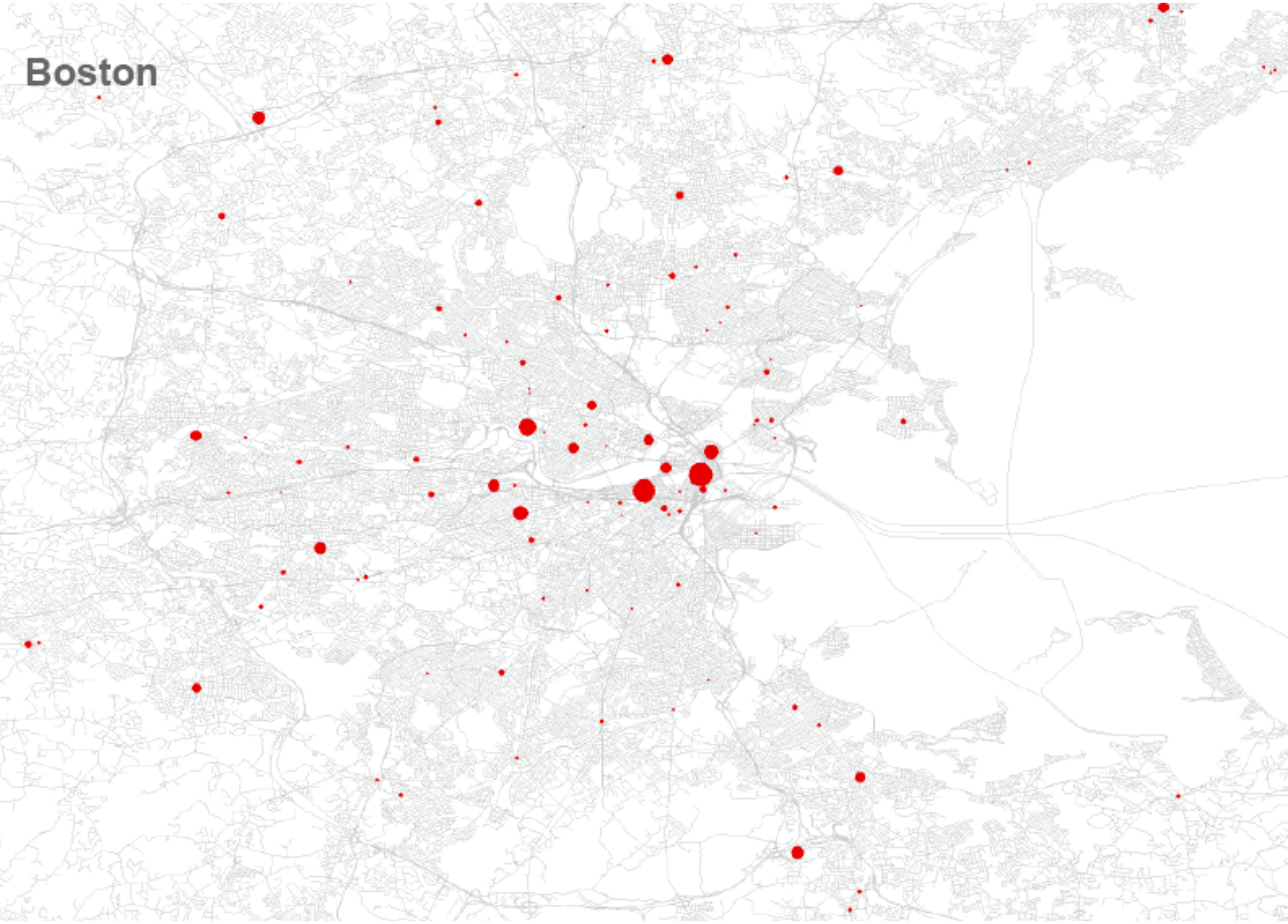
Contents

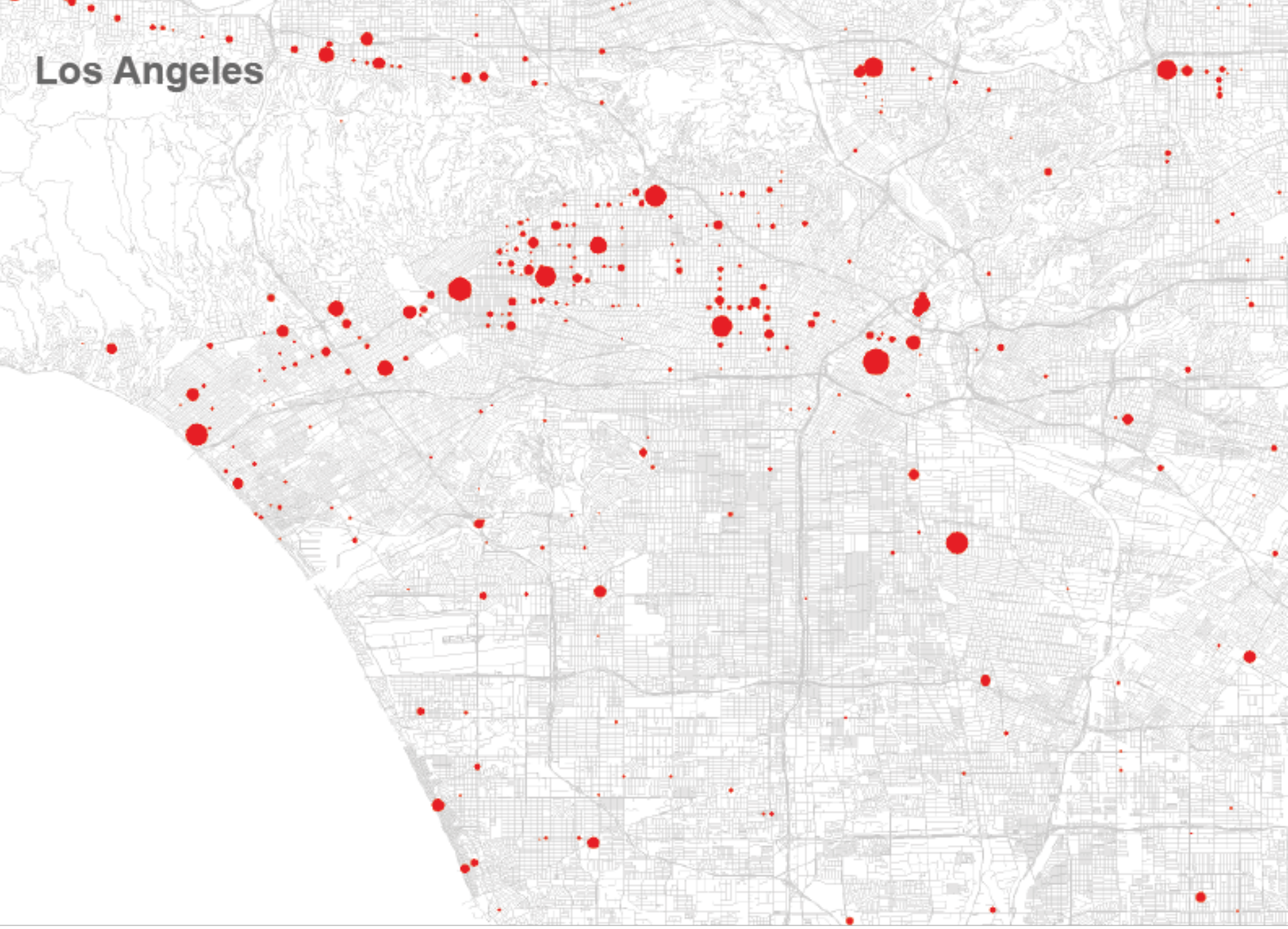
1. Macro picture –predictability of retail location patterns.

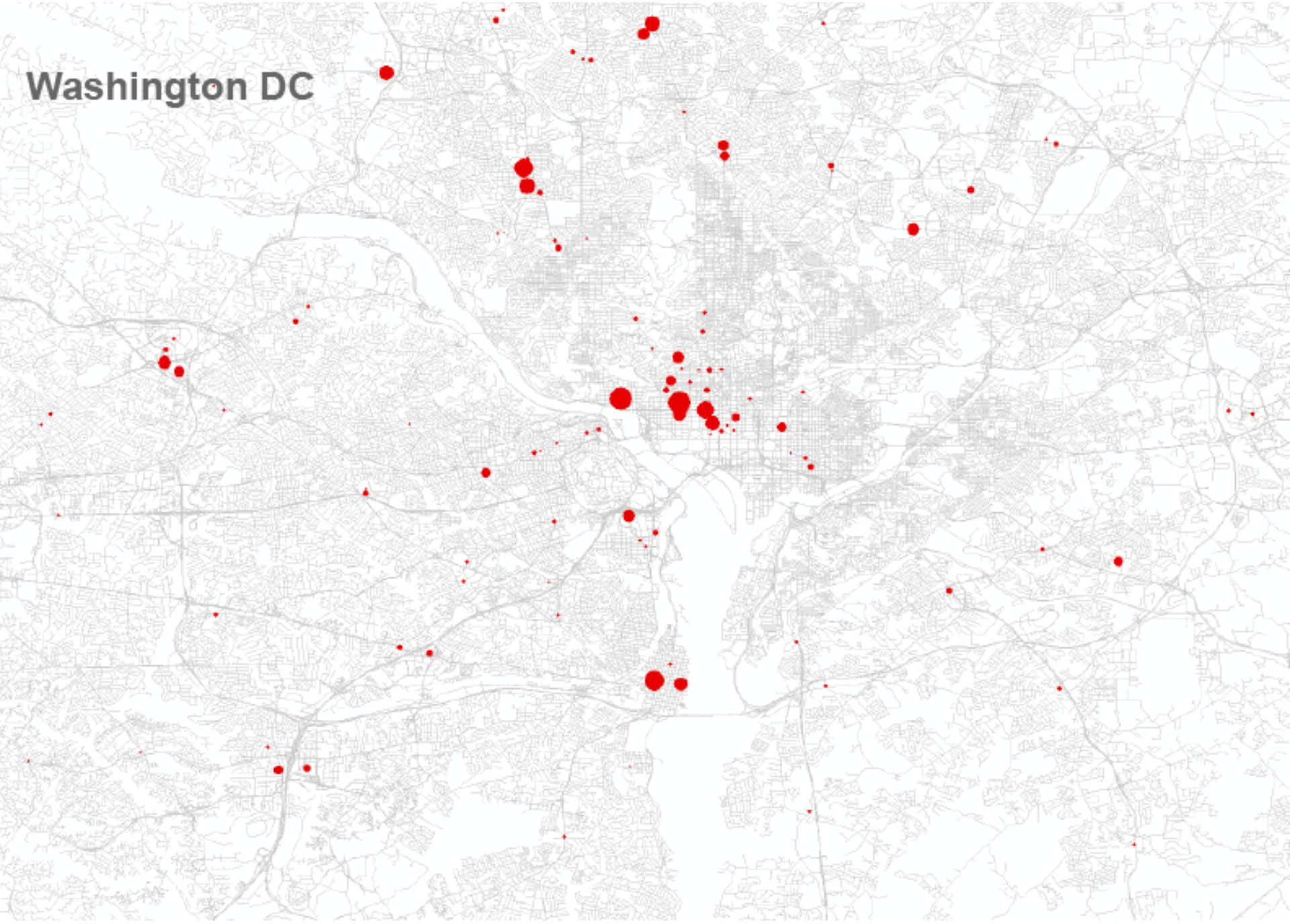
Defining retail clusters as agglomerations, where a minimum number of stores co-exist and where the distance between stores is less than a given limit.

Clusters of street commerce around Cambridge MA.



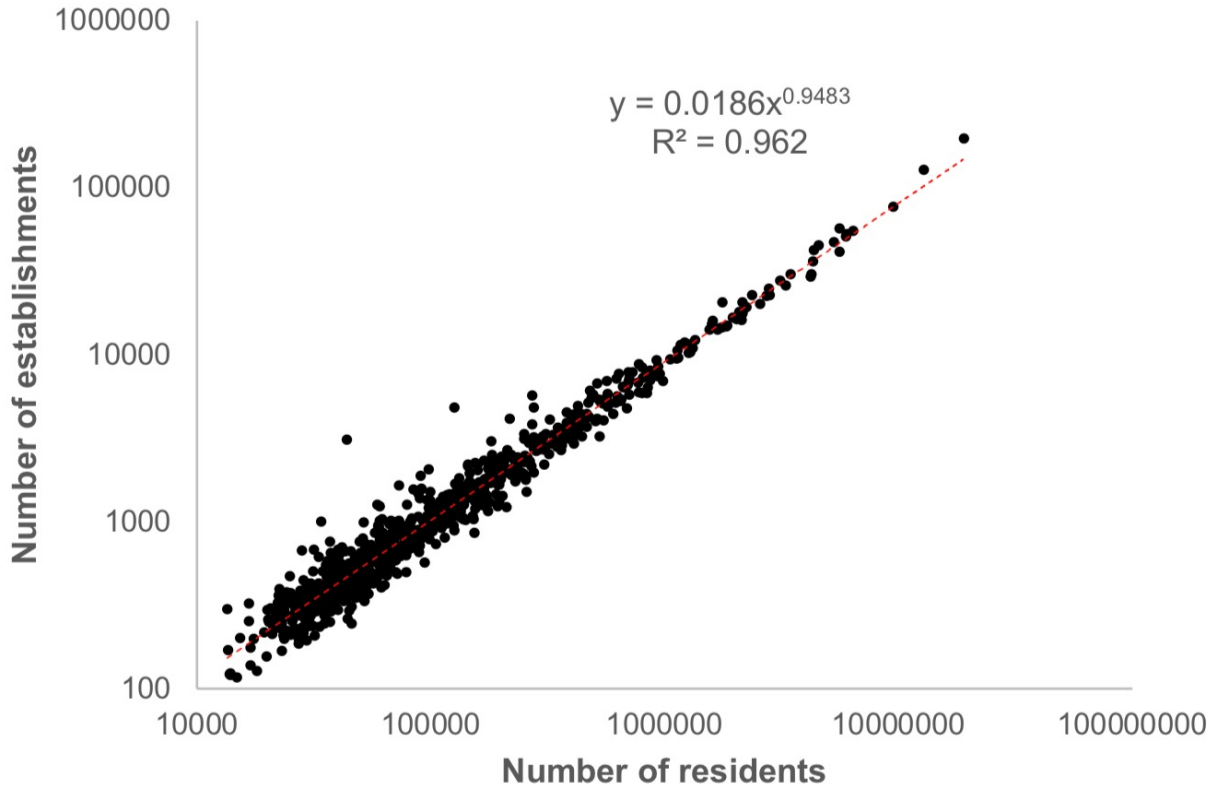

Boston


Los Angeles


Washington DC

Predictability of retailers by city size

Log-Log scatter plot of retail, food and service establishments versus population size in 273 US metro areas, where population is greater than 40,000 people.

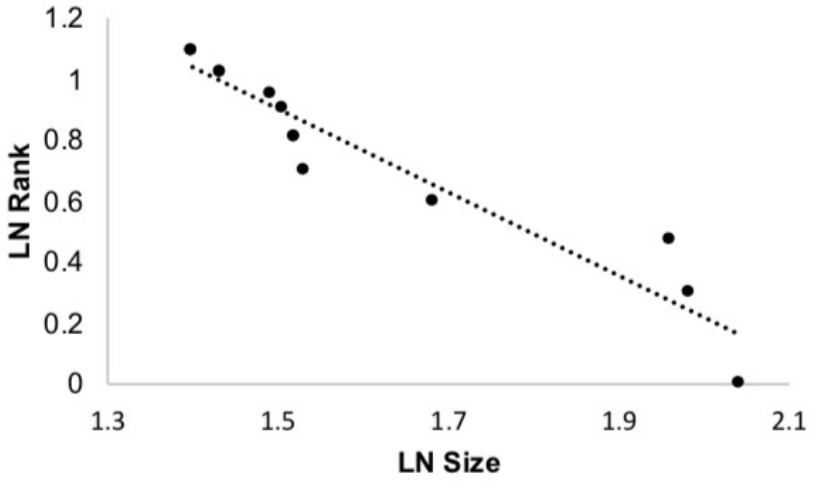


Example: Washington – Arlington – Alexandria metro population was 5.582 million in 2010. The trend line predicts a metro area of this size should have 46,505 retail, food and personal service establishments. The actual number is 41,453

Scaling of retail clusters: there are exponentially more small clusters than large clusters.

Virginia Beach, VA

Rank	log(rank)	Size	log(size)
1	0	110	2.041393
2	0.30103	96	1.982271
3	0.477121	91	1.959041
4	0.60206	48	1.681241
5	0.69897	34	1.531479
6.5	0.812913	33	1.518514
6.5	0.812913	33	1.518514
8	0.90309	32	1.50515
9	0.954243	31	1.491362
10.5	1.021189	27	1.431364
10.5	1.021189	27	1.431364
12.5	1.09691	25	1.39794
12.5	1.09691	25	1.39794



Example

In Phoenix AZ, Zipf's Law predicts 25 retail clusters with 25-52 establishments, while the actual number of such clusters is 23.

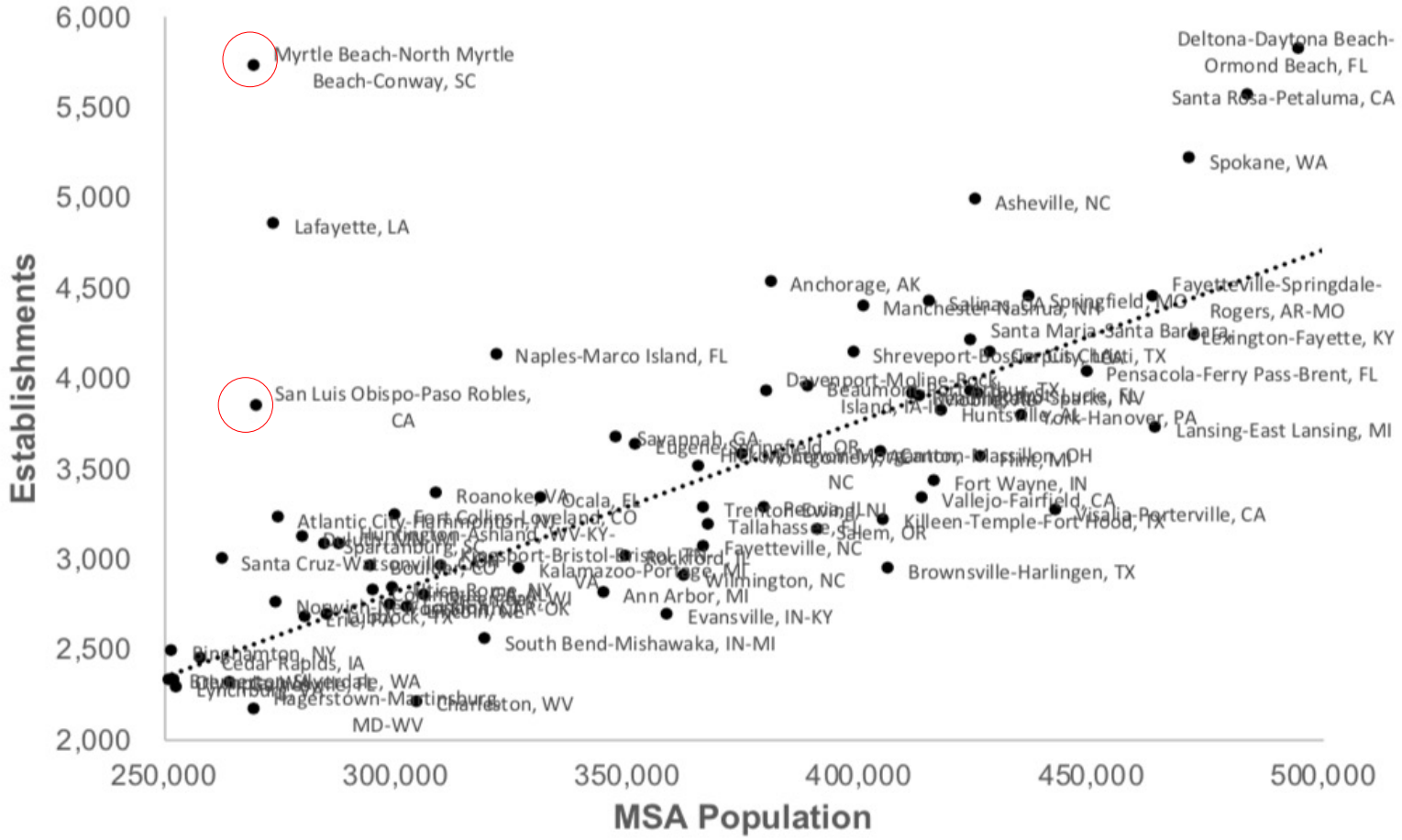
The trend also predicts 9 clusters with 53-104 establishments, while the actual numbers is 8.

And the predicted number of clusters with 105-199 establishments is three, which exactly matches three such clusters in reality.

No clusters over 4,000 stores predicted, but there actually is one…

Predictability of retailers by city size

Log-Log scatter plot of retail, food and service establishments versus population size in 273 US metro areas, where population is greater than 40,000 people.



San Luis Obispo / Paso Robles

Predicted: 2550 establishments.

Actual: 3850 establishments.


Los Angeles
TOWER
Source: brighamyen.com


New York
Source: winick.com


Chicago
Source: flickr.com

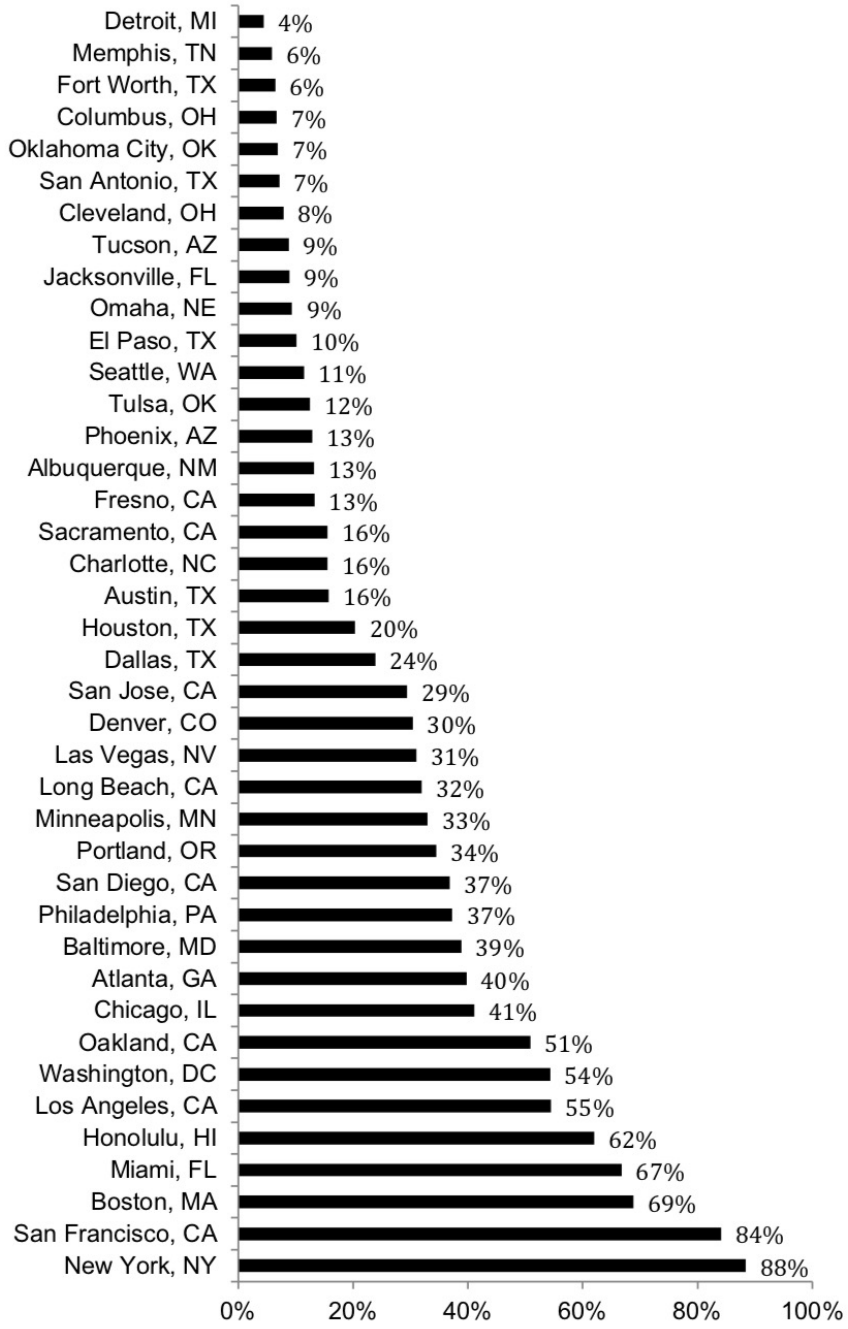

Houston
The Home of
EASY CREDIT
Source: houston-texas-us.blogspot.com


Los Angeles
Largest cluster: 14% of all stores
Source: brighamyen.com


New York
Largest cluster: 33% of all stores
Source: winick.com


Chicago
Largest cluster: 7% of all stores
Source: flickr.com


Houston
Largest cluster: 1% of all stores
Source: houston-texas-us.blogspot.com



Percent of population living within 1,000 meters of at least one retail cluster of more than 25 establishments in cities with populations over 350,000 inhabitants

Cities, where more than ½ of all residents have a retail cluster within a 15min walk (top) and those with the least (bottom).

Rank	City	Population within 1000m of a retail cluster	Population 2010	Land Area (km2)	Residential Density		FAR	Built Coverage
1	New York City, NY	88%	8,175,133	783.0	10,890	km^2	1.66	35.38%
2	San Francisco, CA	84%	805,235	121.5	7,174	km^2	0.43	27.42%
3	Boston, MA	69%	617,594	125.4	2,700	km^2	0.71	16.14%
4	Miami, FL	67%	399,457	93.2	4,866	km^2	-	-
5	Honolulu, HI	62%	337,256	156.7	2,236	km^2	1.50	14.16%
6	Los Angeles, CA	55%	3,792,621	1,214.0	3,275	km^2	1.40	18.67%
7	Washington, DC	54%	681,170	158.1	4,308	km^2	0.83	16.47%
8	Oakland, CA	51%	390,724	144.8	2,901	km^2	0.69	17.04%
9	Chicago, IL	41%	2,695,598	589.6	4,572	km^2	-	14.15%
10	Atlanta, GA	40%	417,735	344.9	1211.17	km^2	-	-
	Mean	**61%**	**1,831,252**	**373.1**	**4,413.4**	**km^2**	**1.03**	**19.93%**
31	Omaha, NE	9%	383,964	329.2	1166.35	km^2	-	-
32	Jacksonville, FL	9%	822,050	1,934.7	425	km^2	0.05	1.23%
33	Tucson, AZ	9%	520,116	611.7	868	km^2	0.21	6.52%
34	Cleveland, OH	8%	396,815	201.2	1,972	km^2	-	-
35	San Antonio, TX	7%	1,469,845	1,193.7	1,147	km^2	-	-
36	Oklahoma City, OK	7%	579,999	1,556.9	360	km^2	-	-
37	Columbus, OH	7%	787,033	562.5	1,399	km^2	-	-
38	Fort Worth, TX	6%	854,113	886.3	842	km^2	-	-
39	Memphis, TN	6%	646,889	816.0	770	km^2	0.26	6.42%
40	Detroit, MI	4%	713,777	359.4	1,900	km^2	0.25	14.78%
	Mean	**7%**	**717,460**	**845.2**	**1,084.9**	**km^2**	**0.19**	**7.24%**

San Francisco

84% population has an amenity cluster within 15min of their home.

Boston

69% population has an amenity cluster within 15min of their home.

2. Micro picture – survival of the individual store.

1. How big of a catchment area (# of people) does this Starbucks shop in Cambridge, MA need to break even?

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Rent: $12,500 / month
Utilities: $1,000 /month
Staff: (10 baristas x $12/h)x20h/week + (2 managers x $20/h)x40h/week = $4,000/week = $16,000/month
Total: $29,500 / month

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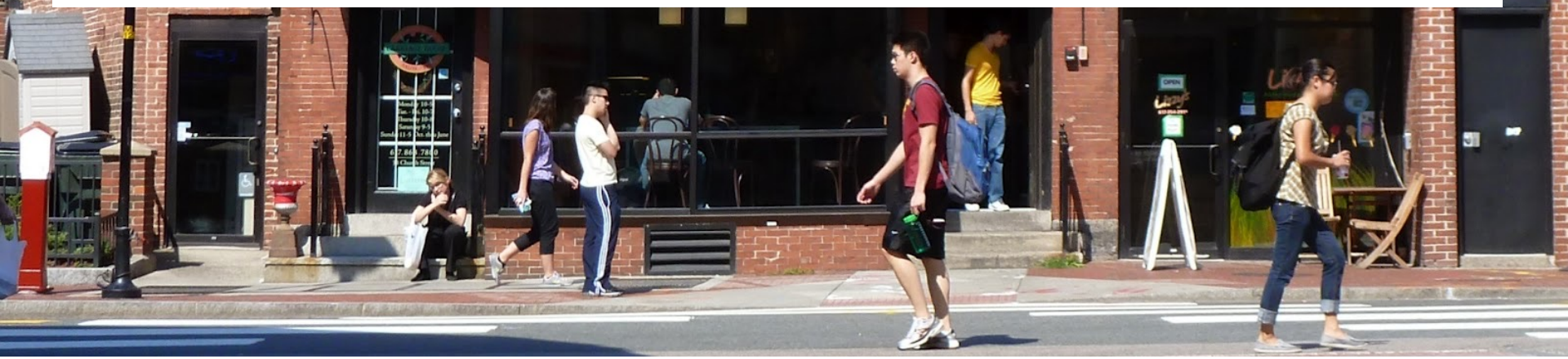
In order to generate $ 29,500 / month, the shop needs 29,500 / 3.5 = 8,429 customers a month or **281/day**.



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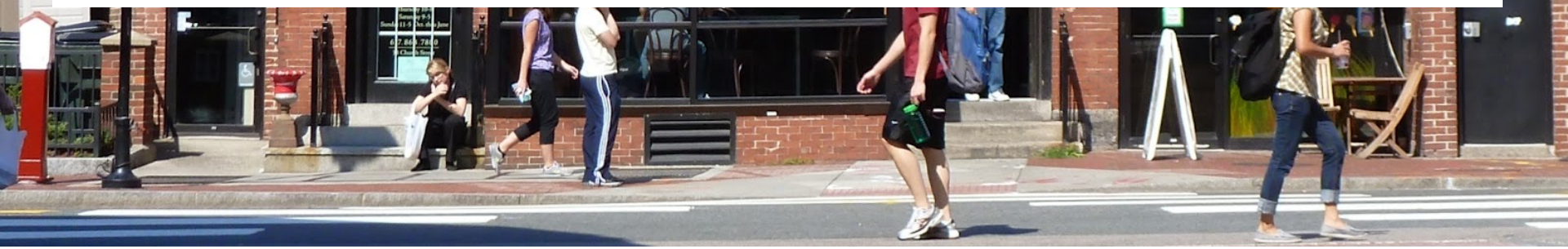
If only one in 40 ppl in the area visit Starbucks once a day on average, then 281*40= **11,240 ppl needed in the daily catchment area to sustain the store.**



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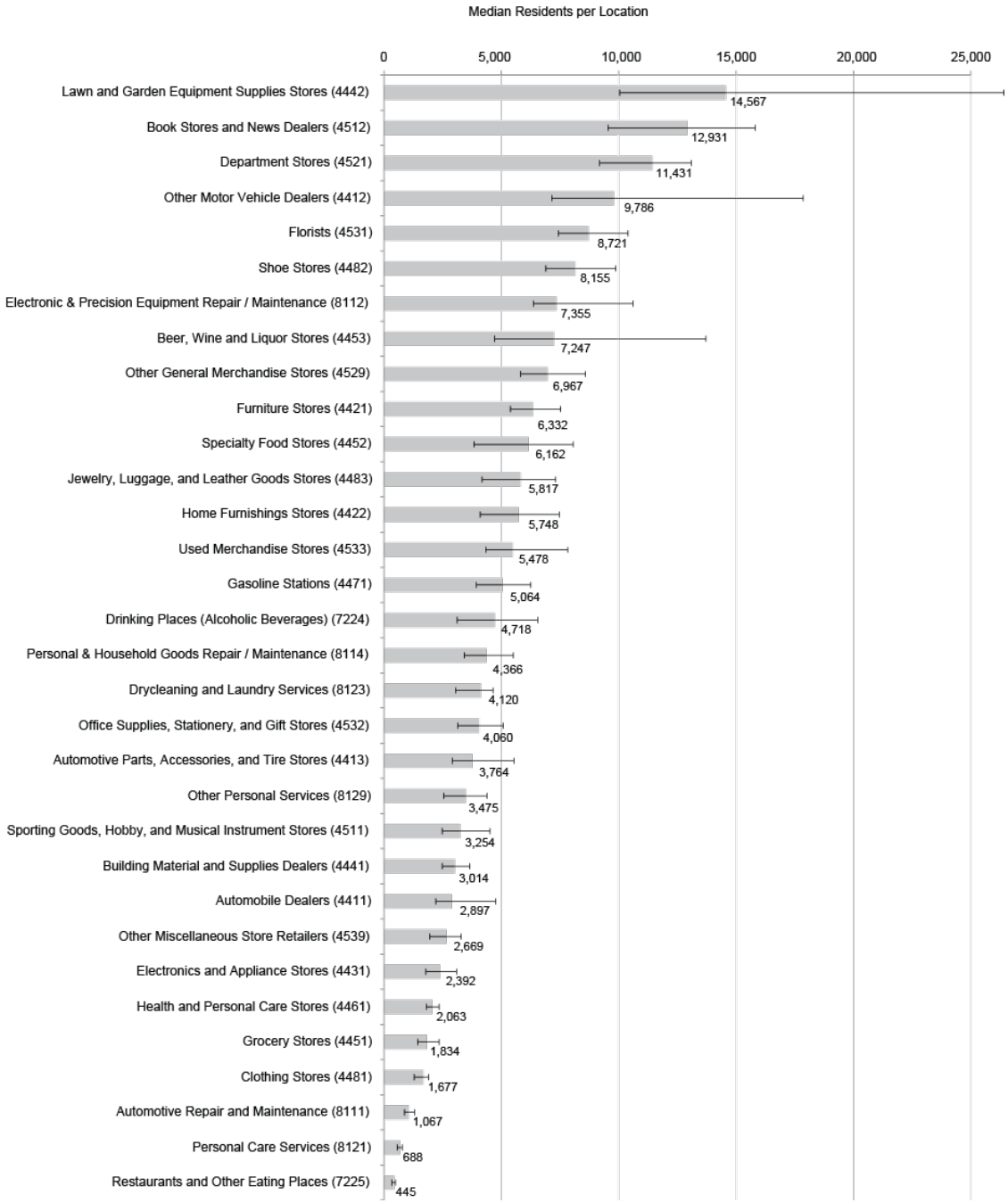
In order to generate $8,000 / month, the shop needs 8,000 / 265= 30 customers a month or **1/day**.

If only one in 10,000 ppl in the city buy stuffed animals once in 3 years, on average, then (365*3)*10,000 = **10,95 million ppl needed in the daily catchment area to sustain the store.**

Median number of residents per business establishment among the 50 most populous US cities in 2010.



Source: Sevtsuk (upcoming 2019).
Data: InforGoup 2010, US Census 2010.

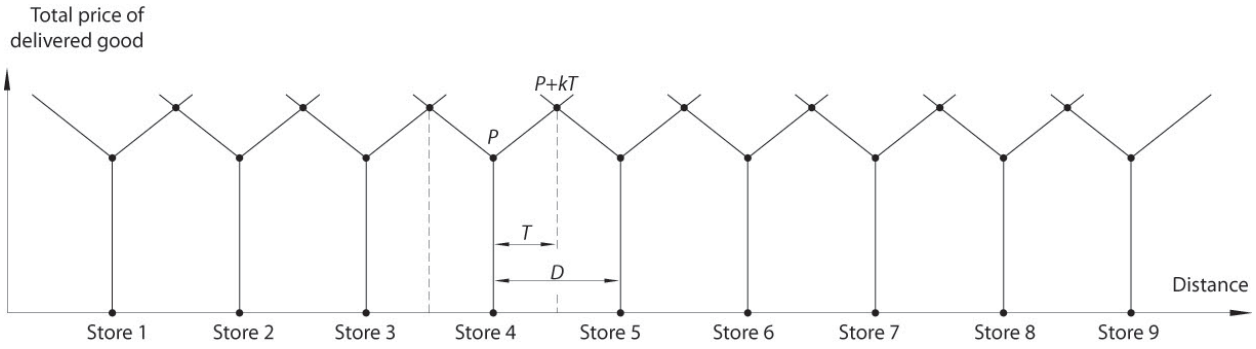
3. Economic view of retail densities

A one-dimensional model

Classical retail location theory (Di Pasquale & Wheaton 1996)

Distance between stores (D) is determined by:

v:	Frequency of purchase trips for a given good
k:	Transportation costs for consumers
F:	Density of customers
C:	Fixed costs for a retail facility
P:	unit price of good
mc:	marginal (wholesale) cost of a good to retailers



$$D = \left(\frac{C}{kvF} \right)^{\frac{1}{2}}$$

When fixed costs C ↓, then distance between stores ↓
When customer density F ↑, then distance between stores ↓
When frequency of visits v ↑, then distance between stores ↓
When transportation costs k ↑, then distance between stores ↓

When frequency of visits v ↑, then distance between stores ↓

Paris, France

When frequency of visits v ↓, then distance between stores ↑

London, UK

When fixed costs C ↓, then distance between stores ↓

Jakarta, Indonesia

When fixed costs C ↑, then distance between stores ↑

New York City, US

When customer density F ↑, then distance between stores ↓

Hong Kong, China

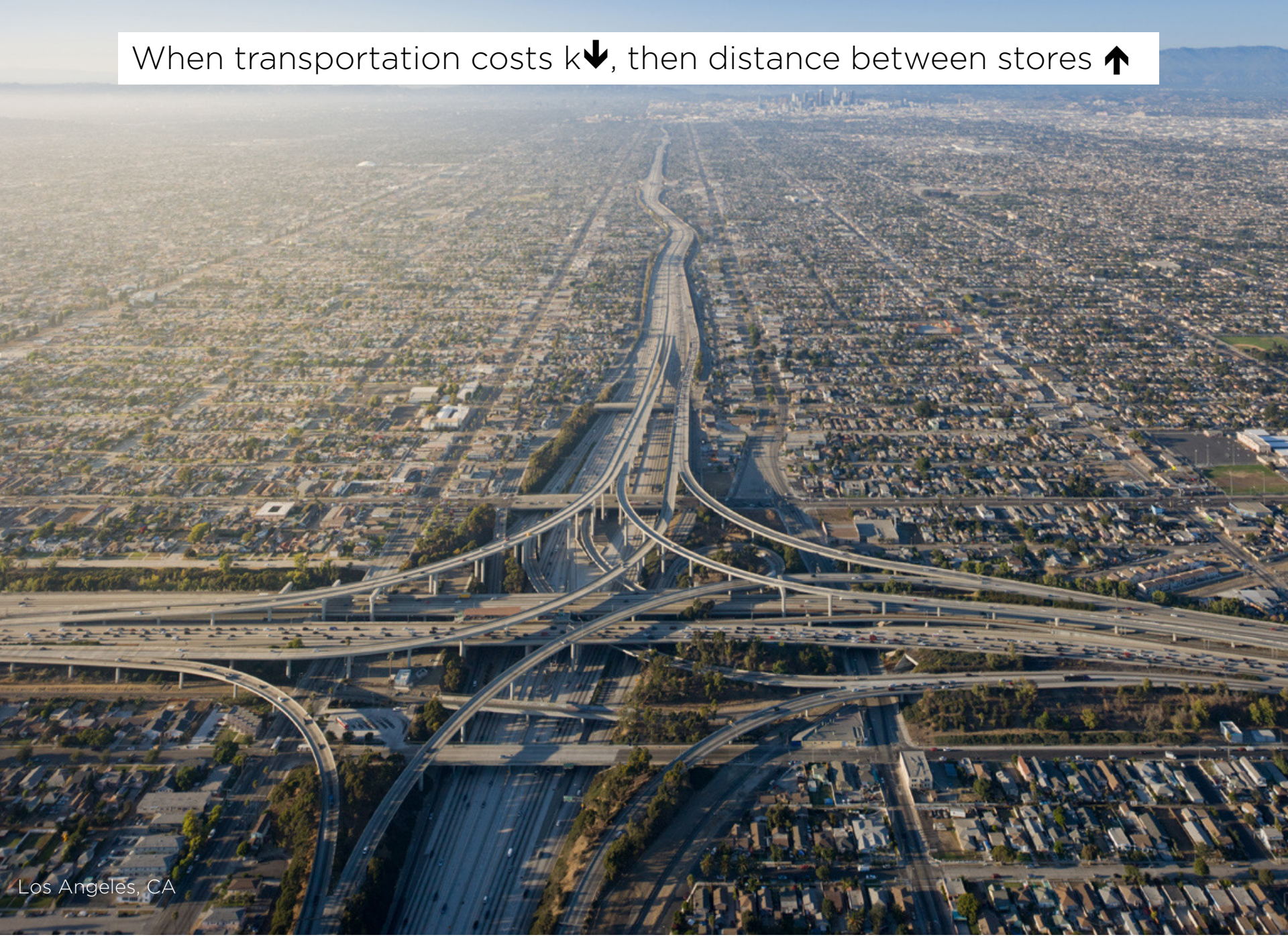
When customer density F ↓, then distance between stores ↑

Tallinn, Estonia

When transportation costs k ↑, then distance between stores ↓

Venice, Italy

When transportation costs k🡻, then distance between stores 🡹



Los Angeles, CA

Transportation costs

In car-oriented cities, cheaper to move a mile

Transportation costs

In pedestrian/transit-oriented cities, more expensive to move a mile

Relative effects of destination size VS proximity

On store patronage.

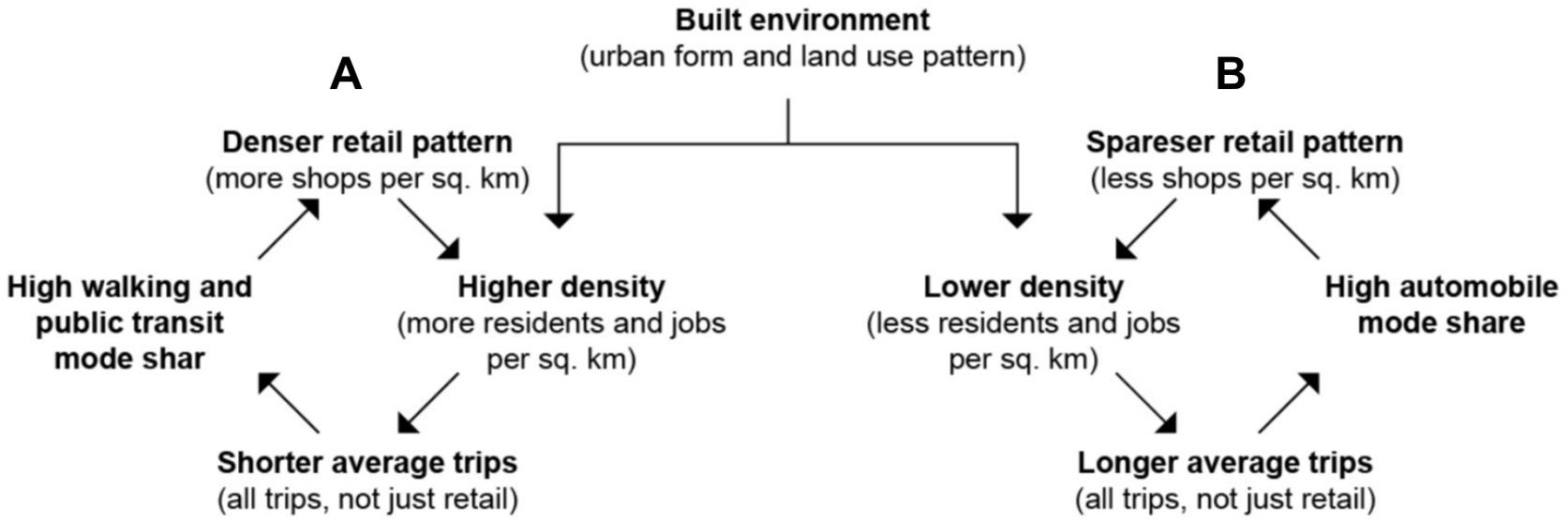
In walkable/transit-oriented cities, retail patronage depends more on proximity...

Numerous but smaller destinations

In car-oriented cities, retail patronage depends more on destination size

Fewer but larger retail destinations

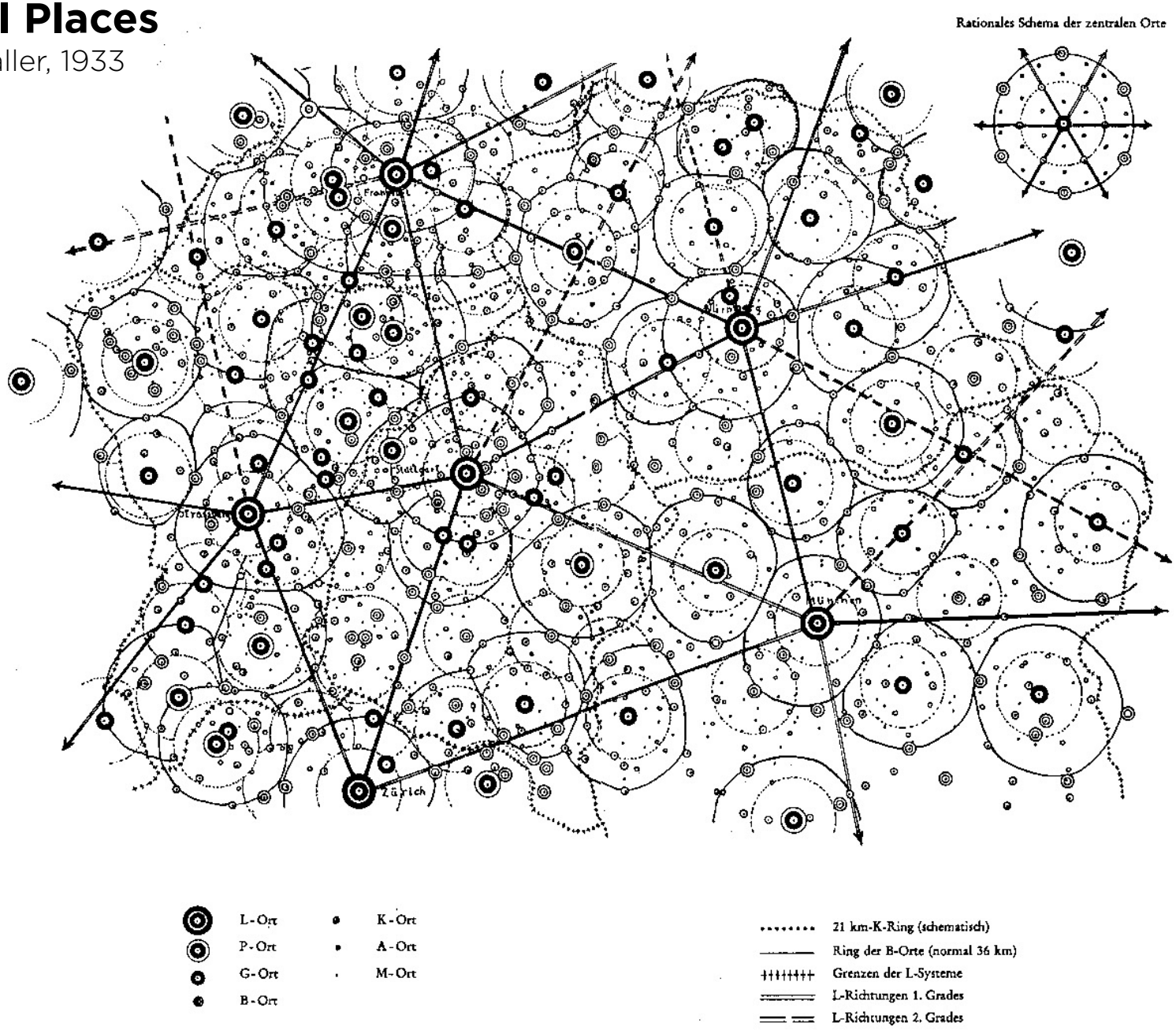
Interactions between urban form, transportation mode share and retail density.



4. Clustering between stores.

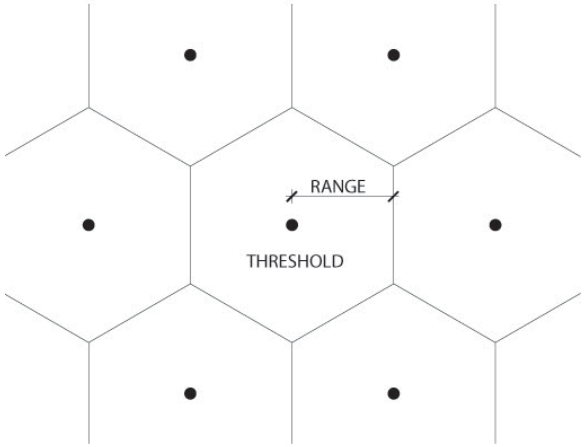
Central Places

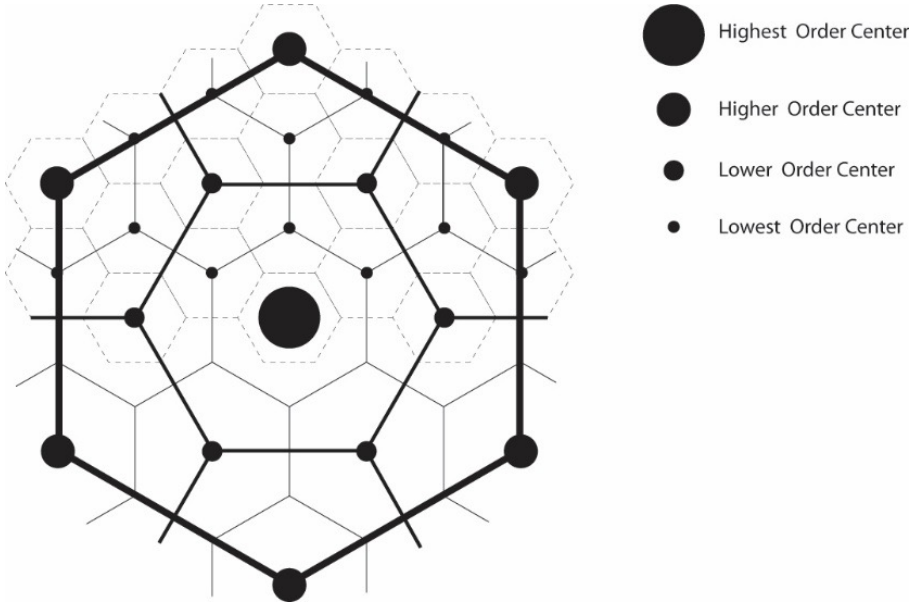
W. Christaller, 1933



A two-dimensional schema

Classical retail location theory: Christaller and Losch



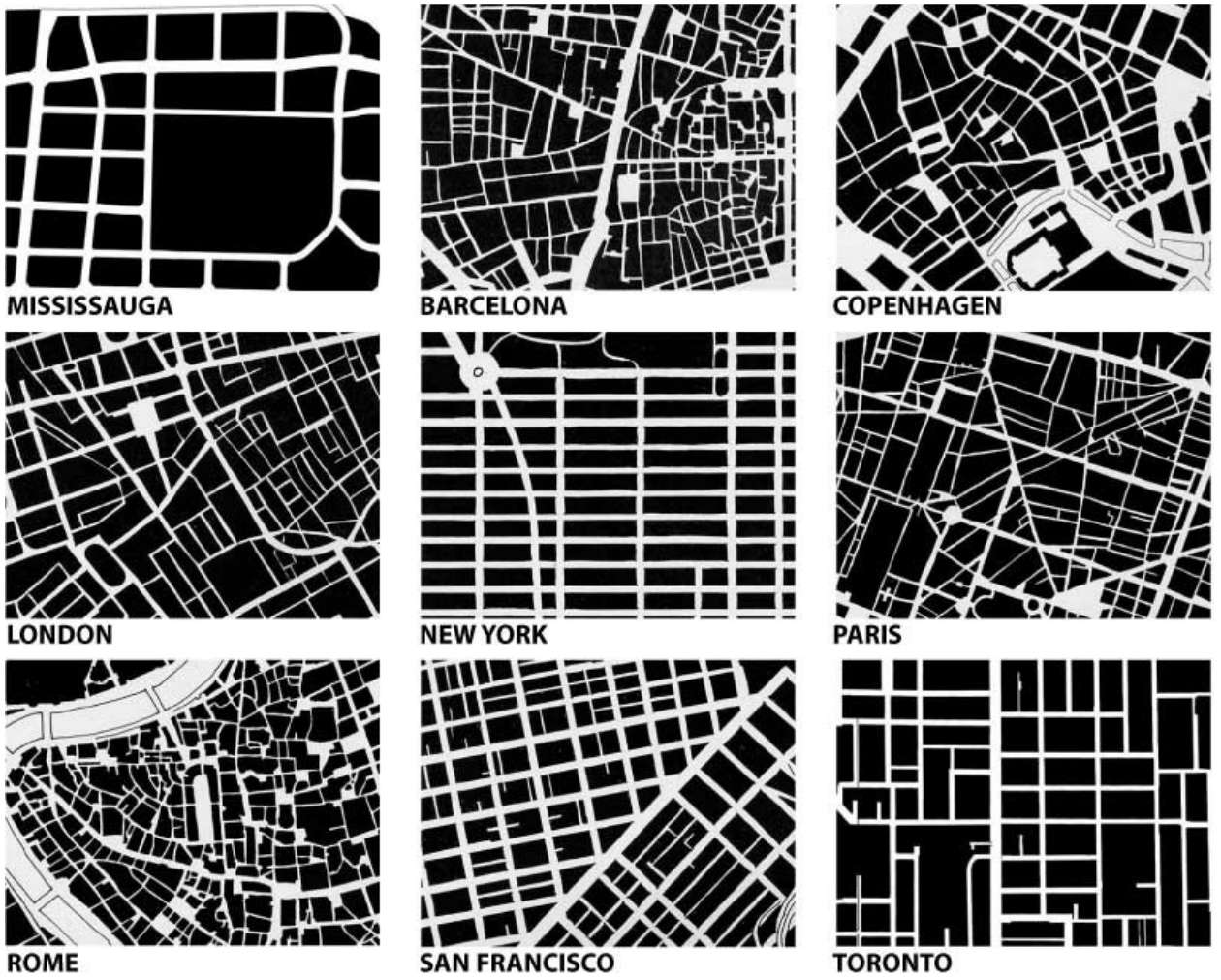


Assumptions

1. Customers undertake a separate trip for each good
2. Each good is obtained from the nearest available store
3. Customers are free travel in any direction along straight-line travel paths (Christaller 1933)

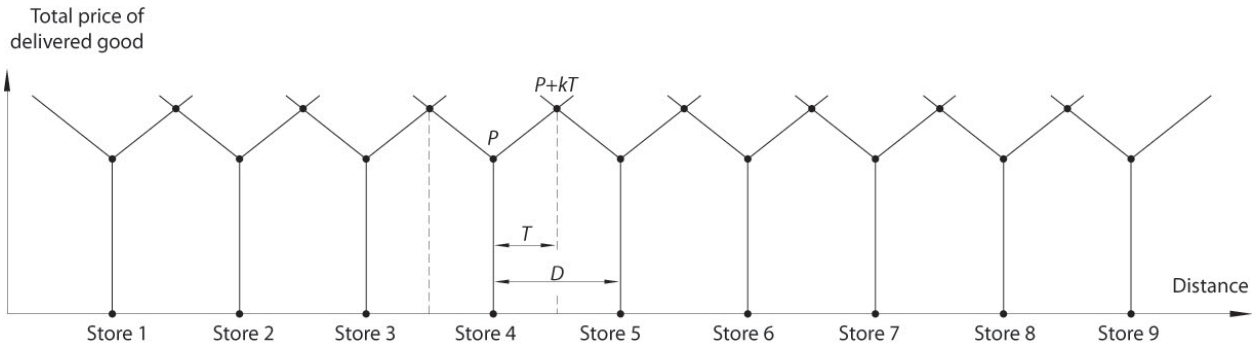
Accessibility to customers plays a key role for patronage, but accessibility is not evenly distributed in space.

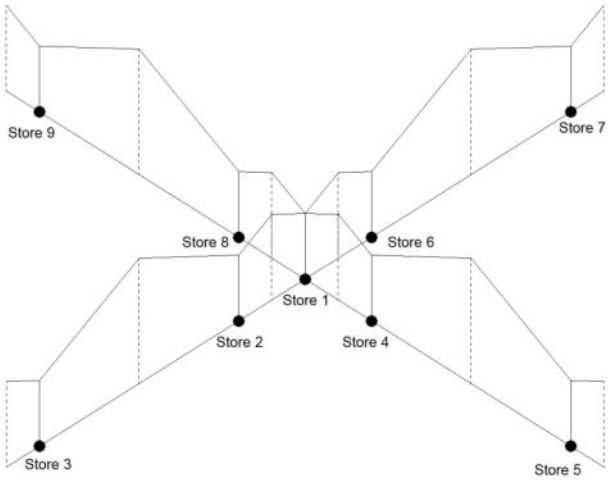
A city is not a “featureless plain” (Alonso 1964) → retail pattern not hex.



Introducing environmental geometry, uneven street networks

Classical retail location theory





Exogenous clustering

Difficult to distinguish exogenous VS endogenous clustering empirically...

Retail densities emerge at locations with better accessibility.

Retail clustering

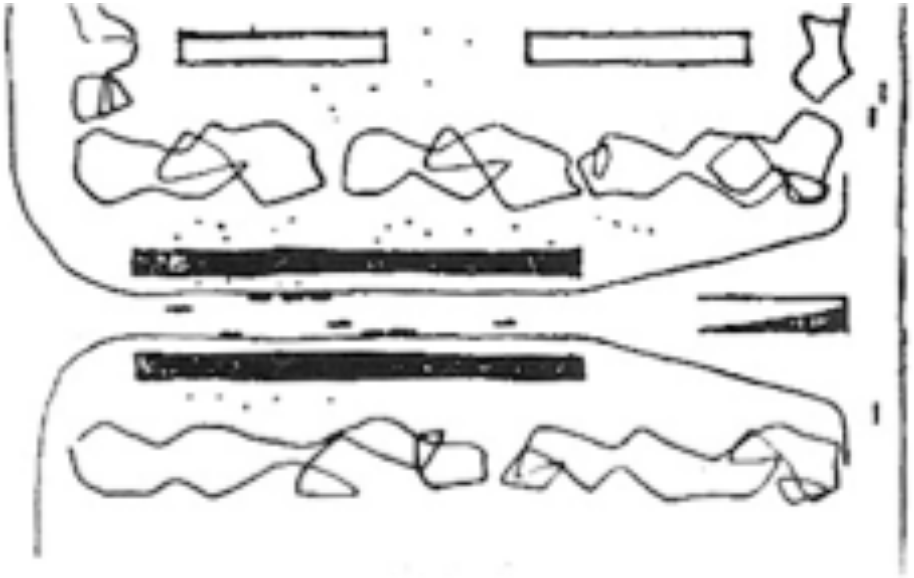
1. Complimentary

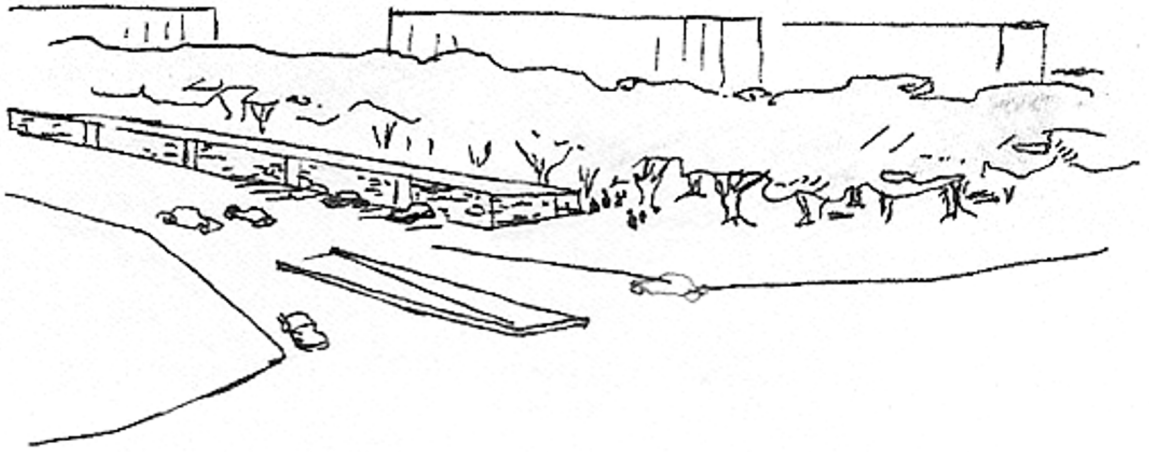
2. Competitive

Retail clustering
Lessons from Brasilia, 1956

Source, Fares El-Dahdah, 2005.

Retail clustering
Lessons from Brasilia, 1956





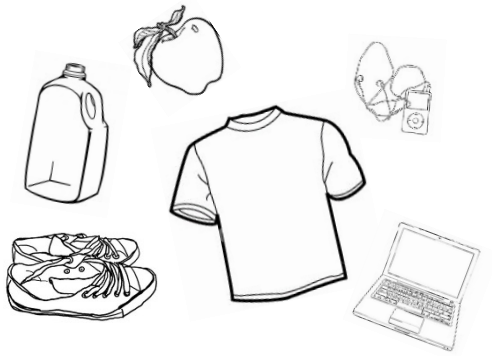
Source, Fares El-Dahdah, 2005.

Retail clustering
Lessons from Brasilia, 1956

Source: panoramio.com

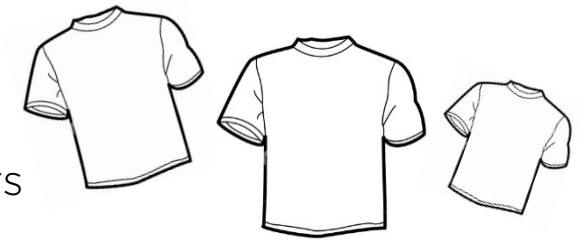
Why do clusters form?

Neo-classical retail location theory



Complementary clustering

Multi-purpose shopping → Consumer savings in transportation costs
Eaton & Lipsey, 1982
Positive demand externalities between stores
(Brueckner, 1993



Competitive clustering

Lower risk for unexpected behavior between competitors
Hotelling, 1929
Price and product comparison → Lower search costs
Eaton & Lipsey 1975
Lower prices through Cournot competition
Dudey, 1990

Which stores are most likely to cluster with like stores?

Stores selling "comparison goods" cluster, "Convenience goods" do not!

Rank	Description	Clustering Coeff.
1	Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, and Music Stores	0.817***
2	Food Services and Drinking Places	0.556**
3	Electronics & Appliance Stores	0.425*
4	Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores	0.326**
5	Food & Beverage Stores	NONE
6	Miscellaneous Store Retailers	NONE

Source: Sevtsuk 2010

5. Coordination between stores.

Coordinated retail clusters: joint management

Viru

Lasnamäe

Rocca al Mare

Ülemiste

Uncoordinated retail clusters: fragmented ownership

Types of retail clusters

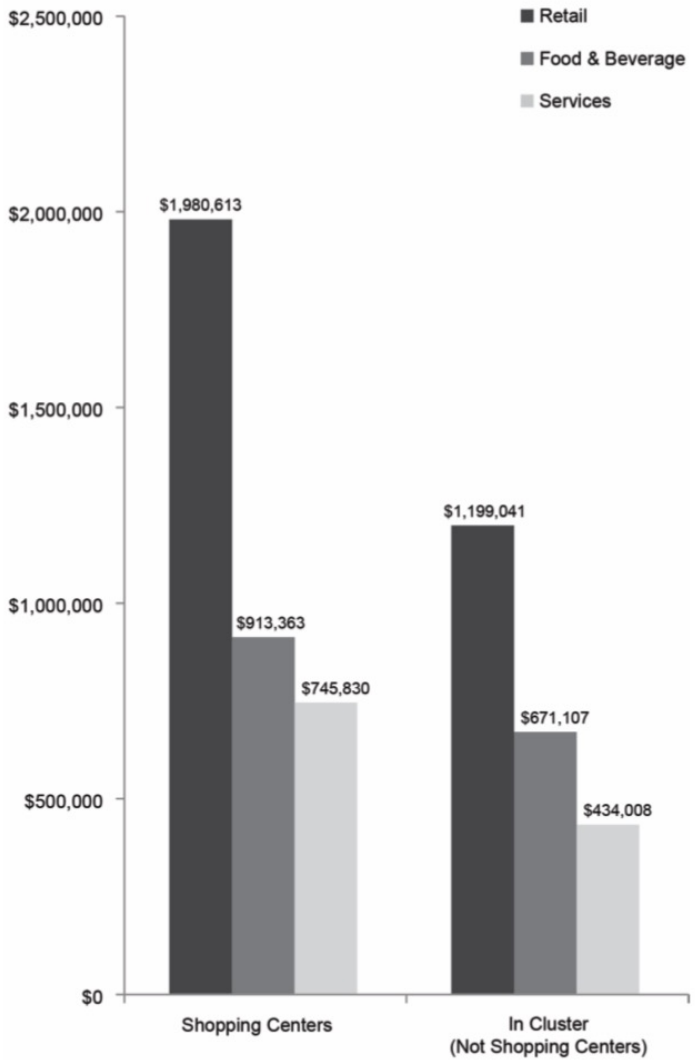
Shopping centers

- Coordinated lease contracts
- Controlled tenant entry
- Coordinated management

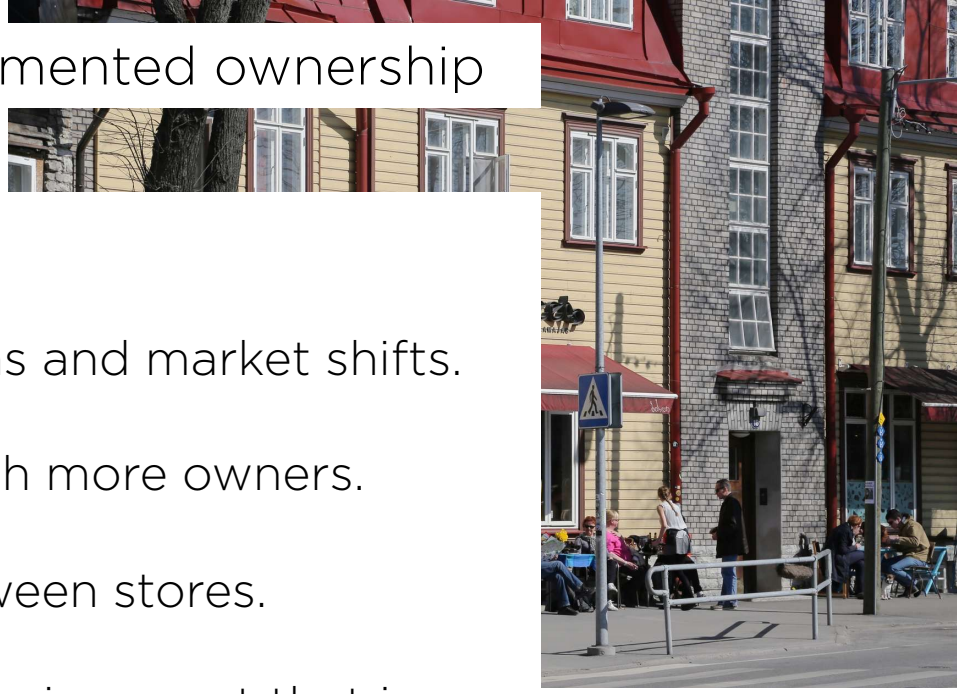
Street commerce

- Independent lease contracts
- Uncontrolled tenant entry
- Fragmented management

Average Sales Volume per Business Establishment
in Los Angeles for year 2010



Uncoordinated retail clusters: fragmented ownership



Public benefits:

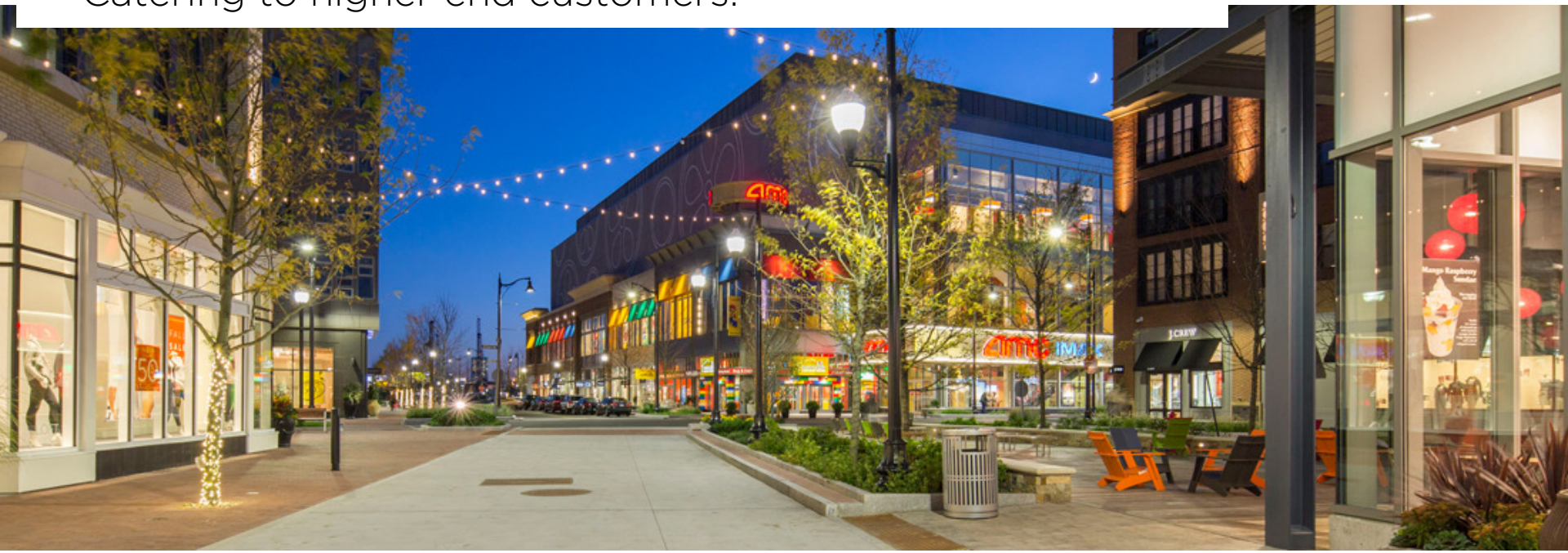
- More resilient to economic downturns and market shifts.
- Supports shared wealth creation, with more owners.
- Foster democratic public space between stores.
- Produces a genuinely diverse built environment that is more serendipitous and enriching than malls.

Rise of Life-Style centers... Assembly Square, Boston

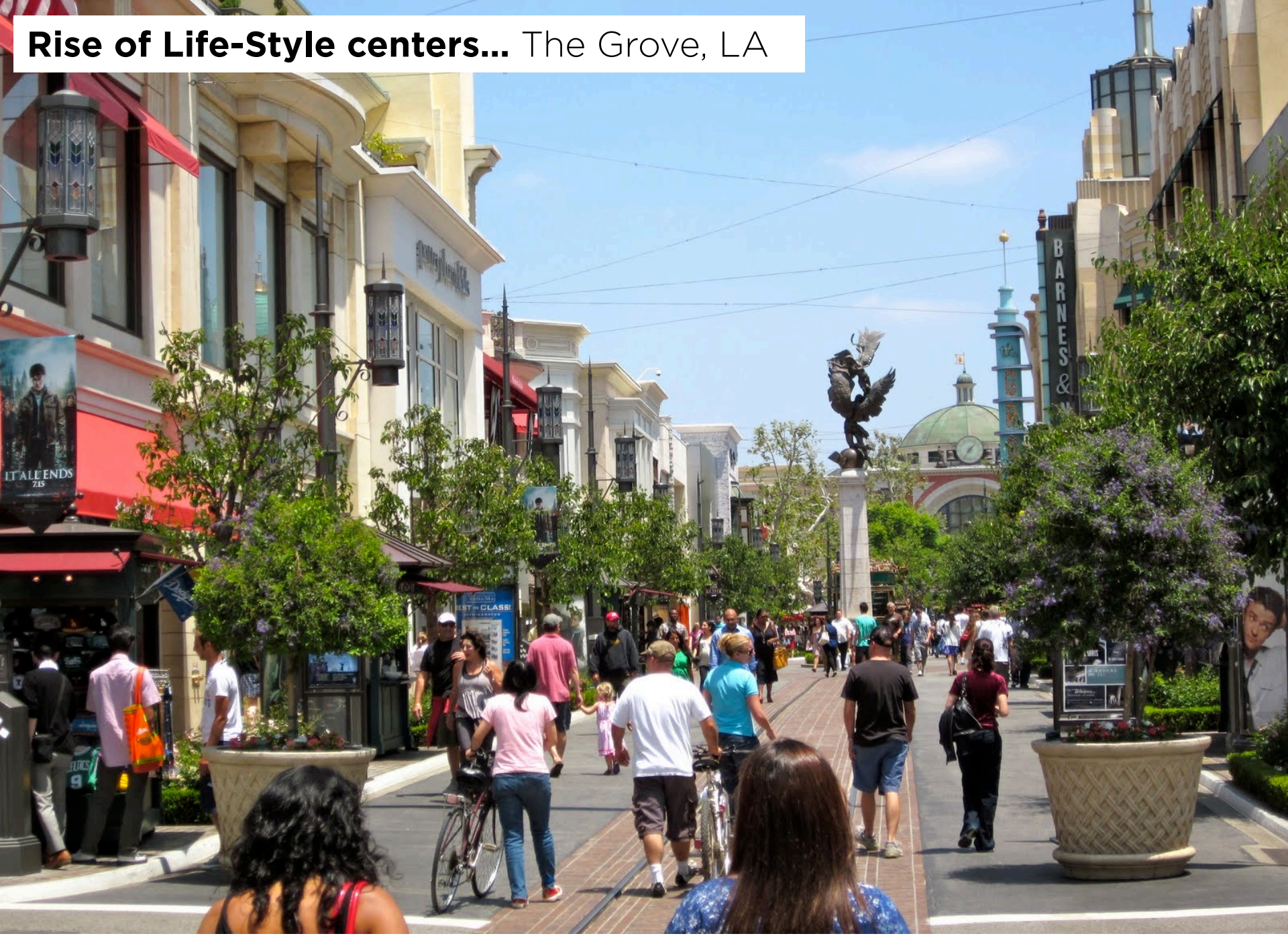
Rise of Life-Style centers... Assembly Square, Boston

Characteristic features:

- Outdoor circulation between stores, reminiscent of traditional main streets.
- Mixed use, including retail, food services, leisure and sometimes housing + office.
- Catering to higher end customers.



Rise of Life-Style centers... The Grove, LA



Rise of Business Improvement Districts – BIDs

Flatiron – 23rd Street Partnership

Rise of Business Improvement Districts – BIDs

Flatiron – 23rd Street Partnership

Establishment of a BID

- BIDs are private-public partnerships
- Governed by a privately elected BID board
- But publicly incorporated and fees collected by the municipality
- 60% of property owners need to agree to establish a BID
- BID dues are usually levied on top of normal property taxes
- All property owners within boundary pay, regardless of agreement
- 5-year renewal cycle

Rise of Business Improvement Districts – BIDs

Flatiron – 23rd Street Partnership

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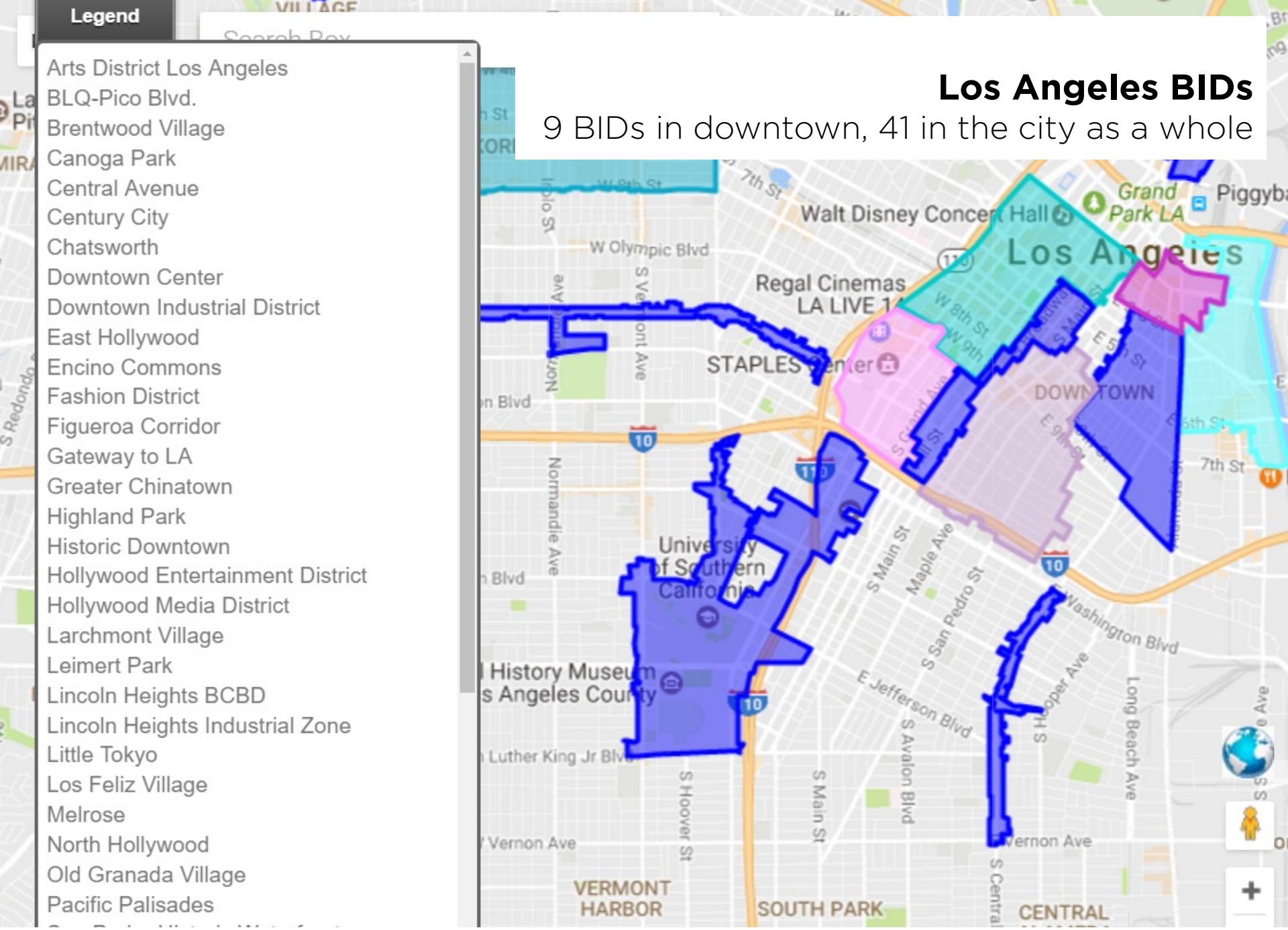
Typical BID activities

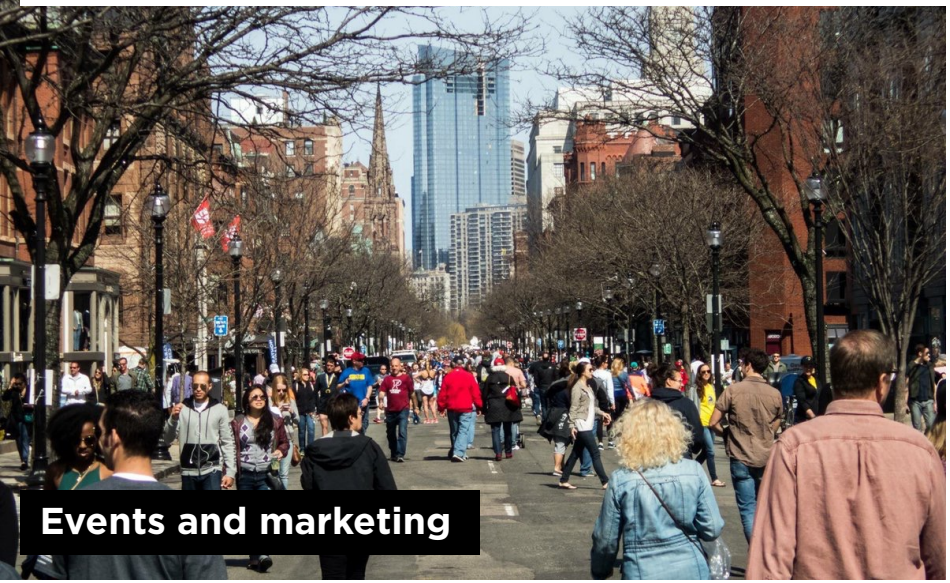
- Extra street cleaning and security patrols
- Join marketing of the cluster – ads, festivals, events.
- Public space improvements – street furniture, flowers, sidewalk paving.
- New tenant recruitment to vacant spaces
- Grants to attract desired tenants
- Coordinate opening hours of stores.

Los Angeles BIDs

9 BIDs in downtown, 41 in the city as a whole



Rise of Business Improvement Districts – BIDs



Events and marketing

Area upkeep

Business recruitment

Public space improvement

Are BIDs successful?

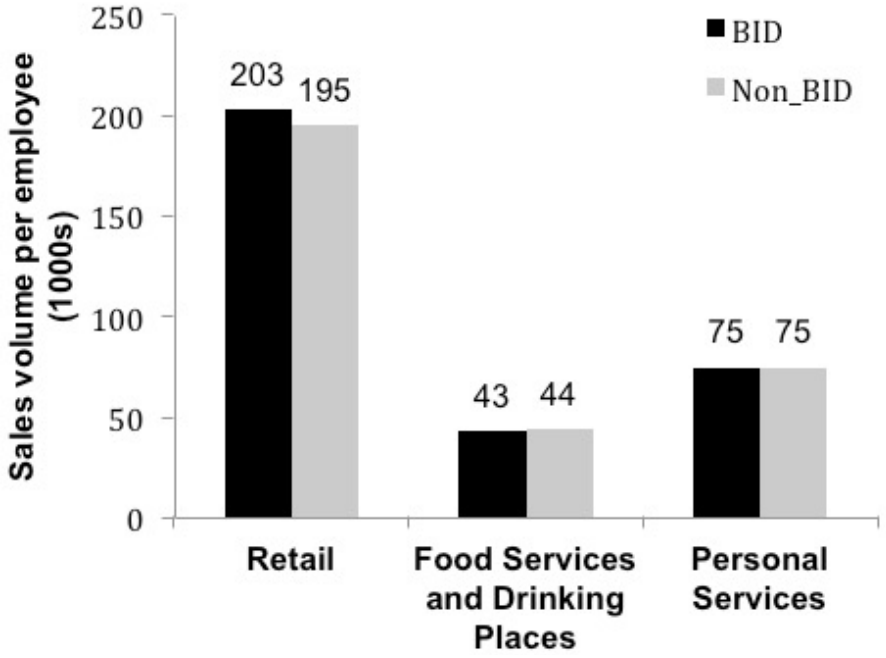
Depends on how we measure success. Most evaluations performed by the BIDs themselves, hotly debated question…

Before-After Vacancies in NYC BIDs

BID	First Recorded Commercial Vacancy Rate	Rate in 2002
Flatbush Avenue	30%	3%
North Flatbush Avenue	22%	9%
Sunset Park – 5th Avenue	20%	5%
34th Street	9%	4%
Lower East Side	10%	5%
Times Square	25%	9%

Source: nyc.gov

Sales per employee in LA BIDs VS non-BID clusters



Source: Sevtsuk 2017.

Types of retail clusters

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- Coordinated lease contracts
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Street commerce

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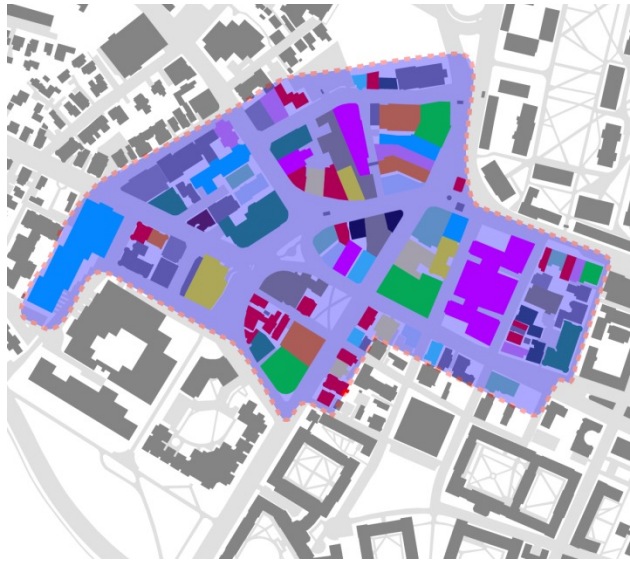
BIDs

- Independent lease contracts
- Uncontrolled tenant entry
- Partly joint management
- Common services, upkeep



5. COVID-19 impacts on street commerce

Major retail problems pre-date COVID19

- Rise of E-commerce
- Shift from stores to services
- Over-leveraged chains
- Retail leasing structure is outdated
- Lack of affordable retail space

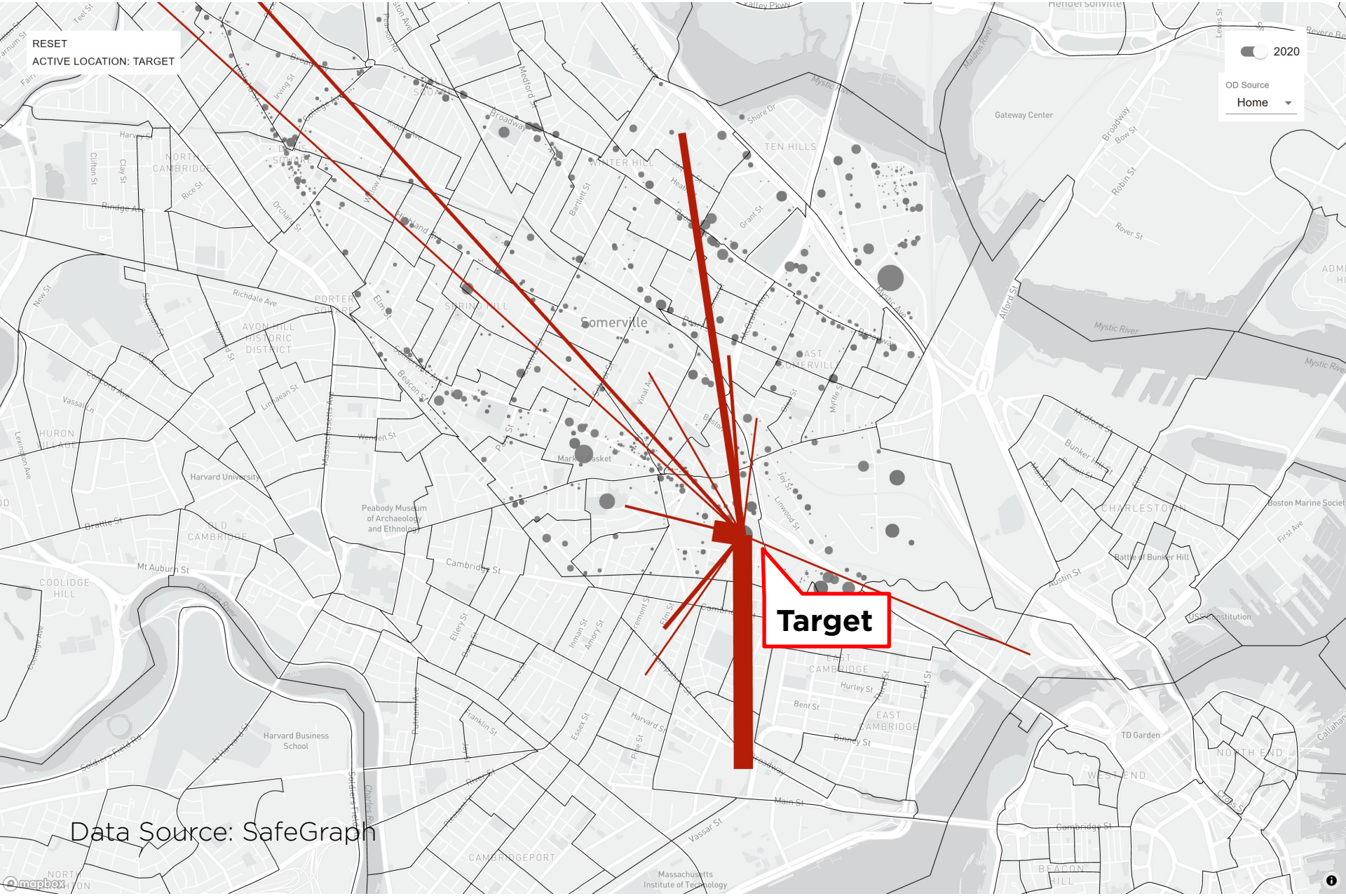
What are the key factors impacting the patronage of amenity clusters?

- Built Environment
- Regulations (e.g. COVID-19 closures).
- Behavior / Preferences

What are the key factors impacting the patronage of amenity clusters?

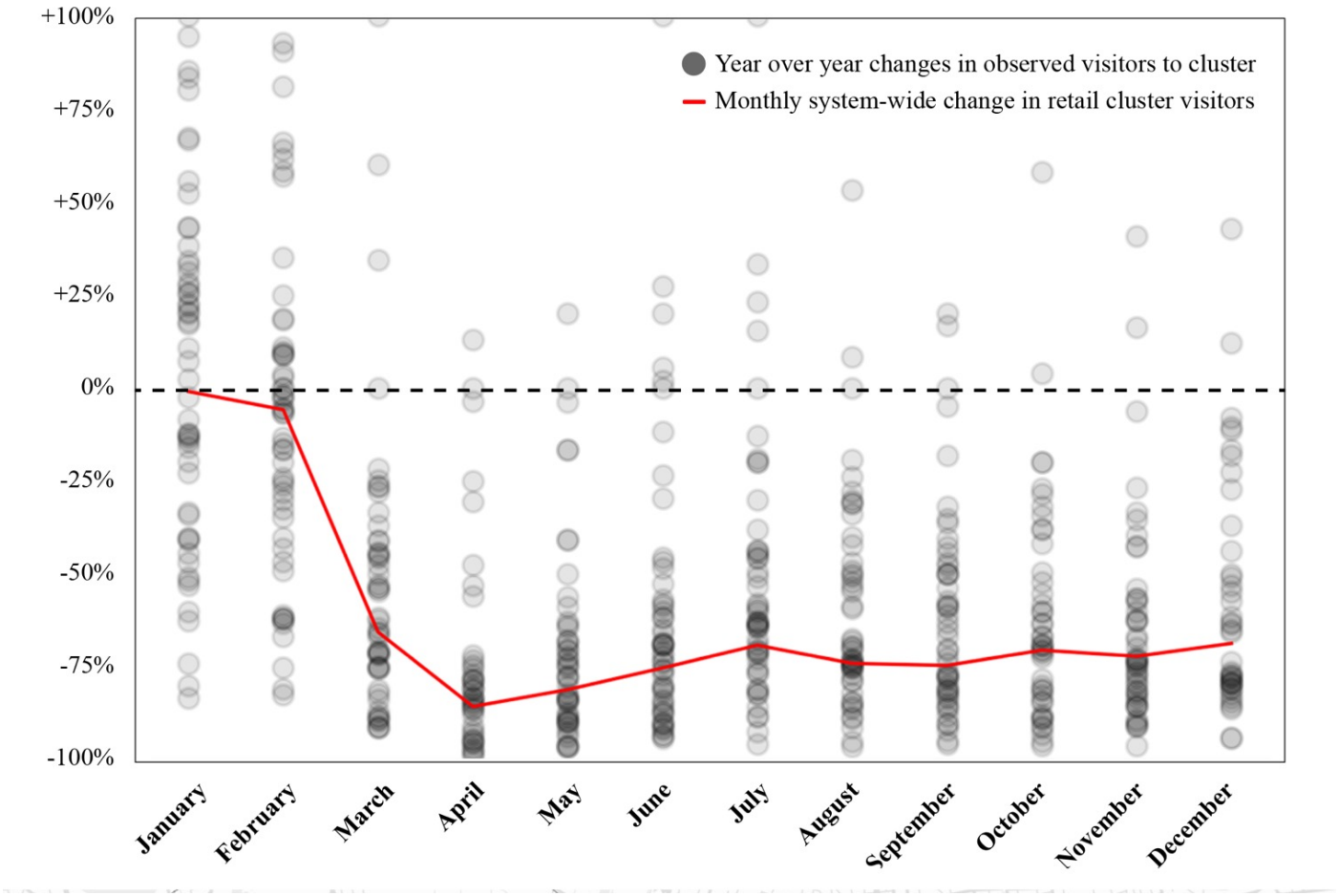
- Built Environment
- Regulations (e.g. COVID-19 closures).
- Behavior / Preferences


RESET
ACTIVE LOCATION: TARGET
2019
OD Source
Home
Target
Data Source: SafeGraph


RESET
ACTIVE LOCATION: TARGET
2020
OD Source
Home
Target
Data Source: SafeGraph
Somerville
Harvard University
Gateway Center
Mystic River
Harvard Business School
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
TD Garden
Boston Marine Society
USS Constitution
Battle of Bunker Hill
Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology

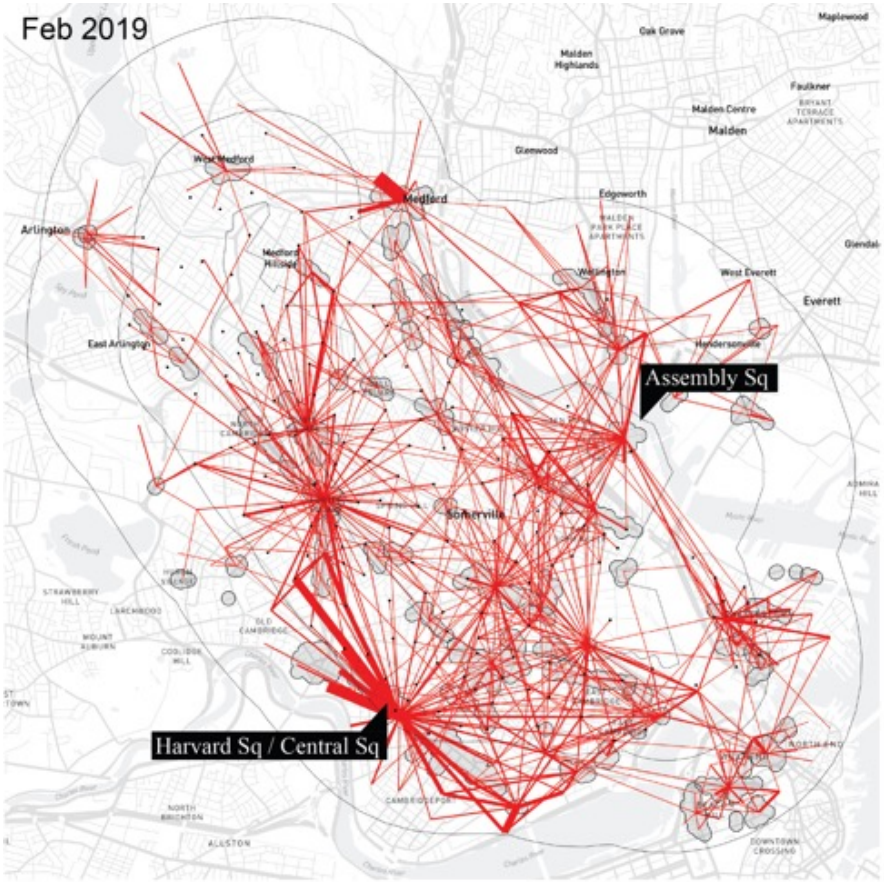
Add slide about which naics lost most from online site

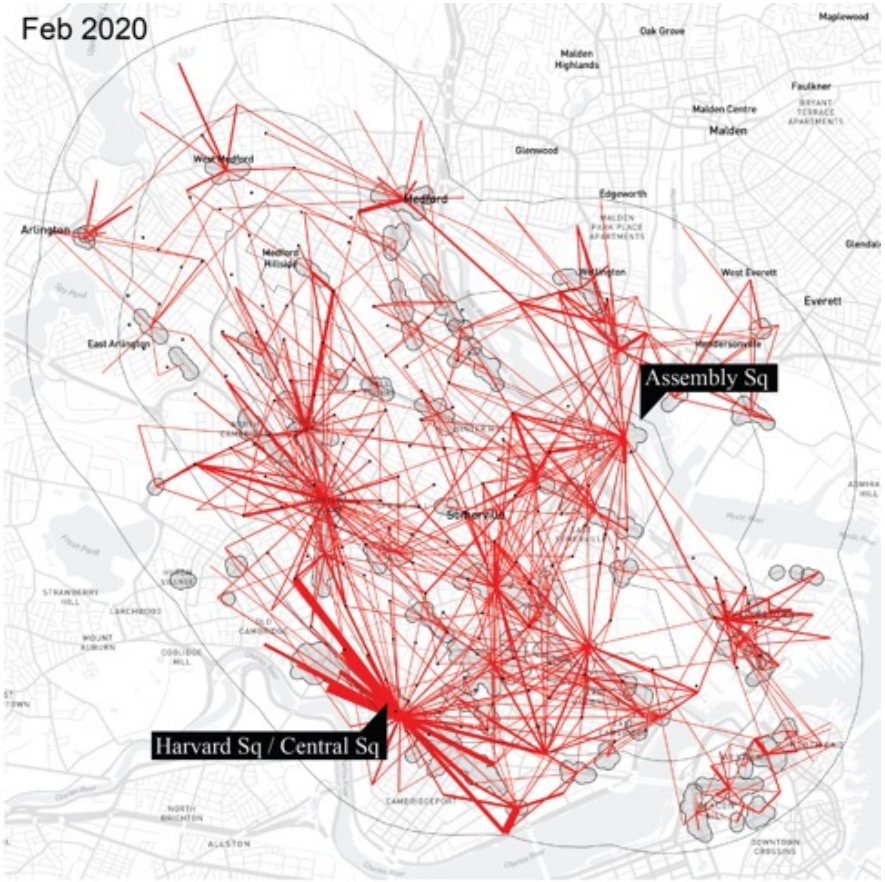
Middlesex County activities



Ref: Sevtsuk, A., Hudson, A., Halpern, D., Ng, K., Basu, R., & Jong, J. de. (2021). The impact of COVID-19 on trips to urban amenities: Examining travel behavior changes in Somerville, MA. *PLOS ONE*.

Visits to amenity clusters in and around Somerville, MA.





Same as expected

Ref: Sevtsuk, A., Hudson, A., Halpern, D., Ng, K., Basu, R., & Jong, J. de. (2021). The impact of COVID-19 on trips to urban amenities: Examining travel behavior changes in Somerville, MA. *PLOS ONE*.

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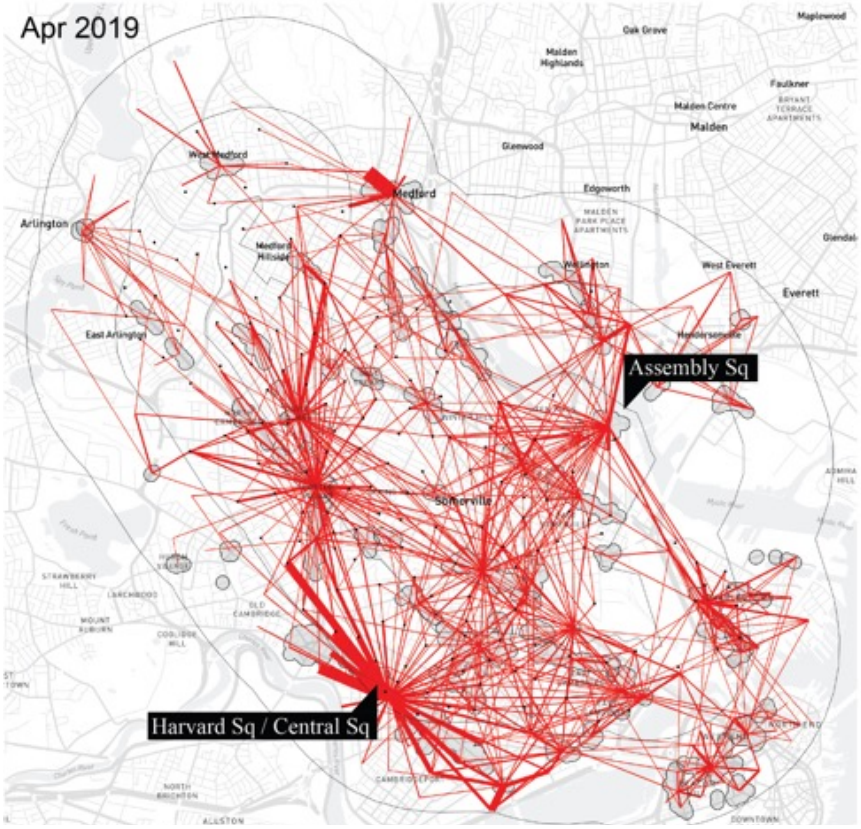
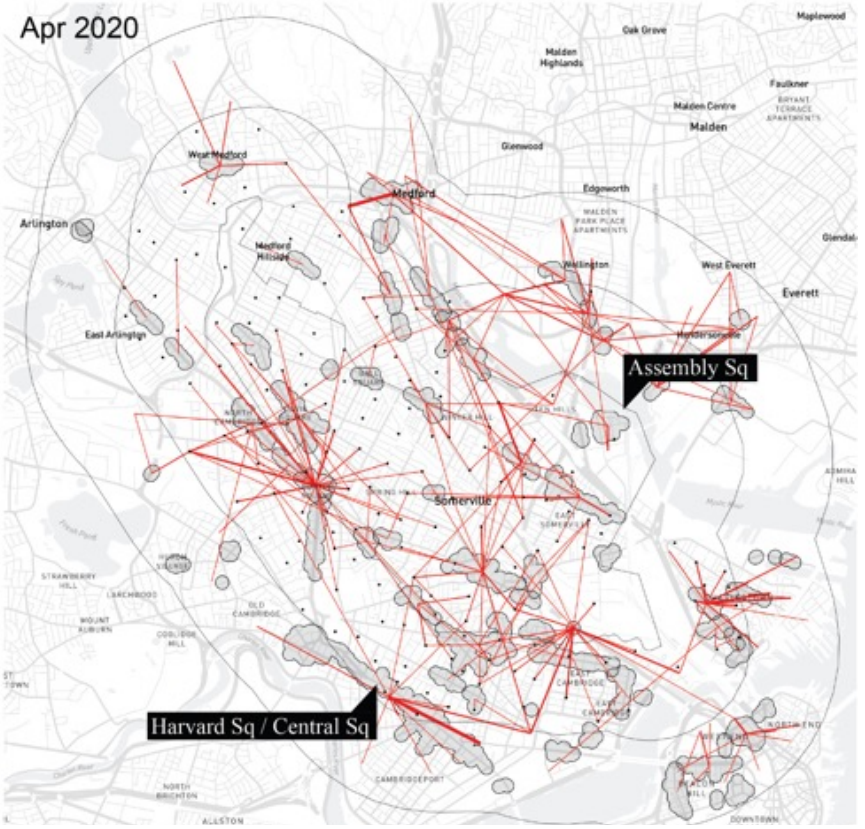
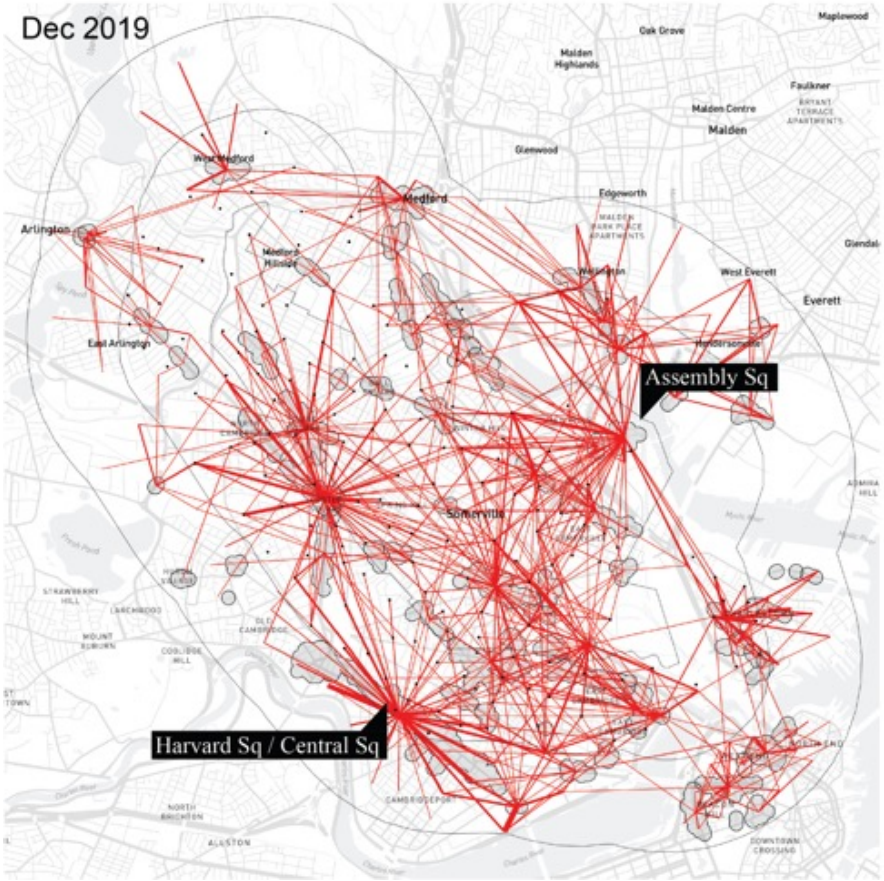
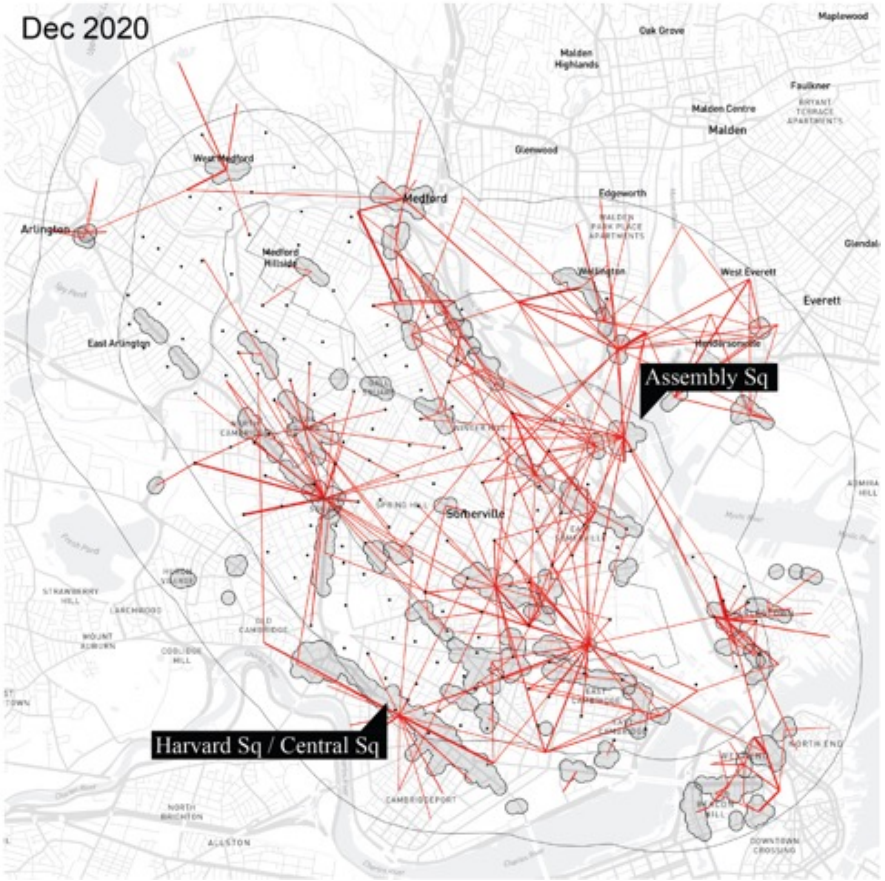




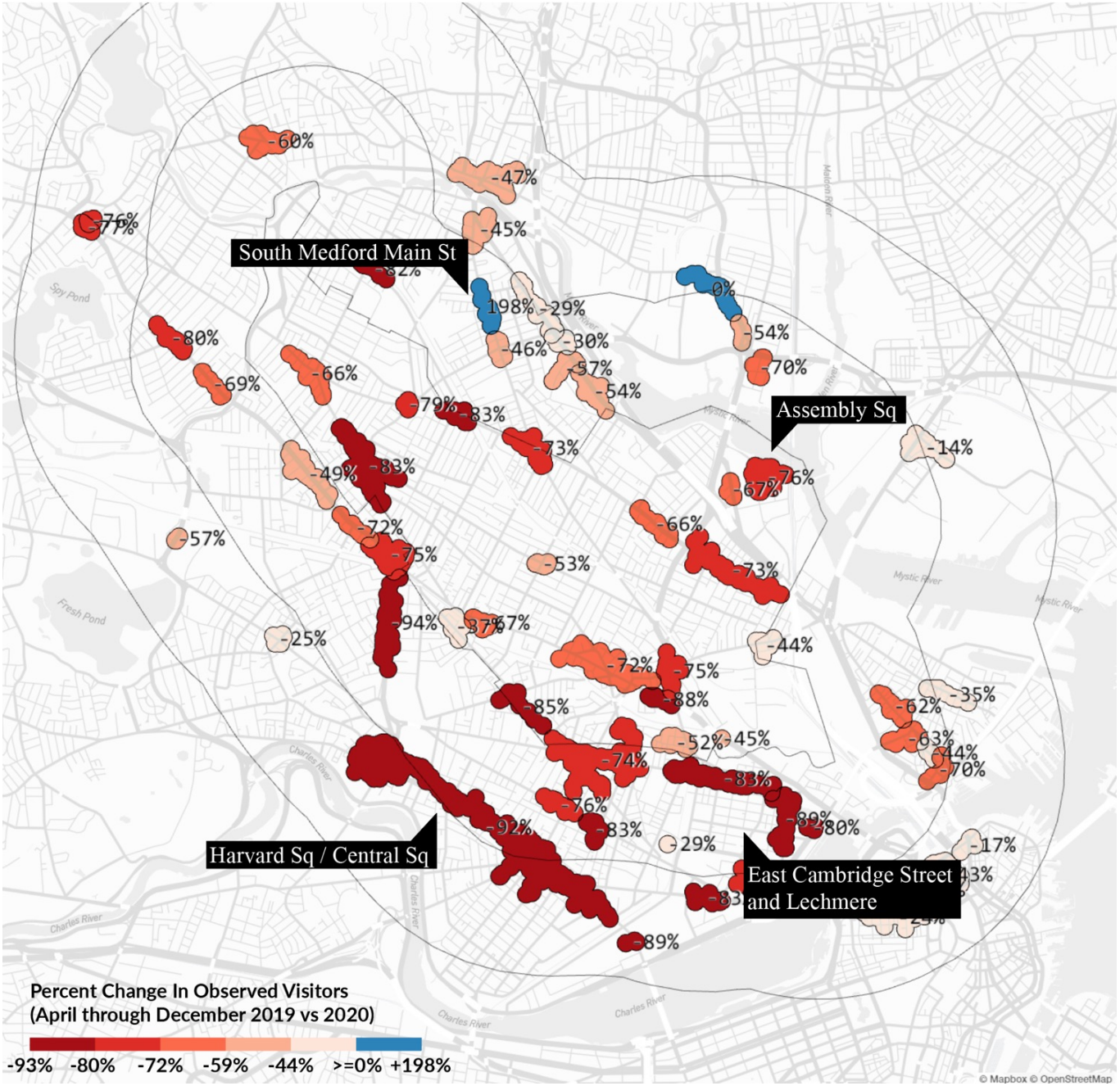
88% lower than expected

Visits to amenity clusters in and around Somerville, MA.

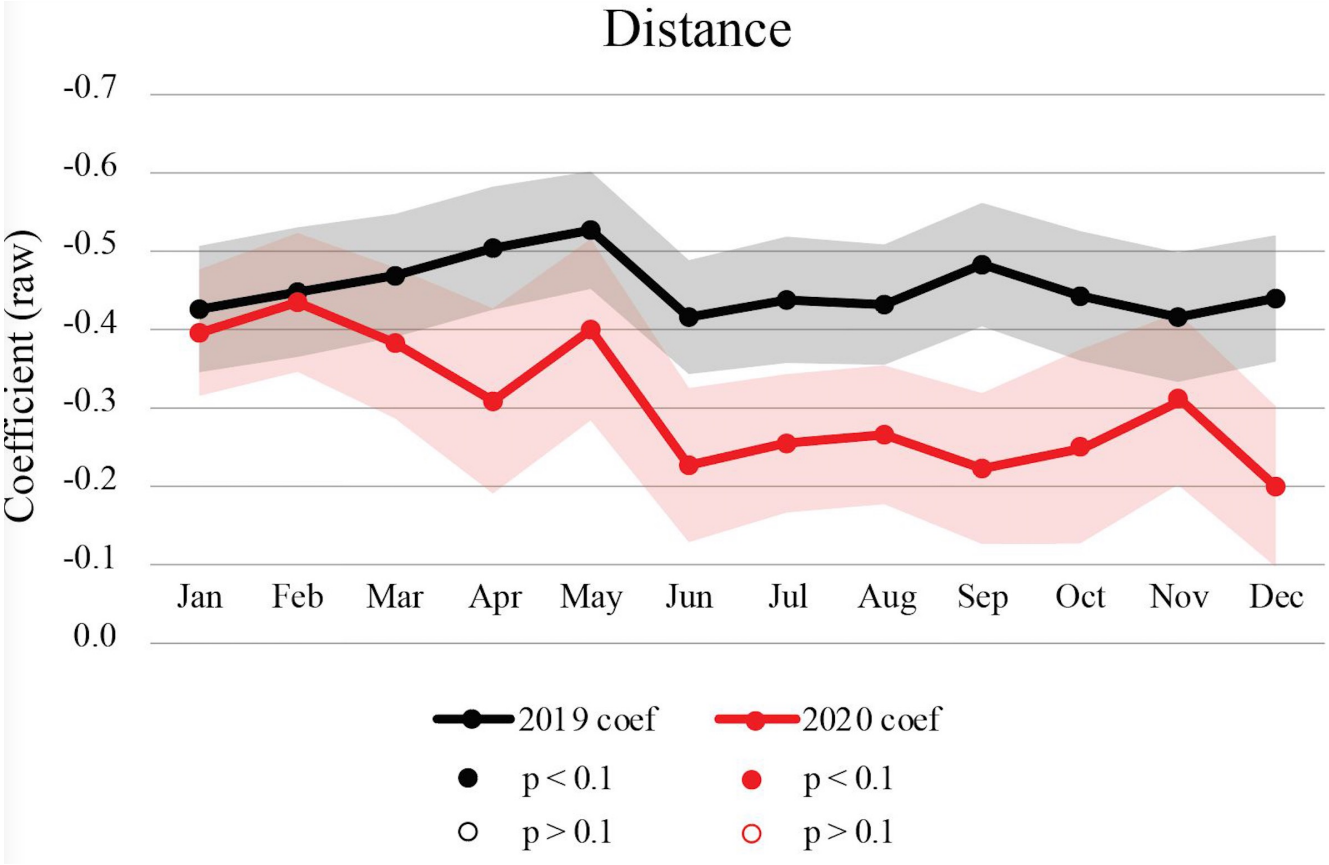




65% lower than expected

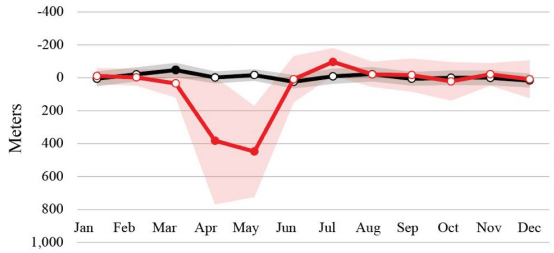

South Medford Main St
Assembly Sq
Harvard Sq / Central Sq
East Cambridge Street and Lechmere
Percent Change In Observed Visitors
(April through December 2019 vs 2020)
-93% -80% -72% -59% -44% >=0% +198%
© Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

South Medford Main St


Distance
Coefficient (raw)
-0.7
-0.6
-0.5
-0.4
-0.3
-0.2
-0.1
0.0
Jan
Feb
Mar
Apr
May
Jun
Jul
Aug
Sep
Oct
Nov
Dec
2019 coef
2020 coef
p < 0.1
p < 0.1
p > 0.1
p > 0.1

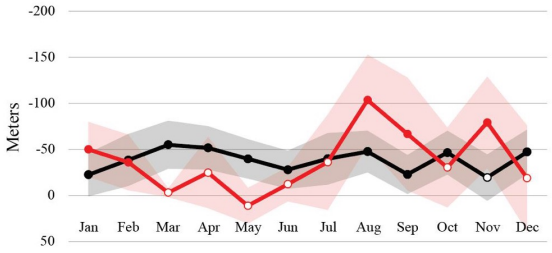
Number of establishments

Having 10 additional establishment in the cluster is perceived as



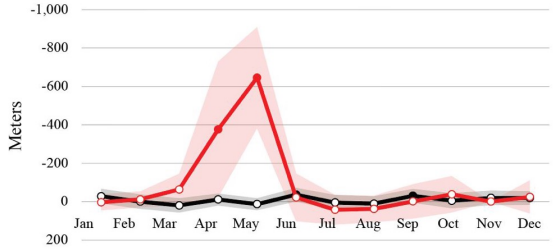
% Large

A 1% increase in large establishments is perceived as:



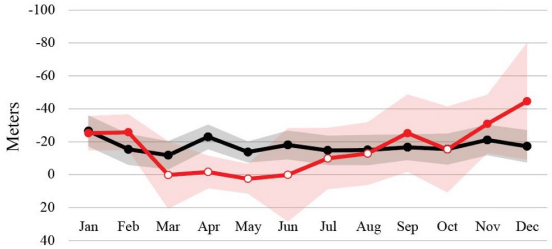
Cluster Area

A 10,000 sq m increase in cluster area is perceived as:



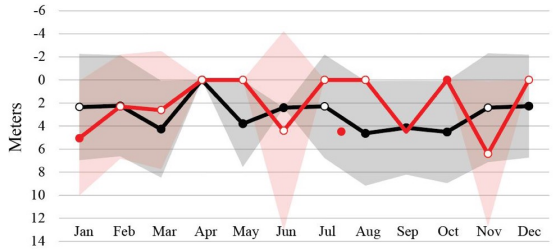
Shop Diversity

A 1% increase in diversity is perceived as:



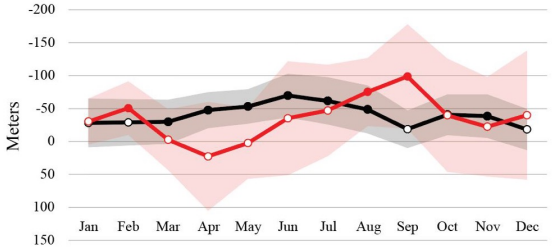
Parking per business

Adding one parkign space per business is perceived as:



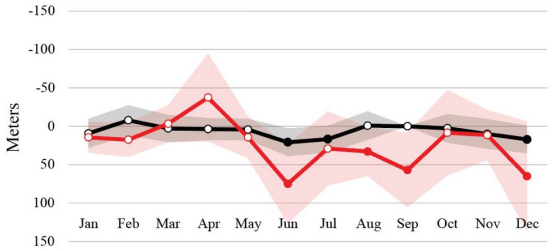
Open space

A 100 sq m increase in open space is perceived as:



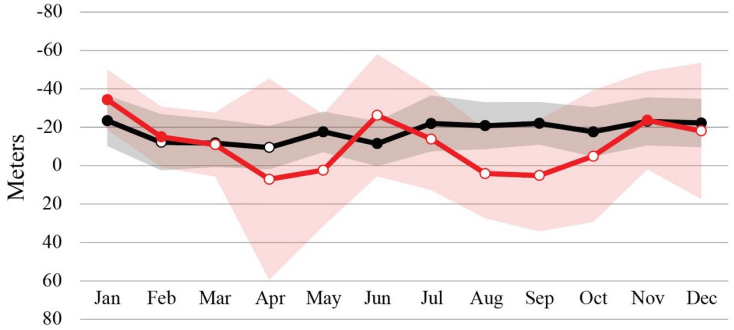
Land value per business

a $100 / sq m increase in avg land value in a cluster is perceived as:



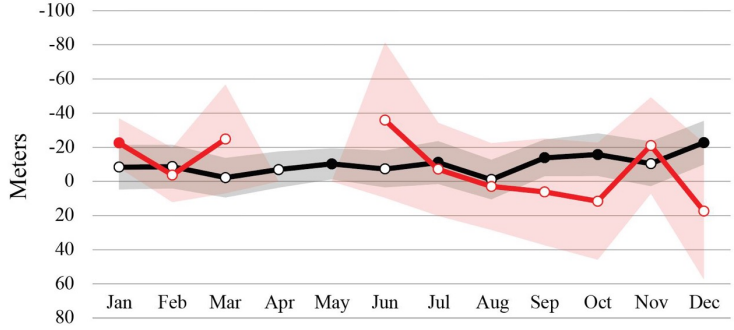
% Comparison

A 1% increase in comparison-goods stores is perceived as:



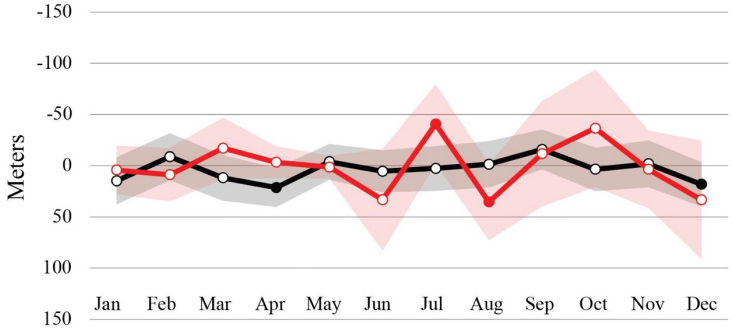
% F&B

A 1% increase in F&B stores is perceived as:



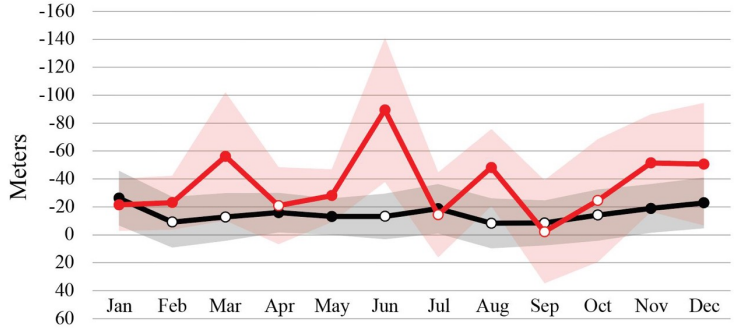
% Convenience

A 1% increase in convenience-goods stores is perceived as:



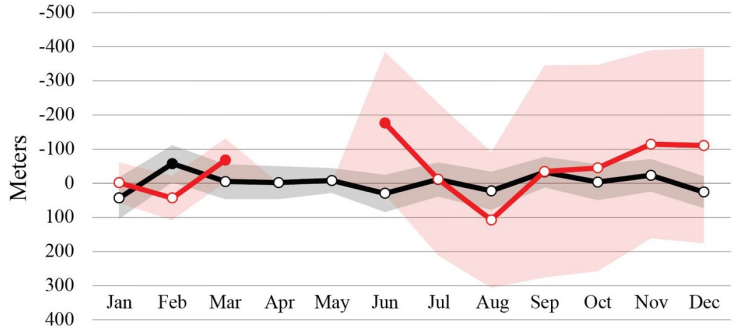
% Personal

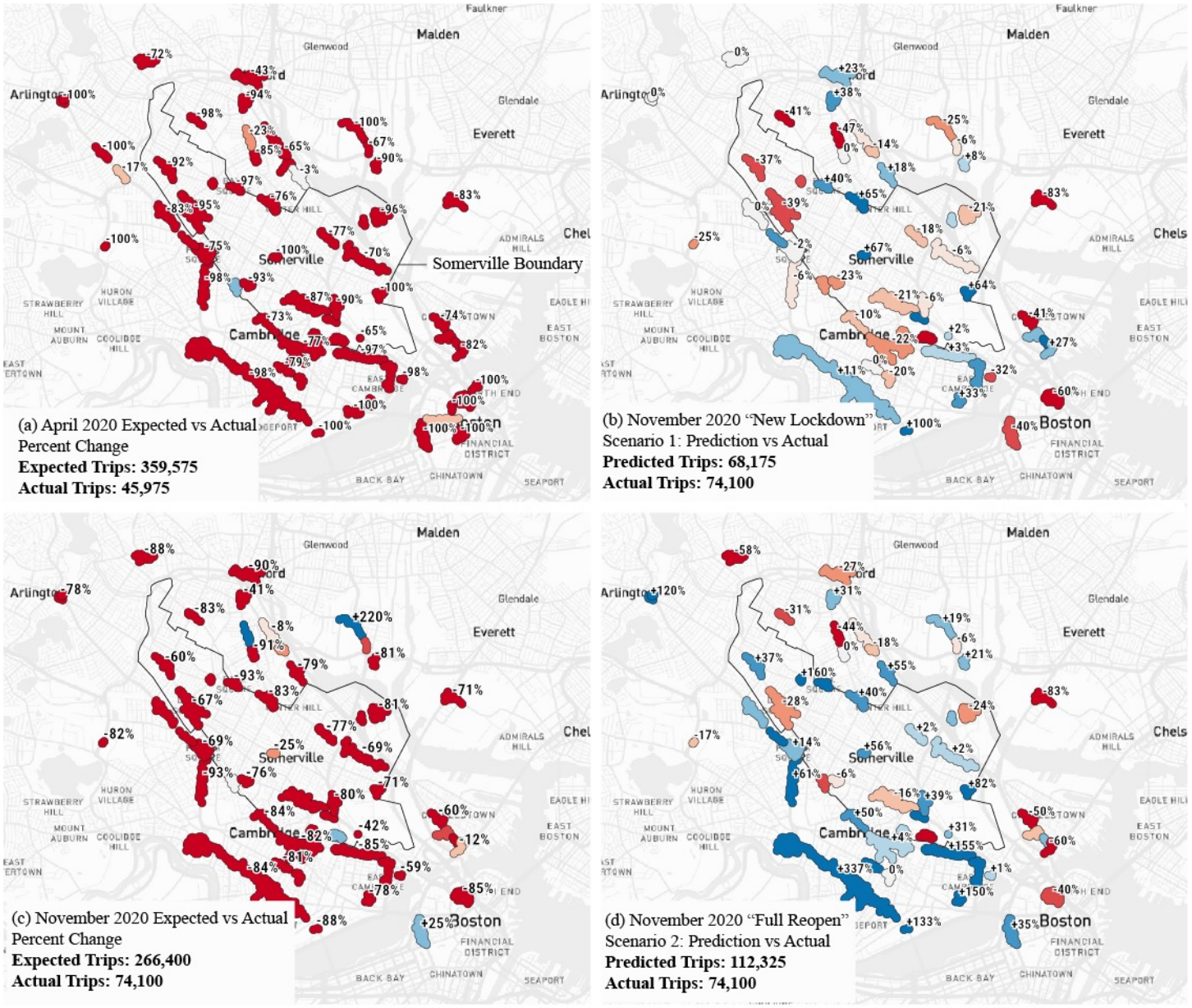
A 1% increase in personal-goods stores is perceived as:



% Entertainment

A 1% increase in entertainment stores is perceived as:




Malden
Glenwood
Everett
Glendale
Somerville
Somerville Boundary
Cambridge
Boston
Chelsea
Arlington
Faulkner
(a) April 2020 Expected vs Actual Percent Change
Expected Trips: 359,575
Actual Trips: 45,975
(b) November 2020 "New Lockdown" Scenario 1: Prediction vs Actual
Predicted Trips: 68,175
Actual Trips: 74,100
(c) November 2020 Expected vs Actual Percent Change
Expected Trips: 266,400
Actual Trips: 74,100
(d) November 2020 "Full Reopen" Scenario 2: Prediction vs Actual
Predicted Trips: 112,325
Actual Trips: 74,100
0 1 2 km
0 0.5 1 mi
Percentage Change in Trips, September 2020 Scenario 1 Prediction Deciles (Fixed Bins For All Maps)
-40.4% -28.5% -21.2% -9.4% -3.7% -0% +8.6% +31.8% +58.4%

COVID19 impacts?

- More trips originate from homes→ amenities that were used to relying on demand from employees have suffered more.

- Heterogeneity in the relative importance of policy VS public behavior.

- Unclear how far the urban escape trends will last. Will people prefer suburbs again or return to inner cities with a vengeance?

- Remote working could stretch beyond COVID, giving people more time to spend time outside the office in other places they enjoy → street commerce benefits?

What can cities do to support street commerce?

- Don’t subsidize big box stores (with infrastructure, tax breaks etc) but small, locally owned stores.
- Ease zoning to allow more flexible uses on commercial streets.
- Support density and land use mixing.
- Support transit/walking/biking, organize car-free days etc.
- Establish Affordable retail space policies.
- Support F&B businesses doing their own online orders and organizing their own deliveries.

Thank you!

http://cityform.mit.edu
asevtsuk@mit.edu