Class 12a: Suburban geography

• Transportation and land use
• History of suburban growth
History of the suburbs (U.S.)

• Tied to transportation technology
  – One hour commute
• And federal subsidies
  – Mortgage deductions, veterans’ loans
Transportation and urban land use

- Walking, horsecars (to 1888)
  - High density downtown
- Streetcar, commuter rail (1888-1920s)
  - Interurban electric rail, subways/elevated
- Recreational auto (1920s-1950s)
  - Buses feed streetcar lines
- Freeway Era (1950s-)
History of the suburbs (U.S.)

• Residential land uses
  – Escaping urban ills, spreading out
• Retail followed the market
• Industry followed the employees
  – More space, new buildings
  – Good transportation access
History of the suburbs (U.S.)

• Edge cities
  – At a new kind of crossroads
  – Subcenters instead of CBD
  – “Shadow governments”

• Leapfrog development
  – Expensive utilities
  – Inefficient land use
Suburbs and inner cities

- Suburban residents and jobs came from somewhere
- Growth now limited to suburbs
- Segregation by class, race
- Falling tax income, rising service needs
- Spatial mismatch: jobs moved, poor didn’t
Suburbs and inner cities

- But agglomeration still matters
- And immigrants still arrive in cities
- Increasing redevelopment of downtowns
  - LoDo in Denver
  - Jack London Square in Oakland
  - Train station in Sacramento