

**Comeback Cities or the New Melting Pots:
Explorations into the Changing Large Cities of New England**

By

**Eric S. Belsky
and
Daniel McCue**

**Prepared for the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy
New England Smart Growth Leadership Forum**

October 2006

Final Draft

Executive Summary

Most observers consider cities that regained population after a period of decline as cities that have been revitalized, or in other words “comeback cities”. Of course, some of these turnaround cities have not seen substantial rebounds in population. For example, turnaround cities of Brockton, Newton, Somerville, and Waltham bounced back only in the 1990s and only by about 2 percent while another turnaround city, Warwick, had population growth in the 1990s that does not even round up to 1 percent. More importantly, many cities that have seen their populations rebound still have not exhibited other signs of revival, such as reductions in the poverty rate, increases in residential construction, and income or residential property valuation changes that match or exceed those of their respective states. Cities are constantly in the process of change and the direction of the population growth is only one sign of this process. In examining cities, it is not only whether they gain or lose population that should be of interest but also how the composition of the population in these places is changing. In particular, it is important for public officials to track changes in poverty rates, racial and ethnic composition, and age distribution not only within the cities they focus on but in others in their region. Changes in property values are another important indicator of the issues that confront city residents. Comparisons to other cities can furnish insights to the relative standing of a city over time. These mix effects have a great deal to do with the economic and social needs of the populations now found in these places and the challenges and opportunities they represent to the elected and other public officials who serve them.

This paper examines changes in the population of 50 of the largest cities in New England¹ and groups them into what have become the conventional categories of long-term comeback cities, failed comeback cities, and recent comebacks based on how long population growth in these areas has been restored since 1980 and if it has been sustained through the year 2000. Information since 2000 is available but only as estimates that are subject to considerable measurement error. Hence the period after 2000 has been excluded from consideration. This classification of cities serves as a point of departure for a more thorough investigation of the demographic changes in these cities, and the extent to which population growth and decline has been accompanied by corresponding changes in poverty rates and rates of median house value change relative to statewide averages. The latter captures the capitalized value of perceived improvements in a place but also any changes in the mix of home values because it keys off the

¹ In addition to the 50 largest cities in New England, we added the largest two cities in Vermont and the second largest city in Maine to expand coverage of these two states. Falling outside the study were Meriden, West Haven, and Bristol, CT, which did not fall into any of the categories listed.

value of the median (middle-most) home in each city and state. In addition, other elements of change in the composition of residents and the housing stock in these cities are examined, including share of housing recently built, the age of residents, and the education levels of residents.

What emerges from this analysis is a series of findings about the largest cities in New England. First, 11 of the largest 50 cities in New England that have continuously added population 1970-2000, 22 cities have experienced recent or sustained comebacks since 1980, 10 failed to sustain a comeback staged in the 1980s, and 7 faced sustained declines in the 80s and 90s. Second, only 6 of the 22 recent and long-term comeback cities simultaneously experienced reduced poverty rates as well as growth in house values ahead of statewide median increases 1980-2000.

Third, it is apparent that the cities that saw turnarounds in more than their population benefited from growth in a nearby metropolitan area and shifts towards more highly educated populations. The strong association of increases in college-educated residents also suggests that these growth cities were capitalizing on the transitions in broader regional economy from blue collar manufacturing jobs to higher value-added service and technology jobs. With the data involved in this study, it cannot be made entirely clear why it was these cities in particular that experienced positive trends on a number of revitalization measures while others with similar proximity to the two major, growth-driving metropolitan areas in the New England region (Boston and New York) did not.

Fourth, the 11 cities that saw no declines in the 1970s and steady population gains since then are overwhelmingly smaller cities more distant and apart from Boston. These cities are distinct from the others because they are nearly the only ones of the group of 53 that benefited from gains in both native-born and foreign-born populations in both the 1980s and 1990s. The two additional cities sharing this trend include Peabody, MA and Cranston, RI, which were among the long-term comeback cities.

Fifth, and in stark contrast from the continuous growth cities, nearly all the other long-term comeback cities besides Peabody and Cranston continued to see losses of native-born residents in the 1980s and 1990s but foreign-born gains that more than offset those losses. Warwick, RI and Milford, CT did, however, have slight declines in foreign-born population in the 1980s that were substantially reversed.

Sixth, the short-lived growth in failed comeback cities occurred for exactly the opposite reason growth occurred in the other comeback cities, namely, temporary gains in the native-

born population that offset declines in the foreign-born population. These trends then reversed in these failed comeback cities in the 1990s.

Seventh, the shift in the composition toward foreign-born population in the large majority of New England cities during the 1990s typically has resulted in a larger share of younger households (under the age of 35) and children as well as increases in poverty rates.

Eighth, growth in cities was not driven by increases in baby boomers. The sole exception is Barnstable Town, MA, a consistent growth city which saw baby boomer increases in the 1980s and 1990s. The majority of cities saw outright baby boomer declines in both decades, with the remaining –mostly sustained comeback cities- seeing slight increases in the 1980s reversed in the 1990s.

Ninth, changes in tax laws left all but one city with significant declines in new housing production in the 1990s vs. the 1980s or 1970s. The single exception is Waltham, which produced a scant 300 more houses in the 1990s than the 1980s.

Tenth, consistently growing cities had the highest shares of new housing as a percent of total housing in 2000. Even Nashua, NH with just 7 percent new housing was higher than all other cities in the other categories with the exception of Milford, CT (10 percent) and Waltham, MA (8 percent) in recent comeback cities, Stamford, CT (9 percent) and Cranston, RI (7.2 percent) in sustained comeback cities, and Burlington, VT (8 percent) in failed comeback cities.

The close link in many—though by no means all—of the turnaround cities to immigration trends is striking. Places that never made comebacks after losing population in the 1970s or 1980s or those that failed to keep the rally going stumbled in large part because some combination of their economic bases, policies, and prior immigration patterns failed to create an environment conducive to attracting immigrants in the 1980s and 1990s. Places that gained in the 1980s and 1990s did so in large measure because they attracted immigrants. Hence, as Paul Grogan points out in his eponymous “Comeback Cities,” comeback cities frequently rebound because they play the role so often traditionally played by cities in American History—melting pots of opportunity for new immigrants who pass through them on paths towards assimilation and greater affluence. And, as Grogan also points out, official statistics on incomes may not accurately reflect the income these groups in fact have because more of may go unreported relative to native populations. Indeed, Social Compact has begun to devise new methods to assess purchasing power in a handful of immigrant neighborhoods to move beyond reported income. Given the importance of immigration to so many of the cities examined in this report, the implications of

immigration patterns appear essential to understanding growth and change in the largest cities in New England.

I. New England Cities Rebounding from Past Declines

This study looks at change in 50 of New England's largest cities from 1970 to 2000, with focus on cities experiencing new population growth since 1980. Included in the study are the 50 largest cities by population in 2000, plus the two largest cities in Vermont—Burlington and Rutland—and the second largest city in Maine—Lewiston—to enhance the geographical coverage of the study. Not included in the study are three small cities in Connecticut that did not fall into any category, having neither a comeback, failed comeback, nor continuous loss or gain during the study period. Unless otherwise noted, all data used in the study has been taken from the US Census Decennial Survey of Population and Housing for the years 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000.

The 1970s were a difficult time for the majority of cities in New England. At the beginning of the decade, the 50 largest New England cities studied were home to 4.36 million people. By 1980, fully 243,000 residents had left, bringing the total population down 5.6 percent in just ten years to 4.11 million. The population losses were widespread throughout New England, occurring in 36 of the 50 cities in our study. Since then, however, these largest cities have experienced a significant rebound of 222,000 residents from 1980-2000, nearly equaling all that were lost in the 1970s. While the population totals of 1980 and 2000 are similar, the cities with the greatest population gains were not necessarily those with the greatest prior losses, and the people moving into these rebounding cities did not share the same characteristics of those whom they replaced. Additionally, mere population changes may not tell us the complete story behind comebacks in New England cities. Various economic indicators add insight to a comparison of cities based entirely on population trends.

One of the purposes of this paper is to classify cities into groups according to the patterns of their population growth. Initially, cities are classified on this basis alone. Then cities are further classified based on other quantifiable indicators of economic progress. The first part of the paper focuses on extending the concept of a comeback city beyond population changes. In the second part the focus is on differences in social, economic, and demographic trends and characteristics within and between cities in each category, with the hope of identifying a small set of traits distinctive to each category while recognizing the cities that are exceptions. The final part presents the implications of this research for public policy.

II. Defining Change and “Comebacks” in New England’s Cities

Population growth after an extended period of decline is a simple and straightforward measure of a comeback city. In theory, population is a measure of demand for city living, and population

growth is an indication of greater demand for the set of public and private goods, services, and amenities available in the particular city. Therefore the fact that growth has occurred after a period of decline suggests that something has changed, making the city more desirable to a greater number of people, and making it able to re-populate, re-vitalize or, in other words, “comeback” as a city.

In the two decades from 1980 to 2000, population growth occurred in various forms. This study focuses on differentiating turnaround cities, or those whose population growth occurred after a period of decline, from cities with other patterns of growth and decline. We classify three types of turnaround cities. The first is the sustained turnaround city- those that had net population growth in the 1980s and the 1990s after losing population in the 1970s. Our study includes 15 such cities (See Appendix Table A-1). The second type of turnaround city is the recent comeback city—those that had population growth in the 1990s after prior losses in the 1970s or 1980s. The study includes 7 such cities. The third type of turnaround city is the failed comeback city – those that had population losses in the 1990s after a brief period of growth during the 1980s. There are 10 failed comeback cities in the study.

In addition to the 32 turnaround cities, there are 18 other cities that do not fall into the above groups. We split these cities into two categories. First, are the consistent growth cities—those that did not experience population losses in the 1970s and consistently grew in the 1980s and 1990s. There are 11 such cities in that study. The remaining 7 cities are decliners, which are mainly the 6 cities that have been losing population consistently since the 1970s and 1 city that has been declining steadily, but only since 1980.

III. Adding Economic Measures

Categorization by population change is a simple but not especially satisfying way of identifying comeback cities, mainly because it fails to capture more meaningful characteristics of revitalization. For a more thorough investigation of the extent to which population growth and decline has been accompanied by corresponding economic changes, we look to four indicators of local economic revitalization:

- Rates of median house value change relative to statewide averages,
- Rates of median income change relative to statewide averages,
- Overall growth in residential construction
- Changes in city poverty rates.

Income gains, rebuilding, and rising property values all indicate success in attracting new capital and a greater mix of incomes to cities. Since economies are largely regional, the way in which

median house values and median incomes are changing relative to statewide medians gives us a relative measure of how each city is improving within its regional economy. New residential construction indicates local investment, as well as growing demand for new housing to replace or augment the existing housing stock. Lastly, poverty rates may identify cities whose population growth is based on growth in poor populations, which may be counter to notions of what it means to comeback as a city.

Most of these indicators provide meaningful insights into trends in the cities here examined. The exception is the indicator for new residential development. Except for Waltham, MA, residential construction was down in the 1990s, relative to the 1970s and 1980s for every city in the survey (See Table A-2). This reflects changes in federal tax law under the Tax Reform Act of 1986 rather than a significant softening of demand in New England's cities in the 1990s. Instead, it is the result of overbuilding in the 1980s created by powerful and unique incentives for investment in rental housing construction that existed from 1980 to 1986. After 1986, the reversal of these tax incentives caused rental property values to plummet, multifamily production to dip below trend, and loan repayments to savings and loans to fall. Thus, we limit our examination of indicators of economic progress to poverty rates, median incomes, and median house values.

Sustained comebacks do not fare particularly well in our economic measures, with nearly half of these cities worse in each measure, and only two cities, Boston and Cambridge, better in all three (See Table A-3). Recent comeback cities fared better economically, with 3 of the 7 better in every measure, although one such city—Brockton—fared worse in all three measures. Failed comeback cities fared especially poorly economically, with 7 of 10 declining on all three economic measures. Portland, ME was the one true outlier, exceeding state income and house value growth and reducing its poverty in 2000. As for declining cities, 5 of 7 decliners were worse in all economic measures and none were positive in all three measures. Lastly, only a single consistent growth city saw gains in every economic measure, while three cities—Leominster, Manchester, and Nashua—posted negative trends on each.

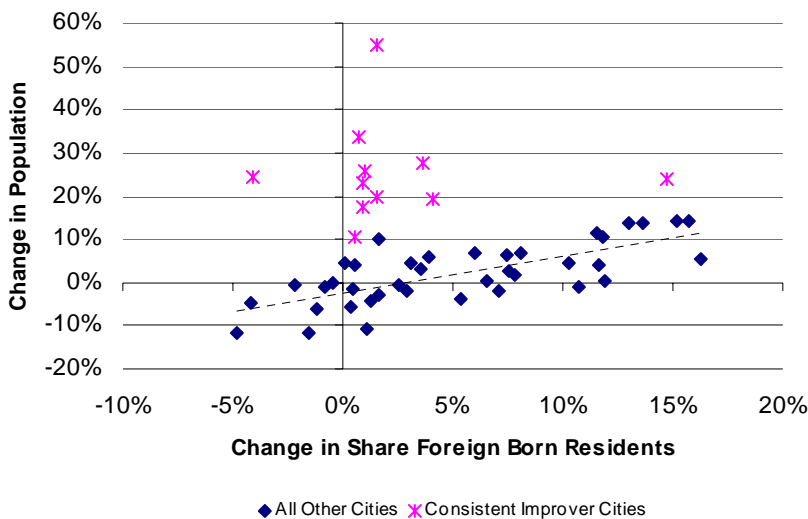
We find that population growth in New England's sustained comeback cities was somewhat dependent on growth in the poor, with 9 of the 15 cities experiencing higher poverty rates in 2000 than 1980. Higher poverty rates may be counter to notions of citywide improvements, leading to greater average use of basic public services but lower than average income tax revenues. However, as Grogan points out in his book "Comeback Cities," an increase in poor city residents may simply mark a return to the city's traditional role as a gateway for currently poor but upwardly mobile immigrants. In this sense, cities can comeback both by rebounding population and by returning to their traditional roles as points of disembarkation for immigrants. Indeed, New England cities clearly benefited from the liberalization of immigration laws in 1965 that followed a period of strict and low quotas resulting from the 1924 immigration act. Just as

income gains, rebuilding, and rising property values all indicate success in attracting new capital and a greater mix of incomes to cities, attracting new poor residents who are young, ambitious foreign born persons seeking advancement may also have signaled economic gains and revitalization not attributable to stagnant populations of less mobile, persistently poor persons.

IV. Immigration and Education: Two Main Dimensions of a Comeback

Growth in the foreign born has largely driven population growth in New England cities and has also been a major dimension upon which comeback cities, failed comeback cities, and cities in decline differ. If not for immigration, the population of New England’s cities would not have rebounded from declines in the 1970s. In fact, from 1980 to 2000, without immigration, New England’s largest cities would have lost an additional 56,000 residents. Instead, an influx of 279,000 new foreign-born residents came to New England in the 1980s and 1990s and helped the population almost completely rebound from dramatic losses in the 1970s. City by city, for most New England cities—especially the largest—population growth has been directly related to growth in the foreign-born population. Charting out population change by change in foreign-born population shows this relationship (See Figure 1) and also shows how the relationship differs for consistently growing cities such as Nashua and Manchester, whose total growth was led by increases in both native born and foreign-born populations.

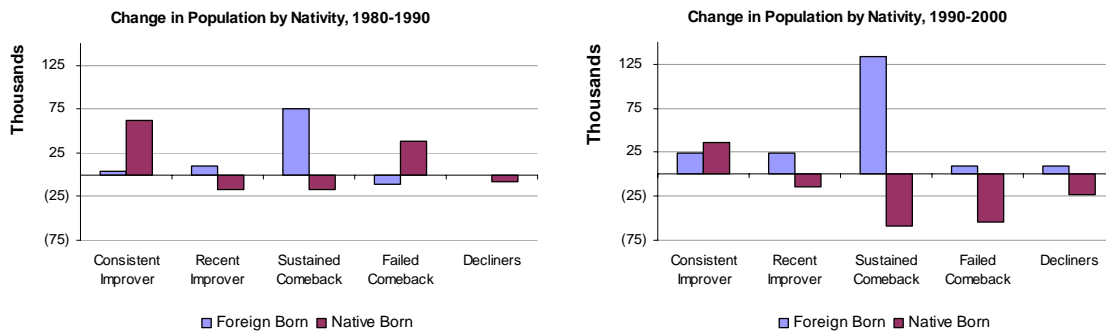
Figure 1: Except for Consistent Improvers, Population Change Was Highly Associated with Change in Foreign Born Residents



Offsetting Foreign- and Native-Born Trends

Looking further into how growth in foreign-born populations has differed between the city growth categories in the 1980s and 1990s, we find that sustained comeback cities were able to keep gaining population because increases in foreign-born populations outweighed decreases in native-born populations. Recent comeback cities also shared this trend, except that increases in foreign born weren't enough in the 1980s to overcome native-born losses, but they accelerated in the 1990s to surpass losses in native born. Salem, MA was the exception recent comeback city where both the native-born and foreign-born populations increased in the 1990s. Due to a brief resurgence of durable goods manufacturing in the late 1980s, failed comeback cities had a trend opposite that of the sustained comeback cities. In these failed comeback cities, the 1980s was a period of population growth because increases in native-born populations outpaced losses in the foreign-born populations. The 1990s saw this trend reverse. In all but Fall River and New Bedford, there were native-born losses that were only partially offset by foreign born gains. In Fall River and New Bedford both native- and foreign-born populations declined in the 1990s. Decliner cities had stable or decreasing numbers of foreign-born residents in the 1980s and 1990s, which came on top of losses in native-born populations. Exceptions to this trend in decliners were the two large decliner cities, Bridgeport, CT and Medford, MA, which had some gains in foreign born populations in the 80s and 90s, but not enough to outweigh large native born losses.

Figure 2: Increases in Foreign Born Persons Drove Population Growth, Especially in the 1990s

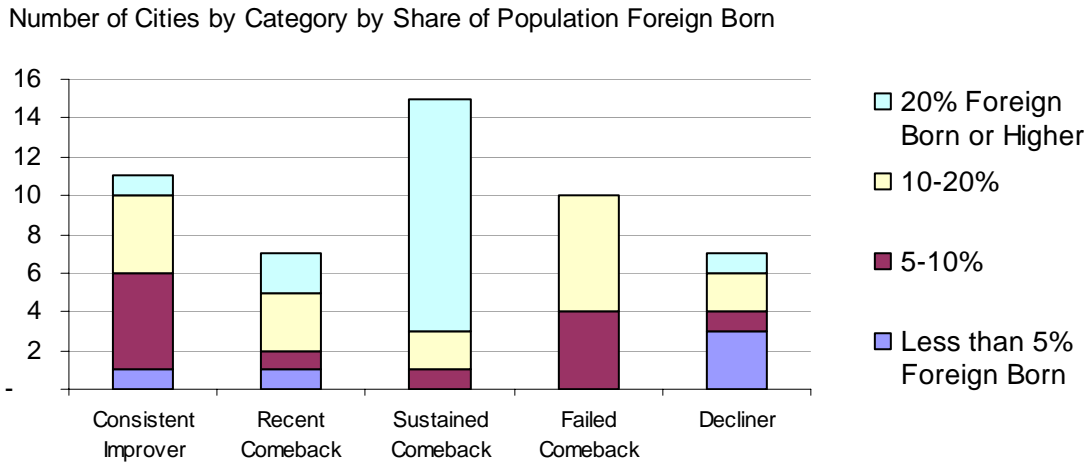


Foreign-Born Shares

Aside from growth of foreign-born residents, the total share of foreign-born residents has also been a major dimension upon which comeback cities may be differentiated from failed comeback cities and cities in decline. In 2000, sustained comeback cities did not differ greatly from failed comeback cities in terms of size, minority composition, age composition, and poverty rates. However, the two could be differentiated by the share of foreign-born residents, with sustained comeback cities home to much larger share of foreign-born residents in 2000. In fact, fully 12 of 15 sustained comeback cities had greater than 20 percent of their citizens foreign

born, while none of the 10 failed comeback cities had more than 20 percent of their population foreign born (See Figure 3).

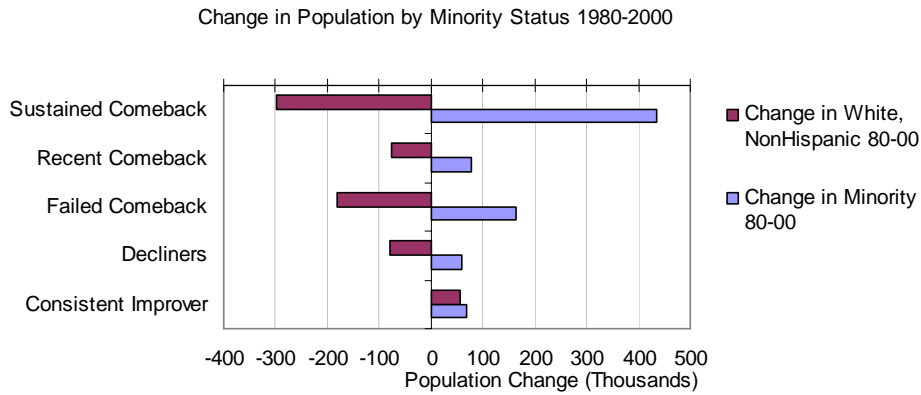
Figure 3: Most Comeback Cities Had High Shares of Foreign Born Residents



Minority Composition

The dramatic growth of foreign-born residents has made New England’s cities increasingly diverse. From 1980 to 2000, while the share of foreign-born residents in New England’s 50 largest cities as a whole rose from 12 to 17 percent, the number and share of minority residents was up in every category of city. Increases were most dramatic in sustained comeback cities, where between 1980 and 2000, the population of non-Hispanic whites decreased by a total of 300,000, while blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and other races grew by 450,000 residents. The link between diversity and the introduction of foreign born becomes apparent as population change by race and ethnicity between city growth categories follows trends in foreign-born growth, with failed comeback cities and cities in decline having minority growth in the 1980s and 1990s which was not enough to outweigh the larger decrease in white, non Hispanics, while consistently growing cities were the only group to have increases in whites that surpassed growth in minorities. (See Figure 4)

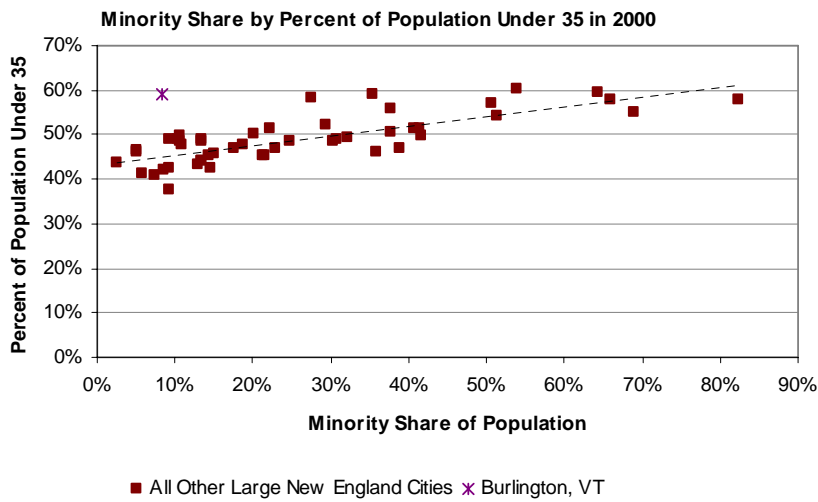
Figure 4: Foreign Born Growth Outweighed Native Born Losses in Comeback Cities



Age Composition

Foreign-born residents and minorities have also added to the ranks of the young in New England. On average, cities with high shares of minorities, such as those in the large comeback cities of New England, also had larger share of residents under age 35 (See Figure 5). Areas such as Hartford, CT and Providence RI, where minorities comprise 82 and 57 percent of the population, also have 58 and 60 percent of their respective residents under age 35. The outlier in this group is Burlington, VT, which, due to the University of Vermont's presence, has a large number of persons under 35 without a high share of minorities. Cities with large shares of minorities and persons under 35 include both sustained comeback cities such as Boston, Providence, Lawrence, and Lowell, as well as New Haven and Hartford, CT.

Figure 5: New England Cities with High Minority Shares were Also the Youngest



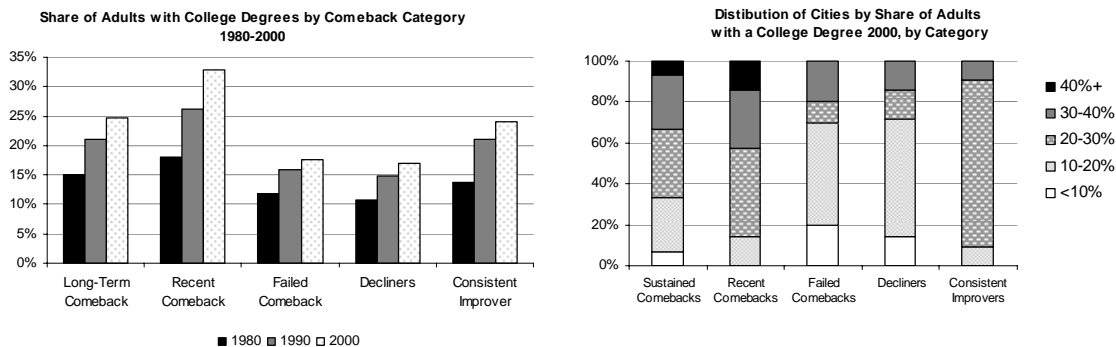
Educational Achievement

In addition to growth in foreign-born population, the second dimension upon which comeback cities may be differentiated from others is education levels. Looking at education levels, we come to four findings:

- Education is becoming increasingly important to city growth
- High education levels may be conducive to further increases
- Increases in foreign-born and minority residents may be contributing to higher education levels in some cities
- There is a clear association with changing city education levels and median household incomes and median house values.

Education is becoming more important to city growth. The recent comeback cities have the greatest share of college educated adults, while cities with failed turnarounds had the highest share of adults without a high school degree. After summing up all adults aged 18 and over across the city change categories, recent comeback cities had 33 percent of their adults with a college degree, while 28 percent of adults in sustained comeback cities were college grads, and 24 percent of adults in consistently growing cities had college degrees. On the other hand, only 16 percent of the adults in both failed comeback cities and overall declining cities had college degrees. The distribution of shares of college educated adults across cities shows a similar trend between sustained and failed comeback cities: approximately 70 percent of cities with sustained comebacks have over 20 percent college-educated adults, while only 30 percent of failed comeback cities have shares as high or higher than 20 percent (See Figure 6).

Figure 6: Shares of College Educated Adults, Mean Levels and 2000 Distributions by Category



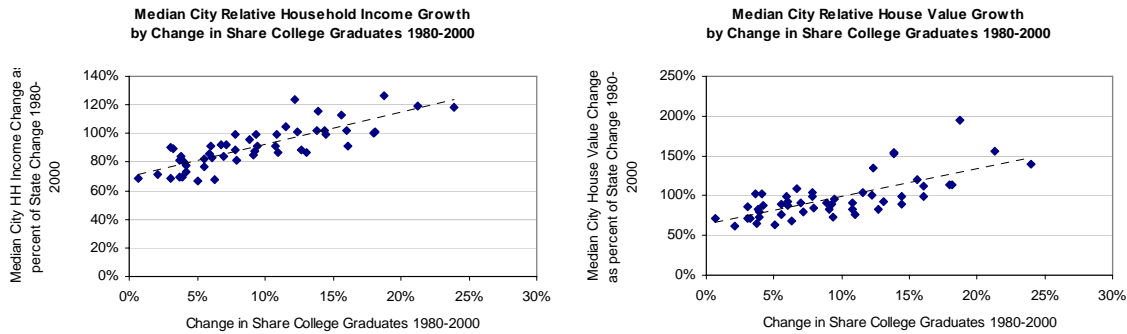
For sustained and recent comeback cities, growth in shares of foreign-born residents, minorities, and persons under 35 was coupled with higher shares of college-educated adults over age 18. While sustained comeback cities followed the same trend, recent comeback cities such as

Somerville and Newton had the highest shares and most significant increases in their shares of adults with college degrees, increasing from 19 to 33 percent and from 17 to 28 percent of their respective populations from 1980-2000. Consistent growth cities followed similar trends to the comeback cities, posting consistent improvements in college educated shares. Interestingly, however, not one of the consistent improver cities was in the top 10 cities ranked by share of college educated adults in 2000. Failed comeback cities and cities in decline had a noticeably different trend, with the lowest shares of college graduates and with rates increasing only a few percentage points from just 11 to 16 percent and 10 to 16 percent respectively of all adults in these cities from 1980-2000.

Comeback cities had the highest shares of adults with a college degree and the highest growth in shares of these residents, while failed comeback cities and cities in decline had the lowest share of college educated adults and lowest growth. Exceptions to this rule among comeback cities include the city of Lawrence, whose college educated share increased from only 7 percent to just 9 percent, as well as recent comeback city of Brockton, MA, where college graduate shares increased from a low 9 percent in 1980 to 13 percent in 2000. On the positive side, exceptions include the decliner city Medford, whose population decreased but college shares increased dramatically from 12 percent in 1980 to fully 30 percent in 2000. Failed comeback cities of Portland, ME and Burlington, VT—outliers also in many other respects—also bucked the trend, with both increasing their college educated shares to 30 percent by 2000 from relatively high respective levels of 18 and 20 percent in 1980.

Comparing levels and changes to college educated shares of adults within our city change categories, we find an association between education levels and growth of median incomes and house values in New England's cities. Our results show that areas with the highest education levels and highest growth in college educated adults were also those that have the highest growth in median household incomes and house values (See Figure 7). This reinforces the notion that cities that saw turnarounds in more than their population benefited from growth in a nearby metropolitan area and shifts towards more highly educated populations.

Figure 7: Higher Education Levels Led to Higher Growth in Median Incomes and House Values



V. Trends and Characteristics of Cities by City Change Category

While some general trends apply to most cities in each city change category, closer inspection of each group has also shed better light on the distinctions to be made among the cities *within* each category. Depending on the sources of population growth or decline, cities within each population change group get different increases or decreases in other indicators of economic recovery. Additionally the shifting demographics of each city are unique, and while trends exist, outliers within each trend help us understand the bigger story. We look now into each city change category to highlight our results.

Sustained Comeback Cities

Cities with sustained comebacks since 1980 include most of New England's largest cities, such as Boston, Providence, RI, Worcester, MA, and Stamford, CT. Without including Boston (which is over twice the size of the next largest city in the study at over 589,000 persons), sustained comeback cities had the largest mean population of 93,000. The group also includes Norwalk, CT and several small cities mostly within the Boston Metro area. This suggests that expansion of the regional economies of Boston and New York City positively affected many smaller cities near Boston and Norwalk and Stamford near New York.

Sustained comeback cities attained high growth in both decades of the 1980s and 1990s. Two cities with a noticeable difference are Lowell and Lawrence, which appeared more like failed comeback cities. In each strong population growth in the 1980s of over 10 percent decelerated dramatically in the 1990s, but managed stay positive. Proximity to Boston was apparent in cities with accelerated growth in the 1990s, including low-cost areas such as Lynn and Revere, as well as high-cost cities like Cambridge, Boston, and Quincy. Growth in sustained comeback cities was driven by large increases in foreign-born residents which outnumbered losses in native-born residents. The majority of New England cities' growth in foreign-born residents has been in the large sustained comeback cities, such as Boston which added 65,000 new foreign-born residents

in the 1980s and 90. This is fully 11 percent of the City's 2000 population. Providence, RI and Stamford, CT (also sustained comeback cities) added 23,000 and 20,000 new foreign-born residents respectively in the 1980s and 1990s, which amounted to 13 and 17 percent of each city's total populations in 2000. In Lawrence, the nearly 13,000 new foreign-born residents since 1980 amounted to 18 percent of the City's total population. In total, sustained comeback cities lost 5 percent or 75,000 native-born residents, while nearly doubling their number of foreign-born residents (who increased by 209,000 or 93 percent). Exceptions to this trend were Peabody, MA and Cranston, RI, both of which were increasing both native- and foreign-born populations in both decades, a trait more common to suburban consistent growth cities.

Growth in foreign-born and loss of native-born populations has made New England's sustained comeback cities more diverse than in 1980. This is reflected in the growth in minorities in all sustained comeback cities in the 1980s and 1990s, as well as in the decline in the number and share of white, non-Hispanic residents in all of them. Sustained comeback cities significantly increased their minority shares by an average of 22 percentage points from 1980 to 2000 to equal 34 percent in 2000. As exceptions, Peabody, MA and Cranston, RI had the lowest share changes, with only minor growth in minorities and modest losses in whites.

The population growth of sustained comeback cities came in spite of dramatic losses in baby boomers, especially in the 1990s. Though all but a few cities in New England experienced losses in this generation—who were 25 and 44 years old in 1990 and of prime age to start families and move to the suburbs—losses were especially large in sustained comeback cities such as Boston and Cambridge. These two cities lost 26 and 38 percent of their Baby Boomer population in the 1990s respectively. That the overall population of these cities increased, even as this large segment of the population moved away is dramatic, and demonstrates the draw that these cities still have in attracting young adults and the constant dynamism and flux of the population of these cities. Home to many major universities, they are able to replenish their young adult populations. Except for Lawrence, Lowell, Worcester, Providence, and Peabody, sustained comeback cities attracted Generation X residents in the 1990s (aged 15-24 in 1990). Stamford and Norwalk, CT in particular increased their Generation X residents by 56 and 49 percent, respectively, while Cambridge, MA also increased this population by 20 percent in the 1990s.

Growth in sustained comeback cities was not necessarily attached to growth in overall indicators of economic development. Of the three factors we examined (median income growth in relation to statewide growth, median house value growth in relation to statewide growth, and changes in poverty rates), we found that over half of cities with sustained comebacks registered negative in all three respects. The cities registering negatively on each of these measurements were generally lower-cost, lower-income cities with already high poverty rates. These cities included Lawrence, Lowell, Lynn, Revere, Worcester, Providence, and Pawtucket. Of the 15 cities in this

category, only two—Boston and Cambridge—had positive growth in all respects, while other similarly situated cities such as Quincy, as well as affluent cities near the New York Metro, such as Stanford and Norwalk were positive in two of the three measures without large negatives in the third. Lastly, the fact that sustained comeback cities had both some of the highest and lowest median house values in their respective states suggests these cities were not simply the cheapest areas in otherwise high-cost metros.

In terms of residential development, as noted earlier, it dropped in fully 52 of the 53 cities from 1980s to the 1990s. For sustained comeback cities, this meant population growth occurred alongside decreases in housing production. Declines were large for sustained comeback cities. In Boston, for example, in 1990, 19,000 units were built in the previous 10 years, but in 2000, only 8,500 units were less than 10 years old. As a group, new housing went from 11 percent of the total housing stock in 1990 to just 4.5 percent in 2000. Given that reductions in development were spread across the region, the large, sustained comeback cities with access to regional job centers were a likely place for new residents to land. It also put pressure on house prices in the cities most accessible and most desirable in the recovering regional economy—areas with already relatively high house values to begin with.

Recent Comeback Cities

Cities with recent comebacks that didn't turnaround until the 1990s include mainly mid-sized New England cities close to Boston, such as Newton, Somerville, and Waltham, as well as Milford, CT and Salem, MA. Recent comeback cities had a mean population of approximately 70,000 in 2000. The location of these cities suggests that expansion of the regional economies of Boston and New York City positively affected them in the 1990s.

Recent comeback cities attained high growth in the 1990s that outweighed losses occurring in the 1980s. Two cities appearing as exceptions to this are Warwick, RI and Brockton, MA whose population growth in the 1990s was smaller and not enough to overcome losses in the previous decade. These two cities were also outliers in that they had population growth in the 1970s and 1990s while the others only increased in the 1990s. Proximity to Boston was apparent in cities with accelerated growth in the 1990s, including low cost areas such as Brockton and Salem, as well as high cost cities Newton, Waltham, and Somerville. Growth in recent comeback cities was driven by accelerated increases in foreign-born residents in the 1990s, which grew to outnumber sustained losses in native-born residents in both the 1980s and 1990s. As a group, recent comeback cities lost 4 percent of their native-born residents in the 1980s and then again in the 1990s, while growth in foreign-born residents increased from 20 percent growth, or 9,000 new residents in the 1980s to a significant 42 percent growth, or 24,000 new residents in the

1990s. The result was that from 1980 to 2000, these cities had a 7 percent loss in native-born population and a 70 percent gain in foreign-born population. An exception to this trend was Salem, MA which was increasing in both native- and foreign-born populations in the 1990s, a trait more common to the consistent growth cities. Also of note were Warwick and Milford, RI who were exceptions in that they saw only very little change in foreign- and native-born population growth, and not the large acceleration seen in the other cities.

Growth in foreign-born and loss of native-born populations has made New England's recent comeback cities more diverse in the last decade, with accelerated minority growth reflected in all recent comeback cities in the 1990s. Declines in number and share of white, non-Hispanic residents was also found in all these cities. Recent comeback cities increased their minority shares by an average of 15 percentage points from 1980 to 2000 to equal 20 percent in 2000. Warwick and Milford, RI - the two cities outlined above as having very little growth - also had the lowest minority shares and the lowest changes in minorities, increasing just 6 and 4 percent respectively.

The population growth of recent comeback cities also came in spite of dramatic losses in baby boomers in the 1990s. Losses were especially large in recent comeback cities such as Somerville and Waltham, which lost 36 and 19 percent of their Baby Boomer population in the 1990s, changing similarly to long-term comeback cities Boston and Cambridge. Other recent comeback cities had fewer losses, such as Warwick, which actually had slight gains in Baby Boomers, appearing more like a consistent growth city in this respect. Aside from Salem and Somerville, recent comeback cities did not attract significant numbers of young adults in the 1990s. While Somerville's Generation X residents increased by a dramatic 46 percent in the 1990s, high cost areas such as Newton and Waltham, MA decreased their respective Generation X residents by 20 and 14 percent in the 1990s.

Growth in recent comeback cities, more than other groups was also attached to growth in overall indicators of economic development, suggesting that economic growth in high-value areas in the 1990s was especially beneficial to these cities. Of the three factors we observed (median income growth in relation to statewide growth, median house value growth in relation to statewide growth, and changes in poverty rates), we found that 3 of the 7 cities with recent comebacks were positive in all three respects. The cities registering positive on each of these measurements—Newton, Waltham, and Milford—were high-value, high-income cities with low poverty rates. Only one recent comeback city had negative growth in all respects, Brockton, which although in the Boston Metro did not share the high-cost, high-income and low poverty rates of the other recent comeback cities.

Recent comeback cities also had population growth alongside decreases in housing production in the 1990s. Though we saw trends in residential development were overwhelmingly negative for 52 of 53 cities in the study, the recent comeback city of Waltham was the only city to have increased housing production in the 1990s relative to the 1980s--barely increasing production by 300 units. However, part of this was due to very low production levels in the 1980s. In 2000, Waltham still had just 8 percent of its housing stock as new units built in the past 10 years. Declines in residential construction were large for sustained comeback cities. For example in Salem, which had a 6 percent population increase in the 1990s, new construction went from 1,745 units to just 715 from the 1980s to the 1990s. Additionally, in Somerville, new housing comprised just 1.4 percent of the housing stock in 2000. As a group, new housing went from 12 percent of the total housing stock in 1990 to just 5 percent in 2000. Given that reductions in development were spread across the region, the largely built out recent comeback cities with access to regional job centers were a likely place for new residents to land. Regional economic recovery also put pressure on house prices in the cities most accessible and most desirable in the recovering regional economy—namely, those with initially high house values compared to other groups.

Failed Comeback Cities

Cities which experienced population decreases in the 1990s after brief rebounds in the 1980s include large cities in western and South Eastern New England that are outside the Boston/Providence/NYC corridor such as Springfield, MA, Hartford, Waterbury and New Britain, CT, New Bedford and Fall River, MA. It also includes rural northern cities such as Portland, ME and Burlington, VT, though these cities are most often outliers in many of the trends of this group. Failed comeback cities are large and similar in size to the large sustained comeback cities, having a mean population of 92,000. The location of these cities suggests that they were largely bypassed by the expansion of the financial service and high value added service economies of Boston, Providence, and New York City in the 1990s.

Failed comeback cities, during their time of growth in the 1980s, displayed the exact opposite growth pattern of cities with sustained population comebacks, with high population growth in the 1980s that was driven by a brief increase in native-born residents, which outweighed concurrent losses in the foreign-born populations. Nearly every other city with sustained population increases had growth in foreign-born populations. It appears that in the 1990s, when this native-born population growth quickly turned to large declines, the newly formed growth in foreign-born residents in these cities was relatively small and not enough to overcome such losses. Two cities of exception are Fall River and New Bedford, MA whose foreign-born populations continued to be drivers of decline in the 1990s. This was rare even among consistently declining

cities. Other outlier cities in the group were Portland, ME and Burlington, VT, which technically were failed comebacks but had only negligible population losses in the 1990s.

Proximity to Boston as a driver for growth was apparent in cities with failed comebacks in the 1990s, as not one city in this group was within the Boston Metro area. As a group, failed comeback cities lost 9 percent of their foreign-born residents in the 1980s and then increased their foreign-born population by 9 percent in the 1990s, while changes in native-born residents went from 5 percent growth, or 38,000 new residents in the 1980s to a 6 percent loss, or 55,000 new residents in the 1990s. This dwarfed the 9,900 gain in foreign-born population. The result was that from 1980 to 2000, these cities had a 2 percent loss in native-born population and a 1 percent loss in foreign-born population.

Although suffering net losses of population, recent modest growth in foreign-born and loss of native-born populations has made New England's failed comeback cities more diverse in the last decade, with small minority growth reflected in all these cities in the 1990s. Failed comeback cities increased their minority shares by an average of 17 percentage points from 1980 to 2000 to equal 35 percent in 2000. Burlington, VT, and Portland, ME, the two cities with the lowest minority shares, also had the lowest growth in minority shares, increasing just 6 and 7 percent respectively, while Fall River with a slightly higher minority share, also had just 7 percent growth in minority shares in the last two decades.

The population decline of failed comeback cities also came in spite of dramatic losses in baby boomers in the 1990s. Failed comeback cities went from having the highest average percentage of residents as baby boomers in 1980 (37 percent) to having the lowest percentage of any category in 2000 (26 percent). Boomer losses were large in number and share in failed comeback cities, especially New Haven, CT, Hartford, CT and Burlington, VT which lost 43, 41, and 52 percent their respective Baby Boomer population from 1980-2000s, reducing their respective Baby Boomer population shares by 17, 13, and a full 28 percentage points in Burlington. While comeback cities such as Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville were attracting younger Generation X residents, failed comeback cities, especially Hartford, Springfield, New Haven, and Burlington, who combined to lose 23,000, or 25 percent of their Gen X residents, lost significant numbers of young adults in the 1990s. The two exceptions to this trend were Portland, ME which increased its number of Gen X residents by 22 percent in the 1990s, and Waterbury, CT, which had a slight increase.

Decline in failed comeback cities was attached to negative trends in overall indicators of economic development, suggesting that economic growth in high-value areas around Boston and New York City in the 1990s had minimal benefit on these cities. Of the three factors we considered, we found that 7 of the 10 cities with failed comebacks were negative in all three

respects, indicating that they were not keeping up with statewide growth. The failed comeback cities registering negative on each of these measurements generally had the worst readings, with the greatest increases in poverty, and the smallest increases in median incomes and house values. Hartford, CT and Springfield, MA for instance, each had poverty rates that increased by over 5 percentage points from 1980 to 2000, with house values appreciating at less than 70 percent of the statewide level, and median incomes growing at just 71 percent of statewide levels. Only one failed comeback city—Portland—had positive growth in all respects, whose robust economy and only very slight population decline in the 1990s led it to appear more like a growth city than a failed comeback.

Failed comeback cities also had decreases in housing production in the 1990s. For example Hartford, a city of 56,000 housing units in 1990, registered only 2,000 housing units built in the 1990s. This contributed to a net decline of a dramatic 5,400 housing units from 1990 to 2000. Other failed comeback cities registered net declines in housing units in the 1990s such as New Britain, New Haven, Waterbury, CT, as well as New Bedford and Springfield, MA. As a group, new housing went from 11 percent of the total housing stock in 1990 to just 5 percent in 2000.

Cities in Decline

Cities in decline are those which experienced net population decreases since the 1970s or 1980s. They are mainly small cities, having a mean population of just 55,000, and are located outside the Boston metropolitan area, with the exception of Medford, MA. The group includes two general types of decliners: small rural cities, such as Pittsfield, MA, Lewiston, ME, Rutland, VT and Woonsocket, RI, and larger, more urban cities with consistent decline, such as Bridgeport, CT, East Providence, RI, and Medford, MA.

Population change in declining cities followed two trends. The rural cities in north and west New England experienced consistent decline through sustained losses in both foreign- and native-born populations in the 1980s and 1990s, with larger number losses in native born but larger percentage losses in foreign born. The other more urban decliners appeared more like failed comeback cities, with some foreign born increases that were exceeded by larger losses in native born. Bridgeport, CT and Medford, MA stood out in this group as having substantial foreign-born population increases, but they also incurred equally substantial native born losses.

Though cities differed within the group, as a whole these cities had very little population change in the 1980s and large declines in the 1990s. They lost 1 percent of their foreign-born residents in the 1980s and then increased their foreign-born population by 22 percent in the 1990s. These cities also accelerated their losses in native born residents, increasing from a 2 percent loss in the

1980s to a 7 percent loss of 23,000 native born residents in the 1990s, which dwarfed the concurrent 8,000 person gain in foreign-born population.

The modest changes in foreign-born population combined with relatively larger losses of native-born populations to make New England's declining cities slightly more diverse in the last decade, with small minority growth reflected in all these cities in the 1990s, while declines in number and share of white, non-Hispanic residents also occurred in each. These cities increased their minority shares by an average of 10 percentage points from 1980 to 2000 to become 19 percent minority. Rutland, VT, and Lewiston, ME, had the lowest minority shares and lowest growth, increasing just 1 and 3.5 percent to become 2 and 5 percent minority in 2000.

The population decline of these cities was marked by dramatic losses in baby boomers and an aging population base, with rising shares of adults aged 65 and over in all cities except Bridgeport, CT and Woonsocket, RI. Declining cities went from having 33 percent of residents as baby boomers in 1980 to having just 28 percent of residents as Baby Boomers in 2000. Losses were large in number and share in decliner cities, especially Bridgeport, CT, and Medford, MA, which reduced their respective Baby Boomer population shares from 30 to 26 percent and from 36 to 28 percent respectively. Bridgeport, CT differed from the other decliners in that the lower share of baby boomers was replaced by higher shares of younger residents, while most declining cities such as Medford, Lewiston, and Pittsfield saw increasing shares of residents aged 65 and over, suggesting higher aging in place in declining cities.

With Medford as an exception, the location of these cities suggests that population losses occurred from being bypassed by the expansion of the financial service and high value added service economies of Boston, Providence, and New York City in the 1990s, as population decline in these cities was attached to negative trends in overall indicators of economic development. Of the three factors we observed, we found that 5 of the 7 cities in decline were negative in all three respects, indicating that they were not keeping up with statewide growth and had increasing poverty rates. Medford, being within the Boston metropolitan area, had the most positive economic indicators, with above state growth in incomes and house values, while Pittsfield, MA, being the other decliner city in Massachusetts away from the Boston metro, had the lowest levels of income and house value growth relative to its state, each at just 67 percent of state growth.

Decliner cities also had decreases in housing production in the 1990s and the lowest number of new housing as a percent of the total housing stock. Bridgeport, a city of 54,000 housing units in 1990, registered only 2,200 housing units built in the 1990s, which contributed to a net decline of a dramatic 2,900 housing units from 1990 to 2000, which was 5 percent of its housing stock. Other decliner cities that registered net declines in housing units in the 1990s were Lewiston, ME

and Rutland, VT. As a group, new housing went from 11 percent of the total housing stock in 1990 to just 4 percent in 2000. On the other hand, 3 of these cities had modest increases in their housing stock amid population losses in the 1990s, the greatest being East Providence, RI where total housing stock increased by 2.4 percent.

Consistently Growing Cities

Cities who have consistently grown from 1970 through 2000 are mostly outer suburb cities of the Boston metropolitan area in proximity to Interstate 495. These cities are less built out than the inner comeback cities and smaller, with a mean population of 58,000. The group also includes Nashua, and Manchester, NH, which potentially felt spillover effects of the dispersing Boston economy, as well as Barnstable Town, MA, which has seen a steady transition from seasonal to year-round residents and retirees.

Consistent growth cities attained high growth in both decades of the 1980s and 1990s. Growth trends in the 1990s ranges from Haverhill, MA, with 15 percent population growth to Middletown, CT, with just 1 percent growth in the 1990s trending down. Proximity to Boston and the 495 corridor was apparent in cities with accelerated growth in the 1990s, which included Harverhill, Methuen, and Taunton. Unlike other comeback cities, which were experiencing net losses in native-born populations, growth in consistently growing cities was driven by substantial increases in both native born and foreign-born residents, with native growth outpacing foreign-born growth. As a group, growth in the native-born population was higher in number, while foreign-born growth saw higher percent gains. In total, native-born population increased by 98,000, or 21 percent from 1980 to 2000, while foreign-born residents increased by 28,000, or fully 65 percent. The exception to this trend was Taunton, MA, which had declines in foreign-born residents in both the 1980s and 1990s.

Growth in foreign-born populations made all of New England's consistent growth cities slightly more diverse in 2000 than in 1980, but these cities as a group still had significantly fewer minorities and smaller minority growth from 1980-2000. Across the category, consistent growth cities significantly increased their minority shares by an average of 9 percentage points from 1980 to 2000 to equal 15 percent of city populations in 2000. As an exception, Danbury, CT had the highest share change, with minorities increasing 21 percentage points to become 32 percent of the population.

While the population growth of consistently growing cities in New England was driven by increases in Baby Boomers in the 1980s, except for Barnstable, the 1990s saw reductions in the number and share of baby boomers in most of these cities. However, nearly all cities in New

England experienced losses in this generation. Except for Middletown, CT and Barnstable Town, MA consistent growth cities attracted Generation X residents in the 1990s, each increasing their shares of this group between 2 and 3 percent.

Population change in consistent growth cities was not necessarily attached to growth in overall indicators of economic development. Of the 11 cities in this category, only one consistent growth city, Haverhill, had positive economic growth in all three measures, while Leominster, Nashua, and Manchester, each registered poverty rate increases and below state median income and house value growth. The majority of these cities did have reductions in poverty rates from 1980 to 2000, signaling that their growth was largely from poor residents.

While even in consistently growing cities, population growth occurred alongside decreases in housing production relative to the 1980s. However, consistently growing cities had the greatest amount of new housing as a percent of total housing in the city. In fact, 10 of the top 11 cities with the highest shares of new homes in 2000 were in the consistent growth category, and not in comeback cities. New home shares in this high-flying group ranged from a low of 7.0 percent in Nashua, NH to a high of 14.8 percent of the housing stock in Taunton, MA. Outer suburb cities of Boston, such as Taunton, Attleboro, and Haverhill, had the highest levels, with new housing comprising 14.8, 13 and 12.5 percent of all housing in each respective city. Even these cities faced declines from levels near 20 percent in the 1980s. As a group, new housing went from 20 percent of the total housing stock in 1990 to just over 10 percent in 2000. Given that even the reduced level of 10 percent was nearly twice as high as the level for any other category of city, population growth appears to be having a physical effect on consistently growing cities, as opposed to comeback cities, which appear to be absorbing growth within the existing housing stock. That the median values of housing is lower than housing in recent or sustained comeback cities closer to the Boston metropolitan area suggests that much of this growth may be driven by the affordability of these areas and the need for affordable housing further away from job centers but still within commuting distance.

VI. Conclusions

The following conclusions draw out major themes from the above detailed discussions of findings by dimensions of change and with in each city change category.

1) With increasing dependence on foreign born, many New England cities have returned to their historic role as points of entry for new immigrants

For most New England Cities, population growth has been driven by growth in foreign born outweighing other losses. If not for increased immigration in the 1980s and 1990s, the

population of New England's cities would not have rebounded from declines in the 1970s, and instead would have faced the additional loss of 56,000 native-born residents. However, 279,000 new foreign-born residents came to New England's cities in the past two decades, and the population almost completely rebounded. Such a large transition marks a return to the past nature of New England's large cities as gateway communities for immigrants as they enter the country, establish their bearings and join the workforce.

II) Population growth in New England's comeback cities has meant increasing diversity in terms of the share of foreign-born and minority residents.

On average, in cities of sustained comebacks through the 1980s and 1990s—areas where the majority of population growth occurred—the share of foreign-born residents increased by 10 percentage points, reaching 22 percent of the cities' population in 2000. Meanwhile, minority shares climbed 22 percent to comprise an average of 34 percent of these cities' populations. On the other hand, declining cities and those with failed comebacks increased their shares of foreign born by less than one percent in twenty years, with just 10 and 13 percent of their respective populations foreign born in 2000.

III) Higher foreign-born and minority shares have helped maintain high shares of young residents in comeback cities, even as the remaining Baby Boomers age.

While baby boomers have been leaving the cities for the suburbs throughout the 1980s and 1990s, those remaining still comprise the largest segment of the population of most all New England cities. As baby boomers continue to leave, the young, foreign-born residents arriving have maintained a consistent share of young residents in comeback cities even as the largest segment of the population has aged.

IV) Rising education levels has also differentiated New England's comeback cities from decliners

While comeback cities and failed comeback cities both consisted of large cities, those with sustained comebacks and accelerated growth in the 1990s had the largest shares and increases in shares of residents with college degrees. The association between rising shares of college educated adults and the economic indicators of growth, such as above-state growth in median house values and median household incomes also suggests that higher education is playing a major role in both population and economic growth in New England's cities.

V) Economic indicators suggest access and proximity to large metropolitan areas, especially Boston, has had a large positive influence on the growth and change of New England's cities.

Cities with consistent population growth appear at the confluence of the Boston/I495 regions, while cities with consistent decline are rural and far away from large metro areas. Comeback cities are closer to Boston, New York City, and Providence, while failed comeback cities are outside of this corridor and appear disconnected. The association becomes even more apparent when viewing indicators of economic growth, as cities that improved on these measures tended to be higher-value, higher-income cities closest to Boston and New York City, while cities away from these metros tended to do increasingly worse.

V) The combination of foreign-born population growth and rising poverty rates in many comeback cities differentiates these areas from high populations of persistently poor.

Not all areas that gained population had gains on other economic indicators such as poverty rates. Areas that are attracting new, poor residents that increase the poverty rate challenge the notion of a “comeback” as being positive progress across a range of indicators. However, that the poverty rates may consist of largely young and upwardly mobile foreign born sets these cities apart from others that may be older and persistently poor. The aspiring, upwardly mobile poor immigrant who moves on and makes room for new immigrant families who are poor but similarly working and aspiring is the vision of comeback cities as gateways of opportunity.

VI) Market cycles of the 1990s and changes in federal tax laws in 1986 had a dramatic negative impact on development throughout New England’s cities; but while residential construction was down almost everywhere, new residential construction was transforming the small, consistently growing cities on the fringe of the Boston Metropolitan area.

Residential development in the 1990s was down significantly from levels of the 1970s and 1980s in every city in New England except Waltham, MA. By year 2000, most cities had only between 2 and 6 percent of their housing stock less than 10 years old. Consistently growing cities, however, especially those in the 495 belt around Boston, such as Methuen, Haverhill, and Attleboro, MA, still averaged over ten percent of their 2000 housing stock built in the 1990s. This suggests that population increases in these cities are having a much greater impact upon the physical environment of these outer-metro cities than are being felt in the more built-out inner metro comeback cities whose growth appears to be refilling vacant housing stock.

VII. Final Observations and Policy Implications

Although our look at population change dynamics does not lend itself to in-depth analysis of civic policy in New England, it does lend itself to drawing out several policy implications. The

fact that growth in New England's cities has been increasingly dependent upon increasing shares of a diverse array of immigrants and minorities in the past two decades leads to several implications. The main implication is that, in order to grow, cities will increasingly need to attract a diverse array of new residents, many of whom will have been born outside of the country. Also, with the increasing diversity of new residents in terms of race, culture, age, education, and income, additional community, cultural and educational institutions will need to be established within New England's cities to support the different needs of these populations.

Given that rising poverty rates have accompanied growth in many New England comeback cities, supports and services are especially necessary to enhance upward mobility of the poor residents, both native- and foreign-born. While rising poverty rates themselves may not be contrary to economic recovery in comeback cities, this is only if the poor themselves are constantly changing as currently poor move up the income scale. If this upward mobility slows and levels of the persistently poor increase then comeback cities will hardly live up to their names.

The association between educational attainment of residents and city population comebacks in New England, as well as the associations between education levels and gains in our economic measures underscores the need to focus on education to train and support a highly educated local workforce. It is apparent that such a workforce best positions a city for the high-value added economy driven by regional finance, technology and service industries that are firmly established in, and increasingly spreading out from centers of Boston, New York, and Providence.

The fact that education levels increased the most in areas that also saw the largest increases in shares of foreign born suggests that there is great income and educational variation among foreign born. As a result cities need to find ways of both being receptive to highly educated immigrants as well as providing educational opportunities for the foreign- and native-born looking for economic advancement. The importance of higher education and skill training is apparently great. Cities close to the major, thriving cities in the region like Boston that started with lower shares of residents with college degrees in 1980 fared much worse than the cities that started with higher shares over the past two decades. While it is possible that lower initial shares signaled that these cities were less desirable areas to start with, it is the case that economic progress appears to have stalled in places that did not increase the college-educated share but advanced in those that did.

Of course, this analysis leaves many questions unanswered. The analysis is not fine-grained enough to explain why two similarly located places with similar initial economic bases thrived while others struggled. Important factors are noticeably absent from this analysis, such as political leadership, city governance, nonprofit capacity, business leadership, level and use of

federal community development subsidies, industrial mix, and transportation access. Nevertheless, this paper makes it clear that it is well worth moving beyond simple classifications of cities into categories of population change. While there is value to doing so in ways this paper points out, it is superficial in the sense that below the surface are demographic and economic shifts at least as important. In many cases, the direction of population change and indicators of economic success move in opposite directions. It is vitally important for leaders to focus as much or more on understanding how the mix of their residents is changing as on toting up population gains and losses. It is therefore also worthwhile for cities to fund ways to share information and experiences among cities undergoing similar demographic and economic shifts. Hopefully, this paper helps facilitate those exchanges.