

# Transit and Job Growth: Lessons for SB 375

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# Outline

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- Approaches to reducing VMT
- The land use – transportation connection
- California's experience with transit-oriented development
- Policy recommendations

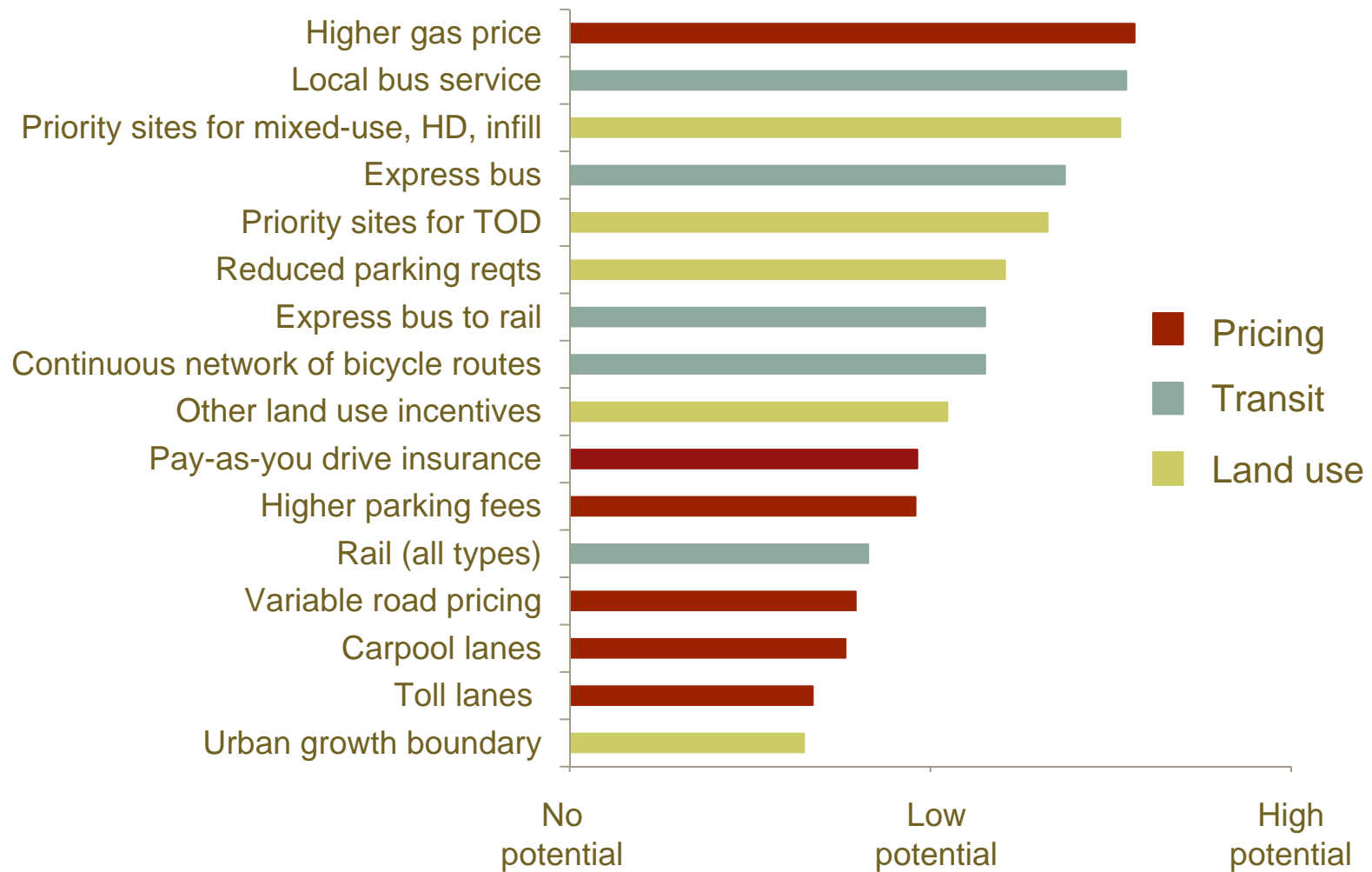


# Reducing Driving Is Part of California's Climate Policy

- AB 32: Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006
  - Reduce economy-wide GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020
- SB 375 (2008): lower emissions by lowering car use
  - Regional per capita emission targets
  - Coordinated transportation and land use
- SB 375 aims to reduce per capita emissions by
  - about 7% by 2020
  - about 15% by 2035



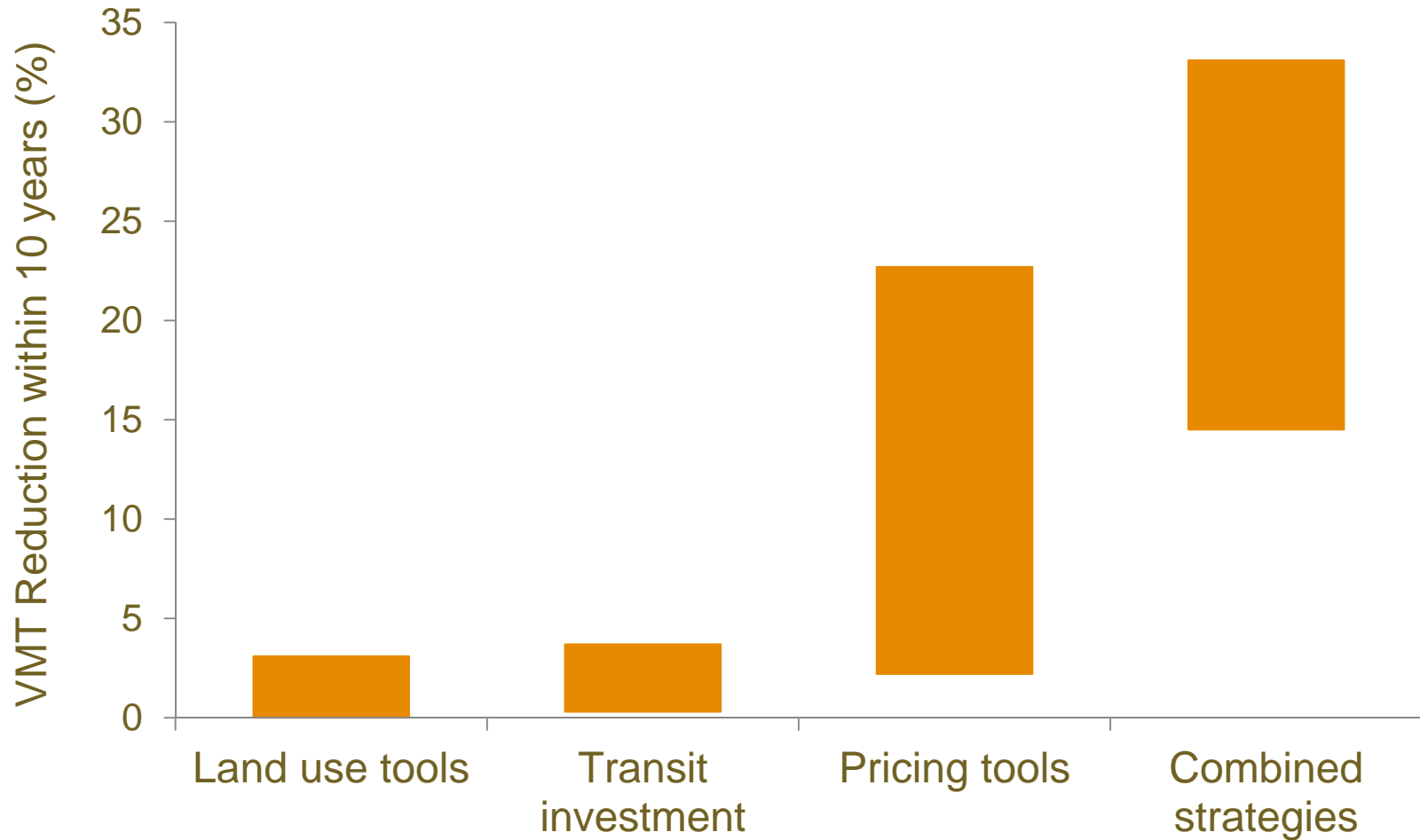
# Local Officials See High Potential in a Variety of Approaches



HD is high density; TOD is transit-oriented development



# Integrated Approaches Reduce VMT Most



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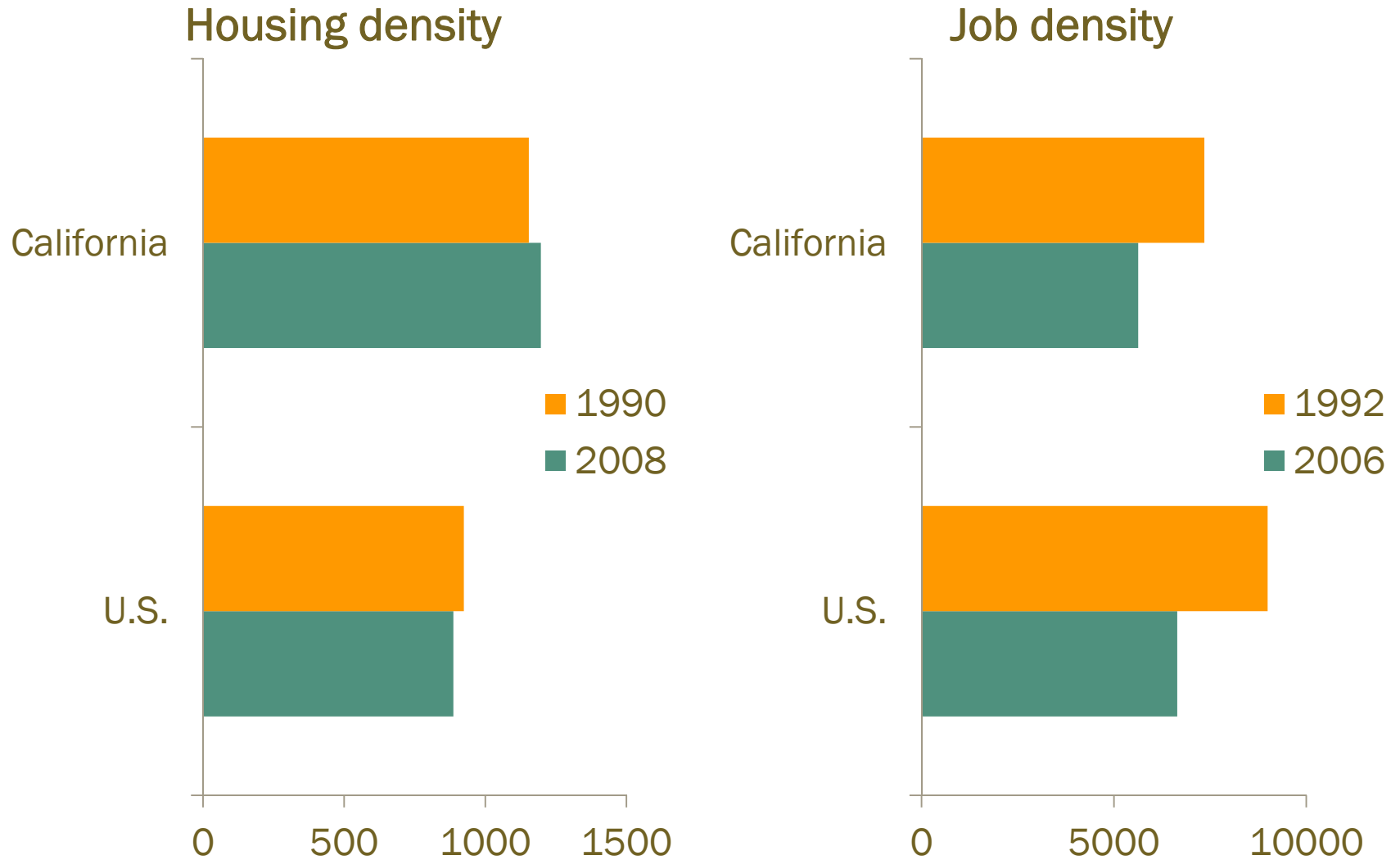
# How Land Use Affects Travel

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- Land use patterns ...
  - Density, jobs-housing distances, and design
- ... affect transportation behaviors
  - Number and length of trips, and travel mode
- Examples:
  - Higher densities = transit investments and ridership
  - Jobs nearer housing = shorter commutes
  - Short blocks = walking



# Density in California: Good on Housing, Bad on Jobs



Occupied housing units and jobs per square kilometer, tract-weighted





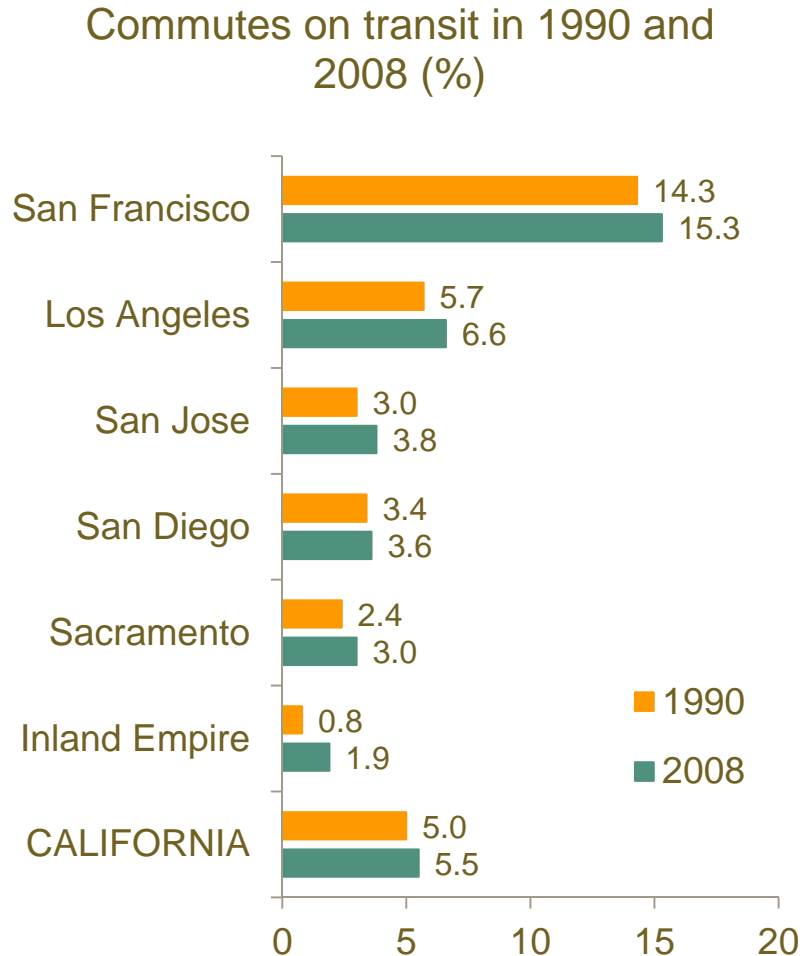
# Few California Metros Have High Job Density

Metro	Population	Residential Density	Employment Density
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana	2	2	23
San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont	12	3	3
Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario	13	47	236
San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos	17	9	35
Sacramento-Arden-Arcade-Roseville	27	30	24
San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara	28	6	47
Fresno	58	40	144
Oxnard-Thousand Oaks-Ventura	61	19	212
Bakersfield	70	54	271
Stockton	82	21	209
Santa Rosa-Petaluma	98	89	206
Modesto	100	36	233

Ranking among all U.S. metros



# Spurring Transit Use Is a Major Challenge



- Transit usage up modestly in all metros, but still low (5.5% of all commutes)
- 75% still drive alone to work
- VMT per capita rose 3.5% in California, 1990-2008
  - Up 13.7% nationally



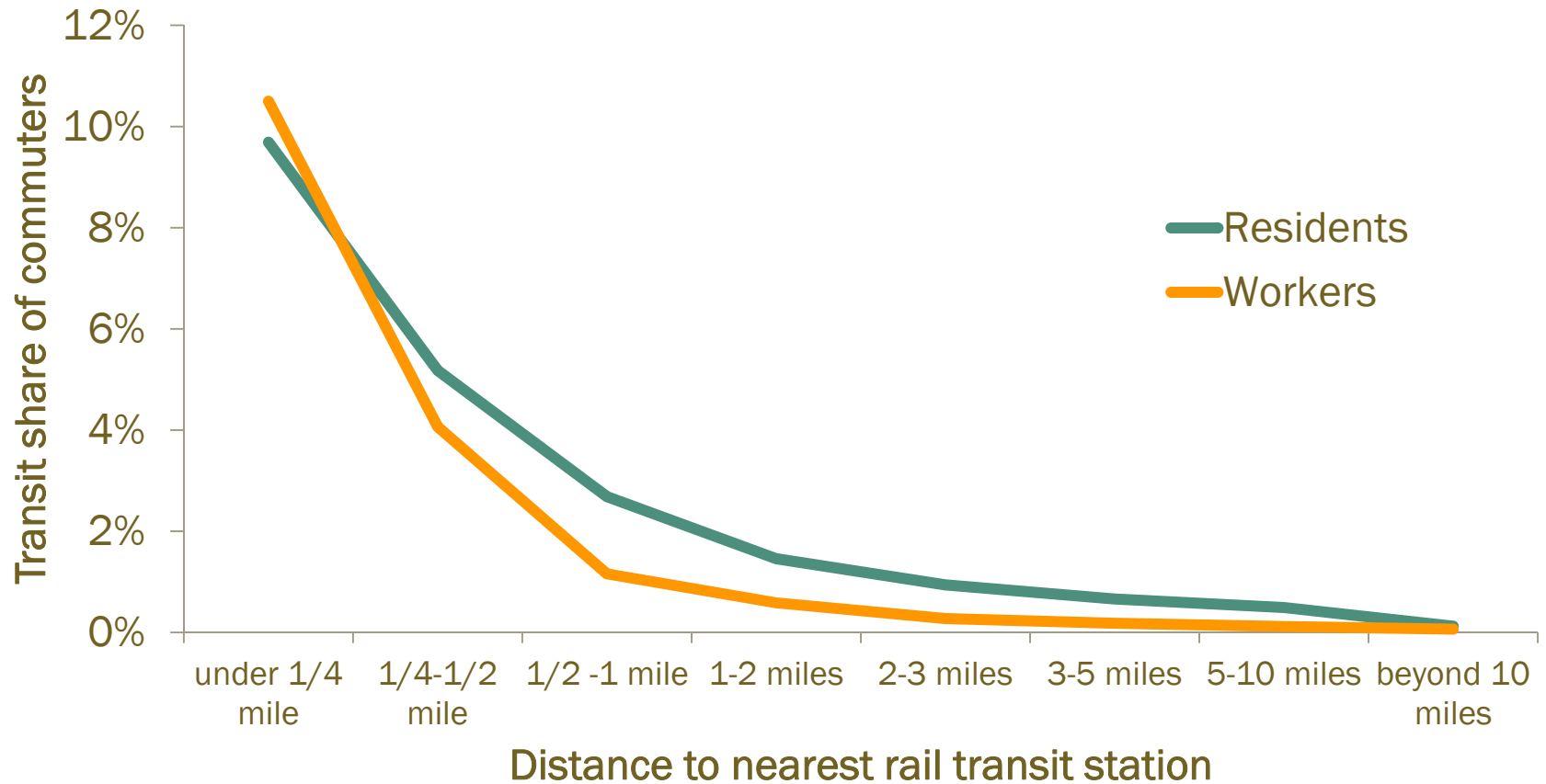
# Job Density Lifts Transit Ridership

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- Job density is strongest predictor of high transit ridership
  - Job centralization matters, too
- However, only modest scope for reducing VMT through higher density
  - Land use patterns change slowly
  - Uncertain feasibility of widespread dense development
- Focus on job density at transit stations



# Ridership Requires Proximity



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# Transit-Oriented Development Is Major Opportunity for California

- New and expanding transit systems
  - 200+ new rail stations in 1992-2006
  - Additional systems and lines planned
- SB 375 streamlines environmental review for “transit priority projects”
- Can integrate parking strategies and walkable design
- Planners in jurisdictions with rail optimistic about TOD potential





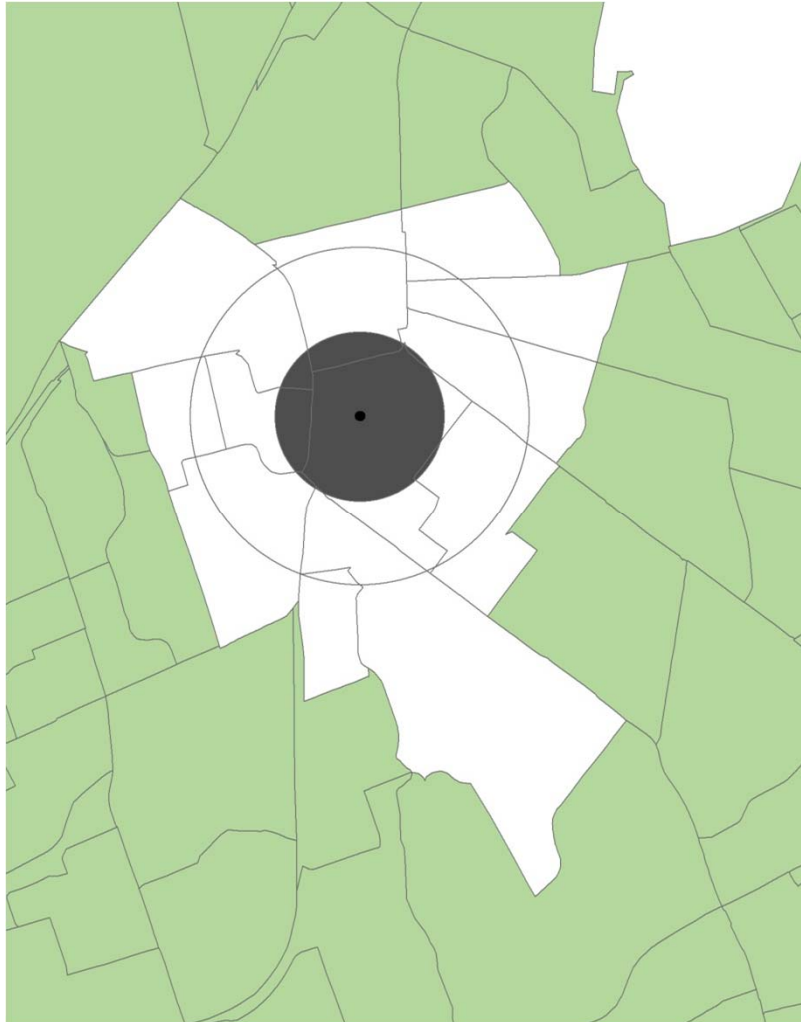
# Has Job Density Increased Near Transit?



Fruitvale BART Transit Village

- Looked at all new transit stations 1992-2006
- Measured employment growth:
  - Within ¼ mile of transit station
  - Before and after station opening
  - Vs. comparison blockgroups

# Transit Node and Candidate Comparison Areas



- Black dot: Concord BART
- Gray: 1/4 mile from transit
- White: 1/2 mile buffer
- Green: candidates for comparison



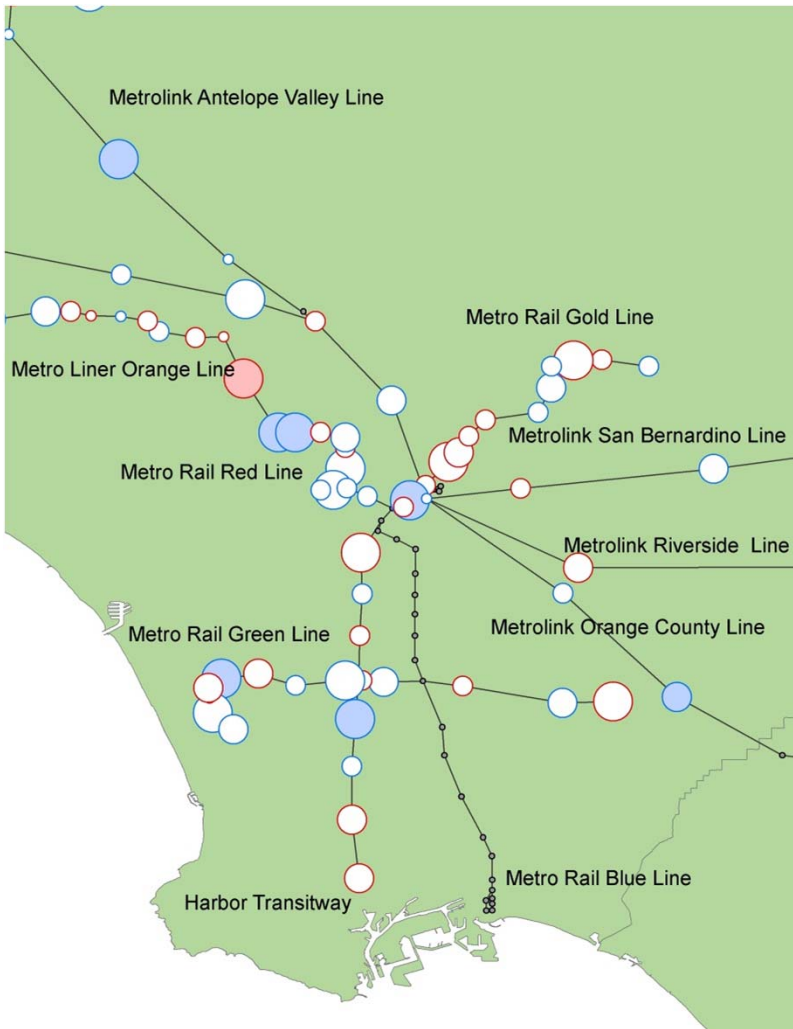
# No Boost to Job Growth Near Transit

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- New stations are in high density areas
- BUT no increase in job growth after stations opened, on average
- Growth increased around some stations, decreased around others
- Stronger growth near stations:
  - Farther from older transit stations
  - With higher initial density



# Employment Effects Vary Across Stations



- Blue circles: positive
- Red circles: negative
- Shaded circles = significant



# Adding Jobs Near Transit Requires Active Policy

- False optimism that jobs “take care of themselves”
- Existing zoning patterns and fiscal incentives not sufficient
- TOD projects emphasize housing over jobs
  - SB 375 favors residential over commercial development
- Case studies show need for active and coordinated planning
  - Hollywood portion of LA Red Line
  - Washington Metro: Arlington vs. Fairfax



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# Optimism, with Warnings

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- On the plus side:
  - Active promotion of denser land use
  - Policies and planners appreciate integrated strategies
- But success means reversing some trends:
  - California employment density is low and falling
  - Missed opportunity to boost employment near transit stations



# What California Should Do

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- Encourage job growth near transit
  - Shift from current tilt toward housing
- Increase cost of driving and parking
  - Most effective, but unpopular and underutilized
  - Supports TOD's
  - Large role for state and feds



# Land Use Policy: Beyond SB 375

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- Land use patterns affect emissions, aside from VMT
  - Denser units: smaller, less energy-intensive
  - Milder regions emit less per capita
- Benefits of density, aside from lower emissions
  - Public health
  - Water consumption





# Notes on the use of these slides

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These slides were created to accompany a presentation. They do not include full documentation of sources, data samples, methods, and interpretations. To avoid misinterpretations, please contact:

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Thank you for your interest in this work.

