

MAY 28, 2019

# How Can Cities Best Reopen and Recover

---

Richard Florida  
Presentation for SPUR



## Urbanization > Infectious Disease

- **Our communities will survive and grow again.**
- **Worse pandemics have not altered the course of urbanization.**
  - Spanish Flu of 1918, London Cholera Epidemic and more.
- **Dystopian vs. Utopian Takes.**
- **Pandemic will result in modest changes and accelerate already-occurring trends.**
- **Strategic, intentional action matters.**
  - Both to current period of lockdown and mobilization and to subsequent period of reopening and recovery.

# COVID-19 Hotspots

## **Global Superstar Cities**

- London, New York

## **Industrial Centers**

- Wuhan, Detroit, Northern Italy
- Linked by industrial supply chains

## **Jet Set Places**

- Ski slopes of the U.S. Rocky Mountains and European Alps

## Why Some Places Are More Vulnerable Than Others

- Density
- Age
- Class
- Health and Fitness
- Childlessness
- Multi-Generational Families
- Religiosity
- Social Capital

# COVID-19 Reinforces Class Divides

## How We Work

- Affluent professional workers can work remotely and isolate safely using delivery.
- Frontline service workers, 30 million workers, are exposed and use transit to get to work.

## How We Live: Density Divide

- *Rich place* density vs *poor place* density.



# How the Virus Will Reshape Our Cities

## Pull Factors

### **Out to Suburbs and Rural Areas**

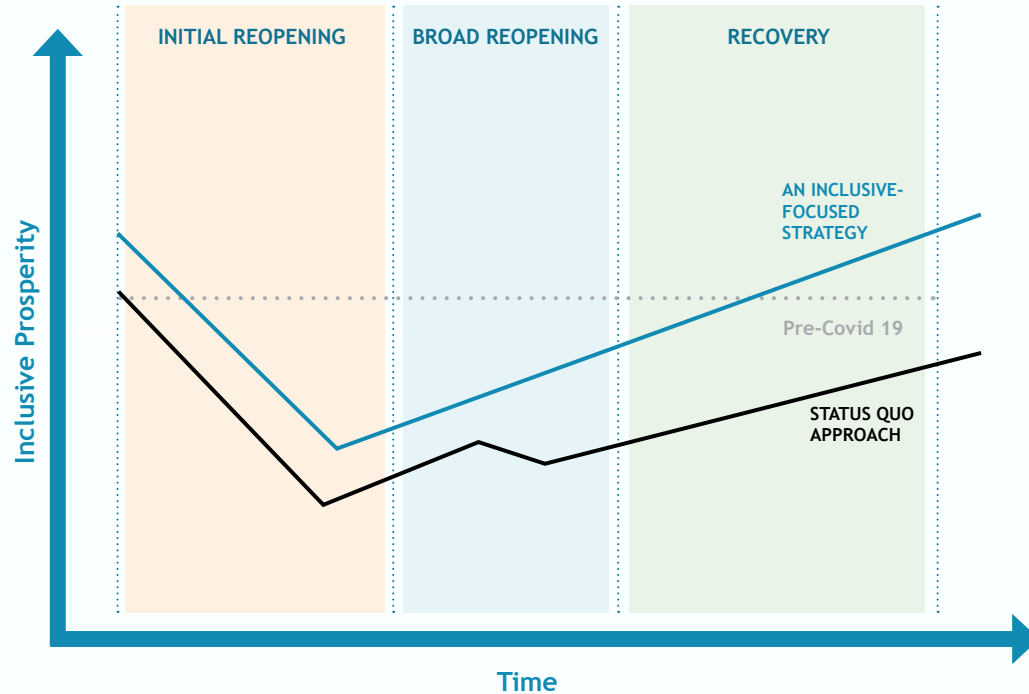
- Families to suburbs
- Remote work
- Fear of mass transit
- Desire for private amenities like backyards and play areas
- Rural gentrification

## Push Factors

### **In toward Cities and Urban Cores**

- Young people to cities
- Clusters like high-tech, finance, media and entertainment require proximity
- Walkable/bikeable areas close to leading industry clusters
- Possible housing affordability reset

# Framework for Resilient and Inclusive Prosperity



## **Four Key Dimensions**

**Personal Protective  
Equipment**

**Health Screenings &  
Temperature  
Checks**

**Design for Social  
Distancing**

**Personalized  
Service Provision**



## Stage 1: Initial Reopening

- **Modify Public Space**  
Reimagine & redesign streets and open spaces for safety and social distancing.
- **Ensure Main Street Survives**  
Help enterprises redesign for health and safety and rethink their business models.
- **Protect the Arts and Creative Economy**  
Provide technical as well as financial assistance.

## Stage 2: Broader Reopening

- **Enlist and Ready Anchor Institutions**

Universities are key economic drivers.

Develop strategies to reopen safely.

- **Prepare Large-Scale Civic Assets**

Stadiums, arenas, convention centers, and performing arts centers must prepare now.

- **Pandemic-Proof Airports, and Reginal Transit Hubs**

Airports and transit hubs are critical to regional economies.

## Stage 3: Economic Recovery

- **Build a Framework for Economic Recovery**  
Plan now for a resilient, inclusive, and prosperous recovery for all Bay-Area residents.
- **Assess Industry Clusters and Talent/Skill Needs**  
Identify growth areas, address harder hit industries, especially service and hospitality-based. Focus on skill/ talent gaps and needs.
- **Upgrade Jobs for Frontline Service Workers**  
Higher wages and safer working conditions.
- **Protect Less-Advantaged Communities.**

# Discussion + Thank You

[florida@creativeclass.com](mailto:florida@creativeclass.com)

[@Richard\\_Florida](https://twitter.com/Richard_Florida)

[www.creativeclass.com](http://www.creativeclass.com)

