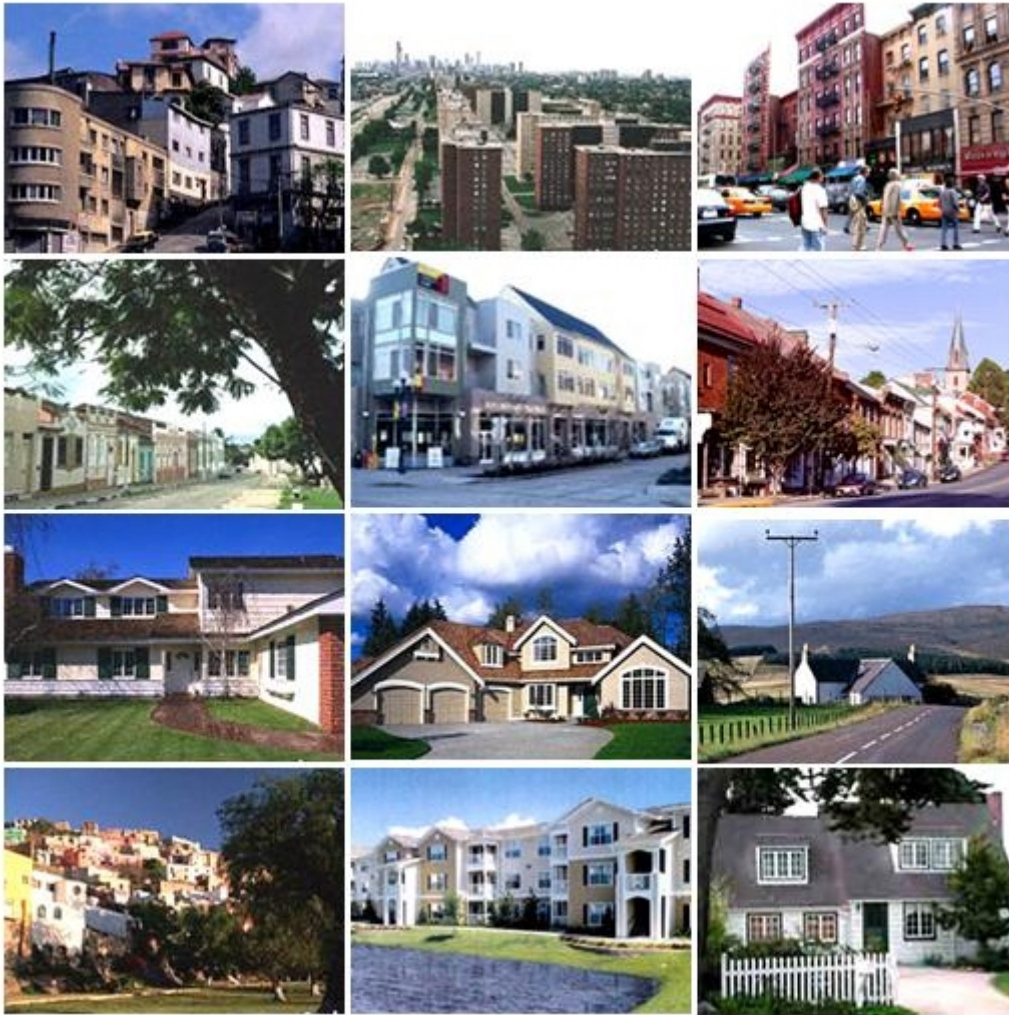


# Can City Lifestyle be a Catalyst for Smart Suburban Change?

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## A Comparative Investigation into

How Asian and Latino Immigrants' Prior Urban Experiences  
and American's Prior Suburban Experiences  
Can Inform the Future Planning and Growth of Maryland Suburbs



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## Table of Contents

### *Introduction*

#### **Section 1. Introduction**

1. Research Context and Questions
2. Research Methods
  - A. Expert Sessions
  - B. Surveys
  - C. Semi-structured Interviews
  - D. Sources of Error
3. Immigrants' Demographic Background in the Metropolitan DC Area

### *General Results*

#### **Section 2. Overall Analysis**

1. Demographic Distributions
2. Annual Incomes
3. Residential Location Analysis
4. Housing Type Analysis
5. Travel Time Analysis
6. Home Image Preferences

#### **Section 3. Analysis of Cultural Groups: US-born Residents, and Latino and Asian Immigrants**

1. US-Born Residents: Socio-cultural background and Lifestyle Review
  - A. Demographic Distributions
  - B. Annual Incomes
  - C. Residential Location Analysis
  - D. Housing Type Analysis
  - E. Home Image Preferences
2. Latino Immigrants: Socio-cultural background and Lifestyle Review
  - A. Demographic Distributions
  - B. Annual Incomes
  - C. Residential Location Analysis
  - D. Housing Type Analysis
  - E. Home Image Preferences
3. Asian Immigrants: Socio-cultural background and Lifestyle Review
  - A. Demographic Distributions
  - B. Annual Incomes
  - C. Residential Location Analysis

- D. Housing Type Analysis
- E. Home Image Preferences

### *Urban/Suburban-experience Analysis*

#### **Section 4. Comparative Analysis of Cultural Groups: Asian and Latino "Urban Grown," and US "Suburban Grown"**

1. Residential Location Analysis
  - A. Past Residential Locations
  - B. Present Residential Locations
  - C. Preferred Residential Locations
2. Shift of Residential Locations Analysis
3. Travel Patterns Analysis
4. Home Image Preferences

#### **Section 5. Analysis of Individual Cultural Cases**

1. US-born Residents – 8 Women
2. Latino immigrants – 8 Women
3. Asian immigrants – 8 Women

### *Conclusions*

#### **Section 6. Conclusions and Recommendations**

1. Conclusion
  - A. Value of American Suburban Dream
  - B. Cities within Suburbs
  - C. Potential for a Smart Growth Future
2. Recommendations
  - A. Shaping Suburban City Districts
  - B. Blue Print for a Sustainable Suburban Home
  - C. Smart Marketing for a Smart-growth American Dream

### **Appendix:**

- A. Questions for the Expert Interviews
- B. The Lifestyle and Image Survey
- C. Lifestyle Survey Analysis
- D. Image Survey Analysis

### **Related References**

### **Acknowledgements**

### **Contact Information**

## *Introduction*

## Section 1. Introduction

### 1. Research Context and Questions

In the last fifteen years, the number of immigrants who have relocated from their homelands to the United States has grown at a tremendous pace. According to the Maryland Department of Planning, a significant percentage of immigrants arrived in suburban Maryland in the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Figure 1-1).

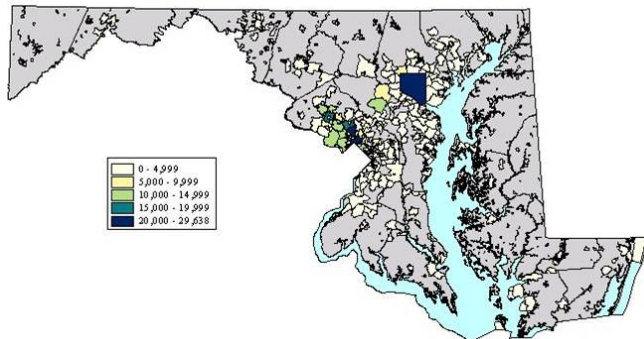


Figure 1-1. Immigrants in Maryland, by Place. (Maryland Department of Planning, Census 2000)

Figure 1-2 explains that, within the last decade, Montgomery County gained 89.1 percent of immigrant population, Prince George’s added 71.9 percent, while the state of Maryland has a 44.3 percent gain.

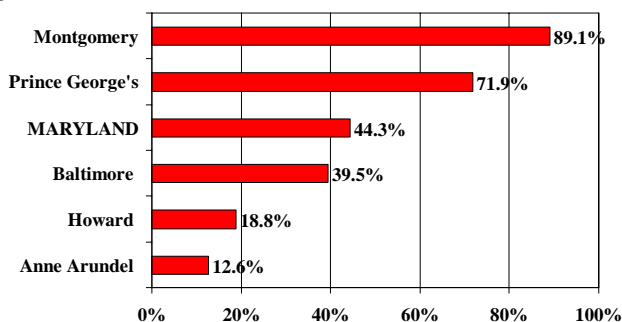


Figure 1-2. Immigrant population gain in Maryland. (Maryland Department of Planning, Census 2000)

More precisely, the majority of the new comers are Asian and Latino immigrants, and half of them relocated to Montgomery County. Figure 1-3 illustrates the immigrants’ relocation areas within Montgomery County.

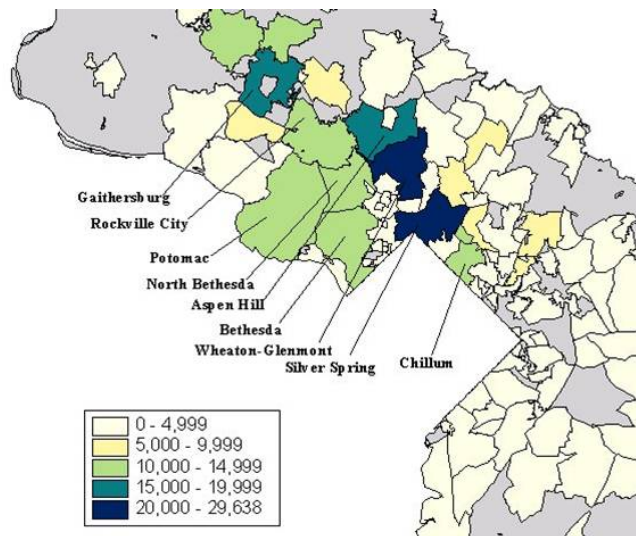


Figure 1-3. Immigrants in Montgomery County, by Place. (Maryland Department of Planning, Census 2000)

With this picture in mind, the 1997 Maryland Smart Growth legislation has channeled state infrastructure funding into Priority Funding Areas (PFA), areas within Maryland’s cities and the DC Metropolitan area’s inner suburbs), to achieve its goals to manage population growth in a land and resource-efficient manner. In theory, developers and property owners would construct houses on smaller lots, and they could propose apartment buildings at greater densities. As a result, it would reduce the numbers of large single-family detached homes in outlying suburbs. In fact, based on our previous analysis of “urban grown” Taiwanese and Chinese immigrants who grew up in urban areas in their home countries, a high percentage of them who arrived in Maryland during the past decade have moved into the PFA zone, but in low-density suburban locations.

The previous finding leads to the central question of this study. It investigates how and why these “urban grown” new comers’ prior urban experiences, melt into a suburban auto-dependant lifestyle, as other US-born suburban residents. In addition to Asian immigrants, this study also takes a close look at Latino groups who are the largest new comers in the DC area. It is important to understand the “urban-suburban transplantation” within the first generation immigrants’ life experiences. It is not only because their embracing of the suburban American dream has created developmental pressure in Maryland’s valuable agricultural lands. It is also

because their prior urban experiences may contribute to Maryland's smart growth dream that progressive planners, designers, and policy makers have been advocating and promoting since the 1990s.

Following this line of thinking, this study examines the primary questions listed below:

- How can the Smart Growth principles in Maryland be integrated into the living preferences of the varied cultures and lifestyles of new immigrants?
- How can immigrants' city life experiences be used as a guide to transform the traditional suburban lifestyle?
- What type of housing are new immigrants looking for?
- Would they prefer that their new Montgomery County lives were less car-dependant and more pedestrian and mass transit oriented?
- Would they like to live in mixed-use areas where shopping, housing, and work are integrated, rather than separated?
- Would they live in a neighborhood where the lot sizes, and house volumes were smaller, and neighborhood population was larger, rather than in neighborhoods where few persons occupy large amounts of space and disrupt greater amounts of the natural environment?

This study analyzes how development in Maryland can respond "smartly" to the new market imposed by new immigrants from Asia and Latin America. It assumes that the "urban grown" immigrants, having lived most of their lives in higher density and pedestrian friendly neighborhoods, might prefer the conveniences that some Smart Growth principles offer, such as mixed-use environments that enable a quick walk to the store from one's home.

The backgrounds of US-born versus immigrants vary based on the extent of living experiences in urban environments. This study responds to the planners and designers' urgent needs to modify Maryland's suburban areas according to the recently arrived and projected immigrants' preferences while maintaining Smart Growth principles.

## 2. Research Methods

In addition to library and Internet research, this study employed both quantitative and qualitative research

methods, with the use of surveys and semi-structured interviews. It also consulted experts in the field of immigration, specifically in the metropolitan Washington, DC area, in order to gain some background knowledge. Furthermore, it sought advice from design professionals for the selections of images that applied in the survey method.

### A. Expert Sessions (Appendix A)

#### *Background Information for Asian and Latino immigrants in Maryland*

Two experts interviewed consisted of a University of Maryland professor and a doctoral student in the departments of Sociology and Geography, respectively, who were knowledgeable in the area of immigration of specific ethnic groups, especially in the Washington, DC area<sup>1</sup>. The information we obtained from these experts provided us with a starting point and/or a helpful contact for the semi-structured interviews. Also, these "experts" provided us with cutting edge, never-before-published information on new immigrants specific to the Washington, DC area.

#### *Landscape Image Selections for image survey*

Two landscape architecture professors with experience in community planning helped with the decisions on the selection and placement of the images. They also edited both the English and Spanish versions of the image survey to ensure that the surveys were easy-to-understand and easy-to-follow, and that the questions followed logical sequence.

### B. Surveys (Appendix B)

This study applied two types of survey: Lifestyle/Experience Survey, and Image Survey. The Lifestyle/Experience survey includes:<sup>2</sup>

- a.) a background section asking for gender, age, marital status, number in household, number of children in household, annual income, country of birth, ethnicity, and place of residence;

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix A for questions asked of the immigration "experts."

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix B for the image survey.

- b.) a section on past, current, and preferred area(s) living, and housing type(s), including ideal neighborhoods in the Washington, DC area;
- c.) questions on routine travel habits, including frequency of trips, means, and travel time;
- d.) questions on maximum acceptable travel time to work and to other destinations.

On the back side of the Lifestyle/Experience Survey, there is an image survey that asked participants to rate on a scale of one (strongly dislike) to five (strongly like) a variety of images and housing types, including; rural, small town, suburban, and urban environments. The image survey was inspired by Anton Nelessen's Visual Preference Survey (1994), which has been in use since 1979 as a way to gauge the public's reaction to sprawl. This technique is now in use to aid master plans, redevelopment plans, as well as in visioning exercises with the public. Historically, Nelessen's VPS has indicated an overall negative reaction to sprawl development patterns and a positive reaction to traditional settlement patterns such as those in small towns.

This study employed image survey in order to gain a better sense of which housing types and styles along with environments are appealing to the survey participants. Asking participants if they prefer apartments or single-family detached houses would yield a different response as opposed to an image survey that would ask them to rate pictures according to their preferences. Asking participants their opinions about different images is much more illustrious than simple yes or no answers. The presentation of housing types is very important, as higher density housing could be perceived both negatively and positively depending on the design of the buildings and the way in which they are presented.

Hence, different groups of housing types and environments were chosen in the image selection. The images included a variety of single-family homes, apartment buildings, and townhouses in different settings which include urban, suburban, small town, and rural. The images were not organized in any particular way on the survey. The numbers (A1, A2, A3, B1, B2, B3, etc.) aid in the organization of the images and make the images easier to score and make comments.

### ***Pre- survey***

Before the distribution of the surveys, a pre-survey was conducted with 25-30 landscape architecture students in order to ensure that the questions and images chosen on the survey were the best to answer the research questions and that the language on the survey was clear.

### ***Formal Survey***

After finalization, 238 total surveys were distributed at community center sports events in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes, and Chinese School classes. The breakdown is as follows: 72 US-born, 108 Asians (immigrants), 86 Latinos, and 17 unknown or other ethnicity. Of these 238 surveys, 145 were complete data sets; hence, these were the data used for this study. The final data sets include: 55 US-born, 60 Asian immigrants, and 30 Latinos.

### **C. Semi-structured Interviews**

Participants for the semi-structured interviews were found from the snowball sampling technique (locating contacts from previous contacts' recommendations). The interviewees, therefore, consisted of contacts from University of Maryland (living in Montgomery, Prince George's, and Fairfax Counties, and Baltimore City) and their family and friends. The participants include a wide variety of age ranges and backgrounds in the following groups: 9 US-born participants, 8 Asians, and 8 Latinos. All participants were female in order to compare across ethnicities the roles of women relating to urban living preferences. The questions we asked the interviewees included those from the survey (including the images) plus additional questions about migration patterns and background.

### **D. Sources of Error**

We want to address three issues before we move on to the analysis and comparison. First, this study is a "focus-group-based" research. It focuses on the immigrants with prior urban experiences in their home countries. It does not imply that immigrants all grow up in urban areas in their homeland and move to suburbs in the USA. Secondly, due to the nature of the focus-group-based research, random sampling is not an efficient way to select the survey targets within a limited timeframe (three months were allocated to data collecting). Survey sites and interview

respondents were chosen deliberately to target the immigrant groups researched in this study and to most efficiently utilize the time and resources given.

However, this snowball sampling technique used in locating interview respondents may bias the sample in its possibly unrepresentative nature. A bias may include the increased representation of more educated interviewees, especially for the Latino new immigrants. Since they were more educated, the sample also may be skewed towards a higher socioeconomic status.

Finally, a source of error for the image surveys is the language barrier. Some new immigrants may have misinterpreted or misunderstood a question and chosen a different answer as a result. Many surveys that were conducted at the ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes in Gaithersburg were incomplete either because they were given out during a break and thus had time limitations, or because we were not permitted to give the survey ourselves and therefore were not present to answer questions that may have minimized the language barrier. Also, the surveys given at the Chinese school have limitations on age range due to the choice of survey location.

### 3. Immigrants' Demographic Background in the Metropolitan DC Area

The past fifteen years have witnessed a tremendous growth of immigrants who have relocated from their homelands to the United States. One third of the current immigrant population in the United States arrived after 1990. In 2000, over 11% of the United States citizens are first-generation immigrants (Census 2000).

In the last fifteen years, the Washington, DC metropolitan area specifically has experienced a large population increase. Much of this can be attributed to this influx of "new immigrants"<sup>3</sup> from Asia and Latin America. Between 1980 and 2000 the Washington metropolitan area attracted 575,000 immigrants. By 2000, these immigrants made up "17 percent [832,016] of the region's population, making the area the seventh-largest immigrant gateway in the United States" (Singer, 2003).

<sup>3</sup> "New immigrants" are immigrants who arrived to the United States since 1990.

Figures 1-4 and 1-5 illustrate the Washington, DC Metropolitan Area's portion of immigrants by jurisdiction. Note that the highest numbers of immigrants are not in Washington, DC, but in the suburban counties of Montgomery, Arlington, and Alexandria. Figure 1-2 shows the increasing numbers of immigrants who have moved to the suburbs or immigrated directly to the suburbs between 1970 and 2000. Montgomery, Fairfax, and Prince George's Counties absorbed almost 250,000 immigrants, for an increase of 72% (Singer, 2003). These counties are attracting more numbers of new immigrants than the District of Columbia and the inner suburbs (Arlington County and Alexandria City) combined.

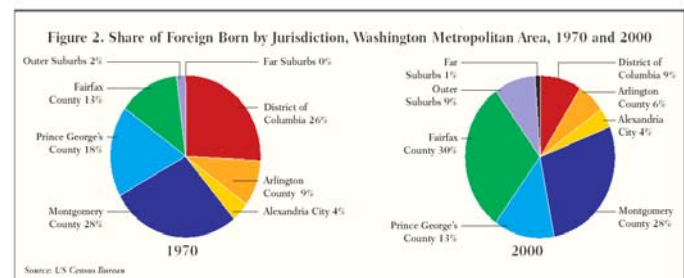
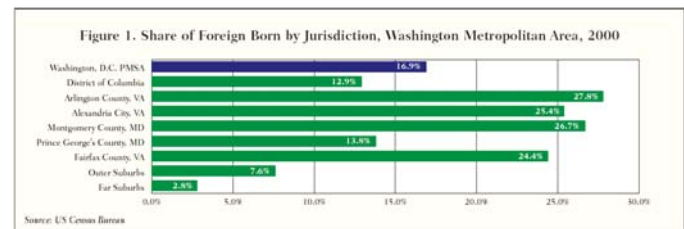


Figure 1-4 and 1-5. Source: Singer, Brookings Institution, 2003

Figure 1-6 maps the distribution of these immigrants across the DC Metropolitan Area. Notice the blue, dark blue and green areas are mostly in Montgomery and Fairfax Counties, with a couple of pockets in Prince George's County and in the District. The areas with high percentages of new immigrants in Montgomery County, Maryland are Gaithersburg, Wheaton, and Silver Spring. The areas in the District and Prince George's County, Maryland are Adams Morgan/Columbia Heights and Langley Park, respectively. Heavily immigrated areas in Virginia include South Arlington and Bailey's Crossroads/Seven Corners.

The Brookings Institution reports, "Montgomery, Fairfax, and Prince George's counties together gained nearly 250,000 immigrants, for an

increase of 72 percent. Immigrants in the outer counties, including Loudon and Prince William, grew by 160 percent with a gain of nearly 50,000 foreign-born residents” (Singer, 2003). New immigrants seem to be driving development patterns by moving farther away from the District.

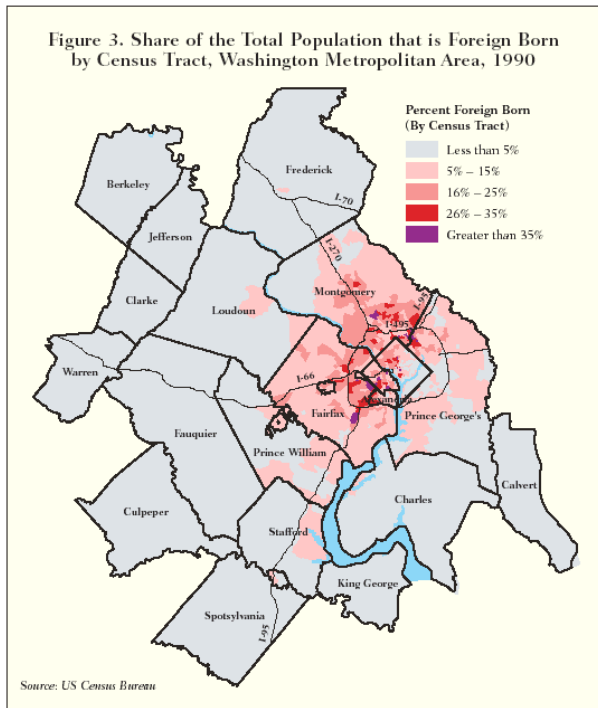


Figure 1-6. Source: Singer, Brookings Institution, 2003

As mentioned in the beginning (Figure 1-3), suburban Maryland, specifically, reflects this shift of demographics with many Asian and Latino businesses and households flourishing. Today, one of every five Montgomery County residents is an immigrant. The I-270 Corridor that connects Montgomery County with Washington, DC has experienced much population growth, reflecting results from Maryland’s wedges and corridors growth management scheme. In fact, this influx of Asians into Montgomery County in the past fifteen years occurred during the same period of rapid suburbanization of the areas along the I-270 Corridor that resulted from the booming biotech and information technology companies along the corridor. Many of the high-tech jobs within this corridor are being filled by new immigrants. This smart growth-targeted area has a high potential for transit-oriented development based on its proximity to the Metro,

which runs parallel to Route 355 in Montgomery County.

Recent data indicates that a significant percentage of first generation Asian immigrants currently living in suburban communities across the U.S. and here in Maryland previously lived in urban environments in their home countries. The set of urban experiences and lifestyle preferences of these new immigrants would likely have a significant effect on their new suburban Maryland lifestyles and implications on the smart growth design of communities within the I-270 Corridor. A previous study conducted by Chang (2003) on first generation Taiwanese immigrants who had relocated to communities along the I-270 corridor showed that immigrants’ previous city lives currently influence their preferences for transportation modes, house size and style, neighborhood density, home to workplace distance, open space usage, and other lifestyle issues that have design implications. She found that 93 percent of those Taiwanese immigrants who relocated to standard single-family detached houses in Montgomery County “preferred to live close to work, schools, and shopping areas”.

As pointed out earlier, this “urban to suburban transplant” phenomenon includes other populations besides Asians. This study will expand the previous study by surveying Latino as well as Asian immigrants, because they are the fastest growing ethnic minority group in the Washington, DC area, and have even become the nation’s largest minority (Cohn, 2003). In July 2002, there were 38.8 Latinos nationwide, making up 13 percent of the national total population (ibid.). In the Washington area alone, there are 447,000 Latino immigrants (U.S. Census, 2000).

Latino immigrants differ from Asian immigrants in that the population is split in the nature of the homeland environment. Where are the Latino immigrants coming from, the cities, villages, or rural areas? There is a wide variety in where these immigrants originated.

54 percent of all U.S. Latinos live in the suburbs (Newswire, 2002). In Montgomery County, the Latino population reached 100,604 in 2000, making up 11.5 percent of the total population (Pérez-Rivas, 2001). Latinos’ residential patterns, once concentrated in the inner DC suburbs of Silver Spring and Langley



Park, according to the 1990 Census, are now “spreading across a wide swath of Montgomery County, from Takoma Park, through Silver Spring, Wheaton, Aspen Hill and into Gaithersburg and Germantown” (ibid.). Even though suburbia has been home to increasing numbers of immigrants since 1970, immigration continues to be associated with the inner city. Sarah Mahler’s (1995) research on Salvadoran immigrants on Long Island, New York, challenges the “prevailing stereotype of the suburbs as homogenous havens of the white middle class” and “documents that immigrants are becoming an important part of suburban life”. In the Washington area, more Latino immigrants today are moving directly to the suburbs instead of moving into the District, thereby giving suburban planners a reason to use Latinos’ input in conceiving, designing, and building communities in Montgomery, Prince George’s, and Fairfax Counties.

To sum up, this research determines which types of environments and structures Latino and Asian immigrants prefer. It compares these immigrants’ preferences with US-born residents’ preferences. Since most immigrants today live in the suburbs, the findings have serious implications for developers and design professionals. The following section will provide the reader with the overall as well as cross-group analysis, showing that Latino and Asian immigrants are assimilating into the suburbs.

## ***General Results***

## Section 2. Overall Analysis

Latino and Asian immigrants are rapidly melting into the suburbs. The following results allow us to catch a glimpse of these immigrants, where they settle, and how they are transforming the suburban landscape. The results of the overall survey analysis serve as the benchmark of group analysis (Section 3) and comparative analysis (Section 4). (Appendices display the comprehensive survey results.)

The summary of the overall results includes:

1. Demographic distribution
2. Overall household income
3. Residential location analysis – past, present, and future preferred areas
4. Housing type analysis – past, present, and future preferred houses
5. Traveling time analysis
6. Home image preferences

### 1. Demographic Distributions

The final results of this study are based on 145 complete surveys (henceforth, overall survey). The overall data set consists of three groups (Table 2-1). First, among the 145 participants, 41 percent is Asian immigrants (henceforth, the Asian immigrant group or Asian group). They mainly come from Mainland China and Taiwan. Only a few of them migrate from Malaysia and South Korea. Second, 21 percent is Latino immigrants (henceforth, the Latino immigrant group or Latino group). Most of them are from Central and South American countries including El Salvador, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, and so on. Third, 38 percent is US-born residents (henceforth, the US-born group). The majority of this group consists of African Americans and Caucasians. We will examine each individual group in section 3, and then cross analyze three groups in Section 4.

Immigrants / US-born residents	Count	Percentage
Asian immigrants	60	41%
Latino immigrants	30	21%
US-born residents	55	38%

Table 2-1: The distribution of immigrants and US-born residents

In general, females and males in the survey are split almost evenly, about half and half. However, for the Latino immigrant group, 21 of 30 Latino survey participants are female. In terms of marital status, 30 percent of survey participants were single and 70 percent were married, in part because the survey targets homeowner groups rather than potential homebuyer groups. Most homeowners are married couples with children in Montgomery County. The age of the survey participants follows an overall normal distribution, with the majority of respondents in their forties (Figure 2-1).

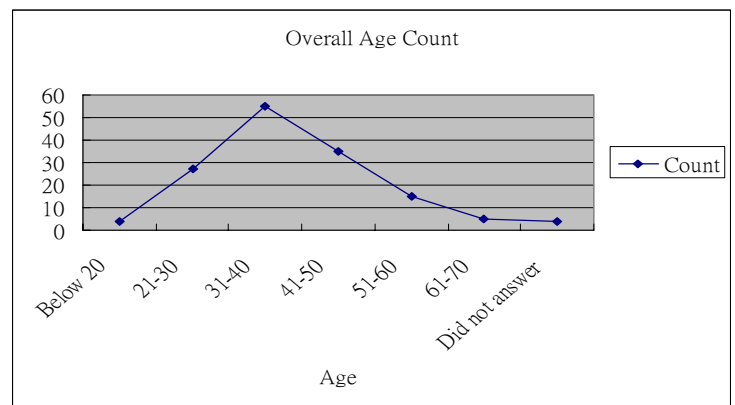


Figure 2-1: Age Distribution

### 2. Annual Income

The overall survey represents a wide variety of annual household incomes (Figure 2-2). However, 13 % of the survey participants did not answer this question.

In general, 58 percent of households make over \$50,000 in annual income. This group includes: (1) 12% making \$50,000 to \$74,999, (2) 14% making \$75,000 to \$99,999, (3) 19% making \$100,000 to \$149,999, (4) 8% making \$150,000 to \$199,999, and (5) 4% making more than \$200,000. In other words, 31 percent of households make over \$100,000 per year; 27 percent have annual incomes between \$50,000 to 99,999; while 30 percent of the households have annual incomes lower than \$50,000.

For each group, the US-born group also has 31 percent making over \$100,000 a year, the largest group (23%) making between \$100 and \$149,000 a year per household.

The Latino immigrant group makes significantly lower salaries than the Asian immigrant group and the US-born group, with 80 percent

making less than \$100,000, the majority (23%) making between \$10,000 and \$24,999. The Asian subset has a significantly higher income than both the US-born subset and the Latino subset, the largest group (23%) making between \$100,000 and \$149,999. Section 3 will illustrate the breakdown of each group’s annual household income and explain further.

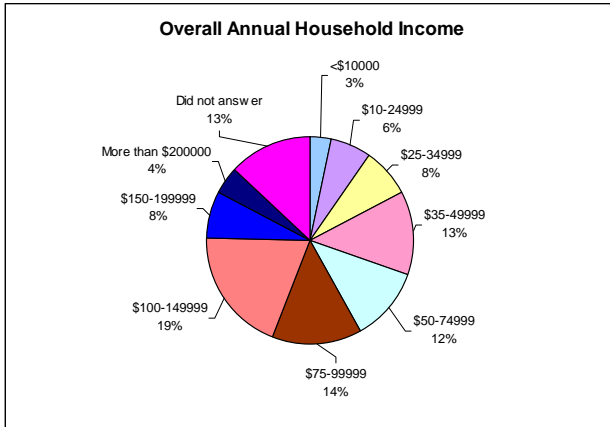


Figure 2-2. Overall Annual Household Income

### 3. Residential Location Analysis – Past, Present and Future Preferred

Table 2-2 shows the distribution of overall survey participants’ residential locations. 52 percent of the overall survey participants grew up in a city while 34 percent grew up in a suburb. Currently, only 24 percent live in the city and 71 percent live in a suburb.

Area	Past (Grew up)	Present	Future Preferred
City	52%	24%	27%
Rural area	5%	1%	7%
Small town	8%	4%	5%
Suburb	34%	71%	60%
Did not answer	1%		

Table 2-2: Residential Location Analysis

Of all US-born, 22 percent grew up in the city, whereas 70 percent of the Latino immigrant group and 72 percent of the Asian immigrant group grew up in a city. Section 3 will analyze each group’s lifestyle preferences. Then, Section 4 will cross analyze Latinos and Asians who grew up in urban areas and compare their lifestyles with the US-born residents who grew up in suburban areas.

### 4. Housing Type Analysis – Past, Present and Future Preferred

Table 2-3 shows overall the types of residences in which survey participants grew up, live in now, and prefer to buy in the future. Among all groups, 60 percent of the survey participants grew up in a single-family house (22% of which are Asian immigrants, 23% Latino immigrants, and 55% US-born). About half of the overall survey participants (52%) live in a single-family house now, a quarter live in a townhouse, and a quarter live in an apartment.

The most compelling finding was that while only 52 percent of all survey participants live in a single-family detached house now, 80 percent of all participants prefer to live in a single-family detached house in the future. It is clear that the majority of the overall survey participants are drawn to single-family detached houses. This finding will be discussed in Sections 3 and 4.

Housing Type	Past	Present	Future Preferred
Single-family house	60%	52%	80%
Townhouse	10%	23%	13%
Apartment	27%	23%	5%
Other	2%	1%	1%
Did not answer	1%	1%	1%

Table 2-3: Housing Type Analysis

### 5. Travel Time Analysis

Table 2-4 shows the maximum acceptable times to work and to other destinations. It is clear that the majority of the survey participants would prefer to spend less than 45 minutes commuting to work. They would be more likely to spend longer amounts of time traveling to other destinations.

Tables 2-5 and 2-6 show travel pattern results of city dwellers versus suburbanites. From the comparison, it found that city dwellers take longer to arrive at their destinations. 54 percent of suburbanites can reach a grocery store in less than ten minutes, whereas only 29 percent of city dwellers can.

Max acceptable time	Work		Other	
	count	percentage	count	Percentage
<10 min	11	8%	3	2%
10-30 min	35	24%	17	12%
31-45 min	42	29%	55	38%
46-60 min	34	23%	40	28%
>60 min	9	6%	21	14%
Did not answer	14	10%	9	6%

**Table 2-4: Maximum Acceptable Times to Work and to Other Destinations**

2-8, and 2-9 present the results of the travel patterns of Asians and Latinos who grew up in urban environments and US-born participants who grew up in the suburbs. Asians and Latinos who grew up in a city are willing to spend more time getting to work, whereas US-born residents who grew up in a suburb are willing to spend more time getting to other destinations.

The means to work differed among the survey participants. Asians who grew up in a city are more likely to drive to work. 77 percent drive while only 7 percent take public transit and 5 percent walk. Latinos who grew up in a city are more likely to take public transit (19%) than are Asians. US-born residents who grew up in a suburb are more diverse in their choice of means to work: 6 percent carpool, 13 percent use public transit, 9 percent walk, and 55 percent drive.

Travel Time	Grocery shopping	Other shopping	Restaurant	Work	Max time to work	Max time to other destinations
Less than 10 min	29%	11%	11%	6%	9%	0%
11-30 min	31%	31%	34%	26%	29%	29%
31-45 min	3%	6%	6%	11%	23%	26%
46-60 min	6%	6%	6%	11%	17%	14%
>60 min	0%	3%	3%	6%	14%	23%
Did not answer	31%	43%	40%	40%	9%	9%

**Table 2-5: Travel Time Analysis for City Dwellers (35 people)**

	Grocery Shopping	Other shopping	Restaurant	Work	Max time to work	Max time to other destinations
<10 min	23%	2%	5%	5%	5%	0%
10-30 min	60%	63%	74%	42%	23%	47%
31-45 min	2%	5%	5%	16%	28%	23%
46-60 min	0%	5%	2%	12%	28%	12%
>60 min	0%	0%	0%	2%	7%	9%
Did not answer	14%	26%	14%	23%	9%	9%

**Table 2-7: Travel Patterns of Asian Urban-grown Immigrants**

Travel Time	Grocery shopping	Other shopping	Restaurant	Work	Max time to work	Max time to other destinations
<10 min	54%	23%	21%	11%	8%	3%
11-30 min	26%	46%	48%	33%	24%	41%
31-45 min	0%	5%	6%	14%	31%	28%
46-60 min	0%	0%	0%	10%	24%	15%
>60 min	0%	0%	0%	3%	4%	8%
Did not answer	19%	26%	25%	30%	9%	6%

**Table 2-6: Travel Time Analysis for Suburbanites (103 people)**

	Grocery Shopping	Other shopping	Restaurant	Work	Max time to work	Max time to other destinations
<10 min	14%	0%	0%	0%	14%	0%
10-30 min	19%	29%	33%	19%	14%	33%
31-45 min	0%	5%	0%	5%	19%	19%
46-60 min	0%	0%	0%	19%	38%	24%
>60 min	0%	0%	0%	0%	14%	24%
Did not answer	67%	67%	67%	57%	0%	0%

**Table 2-8: Travel Patterns of Latino Urban-grown Immigrants**

For the sub-groups, the findings show that all groups spend more time getting to work. Tables 2-7,

	Grocery Shopping	Other shopping	Restaurant	Work	Max time to work	Max time to other destinations
<10 min	45%	13%	13%	10%	10%	6%
10-30 min	42%	68%	68%	35%	26%	48%
31-45 min	0%	0%	3%	16%	29%	26%
46-60 min	0%	0%	0%	6%	23%	10%
>60 min	0%	0%	0%	3%	3%	10%
Did not answer	13%	19%	16%	29%	10%	0%

Table 2-9: Travel Patterns of US Suburban-grown Residents

### 6. Home Image Preferences

Overall, the image survey yielded widely ranging results across and among ethnic groups. Table 2-10 shows the results of the image survey.

Image C2 depicts a large single-family house with a large lot and two-car garage. 82% of all participants rated this image positively, as a 4 or 5. Of those 20 who ranked this image as a 3 (neutral) or under, 18 were US-born, and 2 were Latino.

Score	A1	A2	A3	B1	B2	B3	C1	C2	C3	D1	D2	D3
1	17%	41%	26%	15%	13%	6%	2%	4%	10%	10%	5%	1%
2	39%	30%	36%	37%	21%	20%	8%	7%	16%	27%	14%	8%
3	22%	21%	17%	26%	39%	38%	17%	7%	24%	34%	28%	21%
4	14%	6%	13%	20%	20%	28%	37%	20%	28%	17%	38%	40%
5	8%	2%	7%	2%	6%	6%	36%	62%	21%	10%	16%	30%
Did not answer			1%		1%	2%			1%	2%		

Table 2-10: Overall Image Survey Results



Results from the image survey reveal that across three groups, safety and education for children was of primary concern when choosing a residential location. Even younger generations that currently prefer an urban mixed-use lifestyle anticipate moving to a residential neighborhood in a safe suburb in a reputable school district when they grow older and/or their circumstances change. Overall, however, the results show that very few survey participants preferred the higher-density mixed-use areas. These data reflect an overall preference for the large single-family detached home complete with three-car garage.

In brief, these overall results report the demographics of our study group and point to several conclusions regarding current lifestyle choices and preferences. First, Asians and Latinos in general have more urban living experiences than US-born residents. Second, the majority (80%) of all survey participants prefer to live in a single-family detached house. Also, most survey participants would prefer to keep their commuting times under 45 minutes. Interestingly, city dwellers drive longer than suburbanites do to reach grocery stores. US-born residents are more willing to drive longer to other destinations while Asians and Latinos are more willing to drive longer to work. Latinos use public transit the most, while Asians drive the most to reach their destinations. A final conclusion was in the image survey: the image depicting the large single-family detached house received extremely positive ratings, most from the Asian and Latino subgroups.

The next section will analyze each subgroup’s lifestyle preferences, and Section 4 will cross analyze Latinos and Asians who grew up in urban areas and compare their lifestyles with the US-born residents who grew up in suburban areas. These next two sections will provide greater depth to the above findings, especially on the attraction of the single-family detached house.

### **Section 3. Analysis of Cultural Groups: US-born Residents, Latino and Asian Immigrants**

Even though increasing numbers of Latino and Asian immigrants are making the suburbs their home, an overwhelming majority of them came from urban environments before their migrations. Compared to US-born suburban residents, who grew up mostly in the suburbs, Asian and Latino suburban immigrants have lived mostly in cities.

#### **1. US-Born Residents:**

##### **Socio-cultural background and Lifestyle Review**

The “melting pot” composition of the United States, with its history of immigration, is reflected in the ethnic heterogeneity of the country’s cities and suburbs. Historically, the nation’s population has shifted from rural to urban, and from urban to suburban. The suburbs are also becoming more diverse, as increasing numbers of new immigrants are moving to both inner-beltway suburbs and cities. As a result, the suburbs turn into the “ethnoburbs” (Li, 1998) growing farther and farther outside of cities, encompassing rural small towns and subdividing farms. What caused these major population shifts?

The industrial revolution led more Americans to live in cities than lived on farms by 1920 (Gillham, 2002). The first suburbs in the United States were designed primarily as a quality-of-life measure, for the bourgeois to escape the unhealthy perils of the city (Hayden, 2003). With advancements in transportation such as the railroads, streetcars, and automobiles, suburbs were built as “places of refuge and exclusivity for the middle and upper classes from the ‘invasion and succession’ of immigrants, the poor and industry into the inner city” (Mahler, 1995). The housing finance system established before World War II also fueled suburbanization on a larger scale as a more cost-effective alternative to living in the cities. As a response to the high number of foreclosures and housing shortages, the Federal Housing Administration insured long-term loans made by private banks for housing purchase and construction and decreased the interest rates on mortgages, making it less expensive to own than to rent. As a result,

suburban homeownership was economically feasible for large numbers of people in the US.

The suburbs have become distinct cities, less dependent on the central city for jobs and services. Mahler explains (ibid.), “as the suburbs became more populated, they created new demands for retail stores, public services such as schools and hospitals, and consumer services such as child care and cleaning, which, in turn, generated more local jobs”. As city infrastructure aged and increasing numbers of employees moved to the suburbs, more companies and businesses chose to disaggregate their operations and move to the suburbs as well. Land and property taxes were also less expensive the farther away from the cities they located. With more jobs in the suburbs, US-born and new immigrants alike tended to move to the suburbs, where they could find high-tech jobs (in the case of Asian immigrants to the I-270 corridor in Maryland) or cleaning and landscaping jobs (in the case of Salvadoran immigrants to Maryland suburbs).

The suburban patterns of the past fifty years show that the majority of those younger generations born in the US grew up or lived part of their lives in the suburbs. The US-born were chosen for this study solely to show the differences between US-born and immigrant individuals and groups. Therefore, the US-born participants act as the control group, and include any ethnic group born in the United States. The hypothesis was that the results would show different living preferences among age groups, middle-aged participants preferring the large single-family detached house, and younger and older generations preferring a more pedestrian-oriented city environment. Another expectation was that the rural image (C3) would be highly rated among those born in the United States.

#### **A. Demographic Distributions**

The sample set includes 55 individuals born in the US. Eight of these were African-American, two were Asian American, one was second-generation Latino, 39 were white, and five were other/unknown. 55 percent of the participants were married, 45 percent were single.

#### **B. Annual Incomes**

Figure 3-1 shows the breakdown of the US-born participants’ household income:

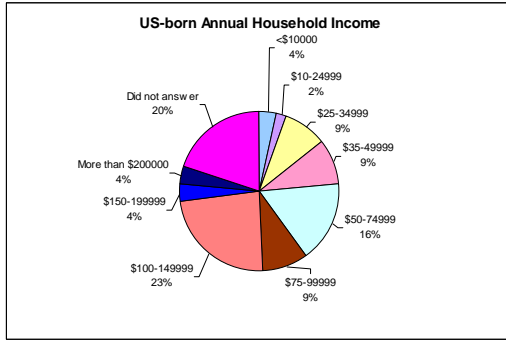


Figure 3-1. US-born Residents Annual Income

Note the high percentage of US-born residents who make above \$100,000 a year (23 percent).

**C. Residential Location Analysis**

The background of the US-born individual varies greatly, but it is clear that more people (76%) live in the suburbs now than did in the past (56%). The suburb also wins in having the most people preferring to live there (61%). Tables 3-1 to 3-3 reflect the backgrounds and preferences of the US-born participants. Note the high percentage of US-born residents who grew up in the suburbs (56%) and the even higher percentage that currently live in the suburbs (77%).

Area (Grew up)	Count	Percentage
City	12	22%
Rural area	1	2%
Small town	11	20%
Suburb	31	56%

Table 3-1 Area US-born Residents Grew Up

Area (Now)	Count	Percentage
City	10	18%
Rural area	0	0%
Small town	3	5%
Suburb	42	77%

Table 3-2 Area US-born Residents Live Now

Area (Preferred)	Count	Percentage
City	12	22%
Rural area	3	5%
Small town	5	9%
Suburb	34	62%
city or rural	1	2%

Table 3-3 Area US-born Residents Preferred to Move to

**D. Housing Type Analysis**

The majority (89%) of US-born participants grew up in single-family houses. 62 percent currently live in single-family houses. 77 percent would prefer to live in a single-family house. Townhouses are second choice to single-family detached houses. Even if participants prefer to live in cities, they still prefer a single-family detached house. The following tables 3-4 to 3-6 reflect these percentages.

Housing Type (Grew up)	Count	Percentage
Single-family house	49	89%
Townhouse	2	4%
Apartment	3	5%
Didn't answer	1	2%

Table 3-4 Housing Types US-born Residents Grew Up

Housing Type (Now)	Count	Percentage
Single-family house	34	62%
Townhouse	12	22%
Apartment	9	16%

Table 3-5 Housing Types US-born Residents Live Now

Housing Type (Preferred)	Count	Percentage
Single-family house	42	77%
Townhouse	9	16%
Apartment	3	5%
Other	1	2%

Table 3-6 Housing Types US-born Residents Preferred to Have



**E. Home Image Preferences**

The following table 3-7 reflects the scores US-born participants rated for the image survey. Note the percentages in red: low scores for image A2 (city high-rises) and high scores for images C1, C2, and D3 (suburban single-family detached houses).

Score (US-born)	A1	A2	A3	B1	B2	B3	C1	C2	C3	D1	D2	D3
1	11%	53%	27%	20%	7%	5%	4%	9%	13%	7%	9%	2%
2	40%	24%	16%	33%	20%	18%	15%	15%	20%	33%	25%	4%
3	20%	20%	24%	22%	44%	35%	18%	12%	22%	31%	29%	18%
4	20%	2%	18%	24%	20%	33%	38%	22%	22%	13%	29%	40%
5	9%	1%	13%	1%	9%	9%	25%	42%	22%	15%	8%	36%
Did not answer			2%						1%	1%		

Table 3-7 US-born residents Image Survey Results



**2. Latino Immigrants:**

**Socio-cultural background and Lifestyle Review**

Latinos are the fastest growing ethnic minority group in the Washington, DC area, and have even become the nation’s largest minority (Cohn, 2003). The 2000 U.S. Census reflects 44,954 Latinos in Washington, DC, not taking into account the 6.9% undercount of Latinos nationwide (Council of Latino Agencies, 2002). This represents a growth of 37% from the 1990 Census data. Much of this growth is due to immigration rather than fertility. The DC neighborhoods of Mount Pleasant, Columbia Heights, and Adams Morgan are long established communities of Latinos, as shown by the wide array of multiracial and multilingual services and activities.

The Brookings Institution reports more than 15,000 immigrants in this area (one-third of the total

population), with 48.6 percent of Salvadorans (Singer, 2003). In Buckingham, Arlington County, “nearly half of the immigrant population of 4,595 is either from El Salvador or Bolivia” (ibid.). Outside the city, the areas of Silver Spring, Wheaton, Rockville, and Gaithersburg in Montgomery County, are experiencing increasing numbers of Latinos—Silver Spring is 22.4 percent Salvadoran—either from former DC residents in search of better schools, lower housing costs, and neighborhood safety, or from immigrants who move directly to these suburbs (ibid.). In both cases, either the suburbs are more desirable because of the jobs Montgomery County has to offer, or because the newcomers have family members or friends already established in the area, as *chain migration* (Klinthall, 2001). Based on our fieldwork, one of the Salvadoran respondents says, “I think that a lot of people, depending on how well it goes, first move to a place where there’s a lot of concentration of Hispanics, and once they improve their lives, they decide to move.” A Cuban respondent says that some immigrants stay in these areas either to maintain their culture or to create a sense of community— she once lived in a neighborhood in Florida that was 40% Cuban.

Some Salvadoran immigrants illegally crossed the border into California then migrated east to the Washington, DC area. According to a Salvadoran respondent, they migrated eastward because of “what the area offers: they earn more money here, many of them are housekeepers, so their lifestyle is better in this part of the United States than the other side.” Other immigrants came directly to Washington, DC for the city’s opportunities. Salvadoran immigrants specifically seem to have migrated directly to the suburbs because the traditional immigrant male work (landscaping, construction), and the traditional immigrant female work (housekeeping, childcare, elder care) are both located in the suburbs with the large yards and houses to maintain (Mahler, 1995). The Washington, DC Metropolitan Area also has many more employment opportunities compared to other US cities.

Langley Park and other heavily Latino populated areas seem to be temporary way stations, where immigrants will live in crowded conditions long enough to earn money to rent or buy their own place, usually no longer than two years. Another

Salvadoran respondent reported that their family shared rooms and apartments with other families and progressively moved into larger places until now they have their own single-family home. It is also very common for immigrant men to leave their families back in their home countries and work for enough time to be able to house them as well (ibid.). Based on our fieldwork, an “expert” interviewee reported there was a wave of migration to Washington, DC during the 1960s when diplomats would bring their housekeepers from El Salvador and employ them in Washington, DC. One of the Latina respondents may have been one of these women.

According to the report prepared by Council of Latino Agencies (2002), a group of Latinos located in the Washington, DC metropolitan area includes new immigrants from El Salvador and other Central American countries in the two most recent decades. Over one third of DC Latinos are Central American and of that group, the majority is from El Salvador. This contrasts greatly from other Latino immigrants in the US, who are mainly Mexican, Puerto Rican, or Cuban. The Salvadoran group immigrated to the United States as political refugees, or for economic reasons (employment opportunities). The report points out that much of DC’s Latino population boom in the 1980s is due primarily to “refugees fleeing war-torn Central America, particularly Salvadorans, Nicaraguans, and, to a lesser extent, Guatemalans and Hondurans.” As a result, the DC area has become “one of the largest Central American communities in the country and has the second-highest concentration of Salvadorans in the U.S., behind Los Angeles” (ibid.). During our fieldwork, a Latina respondent mentions examples of areas where many Salvadorans fled to come to the United States, San Miguel and Morazán, where battles were fought during the civil war.

How many Latinos are there in the DC area? Not only is there a 6% undercount in the Census of Latinos nationwide, but the Immigration and Naturalization Service estimated in 1996 that there were 30,000 undocumented immigrants in the District of Columbia alone. As a result, governments are unable to plan for a population that does not officially exist. As a result, the Latino population around the Nation’s capital area is underserved. More important, it is easy for employers to exploit undocumented

immigrants, since they are “afraid to report abuses by employers, landlords, or police for fear of being deported” (ibid.).

Latinos in the Washington, DC area face problems ranging from housing and employment, to discrimination. Perhaps one of the most basic reasons for DC Latinos moving to the suburbs includes the lack of affordable quality housing. According to the Council of Latino Agencies,

“...affordable housing is the most serious and overarching threat to the Latino community. Throughout the District of Columbia, low-income Latino households face the worst case housing needs – they do not receive federal housing assistance, they pay more than 50% of their income for rent, and they earn less than half of the area’s median family income. Many Latino families live below the poverty line, and while financially eligible for existing housing programs, they encounter barriers of discrimination, language isolation, and the District’s worsening housing crisis that leaves them underserved by the housing programs that do exist.”

Another reason Latinos may be leaving DC to move to the suburbs or moving to the suburbs directly is for better schools. Without access to basic education, Latinos are limited to entry-level jobs, in most cases working two or three jobs to make ends meet and to send earnings back to their mother countries. According to Mark Rubin in the Council of Latino Agencies, “since 1990 most Latino workers have remained in lower paying occupations, often working part-time with no job security or employee benefits such as health insurance” (ibid.).

A biased Federal neutralizing policy has discriminated against refugees from Central America for two decades. In the 1980s and 1990s, many Central Americans and Cubans applied for political asylum with varying degrees of success depending on country of origin. For example, “between 1983 and 1991, almost one fourth (24.8%) of asylum applications filed by Nicaraguan nationals and 18.5% of those filed by Cuban nationals were approved, while only 2.8% of Salvadorans and 2.1% of Guatemalans were granted asylum during this same period” (ibid.). This disparity of approval rates is due to the federal government’s favor of those fleeing

communist or socialist governments, such as those in Cuba and Nicaragua. The federal government did not acknowledge the many human rights abuses under U.S.-supported organizations in countries such as Guatemala or El Salvador, so those escaping these countries were regularly denied asylum. The repeated denials of political asylum to Salvadoran and Guatemalan immigrants have dramatically set them back in their quest to achieve U.S. citizenship. Without citizenship, they will not be able to demand labor protections, salary increases, and employment benefits, which would help them achieve the sought-after “American dream.” In place of political asylum, the U.S. government grants immigrants Temporary Protected Status (TPS) that authorizes refugees to work legally for a limited time in the U.S., but does not allow these immigrants to settle down and feel financially secure.

**A. Demographic Distributions**

The Latino sample set included 30 survey participants, coming from Central and South American countries such as Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, and Peru. One-third of the participants were from El Salvador. 60 percent were married, 40 percent single. The majority (30%) of those sampled were in their thirties. Figure 3-2 depicts the age distribution of the Latino subgroup:

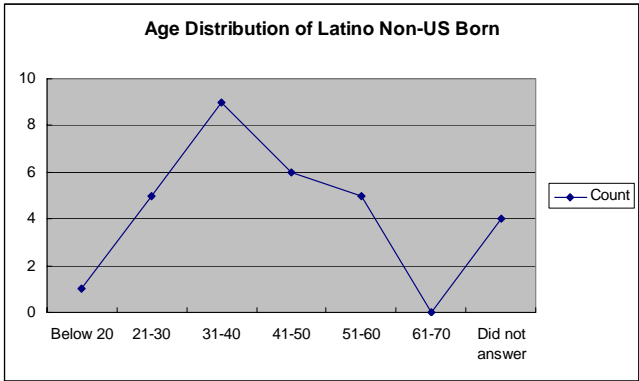


Figure 3-2 Age Distribution of Latino Immigrants

**B. Annual Incomes**

Figure 3-3 depicts the income distribution for the Latino subsample. Note that 66 percent of the Latino

households in the sample make less than \$50,000 a year.

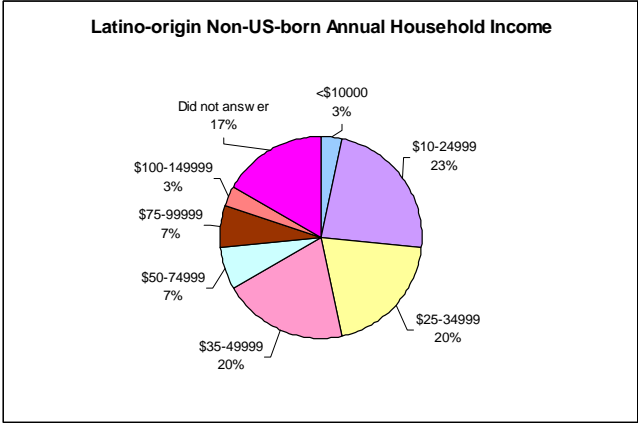


Figure 3-3 Latino Immigrants Annual Income

**C. Residential Location Analysis**

The data show that most (70%) of Latino participants grew up in city environments, and half live in the city now (while 47% live in the suburbs). However, Latinos’ seem to have a different perception of what the “city” is. Of those who consider where they live now a city, 57.5 percent live in Gaithersburg, 10 percent live in Germantown, 7.5 percent live in Rockville and 2.5 percent live in Prince George’s County. As suburbs become more like cities, the lines between these areas blur. This blurred concept of what is “city” and what is suburb leads to a new possibility, that is, “suburban city.” Based on our analysis among Latino/Asian immigrants, and American-born residents, we will propose the design and planning alternatives of shaping “suburban cityscape” for the suburban changes in our conclusion.

Back to the Latino survey analysis, regardless of how “city” is perceived, 67 percent of Latino participants prefer to live in the city, and 27 percent prefer the suburb. Perhaps the higher density commercial areas of Gaithersburg and Rockville are more attractive for their convenience and proximity to public transportation. Alternatively, Gaithersburg is a city compared to rural areas of Central America where some immigrants may have come from. Tables 3-8 to 3-10 reflect the past, present, and preferred residential locations of the Latino survey participants.

Area (Grew Up)	Count	Percentage
City	21	70%
Rural area	2	7%
Suburb	6	20%
Did not answer	1	3%

Table 3-8 Area Latino Immigrants Grew Up

Area (Now)	Count	Percentage
City	15	50%
Small town	1	3%
Suburb	14	47%

Table 3-9 Area Latino Immigrants Live Now

Area (Preferred)	Count	Percentage
City	20	67%
Rural area	1	3%
Suburb	8	27%
Did not answer	1	3%

Table 3-10 Area Latino Immigrants Preferred to Move

#### D. Housing Type Analysis

The majority of Latino survey respondents grew up (67%) and prefer (73%) to live in single-family houses. The present situation reflects that most (40%) live in apartments. These data may reflect the temporary nature of areas such as Langley Park, where Latinos will only stay for a time until they can move elsewhere, such as a Latina respondent's family did in the process of assimilating to life in the Washington, DC suburbs. The following tables 3-11 to 3-13 reflect the housing types where Latino survey participants have lived, are living, and would like to live.

Housing Type (Grew up)	Count	Percentage
Single-family house	20	67%
Townhouse	3	10%
Apartment	7	23%

Table 3-11 Housing Types Latino Immigrants Grew Up

Housing Type (Now)	Count	Percentage
Single-family house	10	33%
Townhouse	7	23%
Apartment	12	40%
Did not answer	1	3%

Table 3-12 Housing Types Latino Immigrants Live Now

Housing Type (Preferred)	Count	Percentage
Single-family house	22	73%
Townhouse	4	13%
Apartment	3	10%
Other	1	3%

Table 3-13 Housing Types Latino Immigrants Preferred to Have

#### E. Home Image Preferences

The following table 3-14 reflects the types of environments that are appealing to Latinos who have immigrated to the US. Note the high scores for the suburban images, such as C1, C2, D2, and D3 and the low scores for the urban image of A3. 80 percent of Latino respondents rated image C2 as a five (strongly like).

Score (Latino)	A1	A2	A3	B1	B2	B3	C1	C2	C3	D1	D2	D3
1	16%	23%	17%	3%	7%	0%	3%	3%	13%	13%	3%	0%
2	47%	44%	67%	44%	23%	12%	3%	0%	10%	12%	7%	8%
3	23%	20%	7%	30%	37%	18%	10%	3%	20%	42%	30%	25%
4	7%	13%	3%	23%	27%	13%	27%	14%	24%	25%	40%	40%
5	7%	0%	6%	0%	6%	5%	57%	80%	33%	5%	20%	27%
Did not answer						2%				3%		

Table 3-14 Latino Immigrant Image Survey Results



### 3. Asian Immigrants:

#### **Socio-cultural Background and Lifestyle Review**

In the last fifteen years, the number of immigrants who have relocated from their homelands to the United States has grown at a tremendous pace. One third of the present immigrant population within the United States arrived after 1990. Out of the more than 240,000 legal immigrants who came to live in the metropolitan area during the 1990s, about half of them were from the following ten countries: El Salvador, Vietnam, India, China, the Philippines, South Korea, Ethiopia, Iran, Pakistan and Peru. The level of immigration from Asia is particularly significant (Singer et. al., 2001).

Asian immigrants are more likely to move to the outer suburbs, while Latin American and African immigrants tend to live within the Beltway. Asian immigrants are the most suburban of the three broad regional origin groups presented, with 56 percent living outside the Beltway (ibid.).

One of the most Asian-concentrated areas is Montgomery County, Maryland. Today, one out of five residents in Montgomery County is an immigrant. Within Maryland, the 1990 Census indicates that one out of four immigrants came from an Asian homeland such as Vietnam, Taiwan or China. Of the 12 census tracts in the state with the most Asians, 10 are in Montgomery County, according to the 2000 Census. Montgomery County is home to 47 percent of the state's 210,929 Asians. Asians make up 11.3 percent of the county's 873,341 residents.<sup>4</sup>

The large influx of Asians into Montgomery County in the last decade occurred during the same period that resulted in the rapid suburbanization of communities located along the I-270 Corridor. During

the 1990s, and still today, the growth of suburban developments along I-270 went hand-in-hand with the growth of biotech and information technology companies that sprang up along Interstate 270. In the 1990s a large number of first generation Asians left their homelands for education and job opportunities within the biotech and information technology companies that predominate the visual landscape along I-270 between Rockville and Germantown. The biotech and computer boom of the 1990s that led to the building of corporate offices and transportation/housing infrastructure along the I-270 Corridor is the same boom that enticed Taiwanese to leave their homelands and relocate in the "Technology Corridor" section of Montgomery County.

A previous study conducted by Dr. Chang revealed that (A) most of the Taiwanese immigrants who have relocated to the I-270 corridor previously lived in mixed-use, high density urban areas like the one shown in Figure 3-3; (B) most of them currently live in standard American suburban homes like that shown in Figure 3-4 and (C) the longer they lived a Montgomery County suburban lifestyle, the likelier it was that they preferred a community that embodied the kinds of "urban convenience" they had experienced within their pre-immigration urban lives (Chang, 2002).



**Figure 3-3. Most Taiwanese American first generation immigrants lived in this typical Taiwanese mixed-use urban neighborhood before they migrated to the U.S. (Photo taken by Shenglin Chang)**

<sup>4</sup> Census 2000 Maryland Newslines Special Report. <http://www.newslines.umd.edu/business/specialreports/census/montgomeryco.htm> April, 10, 2001 update. (6/11/02 logon) Audrey Singer, Samantha Friedman, Ivan Cheung, and Marie Price, "The World in a Zip Code: Greater Washington, D.C. as a New Region of Immigration." The Brookings Institution (April 2001). Shenglin Chang and Ping Sung field work, (2001 and 2002)



Figure 3-4. The majority of the first generation Taiwanese Americans move into a typical suburban house with two-car garage . (image source: longandfoster.com)

The target Asian Americans in this report are primarily of Chinese and Taiwanese descent. They came to the United States in pursuit of higher education. Most of them work in high-tech related industries and academics. When they choose their neighborhood, school district is the most important factor, because they traditionally put very high values on education (Chang, forthcoming). Other factors, according to our fieldwork, include safety, easy access to highways, and investment. For them, living in a suburban single-family house signifies a successful migration and higher social status. Most of them found the better living quality they pursued by leaving their crowded home countries in Asia.

**A. Demographic Distributions**

The Asian subset included 60 survey participants. 50 percent were born in China, 43 percent were born in Taiwan, 2 percent in Hong Kong, 3 percent in Malaysia, and 2 percent in South Korea. 53 percent of the Asian survey participants were in their thirties (Figure 3-5).

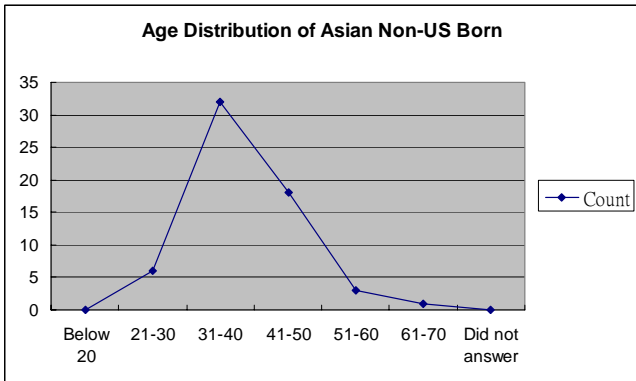


Figure 3-5 Age Distribution of Asian Immigrants

**B. Annual Incomes**

This subset is also higher-income than the Latino and US-born subsets, with 45 percent of Asian households making \$100,000 or more per year (Figure 3-6). 88 percent of the subset were married, and 10 percent single.

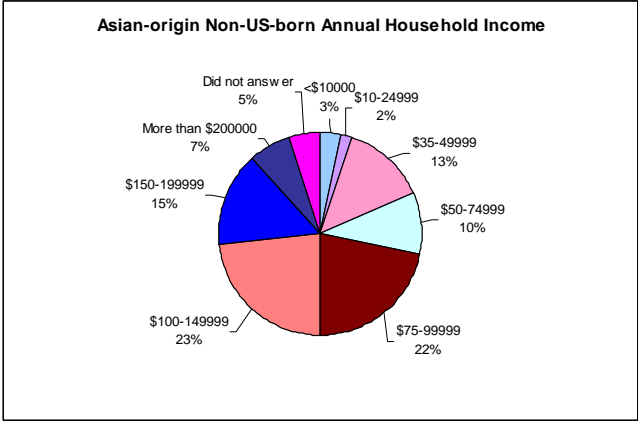


Figure 3-6 Asian Immigrants Annual Income

**C. Residential Location Analysis**

The data show that the majority of the Asian participants (72%) grew up in a city environment, and 78 percent now live in the suburbs. The majority (75%) also preferred to live in the suburbs. Tables 3-15 to 3-17 show the results of the past, present, and preferred residential locations.

Area (Grew Up)	Count	Percentage
City	43	72%
Rural area	4	7%
Small town	1	2%
Suburb	12	20%

Table 3-15 Area Asian Immigrants Grew Up

Area (Now)	Count	Percentage
City	10	17%
Rural area	1	2%
Small town	2	3%
Suburb	47	78%

Table 3-16 Area Asian Immigrants Live Now

Area Preferred	Count	Percentage
City	7	12%
Rural area	6	10%
Small town	2	3%
Suburb	45	75%

Table 3-17 Area Asian Immigrants Preferred to Move

### D. Housing Type Analysis

The results on housing type show a dramatic change of life for the Asian survey participants. While the majority (48%) grew up in an apartment, 53 percent now live in a single-family house. Even more overwhelming than Asians' preference for the suburbs is Asians' preference for the single-family house. 87 percent of Asian survey participants prefer to live in a single-family house. Tables 3-18 to 3-20 reflect these results.

Housing Type (grew up)	Count	Percentage
Single-family house	19	32%
Apartment	29	48%
Townhouse	9	15%
Other	3	5%

Table 3-18 Housing Types Asian Immigrants Grew Up

Housing Type (now)	Count	Percentage
Single-family house	32	53%
Apartment	11	18%
Townhouse	15	25%
Other	1	2%
Did not answer	1	2%

Table 3-19 Housing Types Asian Immigrants Live Now

Housing Type (Preferred)	Count	Percentage
Single-family house	52	87%
Apartment	1	2%
Townhouse	6	10%
Did not answer	1	2%

Table 3-20 Housing Types Asian Immigrants Preferred to Have

### E. Home Image Preferences

The results from the image survey show that Asian participants favor the suburban single-family house. They gave lower scores to the urban images (A1, A2, and A3), and high scores for the suburban images (C1, C2, D2, and D3). The most popular image was C2. 72 percent rated this large suburban single-family house as a five (strongly like). Table 3-21 summarizes the complete image survey results.

Score (Asian)	A1	A2	A3	B1	B2	B3	C1	C2	C3	D1	D2	D3
1	22%	38%	28%	17%	22%	10%	0%	0%	5%	13%	3%	0%
2	35%	29%	38%	37%	20%	20%	5%	3%	15%	12%	7%	8%
3	23%	23%	17%	28%	37%	42%	18%	3%	28%	42%	30%	25%
4	13%	7%	13%	15%	17%	25%	42%	22%	37%	25%	40%	40%
5	7%	3%	2%	3%	3%	2%	35%	72%	15%	5%	20%	27%
Did not answer			2%		1%	1%				3%		

Table 3-21 Asian Immigrant Image Survey Results



To sum up, while all subgroups come from different living environments, they all seem to converge on the same preferences: the large single-family detached house situated in the suburbs. This section explained to the reader the diverse backgrounds of our different subgroups and the path that brought them to the suburbs. The following section will analyze across groups to find out specifically how the percentages of people have changed from city to suburb environments.

## ***Urban/Suburban-experience Analysis***



## Section 4. Comparative Analysis of Cultural Groups: Asian and Latino “Urban Grown,” and US “Suburban Grown”

How did the diverse suburbanites make it to the suburbs and why? This section compares lifestyle backgrounds and housing preferences across three different groups: (1) Asian “urban grown” immigrants (Asian urban), (2) Latino “urban grown” immigrants (Latino urban), and (3) US-born “suburban grown” residents (US suburban).

The questions addressed in the section include:

- Who has what lifestyle experiences?
- Where do people live?
- Where do people want to live?
- Where are people living now compared to their backgrounds?
- Where are those with urban lifestyle experiences living now?
- How often do people go to different destinations?
- What are people’s transportation means?
- How long do these trip takes?

The highlighted findings are:

- 1.) US-born respondents, coming from suburban environments, prefer a diverse choice of residential environments: small town, urban, suburb, and rural.
- 2.) Latino immigrants would prefer to live in higher-density, city-like environments. However, they perceive suburban commercial areas as their model city.
- 3.) Asian immigrants, despite their urban living backgrounds, would prefer to live in suburban environments because their priority is education for their children; therefore, the school districts in the suburbs are highly appealing to them. Also, the large suburban single-family house symbolizes the American Dream, and is very desirable.
- 4.) There are less percentage (55 %) of the US suburban-grown group who drive to work, in comparison to Asian urban-grown group’s 75 % and Latino’s 70 %.

5) The US suburban-grown group also has more diverse transportation means than the Asian and Latino groups.

### 1. Residential Location Analysis

#### A. Past Residential Locations

Who has what lifestyle experiences? Figure 4-1 shows where survey participants grew up, by ethnic group. Note the high proportion of Latinos and Asians who grew up in the city (70 and 72 percent, respectively), and the majority (56 percent) of US-born participants who grew up in the suburbs.

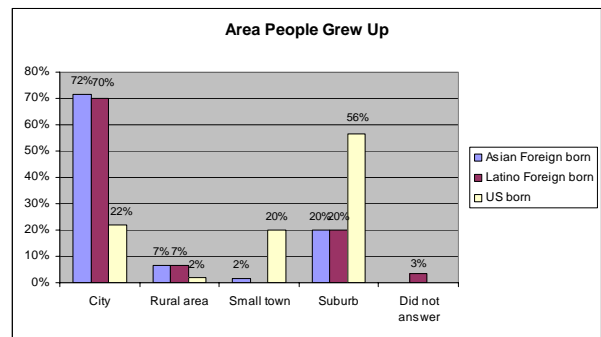


Figure 4-1 Area people grew up

#### B. Present Residential Locations

According to Figure 4-2, most of those surveyed live in the suburbs. Most of the surveys were conducted in Maryland suburbs in order to target our group of suburban new immigrants. This chart reflects the high percentage of Latinos who consider where they live a city, even though 57.5 percent live in Gaithersburg and 10 percent live in Germantown.

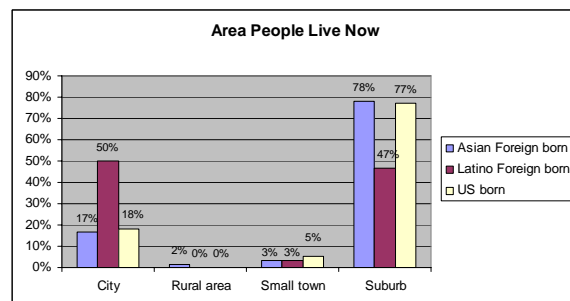


Figure 4-2 Area people live now

As stated earlier, most of the jobs targeted to new immigrants are located in the suburbs: high-tech jobs for Asian immigrants, and landscaping and housekeeping jobs for Latino immigrants. The

increase of US-born living in the suburbs has increased, from 56 percent to 77 percent, reflecting a continuing trend towards suburbanization.

**C. Preferred Residential Locations**

Figure 4-3 illustrates the overwhelming numbers of people, US- and foreign-born alike, who prefer to live in the suburbs<sup>5</sup>. The 67 percent of Latinos who prefer to live in the city may consider Gaithersburg and other Washington, DC suburbs to be a “city.” Therefore, these data on Latinos are inconclusive.

As expected, the 75 percent of Asian immigrants who favor the suburbs along with the 72 percent who rated image C2 as a five may reflect their preferences for the large suburban single-family house as a symbol of the American Dream. An unexpected result is the higher percentage of Latino immigrants (80 percent) who rated image C2 as a five. This may also be a desire to attain the American Dream, but more than anything may reflect an escape from crowded conditions in which they either currently live or have lived in the past.

Moreover, for whichever reasons Asian, Latino, and US-born participants choose to live in the suburbs, they are converging there, resulting in a very ethnically heterogeneous area that historically was unique only to cities.

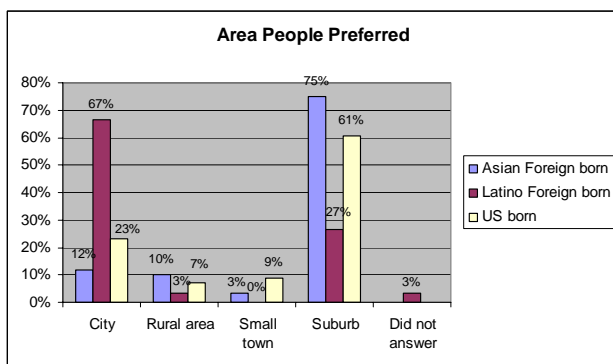


Figure 4-3 Area people preferred

Table 4-1 shows the breakdown of present housing types by group. Note that higher percentages of Latinos live in apartments, while the majority of US-born and Asian residents live in single-family detached houses.

US/ Non-US born	Housing Type	Percentage
Asian immigrants	Single-family house	53%
	Apartment	18%
	Townhouse	25%
	Other	2%
	Did not answer	2%
Latino immigrants	Single-family house	33%
	Townhouse	23%
	Apartment	40%
	Did not answer	3%
US-born residents	Single-family house	62%
	Townhouse	22%
	Apartment	16%

Table 4-1 Present Housing Type by Ethnicity

**2. Shift of Residential Locations**

The process of immigration and assimilation results in inevitable changes in lifestyle, desired or not. Immigrants currently living in US suburbs originally thought to live there merely for the employment opportunities (Latino) or quality of school districts, may actually live there or prefer to live there primarily to achieve the American Dream. Where are those with urban lifestyle experiences living now? The following diagrams illustrate this shift of residential locations among those Asian and Latino immigrants who grew up in the city (“urban grown”) (Figure 4-4 and 4-5, respectively), and those US-born who grew up in the suburbs (“suburban grown”)(Figure 4-6).

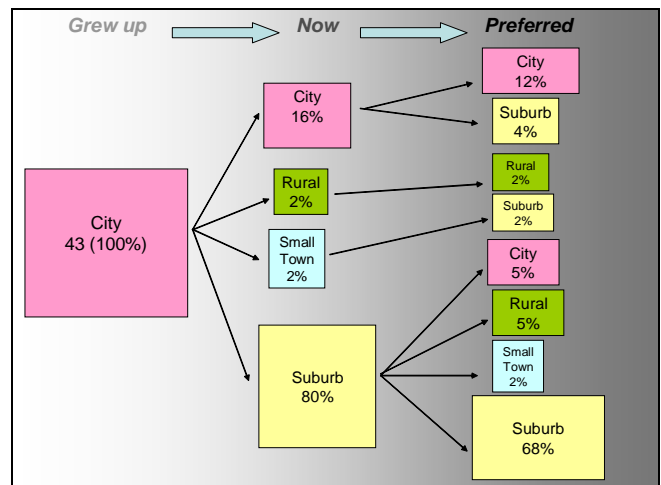


Figure 4-4 Asian Immigrants’ Shift of Residential Location

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix C for complete tables.

Of those “urban grown” Asians, 80 percent live in the suburbs. Most (68 percent) of these participants prefer to stay in the suburbs. For “urban grown” Latinos, 52 percent remain in the city.

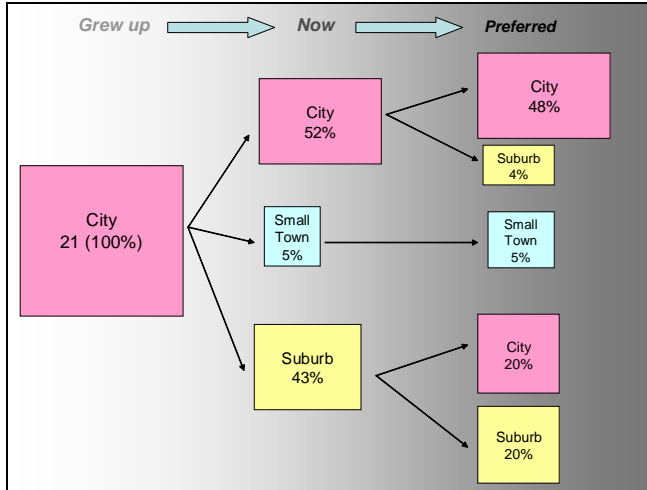


Figure 4-5 Latino Immigrants’ Shift of Residential Location

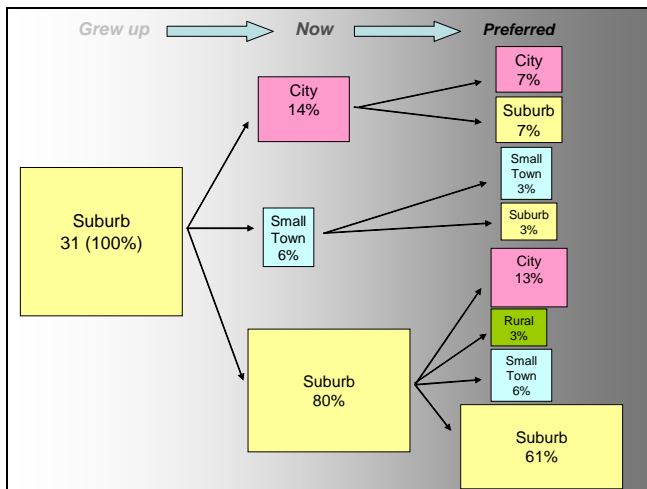


Figure 4-6 US-Born Participants’ Shift of Residential Location

### 3. Travel Pattern Analysis

Table 4-2 and 4-3 are the comparisons for interviewees who currently live in the city (urban interviewees) and suburb (suburban interviewees). Interestingly, based on the survey data, suburban interviewees spend **less** time in traffic. In contrast, urban interviewees would bear longer time (Max time) in traffic.

City (35 count)		Grocery shopping	Other shopping	Restaurant	Work	Max time to work	Max time to other
	Less than 10 min	29%	11%	11%	6%	9%	0%
	11-30 min	31%	31%	34%	26%	29%	29%
	31-45 min	3%	6%	6%	11%	23%	26%
	46-60 min	6%	6%	6%	11%	17%	14%
	>60 min	0%	3%	3%	6%	14%	23%
	Did not answer	31%	43%	40%	40%	9%	9%

Table 4-2 Travel time for people who live in the city

Suburb (103 count)		Grocery shopping	Other shopping	Restaurant	Work	Max time to work	Max time to other
	<10 min	54%	23%	21%	11%	8%	3%
	11-30 min	26%	46%	48%	33%	24%	41%
	31-45 min	0%	5%	6%	14%	31%	28%
	46-60 min	0%	0%	0%	10%	24%	15%
	>60 min	0%	0%	0%	3%	4%	8%
	Did not answer	19%	26%	25%	30%	9%	6%

Table 4-3 Travel time for people who live in the suburbs

Table 4-4, 4-5 and 4-6 analyze the travel patterns among three focus groups: (1) Asian “urban grown” immigrants (Asian urban), (2) Latino “urban grown” immigrants (Latino urban), and (3) US-born “suburban grown” residents (US suburban).

Based on the survey data, the study finds that all three groups spend more time getting to work than to other destinations. Interestingly, Asian and Latino urban groups are willing to spend more time getting to work, while the US suburban group are willing to spend more travel time getting to other destinations.

Another interesting finding is the transportation means to work (walk, bike, drive, public transit, and car pool). The survey found that the US suburban group has more diverse transportation means than the urban immigrant group. 75 percent Asian urban interviewees and 70 percent of Latino urban interviewees drive to work, while only 55 percent US-born suburban interviewees drive to work. The US-born suburban-grown group

has a diverse means of travel. In addition to the 55 percent drivers, 6 percent of them car pool, 13 percent of them take public transportation, and 9 percent of them walk. This result challenges the conventional belief regarding the suburban residents driving more than urban dwellers.

**Asian/Urban**

	Grocery Shopping	Other shopping	Restaurant	Work	Max time to work	Max time to other destinations
<10 min	23%	2%	5%	5%	5%	0%
10-30 min	60%	63%	74%	42%	23%	47%
31-45 min	2%	5%	5%	16%	28%	23%
46-60 min	0%	5%	2%	12%	28%	12%
>60 min	0%	0%	0%	2%	7%	9%
Did not answer	14%	26%	14%	23%	9%	9%

Table 4-4 Travel time for Asian immigrants with City Lifestyle Experiences

**Latino/Urban**

	Grocery Shopping	Other shopping	Restaurant	Work	Max time to work	Max time to other destinations
<10 min	14%	0%	0%	0%	14%	0%
10-30 min	19%	29%	33%	19%	14%	33%
31-45 min	0%	5%	0%	5%	19%	19%
46-60 min	0%	0%	0%	19%	38%	24%
>60 min	0%	0%	0%	0%	14%	24%
Did not answer	67%	67%	67%	57%	0%	0%

Table 4-5 Travel time for Latino immigrants with City Lifestyle Experiences

**US/Suburb**

	Grocery Shopping	Other shopping	Restaurant	Work	Max time to work	Max time to other destinations
<10 min	45%	13%	13%	10%	10%	6%
10-30 min	42%	68%	68%	35%	26%	48%
31-45 min	0%	0%	3%	16%	29%	26%
46-60 min	0%	0%	0%	6%	23%	10%
>60 min	0%	0%	0%	3%	3%	10%
Did not answer	13%	19%	16%	29%	10%	0%

Table 4-6 Travel time for US-born with Suburban Lifestyle Experiences

**4. Home Image Preferences**

Tables 4-7 to 4-9 illustrate the image preferences for the three groups<sup>6</sup>: (1) Asian “urban grown” immigrants (Asian urban), (2) Latino “urban grown” immigrants (Latino urban), and (3) US-born “suburban grown” residents (US suburban).

Score	A1	A2	A3	B1	B2	B3	C1	C2	C3	D1	D2	D3
1	19%	35%	23%	19%	19%	9%	0%	0%	5%	16%	5%	0%
2	37%	26%	40%	37%	21%	19%	7%	5%	18%	12%	9%	9%
3	30%	30%	21%	32%	42%	51%	19%	5%	37%	42%	28%	28%
4	7%	7%	14%	12%	14%	19%	44%	20%	28%	23%	37%	40%
5	7%	2%	2%	0%	2%	2%	30%	70%	12%	2%	21%	23%

Table 4-7 Asian Urban-grown Immigrants

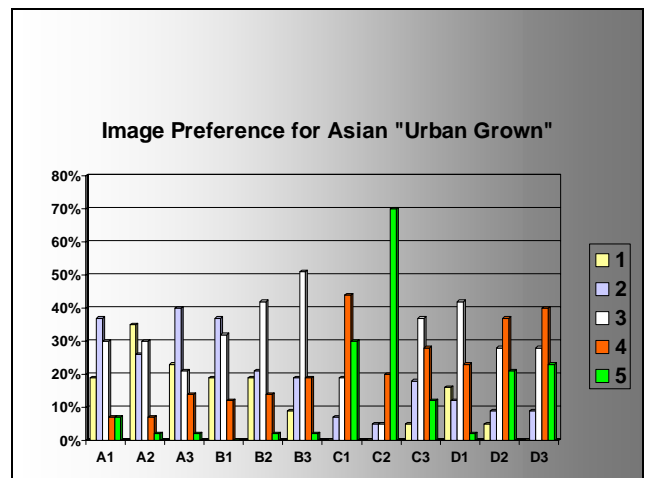


Figure 4-7 Image Preference for Asian “Urban Grown”  
Note that 70 percent of those Asian immigrants with city backgrounds rated the suburban image C2 as a

five (strongly like). They also rated the urban image A3 as one or two.



Score	A1	A2	A3	B1	B2	B3	C1	C2	C3	D1	D2	D3
1	10%	61%	29%	19%	3%	3%	6%	13%	13%	6%	6%	0%
2	42%	23%	19%	42%	23%	23%	10%	3%	19%	36%	20%	3%
3	19%	16%	26%	19%	45%	36%	10%	3%	19%	39%	36%	10%
4	19%	0%	16%	16%	19%	32%	42%	29%	29%	3%	32%	52%
5	10%	0%	10%	4%	10%	6%	32%	52%	16%	16%	6%	35%

Table 4-9 US-born Suburban-grown Residents

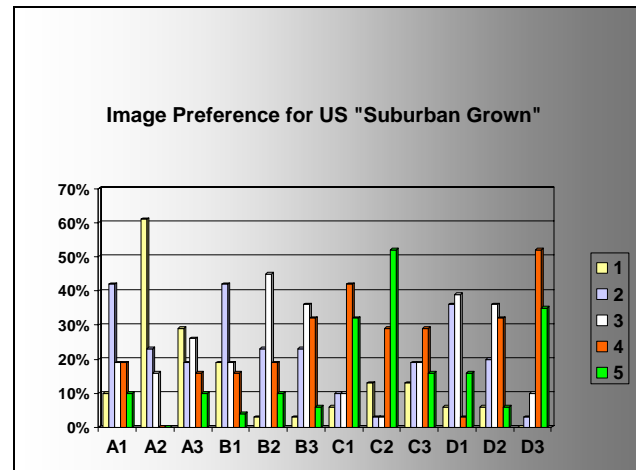


Figure 4-9 Image Preference for US-born "Suburban Grown"

Score	A1	A2	A3	B1	B2	B3	C1	C2	C3	D1	D2	D3
1	14%	24%	19%	5%	0%	0%	5%	5%	19%	10%	0%	0%
2	52%	47%	62%	38%	24%	24%	5%	0%	14%	43%	9%	14%
3	14%	19%	9%	33%	43%	43%	14%	5%	19%	19%	19%	24%
4	10%	10%	5%	24%	28%	14%	19%	14%	19%	14%	48%	29%
5	10%	0%	5%	0%	5%	19%	57%	76%	29%	14%	24%	33%

Table 4-8 Latino Urban-grown Immigrants

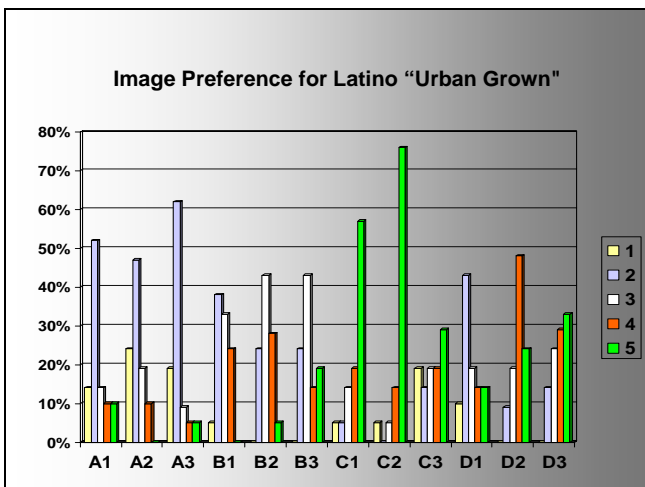


Figure 4-8 Image Preference for Latino "Urban Grown"

Note that 76 percent of Latino immigrants with city backgrounds rated the suburban image C2 as a five (strongly like). The urban image A3 received low scores of one or two from the majority of this group.

As a contrast to the Asian and Latino image preferences, only 52 percent of the US-born survey participants who grew up in the suburbs rated the suburban image C2 as a five. This may be that some have lived the suburban life and find it inconvenient, or it may be for aesthetic reasons.

## Section 5. Analysis of Individual Cultural Cases

The previous section analyzed across subgroups how they came to live in the suburbs. The following section will go deeper into the lives of our respondents in order to explain alternatively the backgrounds and preferences of the survey and interview participants.

### Income Distribution for Interviewees

The interview participants reflect a wide range of incomes, divided almost equally. Results from the individual interviews reveal that there is a great difference in urban living preferences among age groups. For example, younger generations prefer a denser, more mixed-use neighborhood and older generations prefer the tranquility and silence of single-use residential (mostly) single-family detached houses in the suburbs.

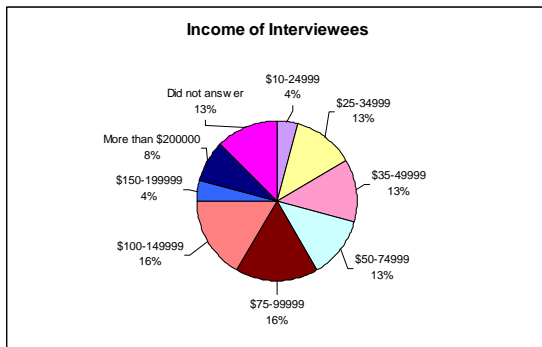


Figure 5-1 Income of interviewees

### US-Born Residents – 8 Women

The respondents for the semi-structured interviews were intentionally very diverse, including a variety of ages and backgrounds. The results reflect this heterogeneity, not only by age but also by various preferences chosen for different lifestyles. The respondents include a variety of females aged 20 to 50 with and without children. We focused on females so that we could compare across ethnicities the roles of women relating to urban living preferences. Also, recent studies indicate that women produce the majority of traffic on roads today, warranting an additional study on travel habits relating to these preferences in order to explain why these trips are

being taken and recommend alternative options if necessary. We have changed the respondents' names for their privacy.

- Jennifer, middle-aged with children
- Hillary, middle-aged with children
- Linda, middle-aged without children
- Veronica, middle-aged with children
- Katherine, thirties without children
- Madeline, twenties without children
- Amelia, twenties without children
- Ana, twenties without children

### Jennifer

Jennifer, a female in her thirties, is a part-time student living in Four Corners, Silver Spring with her family. Jennifer grew up in St. Louis, Missouri, and has lived in places such as Silver Spring, Manburg (Germany), Bethesda, and Seattle, because her husband was in the military. She and her family have been living in Silver Spring for four years so far. Jennifer comments that making a decision to live in a specific place is "different now because we have to think about schools and neighborhood environment." Jennifer says that this neighborhood is very inclusive and safe: "We know the neighbors, we help each other out and the kids all play. There are kids all around so they are out playing after school. It is more like where I grew up.....I guess it is wanting it to feel like a home and like you are a part of things rather than just being a separate entity."

Jennifer values the ethnic diversity of her neighborhood and exposing her children to other cultures. In lifestyle preferences, even though they are located near the metro stations in Takoma Park and Silver Spring and have good bus service according to Jennifer; she drives because it is the only way to get around. She dislikes driving in Silver Spring and would prefer other modes of transportation. In the image survey, Jennifer does not give any image a five, but the highest she ranked at four were those mixed-use urban areas such as A1, A3, and D1, although she ranked C3 as a four because "rural is very appealing." She ranked D3 as a four as well, because it had "possibilities." Here it is evident that Jennifer is drawn to the rural image of tranquility yet on the other hand enjoys the convenience the mixed-use urban areas offer.



**Hillary**

Hillary is a registered nurse, mother, and wife in her forties. She lives in suburban Olney, which she considers a small town. Hillary seems very settled at this point, but she has lived in about 20 different places in her years. This frequent migratory pattern is partly because her father lived in and rehabited dilapidated houses by trade. Hillary remembers her role in the renovation of houses and the way the moving affected her own migratory patterns after she moved away from her family:

“So we renovated the houses and as soon as they were spiffy, we sold them and moved into another dilapidated house. I think my father had a keen sense of when a neighborhood was changing for the worse or when it was going downhill. He would get out and move into the worst house in the best neighborhood, get it up to speed; turn a profit, and then move on. So I moved probably 11 times before I left home myself then moved another 11 times after I moved away from my family.”

However, unless Olney goes “belly-up” Hillary will not move any more. She enjoys the convenience that Olney has to offer. It is close to church, school, shopping, gas stations, bank—everything her family needs. Also, Olney has “curb appeal”—the appearance of a house from the street—which is just as important to Hillary. She values this quality about her neighborhood, with a “nice manicured lawn, pride of ownership, when the whole neighborhood looks like they care about how things look and they take care of their house.”

Hillary gave low scores for the urban images, except for D1, which she said may be “fun for a while” if she were younger. She used negative comments for these images, such as “crowded” and

“suffocating.” Hillary consistently rated the single-family detached homes very highly (C1, C2, and D3) with scores of five and very positive comments, such as “tidy” and “prosperous.” The combination of images that represent her ideal home are C1, C2, C3, and D3. She rated C3 (the rural image) as a four because “rural is appealing but I don’t want to be a farmer” for the lack of convenience. Again, the rural image seems to appeal to those born in the US. Hillary makes all of her frequent trips via private vehicle. She does not mind having to drive everywhere and in fact tries not to walk. Overall, Hillary prefers the convenient life a suburban town such as Olney offers so long as it does not change.



**Linda**

Linda is a white woman in her forties who lives in a single-family house in Rockville. She has two housemates, but no children. She grew up in the inner suburb of Chevy Chase, along the District line, and has lived in Bethesda, Adelphi, Landover, Mount Ranier, and Hyattsville. Her father lives on the Eastern Shore, a place where Linda visits often. She values the natural environment the most, her father’s place specifically, because there is a creek on the property. Linda’s idea of an ideal neighborhood is Fell’s Point in Baltimore (because it is close to the water) or U Street for its “authentic flavor.” When given a choice of an old or a new suburb, Linda prefers the old suburbs for their natural environment and neighborly interactions. She says,

“With the new suburbs..., they bring a bulldozer in and push everything over and that just breaks my heart. Whenever you have a house tucked into the trees it feels totally different than a house in an old field. So the older suburbs do tend to have the big oak trees and things like that. It just feels so wonderful to me. I always buy my houses with trees in mind. With the newer suburb there is more separation between the houses...the old suburbs I’ve lived in are great places to take a walk in the evening after

dinner and everybody’s pattering in their gardens, saying hello to each other – nobody is ever out in the newer suburbs where the houses are set back. That difference in character is part of what I see as the separation.”

Linda decides that these types of neighborhoods, the older suburbs, seem to include more friendly and neighborly people. She also prefers the older architecture of the old suburbs, and its sense of history.

In travel habits, even though Linda depends highly on her car, she would much prefer to be somewhere amenable to walking. She does not take the metro on a regular basis because it takes two hours to College Park (accounting for two different metro lines plus the shuttle bus to the University of Maryland campus), as opposed to 35 minutes driving.

Linda will sometimes help her sister with her children and routine tasks. Her sister is separated from her husband so “keeping track of three kids when you work full time—in the suburbs—means that the kids are really hard to get where they need to go...she gets stuck in traffic.”

Earlier in the survey Linda stated that she preferred to live in a townhouse in the city. Her image survey results showed an overwhelming distaste for the new suburban single-family detached house, (image C2), for the garages and for the “boring” single-family house in image C1. She rated these images as one and two, respectively. She gave overwhelmingly positive ratings to the more urban mixed-use images such as A1, A3, B1, B2, B3, and D1, because of their small scale. She comments on image B2: “I like that small scale and the intimacy. That one has all the glass on the ground level, which makes me think I would enjoy walking along and looking in those windows.” Even though Linda’s scores report a taste for urban, pedestrian-friendly environments, she gives image C3 a high rating of four because it’s “pastoral,” again a US-born drawn to the rural image.



**Veronica**

“What I enjoy about this community or this area is the fact that it is an older style community that is still changing, and new people are coming in with new values.”

Veronica is a white woman in her mid forties who grew up in the South and works as a landscape architect. She has lived in small to mid-sized towns in Texas, Arizona, and Alabama before moving to Maryland (Mount Airy, Silver Spring, Gaithersburg). She has lived in a combination of housing types, including single-family houses, duplexes, and apartments. She likes the convenience a city offers, and the relaxing comfort a rural area offers, which is why she lives in Silver Spring, the suburbs, a mix of the city’s conveniences and the country’s serenity: “Here you feel like you are in the country because of the open areas. What a lot of people would like to see is more bike paths and ways to get around the neighborhood without having to use cars, making it easier to get around would be nice.” She prefers to live in a single-family detached house because she lives with her husband and children, but says that if she were single she would prefer a townhouse or condominium. She likes Hillendale (where they live) and considers it her ideal neighborhood because “although it is changing a little bit, it has always been a community where neighbors are neighbors. There is a sense of community where people like to be together, the kids like to play together. “Here the kids can run out on the street safely.” She also likes Bethesda’s street life and restaurants. She says, “it would be nice to be able to walk to Safeway, get a cup of coffee, a newspaper, run some errands, or go to a little bookstore or nice restaurant, a restaurant where you can still bring your kids, not a bar.”

Veronica also finds the city block more accessible. Her children must take the school bus in Hillendale, whereas before when they lived in the city they were able to walk to school and to friends’ houses without crossing a busy road. As a result, driving is the only option for her family. She says,



“no, I don’t enjoy driving. I enjoy driving on long trips but not locally because of the traffic congestion. I would prefer to be able to get on a clean form of mass transportation, and get to the town center, or where it is convenient. She suggests, “use the roads we have, but use a different form of mass transportation.” The public transportation in Hillendale is not accessible; the closest bus stop is too far to walk. Veronica recognizes this limitation as a tradeoff. They live in a quiet residential neighborhood without the noise and pollution, but are remote from conveniences, walkability, and public transportation.

Veronica does not seem to show any sort of pattern in her responses to the image survey. She gives the urban mixed-use images as well as suburban single-family house images high scores. She is not consistent with her answers; for example, she gave image A3 (the image of a New York City corner with pedestrians and an older apartment building in the background) a five because of its vitality. She says, “...if I were to live by myself with no kids, or even with my kids, this looks like a safe community. You have people in the street, and even though there is lots of traffic you know there is activity. You can go to restaurants or be out on the street going places, you can look out. It might be noisy but you can find a nice quiet place.” Image B3 (the small town Main Street image) scores a four with Veronica for its “personality and character.” Image D1 (the town atop a hill) scores a five: “I would actually like to live up in one of those little houses. There would be a strong sense of community and you’ve got this beautiful grove of trees. It’s romantic. I love it.” Veronica gave a positive rating of five to image C3 (rural farmhouse image). She says, “this is picturesque with rolling hills. This is like going on vacation for solitude. I like it a lot yet there wouldn’t be any services there. You would send your kids to school and they would have to go on the bus.” She, like the other US-born respondents, react positively to this image yet recognize its limitations on accessibility and convenience.

Interestingly, Veronica recognizes that she lives in C1, yet she gives it a more negative score of three (neutral). She says, “this is where I am now. I don’t like this. I should probably say I am just neutral on it. It is not a house I would want to live in.

Although it is somewhat similar to what we have now in that you just walk up to the door. It is a typical suburban house. It is where I am living now, but I can’t say it is where I prefer to live.” However, she rates image C2 (large suburban single-family house) positively with a score of four. Image D3 she rates as a five and calls “quaint.” She reacts positively to the natural environment (many large trees) and community life that neighborhood would potentially have.

Veronica’s responses to the image survey show that she is grappling with the conflict between the quiet and tranquility of rural areas (and parts of suburbs) but resents the auto dependency so central to her life. She would like to be able to walk more places and resents the parking lots, gas stations, and strip malls of the suburbs, yet she likes the suburban images of C2 and D3. The rural image of C3 appeals to Veronica, as it appeals to many others.



**Katherine**

Katherine is a single white female in her thirties without children. She lives in the suburb of Greenbelt in a co-op townhouse and works as a community planner. She grew up in Kentucky in a single-family house, attended college in St. Louis, Missouri, then moved to a single family house in a small town in rural Connecticut. Then she moved to a small town in Colorado and shared an apartment with a roommate. After living in mostly small town settings, Katherine spent two years in the Peace Corps in West Africa, Guinea Bissau, where she lived without indoor plumbing, electricity, and sewer system and rode her bike to school, where she taught English as a foreign language. After living in Riverdale, Maryland for a few years, she moved to Greenbelt, where she is now. Katherine describes Greenbelt as her ideal neighborhood:

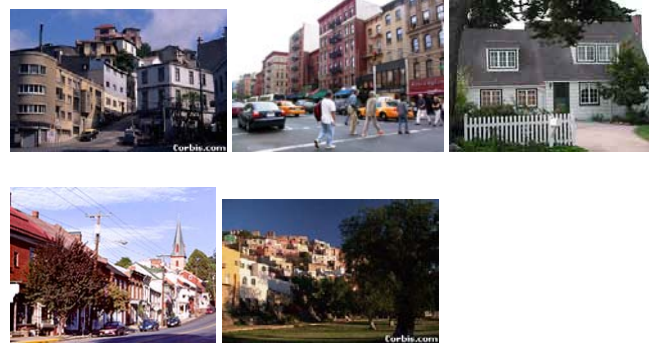
“It’s a suburb. I’m not into suburbs—I’d rather live in a city or a rural area, but in a lot of ways, Greenbelt is like a small town. It’s built so that you can walk to everything you need. I walk to work. I live here. People are very nice. That I like. I like contact with

people, and I like knowing people living in my neighborhood. I like being able to walk to the places I need to go. I also like the fact that it's close to the metro so I can go downtown or anywhere else easily. Things that I'm looking for are sense of community, being able to walk or bike either to work or shopping, close to major transit. The house is really small. I don't think people need huge houses, like is very popular today.

Katherine seems to enjoy the community life Greenbelt offers, especially the co-op in which she lives. She likes to walk, but also likes the freedom of being able to drive. She walks to work and to the grocery store, and takes the metro to restaurants. The only destinations she would drive to are other shopping trips and road trips. She takes routine trips mostly by foot or by metro. These lifestyle choices reflect Katherine's background of living in small communities in the US and in Africa. She seems to want to simplify her life by living close to where she works and living in co-op housing.

Katherine's responses to the image survey reflect her background and her current lifestyle choices. She gives the more urban, mixed use images positive scores and suburban images negative scores. For example, she gave positive scores of four or five to images A1 (urban), A3 (urban), B3 (small town main street), and D1 (small town urban). The urban mixed-use image of B2 she gave a neutral score of three because it is "over retailled" and "too high-end." Katherine gave the suburban images of C1 and C2 negative scores of one, but gave the image of D3 a four because it is not necessarily suburban; it could be in the country or small town. The rural image of C3 again received a positive score of five in this case, but only as an ideal place when she grows older.

Katherine relates to the following images from her past: C1 (suburban single-family house), A3 (similar to the dormitory where she lived in college), C3 (similar to where she lived in Colorado), and B3 (the small town where she and her husband rented an apartment). She chooses the images of B3, D1, and D3 as most representative of her ideal neighborhood. She is drawn to the natural environment and sense of community that these images seem to portray.



### **Madeline**

Madeline is a single white female in her twenties who lives in an apartment in the suburb of McLean, Virginia. Her mother is Cuban and her father is American. She was born in Florida and has lived in many different urban environments, such as Davis, California (a small town), Haifa, Israel (a large city), Montevideo, Uruguay (a large city), and Spain, traveling with her mother who was doing research at the time. She has also lived in suburban locations such as Greenbelt, College Park, Gaithersburg, Silver Spring, Waldorf, and Alexandria.

Currently, Madeline prefers a city environment that is close to entertainment, shopping, and public transportation. Parks and open space are not important to her, but rather a place that is amenable to taking a walk or window-shopping. She currently prefers to live in an apartment or condominium, but anticipates moving to a single-family house close to the city when she has children, mostly for the extra space and the backyard. She says, "even if I had more money, I would choose an apartment because....it works best for my lifestyle." Before she is ready to buy a house, she says that she would like to live in a condominium in the area near Chinatown, in a high-rise building in order to be so close to metro and other conveniences. Her current place of residence is not close to entertainment, shopping, or public transportation, but she can walk to work. This proximity does not seem to affect her choice of transportation: she drives to work because it takes only five minutes and the parking is free.

Madeline mentions she values not only safety in a neighborhood but also a sense of community. For example, she likes neighborhoods with trees along the road, open spaces, and parks.

For the image survey, Madeline gives some urban and suburban images positive ratings. However, unlike the other US-born respondents, she rates the rural image (C3) negatively as “boring” and isolated.

Among the urban images, she rates A3, B2, B3, and D1 positively as a four or five. She used positive comments such as “action,” “welcoming,” “mix” with an “urban feel,” “neat and clean,” etc. She rated image D1 (the urban village) as a five because the buildings atop the hill would have a view of the park and be conveniently located. The urban images she did not like include A1, A2, and B1, mostly because they look unsafe, abandoned, and isolated.

Even though Madeline had indicated her preference for living in a city condominium, she rated all of the suburban images positively with scores of four or five. She rated image C1 as a four because the house is inviting and pristine, the yard is clean and has many trees. She rated image C2 a five because it is “very nice,” it backs up to trees, and she can “imagine it being in a nice neighborhood.” Most of all, she indicated that it seems like a very safe place for a family. Madeline also rated image D2 (the suburban apartments) positively as a five because it is similar to where she currently lives, and the building seems to be in good condition. The small suburban house in image D3 received positive ratings from Madeline, because it seems well maintained, and is located on a tree-lined street, which leads her to think that it has a strong feeling of neighborhood. She says, it is “real cozy and it seems like a safe area just because it is so clean cut with a white picket fence.”

Madeline’s living preferences at first seemed very urban, but the image survey indicated otherwise, because she gave very high scores to all of the suburban images. She continues to like urban settings, however, for entertainment value mostly, instead choosing more suburban settings for residential uses.



### **Amelia**

Amelia is a single white female in her twenties who lives with her family in a single-family detached house in the Aspen Hill section of Rockville. Except for college, she has lived here in this house since she was five years old. She was born in Washington, DC and lived in a townhouse in the Columbia Heights neighborhood for two years, then moved to South Bend, Indiana (a small town) for another two years before returning to DC and moving into their current house in Rockville, MD. She did leave this house to return to Indiana, this time for college, where she lived in a dormitory for four years. During college, she spent four months living with a family in a mid-rise apartment/condominium in the suburbs of Toledo, Spain as a study abroad experience. After college, she moved back to her childhood home in Rockville. She will be moving out soon, however, into a townhouse in King Farm after she gets married in a couple of months.

Amelia typically drives everywhere she has to be on a daily basis, sometimes driving an hour and a half to work. Aside from the metro station being a ten minutes’ drive away, the bus system is inaccessible—Amelia does not ride the bus. On weekends, she may take the metro to DC for entertainment destinations such as going to the zoo, or running and shopping, etc.

In an ideal place to live, Amelia looks for nice neighbors, accessibility (easy access to a main artery and shopping), and a newer housing stock. In an ideal house, she looks for a brick house with a garage and a yard. Green spaces are important to Amelia, especially a yard, since she enjoys gardening. Growing up she would use playing fields for sporting events, but now she mostly uses the Rock Creek Park trail for jogging. She and her fiancé chose a townhouse in King Farm because of the above reasons (garage, yard) and there are other young couples just starting out in similar situations with similar values. Amelia and her fiancé also were attracted to the shops

within King Farm, with the central Giant and the small cafes, etc. She says,

“We like the neighborhood, we like that it’s next to other types of housing, we like the landscaping, the houses are newer, they’ve been holding their value, good reputation, they have the grocery store in the center, and there’s some places to eat around there.”

However, aside from walking to the nearby restaurants in the development, Amelia does not anticipate any major change of lifestyle and/or transportation choices. She says she and her fiancé will still drive to work despite King Farm’s proximity to a metro station.

Amelia’s responses to the image survey indicate her clear preference for suburban settings. The only images she rated positively as four or five were C1, C2, D2, and D3. She responded positively to these images with comments such as “nice,” “well-kept,” “cute,” and indicated that they had the features she likes, such as; garages, yards, and plenty of space.

Amelia rated the rural image and most of the urban images negatively. She rated the rural image negatively as a two because of its isolated location. The urban images she rated as three (neutral), two and one (dislike). She used negative words to describe these images, such as “run-down,” “no activity,” “ugly,” “cluttered” (A1), “boring” (A2), “poor,” and “unfriendly” (B1).

Those images Amelia rated positively she related to the most. She grew up in mostly suburban or small town settings, in a single-family house. D3 is the image Amelia related to the most, followed by C1, D2, and B3. The urban images are the most foreign to her, so she seems to stick to what she is used to.



**Ana**

Ana is a single Latina woman in her twenties living in a Silver Spring townhouse with her parents. She was born in the United States, but her father is from Ecuador, and her mother from El Salvador. Both of her parents came to the US in the 1960s. Ana was born in Washington, DC and lived in an apartment in the Adams Morgan neighborhood until she was 12. She and her family then moved out of the city into their current home in Silver Spring. Ana strongly distinguishes between the Adams Morgan of then versus the Adams Morgan of today. She describes the neighborhood’s environment when she lived there as “violent and drug-infested” with much crime. This was the reason they moved out. She describes the apartment building they lived in as very old and dreary, the neighborhood having many vacant buildings. The Adams Morgan of today embodies everything Ana envisions in an ideal neighborhood. She places a high value on being walking distance from metro station because she takes the metro to work every day. As a result of the new Columbia Heights Metro station nearby, Adams Morgan has been experiencing redevelopment recently. Ana names a couple of examples, such as, the Latin American Youth Center, which was formerly a condemned vacant building. Other buildings in the neighborhood that were formerly drug-infested vacant buildings are now condominiums. There are many businesses starting out and thriving on the Columbia Road corridor. She says that she may want to move back into the area because “it’s a lot safer for kids to play in,” and “socially and economically it has grown a lot.”

Living in Silver Spring Ana misses the convenience of being able to walk a couple blocks to the corner store or Safeway. Here she has to take a car or bus—“here it’s more confined.” They do not have much contact with their neighbors in Silver Spring because their neighbors are mostly families with children, so unless your children are playing with the neighbors’ children, the interactions with other neighbors are mostly when her father is outside cultivating his garden.

Ana does not need to have a certain type of housing, as long as it has indoor plumbing. She much more values the setting of residence. She values the location, being proximate to stores and metro. In

Silver Spring Ana must drive everywhere she needs to go, even to the metro to get to work.

In the image survey, Ana did not give a single image a score of five. Those she scored as four are A1, A3, D1, and D2. These are mostly urban images except for D2, which is a suburban apartment complex. She described D1 as both “quiet and city,” alive, the “best of both worlds,” with a “park where you can relax.” She assigned the rural image (C3) the lowest score (one) because it is isolated. She rated the suburban images (C1, C2, and D3) as neutral because she recognized the houses were nice, but it was not exactly what she was looking for in an ideal neighborhood. Ana seems to prefer the more urban setting, yet has grown to accept her current suburban home in Silver Spring. Ana embraces parts of her past, such as image A3, which she listed as both relevant to her past living experiences and her number one preferred image. Also, image D2 is the farthest from anywhere she has lived in the past, but also embodies her ideal home and community along with image A3.



### Latino Immigrants – 8 Women

The eight female Latina respondents from this study live in the suburbs of Washington, DC, and in Baltimore, MD: three from Langley Park, three from Silver Spring, one from Rockville, and one from Baltimore City. Four live in apartments, two in townhouses, and two in single-family detached houses. Six out of eight respondents are Salvadoran, reflecting the demographics of the Washington, DC Metropolitan Area.

The Latina respondents for the semi-structured interviews also included a variety of ages and backgrounds. The results reflect this heterogeneity, not only by age but also by various preferences chosen for different lifestyles. The

respondents include a variety of females aged 20 to 60 with and without children. We also have four sets of mother-daughter respondents. Included in the Latina respondent group we have two sets. Also we have included in this Latina set the mothers of two of the US-born respondents, the mothers of Madeline and Ana. Again, we have changed the respondents’ names for their privacy.

- Julieta, twenties without children
- Emilia, forties, mother of Julieta
- Luisa, twenties without children
- Sara, twenties without children
- Marianela, fifties with grown children living with her and her husband
- Gabriela, thirties with small children
- Luciana, fifties with grown daughter Ana from US-born respondent set living with her
- Maria, empty-nester parent in her forties

### Julieta

Julieta is a single Salvadoran female in her twenties who works and studies as a graduate student in government and politics at the University of Maryland. She lives in a garden apartment in Langley Park with two other people, although her mother is only there on weekends. She was born in El Salvador and lived in the city of San Salvador until she was about six years old. She and her mother then moved to Costa Rica and lived there for about three years before coming to the United States. They stayed in Miami for two weeks before moving directly to Montgomery County, where they stayed for ten years. In Maryland, they moved around, from Gaithersburg, to North Potomac, to Potomac. In 1999 Julieta moved to Langley Park to be closer to the University, while her mother stayed in Potomac in the house where she worked and visits on weekends. Julieta describes living in Potomac,

“Well, I used to live in Potomac, so it was out in the countryside—we were really far from the city. We lived there because my mom used to work there so we weren’t around a lot of people. It was very different from Langley Park...here I’m surrounded by a lot of different people—over there it was just white Americans. My mom and I were the only

Latinos in the neighborhood so it was very trying for me at the beginning.”

Even though Langley Park offered Julieta more diverse neighbors, it was still an adjustment living there. Growing up, she had always lived in “private neighborhoods” because her mother worked for people who were not from El Salvador or Costa Rica; for example, they lived very close to the president’s house. Therefore, they always lived in these exclusive types of neighborhoods, so despite the language barrier, an environment such as Potomac was more familiar to them than Langley Park. Julieta describes Langley Park as a mixed bag. She says it is a very dangerous area sometimes—in fact, someone was robbed in her building that same week. However, Julieta recognizes the social bonds that people form in Langley Park. She says,

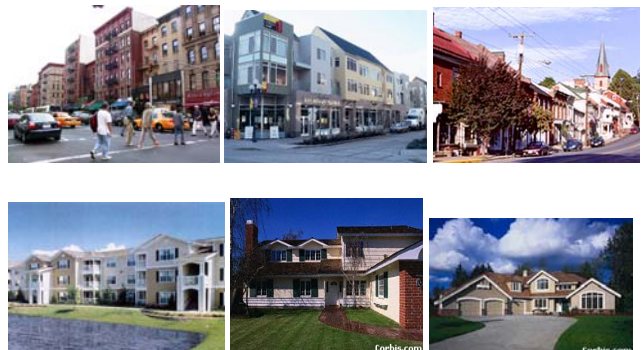
“...everybody is willing to help each other. And I think it’s because there are people from all over Latin America, all over the world, they say, well, we’re in the same boat, so we might as well help each other, cause we’re all in the same situation. Some of them don’t have jobs, some of them earn minimum wage, and they say, I can borrow something from you, you can borrow something from me, I can give you some information, and vice versa. So it’s like that.”

Julieta would prefer to live in a single-family house in the suburbs because the city is too noisy, and she is accustomed to living in houses. In describing her ideal neighborhood, Julieta begins by saying what is not ideal. She says there are tensions between the Latinos and the African Americans in the neighborhood. She sees an ideal neighborhood more in social terms; for example, providing more opportunities for the people in the area, especially the new immigrants, such as workshops, job training, etc.

Julieta takes the bus or the campus shuttle to school. She says that the buses are always running late. She adds that the transportation in Montgomery County is much better than it is in Prince George’s County. Besides going to work and school via bus, Julieta drives with her mother to other destinations. She does not mind her commute to work taking up to 60 minutes, but will not go to other destinations that take more than 25 minutes. Routinely she does not make many trips. During the week, she would only

travel to and from school, and on weekends, they would meet friends at their homes. In Langley Park Julieta sometimes will go to the plaza, and walk past the mango lady selling mangoes and talk to neighbors.

From the image survey, Julieta exhibits primarily a preference for the suburbs. The images she rated highly as a four or five are A3, B2, B3, C1, C2, and D2. She liked the suburban images C1, C2, and D2 because they are clean, well-maintained, nice houses/buildings with trees and plants. Julieta also likes a few urban images, including the big city image (A3) for its vitality, stores, and people, the mixed-use commercial district (B2) because it is clean and well designed, and the small town main street (B3) because it’s well-maintained. The images she rated negatively were the row house image (B1) and the town atop a hill image (D1). The first (B1) she said looks vacant and dead, the second (D1) seems dangerous and reminds her of El Salvador. The remaining images she rated as neutral. While Julieta prefers to live in the suburbs, she also rated some urban images highly, indicating she would be willing to live in these environments.



**Emilia**

Emilia is a single Salvadoran woman who works and lives as a housekeeper in Potomac during the week and lives with her daughter Julieta on the weekends. She was born in El Salvador, grew up in a single-family house in the city (San Salvador) and in a rural area of Honduras. She moved to Costa Rica in 1985, then to the United States in 1999 after getting her visa. She has lived in mostly single-family homes with the exception of the Langley Park apartment.

She would prefer to live in a single-family house in the city, and named Germantown and Rockville as ideal neighborhoods in the area.

Qualities she looks for in an ideal neighborhood include quiet, tranquility, efficient transportation, good schools, and decent parks.

Latino groups have been moving directly into the suburbs; Emilia and Julie are an example of this occurring. As a result, Emilia drives everywhere—to work, shops, recreation—and enjoys it. However, she would not spend more than 60 minutes driving to work destinations and no more than 30 minutes driving to other destinations.

The image survey shows that even though Emilia earlier specified that she would prefer to live in a city when asked, she clearly prefers suburban settings. This disconnect may just be a difference in how she perceives what a city is; she may consider any area with commercial shopping centers such as suburbs to be a city. In the image survey, Emilia consistently gave the urban images negative ratings and the suburban and rural images positive ratings. The images she ranked as fives (highly positive) were C1, C2, and C3, based on the reason that this was how she grew up and what she was familiar with. The other images either had too many people, cars, or were old and deteriorating. She listed A1 (old urban village) as the image least familiar to her.



**Luisa**

Luisa is a single Salvadoran graduate student in her twenties studying at University of Maryland. She lives in a mid-rise apartment in the suburb of Adelphi, Maryland with her sister. She grew up in a single-family house in the metropolitan area of San Salvador, the capital city of El Salvador. She began college in El Salvador, finished in Miami (already knew English), and lived in dormitories and apartments throughout. She then moved back home to El Salvador to work for about two years, and then back to the United States in Maryland to attend graduate school starting January 2002. Her parents and two other siblings still live in El Salvador.

Luisa prefers to live in the city, but anticipates in the future preferring a suburb. Also, she prefers to live in an apartment or townhouse now, but

anticipates living in a single-family house in the future. Her ideal neighborhoods in the DC area are Georgetown and some parts of Adams Morgan. She describes her ideal neighborhood as safe, clean, accessible, and proximate to work and/or school. For housing type, she prefers a spacious unit or townhouse that is newer and does not require much repair. She is most accustomed to having a spacious room of her own; privacy is very important to her. Luisa primarily drives to all of her routine destinations, but will not drive anywhere that takes longer than 30 minutes.

For the image survey, Luisa gave positive ratings of four or five to A3, B2, B3, C3, D1, and D2. She described these images as vital (urban A3), relaxing (rural C3), picturesque (village D1), and well maintained (suburban apartment complex D2). The images with suburban single-family houses (images C1 and C2) Luisa would not rate because she said it “depends on what is around.” She is also more familiar with these suburban images because they are most closely related to her background. The only image not related to her background that appealed to her is C3, the rural image.



**Sara**

Sara is a single Salvadoran woman in her twenties living in a suburban single-family detached house in Silver Spring with her parents and brother, and working downtown for the government. She was born in El Salvador and grew up in a single-family semi-detached house in Soyapango, an urban neighborhood of San Salvador. Her family moved to the US in 1986 (when Sara was eight years old) because of the war and the poor economic situation in El Salvador. They first moved into a three-bedroom apartment they shared with other families. They then moved into a two-bedroom apartment of their own in

Langley Park, then into a series of apartments in Silver Spring, each time acquiring more space. Finally, they moved into the single-family house where they currently live.

Sara drives everywhere she goes, most often to work and to church. However, she will not drive longer than 45 minutes to work. Sara would prefer to live in a single-family house in a suburb, namely Columbia, MD. She describes an ideal neighborhood as having good neighbors, "something nice, close to stores, and aesthetic." Columbia is a 30-minute drive from their current house, which would not be too far from her family. Also, to her the scenery during the commute is important (Route 29 leading Columbia to Washington, DC is scenic). She also seems to anticipate having a family because she mentioned that the schools in Columbia are good quality.

Sara compares the current suburban patterns she lives in today with the urban neighborhood she lived in El Salvador:

"...there you have your neighbors that have their own little mini grocery store. So you don't have to go get in the car, everything's near you. Here you have to either walk, or take the bus, or get a car. Here you are limited to a car."

Sara describes the environment of Adams Morgan, which has a high percentage of Latinos living there. She said people stay in this neighborhood because "it's just like being back home. You go down the street and you have a store. You cross another street and you have your Spanish store. People are walking around, too. That makes them feel closer to home. You'll meet people who are also from El Salvador." Sara's family knows other people from Soyapango who have migrated to the DC area. She also has extended family in the Washington, DC area, but her family back in El Salvador thinks that Sara's family has a lot of money. Their house in Silver Spring compared to their family's houses in El Salvador is like a mansion. Because of this perception, Sara's family is compelled to bring gifts to them whenever they visit.

In the image survey, Sara gave high scores of five to all of the suburban images, including the single-family detached houses in images C1 and C2 and the apartment complex in image D2. She gave scores of four to images B1 (row houses) and D3

(small suburban house), the first because it is familiar and the second because she likes it but it is too small. Images Sara rated negatively with a score of one were the urban images of A2 and A3 and the rural image of C3. Her preferences for the suburban single-family detached house point to her need for personal space having lived in many places with insufficient room and privacy. The images most closely related to her background include B1, A3, D2, and D3.



### **Marianela**

Marianela is a Salvadoran woman in her fifties with her two grown children living with her and her husband in their single-family house in Silver Spring. She works as a housekeeper at various places in Rockville, Potomac, and Olney. Marianela was born in a small town in El Salvador, and moved to a city when she was eight years old. They lived for six years in overcrowded conditions of eight people to a room. Then she moved to a larger house in the city and stayed for four years. She then moved to a rural single-family house. After getting married, she lived in one room in Soyapango (outside downtown San Salvador). They then moved to a rented house in the same city, then on to another house in a subdivision in Soyapango. Finally, they moved to the United States, and lived in the various places Sara described in her interview.

Marianela decides that even though in El Salvador life was slower-paced and she did not have to drive everywhere for routine necessities, the US is safer and more politically stable. However, adjusting to living in the US was difficult for a couple of reasons. They had to live in very overcrowded conditions at first.

Marianela makes all of her routine trips by car. However, she does not enjoy driving but rather does it out of necessity. She does not mind being a passenger in a car and would endure any amount of time to get to a non-work destination so long as she is not the one driving (60 minutes is the cap on how much time she would spend getting to work destinations). In her spare time, she helps with



church and community activities and sometimes takes weekend trips with her husband to rural Virginia or Pennsylvania.

In an ideal neighborhood, Marianela looks for a quiet area with a newer housing stock of single-family houses. She would prefer to live in a single-family house in the suburbs and names Annapolis or a small town in Pennsylvania as her ideal neighborhood. Space is an important issue with Marianela and her daughter the same. They have lived in so many places in the past where they did not have enough privacy that space, square footage, is of primary concern. This was the main reason they moved to Silver Spring from Langley Park, second only to safety reasons.

The image survey reflects this preference for space. The images Marianela rated positively with a score of five were the images with the suburban or rural single-family detached house (C1, C2, and C3). Image C3 is where she differs from her daughter; Marianela strongly likes this rural image because it reminds her of where she would go in rural El Salvador to visit her grandparents, and in fact, this is where she would like to retire. Image B1 (small town row houses) remind Marianela of where she was born, but she rated this as neutral (score of three). She also lists D1 (village atop a hill) as similar to places she has lived in the past. Images B3, D2, and D3 she rated positively as four because the small town main street image (B3) is romantic and reminds her of the trips she takes to rural Virginia and Pennsylvania with her husband; D2 and D3 are pretty and seem quiet, but Marianela seems to prefer larger houses. Again, Marianela and her daughter seek out spacious places—they do not want to be in cramped quarters any longer.



### **Gabriela**

Gabriela is a Chilean woman in her thirties living in a garden apartment in Rockville with her husband and three small children. She stays at home with the children while her husband goes downtown to DC for law school. She was born in a single-family detached

house in Santiago, Chile and lived there until she was married at age 26. She then moved into an apartment in Santiago closer to downtown. She and her husband traveled around a bit, living in Vancouver for a year, Seville, Spain for six months, and now to Rockville, Maryland. She and her husband moved back to Santiago in between these moves to live in a single-family detached house in a new subdivision farther from the city. She said those times she lived in a house, her life was more or less *in* the house; living in an apartment, she went out more, living more *outside* the house. In Chile, she had a nanny to watch the children, so she could go out more often. Here, if she goes out, she must go out earlier in the evening.

Living in the United States, Gabriela has actually used public transit more than she did while living in Chile. Here, she drives to complete her routine tasks and for trips, but once a week she will take the metro down to DC. Comparing the public transportation here to that in Santiago, the system here is much better and cleaner than that in Santiago.

With children to worry about, Gabriela feels more secure about letting them play outside in the yard of a single-family house rather than in a city park where they have to be constantly supervised. As a mother, she therefore prefers to live in a single-family house. However, she prefers to live in a city, namely Bethesda.

The image that most closely represents Gabriela's ideal home and community is D3 (the small single-family detached house). She names the following elements as part of her ideal neighborhood: park access, proximity to public transportation, proximity to center commercial district, vegetation, safety, and strong building structure of housing. The image survey shows her strong preference for a single-family house. She rated images C1, C2, C3, and D3 (all suburban or rural single-family homes) as fives, but distinguishes that she would only go to a rural area such as that depicted in image C3 for a vacation. Those higher density areas she rated highly as fours (D1 and D2) she likes for the vegetation and the lake, respectively. All the other images she faulted for being too commercial, noisy, and crowded.

Apparent here is Gabriela's preference for both natural settings and safe places for her children. She has lived in many different settings (such as urban high-density in Seville, suburban low-density

in Santiago), and prefers the new suburban neighborhood where she lived with her family outside of Santiago. Safety and quality of life are her main concerns when choosing a place of residence.



**Luciana**

Luciana is a Salvadoran woman in her fifties who lives in a townhouse in Silver Spring with her husband and grown daughter Ana (respondent from US-born set) living with her. She grew up in a single-family house in a suburb of San Salvador and stayed in the same house until she moved to Washington, DC at age 21. In DC, she lived in an apartment from 1967 until 1993. She lived in two different apartments total, the second located in Adams Morgan. In 1993, Luciana and her family moved into their current townhouse located in a quiet residential area of Silver Spring. They moved out of DC mostly to prevent the children from getting involved with the gangs or drug dealers in the area. She emphasizes the fact that they had to work very hard and save money to live in this house. It was new when they bought it, a quality very important to Luciana—in fact, they will move when this house gets too old.

Luciana drives to most of her destinations except for work, when she will take the bus. She will ride the bus for up to 60 minutes to get to work, and drive up to 20 minutes to arrive at other destinations. When asked how she adjusted to the American lifestyle, she responded by learning to drive. Also, her style of interaction, if any, is very different from how she would interact with neighbors in El Salvador. She said she and her friends and family would gather just about every day, but here, she does not interact with neighbors quite as much.

Luciana prefers to live in a townhouse in a suburb. She describes her ideal neighborhood as a quiet environment with many trees and gardens, a clean, nice neighborhood. Her former places of

residence had the ideal qualities but they are not quiet anymore. In fact, she does not want to live near new immigrants because they are too noisy. Moreover, she lives in her ideal neighborhood; she is happy where she is in Silver Spring.

The image survey does not include any image that looks like Luciana’s house; therefore, she did not rank a single image as a five (strongly like). The images she rated highly as a four were B1, B2, B3, C2, C3, D2, and D3. This indicates that Luciana is less concerned with the size of a structure and more concerned with tranquility and having quiet neighbors. The images above depict a variety of housing structures and densities, but they all are relatively calm images. She pointed to image B2 (mixed use commercial/residential image) as “like my country.” Rural image C3 she described as a perfect place to retire. The other images, negatively rated, she described as crowded, noisy, and old. When asked to put the images in the order of their relevance to her past living experiences, she put D2 (as a townhouse) first to reflect where she currently lives, then D3 or B1 (similar to El Salvador’s environment), then A3 (similar to the apartments where she lived in DC), then C3 (similar to her grandfather’s farm in El Salvador where she spent time as a child). From the images given, Luciana chose C2 and C3 to reflect her ideal home and community. Peace and tranquility are qualities of a neighborhood that seem to top Luciana’s list of priorities.



## **Maria**

Maria is a Cuban woman in her forties, an empty-nester parent who lives in a row house in Baltimore City and works as a professor at the University of Maryland. Her daughter is Madeline from the US-born respondent set.

Maria grew up in many different environments. In Cuba, she lived in both city, suburban, and small town environments. Maria describes the three different houses she grew up in Cuba:

So we had our own house—which was what you would think of as a suburb here. But every time a baby was born we'd go live with my grandmother for the first and last 3 months of the pregnancy, It seemed like every year my mother was having a baby and for a six month period we would live with my grandmother...then every summer we would relocate to my grandmother's beach house . It was a big house.

Before now, before Maria's current house in Baltimore, she seemed to be in constant motion, from the three houses she lived in simultaneously while growing up to her frequent migrations within the United States. She has lived in a variety of places, including Havana (Cuba), Jacksonville (Florida), Gainesville (Florida), Davis (California), Israel, Montevideo (Uruguay), Seattle (Washington), Greenbelt (Maryland), Alexandria (Virginia), Madrid (Spain), Washington, DC, and Baltimore City.

When she was nine years old, her parents sent her and her siblings to live with their aunt in Jacksonville, Florida in a traditional American 1950s suburb. At that point, her parents thought the revolution would just blow over, but when it appeared to be permanent, her parents came to Jacksonville a year later, and they lived in two houses temporarily before moving to the house that her father built. The neighborhood they lived in Maria described as 40% Cuban-born with a very strong sense of community: "people watched out for each other, and knew if the kids weren't home they were at somebody's house they trusted." The children in the neighborhood "had this tremendous freedom, we were all on bicycles, and had this whole American attitude of freedom, and we could roam anywhere, the whole suburban ideal."

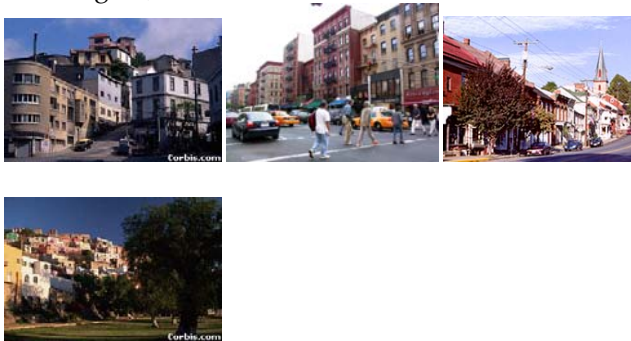
Maria left home at 16 and rented a 2-bedroom house close to her parents' house in the same neighborhood, then bought a house two years later. Four years later, she moved to Gainesville, Florida where she lived in married student housing. She then moved across the country to Davis, California and lived in married student housing and rented a house before getting a Fulbright to work in Uruguay. They lived in Montevideo for a year in this very urban environment by the beach. They also lived in Israel for nine months in a flat. She then got her first tenure track in Seattle and lived there in a rented house for two years. After Seattle, Maria moved to the Washington, DC area. They first lived in Greenbelt, Maryland in order for her daughter to attend a tech school. Then they moved to Alexandria, Virginia. In both Greenbelt and Alexandria, they rented townhouses. Then, Maria explains, "...as soon as [Madeline] graduated from high school I didn't have to live where the schools are good anymore...so then we moved to Washington, DC" into an apartment above a restaurant. After being priced out of the DC housing market, Maria decided to move to Baltimore City.

The results of Maria's image survey show that she prefers urban environments, especially small town-like neighborhoods within a larger city. She rated the following urban images highly with a score of five: A1, A3, B3 (only if located within a larger city), and D1. She prefers to walk to many of her daily destinations, but drives to work out of necessity. To arrive at all other destinations she primarily walks. This preference for walking is shown in the images she liked and described as "walkable," "people-focused," and "looks like Europe." Maria, however, dislikes small towns even though they are also walkable. As one would expect, she strongly dislikes suburban and rural images, calling them "boring" and homogenous.

Maria prefers images such as B1 and B3 only if they are small town-like neighborhoods within a larger city. Many of the images she hesitated to give a score because she wanted to find out what is surrounding the buildings, houses, etc. Location is high on Maria's list of priorities for an ideal neighborhood.

The images most related to Maria's past living experiences are: C1 and D3 (Florida), D2 (graduate

student housing), A1 and D1 (Seattle), A3 (Washington, DC), A1 and B3 (Federal Hill, Baltimore City), and A1 (Montevideo, Uruguay). The combination of images that represent Maria’s ideal home and community are D1, A3, B3, and A1. Like Luciana, Maria is where she wants to be—her preferred living area and housing type are where she currently lives. She says, “Even if I were to win the lottery and have millions and millions of dollars I’ve come to this point where I really love Baltimore, and if I had millions of dollars I probably would just buy another row house, rather than move back to Washington, DC.”



**Asian Immigrants – 8 Women**

The eight Asian female respondents from this study are all of Chinese origin, four from Taiwan, three from China, and one from Hong Kong. All the interviewees live in the suburbs of Washington DC metropolitan area, five from Montgomery County, MD, one from Fredrick County, MD, one from Howard County, MD, and one from North Virginia. Five live in single-family detached houses, one in a single-family attached house, one in a townhouse, and one in an apartment.

The Asian respondents’ age distribution is from late-20’s to mid-50s’. Seven of eight respondents are married, four of them have children. They all came to the States for higher education in the first place. Again, we have changed the respondents’ names for their privacy.

- Ling, twenties, married without children
- Mimi, thirties, single
- Patty, thirties, married without children
- Kelly, forties, married, two children of school age
- Sharon, fifties, retired, living with her husband, two grown children not living with them,

- May, thirties, married and expecting their first child
- Bath, forties, married, two small children of school age
- Janet, thirties, married without children

**Ling**

Ling is in her twenties and works as a Research Scientist at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda. She and her husband are both from Beijing, China and live in a one-bedroom apartment in Rockville. They were married in China and came to the United States in 1996 together to study in Kansas. In May 2002, Ling got her job at NIH and moved to Maryland. The reason she chose to live in Rockville is the area’s large Chinese population and the convenience of shopping. Ling did not drive when she was in Beijing; instead, she took buses or taxis. She felt inconvenienced during the first year in America because she had to drive to get everywhere. Now, she feels it is more convenient to drive and is fine with that. Ling and her husband always go to Asian supermarkets for their groceries. Most of their friends are also from China whom they met at school in Kansas.

As for her ideal neighborhood, the first consideration is safety. She does not like to live in the city, but at the same time, she prefers living not too far from the city. Easy access to major roads and highways is essential. Also, she does not like mixed-use neighborhoods. Ling’s preference in an ideal house is the townhouses based on their current financial status and ease of maintenance. Otherwise, she would like to have a garden if she can afford one. Ling does not want to stay in America. For her, the living standards in China and America are equal. She feels more comfortable in her own country.

In the image survey, Ling gave both C1 and C2 high ratings of five. She does not like city life because she had lived in the big city for most of her life. Ling considered the garage as an important element when she rated the images. Although she thought garages are important, C3’s three-garage single-family house was a waste of land in her opinion. Her favorite three images are C1, C2, and D2.



**Mimi**

Mimi is a single Taiwanese woman in her thirties who works as a researcher in a biotechnology firm. She lives in her townhouse in Rockville by herself. Mimi grew up in a Japanese-style single-family house in the city. The house had large front and back yards with lots of trees and flowers. She pointed out that Image D3 is very similar to the house in which she grew up. Mimi describes how she perceives migration to the US:

“Less pollution and better living environment. Our home in Taiwan was next to a tofu factory. The factory was a big source of air and water pollution. So, urban planning (zoning) is very important. In Taiwan, residential, office, commercial, and industrial areas are mixed together. But I still like walking to shops and department stores.”

Mimi came to the States in 1992 and studied at the University of California in Davis. After graduation, she got a job and moved to Union, Missouri, a rural town with two thousand residents. There were only two Asians including herself in that town. In 1997, Mimi went to Johns Hopkins University for her second Masters degree and lived with her older sister in Bethesda. In the following years, she moved back and forth between Rockville and Gaithersburg, and shared townhouses or apartments with other people. In August 2001, she bought a townhouse in Rockville. The house is within ten minutes driving distance from her work. This townhouse meets the description of her ideal house and neighborhood: in a good school district for investment, safe, good community facilities, close to work and shopping, and easy access to major highways.

Mimi is very active in some Taiwanese American social and recreational organizations. She likes outdoor activities such as hiking and biking. She always walks to the local Giant for her groceries.

In the image survey, she did not like apartments or high-rise buildings. She prefers C1, D3, and C2. She especially liked D3 because this image reminded her of her childhood house in Taiwan. Mimi

chose D3 plus C1 as her ideal home and neighborhood. Quiet, spaciousness, and plenty of trees are her requirements for a quality living environment.



**Patty**

Patty is an environmental planner in her early thirties. She and her husband got married in Beijing, China. They first came to Ohio for their Masters degree in 1997, and moved to Maryland in 1999. They first lived in an apartment in Frederick, then bought a single-family house there a year later. Now, they share a rental apartment in Silver Spring with another Chinese couple during the week. On the weekends, they return to their own house in Frederick. Patty works in Prince George’s County, and her husband works in the District of Columbia. Silver Spring is much closer to their offices than Frederick. They love their house so much and would not want to sell it:

“Our house in Frederick is in a small town kind of city. It was a new house when we purchased it. The neighborhood is peaceful, and people there are very nice and friendly. Most of the residents are white and elders. The shopping center is about twenty minutes walking distance from our home. Not too bad. We sometimes walk there as an exercise. It’s also a benefit for our parents when they come to visit us. They don’t speak English; they don’t know how to drive. It is easier for them to walk around and not feel bored at home.....We didn’t consider the school district because we don’t have kids yet. The schools in Frederick are not bad though and the cost is much cheaper here in Frederick.

Patty and her husband were high-income workers in China. For them, the material lives are equal in the US and in China. But Patty thinks the quality of life is better here in the US in terms of social and natural environment. Patty feels that woman are more respected here in the United States.

Patty and her husband shop in Chinese, Korean, and American grocery stores. They need to go

to Rockville for Asian food. For social life, they attend a Chinese alumni association and professional organizations.

In the image survey, Patty gave C1, C2, and D2 the highest scores, especially C2. She prefers newer houses, and is attracted to the spacious house with the three-car garage. She gave A2 a four because she liked the arrangement of the buildings and thought the lighting would be good in those buildings. She mentioned "convenient" for both images A3 and B3. When asked to put the images in order of her living experiences, Patty put first C1 and then C2 to reflect where she currently lives, followed by A2 that represented the housing type where she lived in Beijing.



**Kelly**

Kelly is forty-something from Taiwan and works as a scientist at NASA. She lives with her husband and two children in Ellicott City, Maryland. She came to America in 1984 and studied at the University of Maryland. She discusses her perception of migration to the US:

"It's all about the quality of life. At that time, everyone wanted to study abroad. My parents gave me the talk, "studying abroad is not just for learning knowledge. After graduation, you can find a good job, have a comfortable life, and better future." I didn't think too much. It was like an adventure for me. I wanted to see another world, a new world.....There used to be many Taiwanese students at that time. But now, there are more and more students from China.

After graduation, they bought a single-family house in Lanham, Maryland, which is close to NASA in Prince George's County. In 1999, they moved to the current house in Ellicott City in order to live in a better school district and to escape traffic. Also, the housing value and living costs are less in Ellicott City (Howard County) compared to that in Montgomery County. When asked about her ideal neighborhood, Kelly looks for a good school district, safe

environment, and convenient to amenities. She especially likes the countryside. She enjoys the rural view she has and does not like a crowded and high density living environment.

Kelly enjoys driving to work every day for thirty to forty minutes each way. She also has a brother who lives in Germantown, Maryland, who she sees at least once a month. For social activity, Kelly attends a Chinese chorus and an oldies band. She is also active in the Chinese school that her children attend.

For the image survey, Kelly gave the highest scores to A1, B3, and C2. She liked the historical feeling and the slopes in A1 that looked European. B3 had a small town feeling with style and looked very beautiful. She said that C2's house was beautiful, spacious, bright, and a comfortable place to live. Kelly rated A2 and B1 the lowest. She felt that A2 is too crowded, too noisy, and has too much air pollution. She also felt that B1 lacked style. Her favorite image is B3 followed by A1. For her, the combination of C2, C3, D3 and A1 represented her ideal home and community, which have a European or New England feel.



**Sharon**

Sharon lives in Potomac, Maryland with her husband and is retired in her fifties. She and her husband are both highly-educated and high-income professionals. The community in which they live is "Avenel," which is a gated, managed community with a golf course. Sharon's house is a single-detached home with another two houses in a courtyard. Sharon is very satisfied with her life now because she is free to play golf, participate in a chorus, and get involved with charities.

Sharon came to the US in 1972. She and her husband first went to Columbia, Ohio on scholarships. In 1978, they bought their first house in Buffalo, New York. This house was located in a rural area which Sharon enjoyed a lot for its large yard and cornfield surroundings. However, they needed to drive a very long distance to shop. After Sharon earned her PhD., they moved to New Jersey in 1982 and lived in

Murray Hills, a suburb of New York City. Sharon described the town and her life at that time:

“The residents there were mostly scientists and engineers in the Bell Labs or worked on Wall Street. Most of them had PhD degrees and were double income families. The school district was very good, which was the reason we moved there. The quality of the residents was very high. There were lawyers, stockbrokers; their social status was very high. It was one of the highest income neighborhoods in the United States. More and more Chinese lived there especially in the late 90s.....I took PATH train to work in New York City. Our second son was born at that time. We sent him to the day care center.....I commuted to New York for one year. And then I relocated to New Jersey and drove to work.”

Sharon and her husband then moved to Maryland in 2000 into their current house.

Sharon grew up in a rural area close to Taipei (now the biggest city in Taiwan). She lived in a single-family house surrounded by farms and flower nurseries. She took the ferry to the Taiwan University in Taipei. At the time she left Taiwan, there were not many apartment buildings in Taipei. She had never experienced city life when she was in Taiwan. Sharon did not have any difficulty in her migration history, mostly because she was surrounded by many of her college friends who also came to America, and by her and her husband’s other family members who live in the United States.

As for her ideal home and neighborhood, Sharon answered,

“It depends on different stages in my life. When we were in New Jersey, school district was the most important thing; but now, it’s not important any more. We didn’t care about how much yard work we needed to do while we were still young; but now, my life of mowing has already passed, and I don’t need a large yard. I want my neighbors to be professional like us, and I try to avoid families with little kids. Anyway, I want to live with homogeneous people with similar background and values. It’s easier to

communicate with each other, and there’s lower possibility of conflicts.”

In the image survey, Sharon gave C2 a five as her favorite, the only image she rated as a five. She described C2 as an upgraded house, and planned well. Sharon gave A1, A2, A3, B1, and B3 negatives. She didn’t like high density housings such as A1, A2 A3, and B1. She said that they were crowded and noisy, and unattractive. She rated other images neutrally. Her combination of ideal home and community was C2 plus D2. She likes a single house in a managed community, which is where she lives now. Sharon described her preferences in living environment: new development, clean-cut design community, close to big city, and luxury life.



### **May**

May, an accountant in her twenties who works in DC, was pregnant with her first child when we conducted the interview. She lives with her husband in their own duplex home in Gaithersburg, Maryland. They lease a floor to a mother and daughter from China.

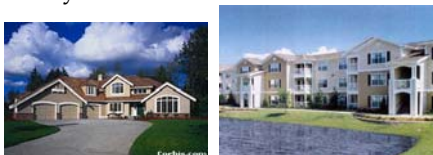
May came to the United States in September 1999 as an international student at the University of Maryland. She and her husband met here and were married in 2001. Her husband is from Hong Kong. They first lived in a single-family house with other people in College Park, Maryland. In December 2002, they bought their own home in Gaithersburg. Their house is in a newly developed community and brand new.. May was homesick during the first year in America, mostly because of the language barrier. She also did not know how to drive when she first came here. She nevertheless adjusted herself quickly to the American lifestyle.

Rockville is May’s ideal neighborhood in the DC area. She likes the downtown feeling and convenience. When asked about her ideal place to live, she said:

“If I’m still single or have no kids, I prefer to live in a place that has easy access to transportation, easy parking, and is close to my friends. There are not many requirements. But now I have family, and will have a child

soon. The school district is the most important thing. But we can only afford the house we have now. The houses in Potomac, Rockville, and Bethesda are too expensive. I think the school district will go up because there are more and more Chinese and Asians living here. I also want there to be a bus route in our community. Our parents will come to baby-sit for us. It's more convenient for them to get around. Oh, of course, I hope the neighbors are nice."

May gave ratings of five to C2 and D2 in the image survey. She liked the new appearance, yard, and spacious house and garage of C2. She also liked the waterfront of D2 which she thought to be quiet and peaceful. May gave lower scores to image A group. She did not like attached houses because of their noise and lack of privacy. She indicated that she likes to live close to nature. She described image B1 as quiet, but in a poor neighborhood. In the survey, she always considered traffic an important indicator. When asked to put the images in the order of past living experiences, she put A2 in the first place. A2 is very similar to the living environment where she grew up. For her ideal home and neighborhood, May chose C3 and D2 and considered them as future homes when she gains wealth and does not have to worry about traffic.



**Bath**

Bath is a music teacher in her forties living with her family in Clifton, VA. She came to the US with her husband in 1992 and lived in a school dormitory in Texas for four and half years. They moved to Houston in 1996 after graduation and stayed there for half a year. By the end of 1996, they moved to Richmond, VA. They first lived in an apartment, then bought a contemporary modest single-family house. Her husband then relocated for a new job in Fairfax, VA, and they moved to their current new single-family house in 1999.

Bath grew up in rural Malaysia before going to Taiwan for college. When asked about how she

adjusted to different lifestyles in Malaysia, Taiwan, and the US, she said:

"When I was in Taiwan as a student, the life was simple, there wasn't much except studying. I got used to the life in Taiwan very easily and didn't want to move back to Malaysia. I then got married to my husband and had children. We both didn't like the crowded city life in Taipei, and the air pollution was terrible. We decided a change of environment would be good, so we made the decision to study abroad. The place we lived in Texas was a college town with a population of 30,000. Everything was within walking distance. It was a great relief to escape from the crowded life in Taipei.

She has no problem with driving to get groceries because she can avoid the traffic. Her family has no problem adjusting to the different lifestyles. They have moved 7 times during their 11 years in the US.

Bath considers the school district first when choosing her ideal neighborhood, followed by type of neighbors. They prefer neighbors with similar lifestyles and education levels. For their social lives, both Bath and her husband teach in the Chinese school, where they interact a lot with the Chinese community. Also, the entire family participates in the Chinese tennis association.

Bath gave ratings of five to C2 and D3 in the image survey. She liked the trees, yard, and three-car garage in image C2, and D3 reminds her of her childhood. She gave low scores to all images in groups A and B. The reason was she thought those housing types were too crowded. When asked to put the images in the order of past living experiences, she put C1 in the first place, because it closely resembles the house she lives in now, followed by D2 because it resembled her childhood home. Her ideal home and neighborhood is a combination of C2 and D3. She likes single-family detached houses with plenty of space located close to the city.





## **Janet**

Janet is in her thirties and works as a researcher for the Army Research Labs. She lives with her husband in a single-family house in Bethesda. She came to the US from China in 1990 to study electrical engineering, and met her husband in Buffalo. She found a job after graduation in 1997 in Rochester, New York, where she rented an apartment. Her husband had a single-family house in suburban Buffalo in a good school district. They moved to Maryland in 2002, first renting an apartment in Bethesda, then buying their current house in Kenwood Park. The houses in Kenwood Park are all of an older housing stock, which Janet and her husband prefer. Their house is located on a quarter acre lot with very wooded surroundings. When they purchased the house, their considerations were both location and school district, as well as a good investment.

The main reason Janet came to the United States was for higher education, as Ph.D. programs were scarce in China. She also considered the improved opportunities and lifestyle. Janet shops at Chinese grocers regularly, and occasionally at Persian and Iranian grocers (her husband is Iranian). For a social life, she participates in the choir and the Washington Area Chinese Tennis Association.

For the image survey, Janet did not rate any image higher than three. She said large bedrooms and kitchens were high priorities in what she looked for in a house. She gave A3 a three because she likes old houses, and it looks close to downtown and convenient. "Investment" was the recurring word in the image survey. She rated town houses and condos very low because they are poor investments. She indicated C1 as the most strongly related to her past living experiences and it resembles her current colonial style house. When being asked about the combinations for her ideal home and community, she again mentioned "Investment." She liked the combination of C1 (the housing style) and A3 (in the cities). She loves Georgetown but it is too far from her work. Even though Janet prefers to live in the city, she chooses to live in the suburbs because of the higher property values they offer for an investment.



## ***Conclusions***

## **Section 6. Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **1. Conclusion:**

Throughout the analysis, this study found that the newly emerged American mainstream values of suburban life and immigrants' previous homeland city lifestyles have played out intricate and dynamic relationships in immigrants' choice of their new dream home at their new homeland in America. In summary, this study reveals three noble trends:

#### **A. Value of American Dream:**

The American mainstream value of owning a newly built single-family detached house (i.e., image C1, and C2) has profoundly influenced the Asian and Latino immigrant interviewees.

The C1 and C2 images of single-family detached houses are the "dreamy" home for the majority of the immigrants. Although more than 70 percent Asian and Latino immigrants grow up in city environments back in their home countries, similar percentage of both immigrant groups adore single detached suburban houses. Many interviewees described the C1 and C2 images as: "I am the king," "American dream", "dreamy," "big house," "privacy," "comfort," "luxury," and so on. In contrast, the American-born group with 56 percent growing up in suburbs does not attach to C1 and C2 as much as the immigrant groups. A few US-born interviewees even criticize C1 and C2 images as: "too much driveway," "cookie cutter," or "too suburb."

The adoption of suburban homes as immigrants' America dream home is a classical case that demonstrates the collective environmental actions that immigrants from different countries take on for melting into their new homeland's mainstream values. Before their migration, through mass media, Hollywood movies, and Internet, they had perceived the form of cookie cutter single detached houses (nice green lawn in front of the house and a well paved driveway leads to garage) within suburban communities as the high-quality American way of life. After they migrate to America, they understand the picture of American suburban life even better. No matter for real or just their impression, they believe that, in contrast to inner city neighborhoods,

suburban subdivisions provide larger houses, better schools, nicer community amenity, more open spaces, and less crime rates. In addition, most upper middle class Caucasian professionals live in suburbs, while inner city residents are likely those working class African Americans.

Therefore, many new comers, especially Asian immigrants, consider their ownership of single-family detached houses within good school districts as the status representing their successful migration journey. In other words, they feel they finally melt into the American society by moving into a suburban house located in a newly developed subdivision. However, many correspondents and interviewees pointed out that they prefer to have convenient lifestyle – close to shops, schools, offices etc. Some of them revealed that they might move to a convenient location, after their children grow up and they do not worry about school districts.

Meanwhile Latino new comers prefer affordable larger houses for slightly different reasons. Due to Latino's extended family configurations, most interviewees and respondents emphasized that they need big houses with more rooms for their big family. "Privacy" is their primary concern. Housing supplies within urban neighborhoods in DC cannot provide affordable choices that fit their needs. In addition, many of them are working in suburban neighborhoods within Montgomery County. Combining these two major factors, they stay in suburban neighborhoods.

This trend leads to the urgent need for providing alternative suburban housing supplies that are built by sustainable technologies. We will address this need in the recommendations.

#### **B. Cities within Suburbs:**

The prior mixed-use and convenient city lifestyles affect Latino immigrants' preference for having city life in their new American homeland. However, they perceive suburban commercial nodes as their model cities.

While Latino immigrants dream about the newly built single detached houses, 67 percent of them prefer city environments. The Latino group's choice of city residential locations fits into the research hypothesis. The Latino immigrant interviewees have lived most of their lives in higher density and

pedestrian friendly urban neighborhoods; they prefer the conveniences that Smart Growth principles offer, such as mixed-use environments that enable a quick walk to the store from one's home.

However, for most Latino immigrant interviewees, they perceive suburban commercial nodes and shopping malls as the model city. According to the survey, more than 70 percent of the Latino interviewees who live in Gaithersburg consider it as a city. Within this particular group, 87 percent is in favor of "city" as the idea location for their future homes.

Why do Latino new comers perceive suburb commercial areas as city neighborhoods in their new homeland? How are suburban commercial areas different from the neighborhoods within the DC urban districts? The study found that the Latino new comers prefer city lifestyles within suburban locations. As some interviewees mentioned, when they visit places like Adams Morgan, they feel "back home." The "back home" feeling stems from the mix commercial and residential land use patterns. "There are stores along both sides of the streets, and people walk around everywhere. However, as pointed out earlier, Latino immigrants need big houses for their extended families and most of them work in suburban areas. These two major factors limit their location choices, and suburban neighborhoods become their primary locations. Depending on the affordability of housing prices, they are, similar to Asian new comers, in favor of the locations close to commercial areas within a convenient walking distance. When they visit suburban commercial areas close to their new suburban homes, the crowdedness and vibrant activities offered by different shops and stores make them feel they are back in their "city" home again.

This trend opens up interesting design and planning alternatives that challenge the conventional "single-land-use" patterns for suburban commercial developments. It leads to the concept of creating "suburban city districts" that contains residential, commercial, and office spaces. We will address it in the upcoming recommendations.

### **C. Potential for a Smart Growth Future:**

The US-born residents who grew up in the suburbs have the potential to accept Smart Growth principles,

i.e., moving back to cities, driving less, and living in higher density neighborhoods.

More percentages of US-born suburban-grown residents (the US suburban group) drive less and prefer to move back to city than urban-grown immigrants, especially the Asian group. More important, there is the slightly higher percentage of the US-suburban group (20%) who prefer to move to cities than the Asian-urban group (17%). In other word, while 71 percent of the US-born residents who grew up in suburbs want to stay in suburban locations, 74 percent of Asian immigrants who grew up in city locations prefer to move to suburban subdivisions after they migrate to America. In addition to the 20% city and 71 % suburbs, 9% of the members of the US-suburban group choose small town (2% Asian urban), and only 3% are in favor of the rural (7% Asian).

Meanwhile, the US-suburban group is less attached to C1 (32% rank 5 point vs. 57% Latino urban group) and C2 (56% rank 5 point vs. 70% Asian urban group and 76% Latino urban group) images that represent the newly developed large single-family detached houses located in typical suburban subdivisions. Instead, the images of small house with white pickett fence and pleasant landscaping (D3) is more appealing to the US suburban group. Based on this finding, the study presumes that members of the US suburban group show the potential of accommodating further sustainable lifestyles that promote smart growth developments.

This trend informs us of the urgent need for better public education related to the "smart growth American dream" within the immigrant communities, especially the Asian professional immigrants, as well as the US-born residents. We will discuss the action plan in the following recommendations.

## **2. Recommendations:**

### **A. Shaping Suburban City Districts:**

Mixed Land-use overlay for suburban Commercial Nodes and Affordable Housing for Mix-income Residents

Based on the analysis of three cultural groups and the comparison analysis, this study recommends the concept of creating "suburban city districts." The concept of suburban city districts refers to transforming suburban commercial areas into mix-use

districts that include offices, residential units, retails, as well as public facilities. The inner ring right surrounding these suburban city districts can be high-density residential land uses, i.e., apartments and condos. The second ring outside the suburban city districts can be town houses and single houses with small lots. The outer ring can be residential developments with lower density. County planning boards should consider different planning tools to implement this concept, i.e., zoning overlay with tax incentive.

### **B. Blue Print for a Sustainable Suburban Home:**

#### **Green Architecture and Sustainable Landscape for Single-family Detached House Design**

As the matter of fact, every one wants to pursue a single-family detached house. Therefore, it is crucial to develop green architecture technology and sustainable landscaping techniques as the alternative blue print for the sustainable suburban homes.

Introducing green technology to the design profession and housing industry is the first step. Programs and departments related to environmental design (i.e., architecture, landscape architecture, interior design, city and regional planning, and environmental engineering) play a crucial role in educating students on how to apply green technologies. From an educational point of view, every design school and program should review its curriculum, because it is important to transform the visual-based design curricula to an ecological-based one. For the young generation, designers should know how to install solar energy panels and design a green roof for residential buildings, as well as how to select native plants for home garden design.

There is an urgent need for county, state and federal governments to provide financial support for homeowners to install these green features in their houses. More importantly, governments should create intensive policies to enable banks to lend money to homeowners who plan to install green features in their homes. Today, in Maryland, homeowners with ecological concerns are facing the challenge to get conventional loans from banks to install green features like solar panels and green roofs.

The irony is that it is easier to get loan approval to add additions in one's house than to replace one's roof with a green roof. Banks in Maryland, and around the country, believe that it will reduce the resale value of a house, therefore, financial support from government and the accessibility of conventional loans are both crucial for creating sustainable homes.

### **C. Smart Marketing for a Smart-growth American Dream:**

It is important to broadcast smart-growth education for Americans and immigrants to rebuild the smart-growth American dream. Based on our investigation, there are two potential groups. One is the young generation, American suburban-grown group. The other is Asian city-grown.

For the American group, many interviewees told us that they did not enjoy suburban childhoods. They prefer to move to an urban area where they can enjoy a diverse city life. Their favorite home locations are close to Metro stops, i.e., Bethesda, Silver Spring or Union Station. This group also practices car-pooling, biking, and other alternative transportations. They are indeed the ones with the most likely potential to adapt the ideal smart growth lifestyles. On the other hand, the Asian-city-grown group is the one which embodies the city lifestyles, but wants to embrace the suburban American dream. According to our interview, they believe that owning a suburban house in the good school district represents their successful immigrant migration, because mainstream Americans all live in suburbs. They are intimidated by their city lifestyles in their home countries, because only poor Americans/Chinese Americans live in the inner city slums or Chinatown. However, when they do their house hunting in the suburbs, they still prefer to live in a convenient location that is close to shopping, working, and children's schools. Their urban lifestyles are internalized and turn into their home identities. Therefore, it is crucial to broadcast that city lifestyle is not a shame, but the catalyst for a smart-growth suburban change!

## *Appendices*

## **Appendix A: Questions for the Expert Interviews**

### 1. What's your background?

Occupation? How old are you? Where do you live now? Are you an immigrant?

If yes:

When did you move here?

Can you brief your family migration history?

What type of environment your family first settled into, when you moved.....

How did your family adjust to American lifestyle (suburban culture)? Or, try to...

What do you look for in a place to live, or ideal neighborhood?

### 2. Cultural Context

Do you know the history of Korean/Latino immigrants in this area?

How do people in Korean/Latino countries perceive migration to the US? (perception of social economic status)

Do you know any city of origin that the Korean/Latino immigrants come from?

What's the area that Korean/Latino population concentrated?

Are there Korean or Latino towns around?

What makes them stay in those neighborhoods?

Have Korean/Latino groups moved into the suburbs from DC?

If so, is it for financial reasons?

(Does the suburb provide cheaper housing and more choice?)

Or, if it is because of social status? (Suburban house symbolizes America Values)

What are the characteristics of Korean/Latino family culture and lifestyles?

(In their motherland)

- extended family (grandparents stay with the family)
- stay close with relatives or friends
- choose community within the same ethnic background
- How do Koreans/Latinos use neighborhood public space (sidewalks, parks, playground)?
- How do Koreans/Latinos use their yards or gardens?
- Do they enjoy driving to school, shopping, work, or recreation?
- What's the type of housing where ordinary people live? (apartment, town house, single detached....)
- What's the average size of the dwelling units? How does it compare to the place they live in the US?
- Do they have accessible public transportation service?

What kind of social life do Koreans/Latinos have in their motherland?

- How and where do they interact with their community and neighbors?
- How and where do they interact with their friends and families?
- What are they doing in their spare time?

What kind of social life do Koreans/Latinos have in the US?

- How and where do they interact with their community and neighbors?
- How and where do they interact with their friends and families?
- How often do they contact their family and friends in their homeland?
- Do they do their grocery shopping in their ethnic shopping place?
- Where are those ethnic shopping places?
- Is there any informal (social/recreational/educational) group where most of the K/L go?
- Is there any social group that represents the K/L population you can recommend to us?

**Appendix B: The Lifestyle and Image Survey**

**Page 1. Lifestyle/Experience survey**

Lifestyles for Smart Growth Survey

University of Maryland / National Center for Smart Growth Research and Education / Dr. Shenglin Chang / Research Assistants: Ping Sung & Aimée LaMontagne / Contact info: [301-405-4369](tel:301-405-4369), [sc296@umail.umd.edu](mailto:sc296@umail.umd.edu). It is the intention of the research to understand your preference of living environment and how it is related to your past living experience. Your answers will help us understand design for diverse lifestyles. The survey is anonymous. We will use this information only for the purposes of the study on Smart Growth issues.

1.) Background

Please circle: **Male** **Female**  
 Age: **below 20** **21-30** **31-40** **41-50** **51-60** **61-70** **71 and above**  
 Marital Status: **Single** **Married**  
 How many people in your household? \_\_\_\_\_ How many kids in your household? \_\_\_\_\_  
 What is your annual household income? **<\$10,000** **\$10,000 – 24,999** **\$25,000 – 34,999**  
**\$35,000 – 49,999** **\$50,000 – 74,999** **\$75,000 -99,999** **\$100,000 – 149,999**  
**\$150,000 – 199,999** **more than \$200,000**  
 In what country were you born? \_\_\_\_\_  
 What is your ethnicity? **White** **African American** **Latino/Hispanic** **Asian** **Other**

2.) Where do you live now? \_\_\_\_\_

**City** **State** **Zip Code**  
 Area where you live now: **city** **suburb** **small town** **rural area**  
 The housing type: **apartment** **townhouse** **single-family house** **other**

3.) What kind of area you did you grow up? **city** **suburb** **small town** **rural area**

The housing type was: **apartment** **townhouse** **single-family house**  
**other** \_\_\_\_\_

4.) What is your preferred living area and housing type?

Preferred area: **city** **suburb** **small town** **rural area**  
 Preferred housing type: **apartment** **townhouse** **single-family house** **other** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Please tell us your ideal neighborhood in this area: \_\_\_\_\_

5.) **How often do you:** (please check the box)

**Means and travel time:**

	1x/month	2x/month	1x/wk	2 or more x/wk	Never	Walk	Bike	Drive	Public Transit	Carpool	Time to go there (min.)
Grocery shop?											
Other shopping?											
Go to a restaurant?											
Go to work?											
Go to church?											
Go to sports event?											

What is the maximum acceptable travel time to get to your work destinations? (please circle)

**< 10 min.** **10-30 min.** **31-45 min.** **46-60 min.** **> 60 min.**

What is the maximum acceptable travel time to get to your other destinations? (please circle)

**< 10 min.** **10-30 min.** **31-45 min.** **46-60 min.** **> 60 min.**

**Appendix B: The Image Survey, Page 2**



**P2. Image Survey**

There are twelve images below. Please rate each of them to let us know your preference and why.  
 Score: strongly like 5    like 4    neutral 3    dislike 2    strongly dislike 1

**A1**



score \_\_\_\_\_  
 why \_\_\_\_\_

**B1**



score \_\_\_\_\_  
 why \_\_\_\_\_

**C1**



score \_\_\_\_\_  
 why \_\_\_\_\_

**D1**



score \_\_\_\_\_  
 why \_\_\_\_\_

**A2**



score \_\_\_\_\_  
 why \_\_\_\_\_

**B2**



score \_\_\_\_\_  
 why \_\_\_\_\_

**C2**



score \_\_\_\_\_  
 why \_\_\_\_\_

**D2**



score \_\_\_\_\_  
 why \_\_\_\_\_

**A3**



score \_\_\_\_\_  
 why \_\_\_\_\_

**B3**



score \_\_\_\_\_  
 why \_\_\_\_\_

**C3**



score \_\_\_\_\_  
 why \_\_\_\_\_

**D3**



score \_\_\_\_\_  
 why \_\_\_\_\_

Finally, please put the images above in the order that they relate with your past living experiences:

Strongly related  → not related at all

## Appendix C: Lifestyle Survey Analysis

Appendix C Table 1: Gender Breakdown	Count	Percentage
Female	77	53%
Male	59	41%
Did not answer	9	6%

Appendix C Table 2: Age	Count	Percentage
Below 20	4	3%
21-30	27	19%
31-40	55	38%
41-50	35	24%
51-60	15	10%
61-70	5	3%
Did not answer	4	3%

Appendix C Table 3: Annual Household Income	Count	Percentage
<\$10,000	5	3%
\$10-24,999	9	6%
\$25-34,999	11	8%
\$35-49,999	19	13%
\$50-74,999	17	12%
\$75-99,999	20	14%
\$100-149,999	28	19%
\$150-199,999	11	8%
More than \$200,000	6	4%
Did not answer	19	13%

Appendix C Table 4: Past Experience	Type of area (past)	Percentage
Asian-origin-non-USA born	City	72%
	Rural area	7%
	Small town	2%
	Suburb	20%
Latino-origin-non-USA born	City	70%
	Did not answer	3%
	Rural area	7%
US born	Suburb	20%
	City	22%
	Rural area	2%
	Small town	20%
	Suburb	56%

Appendix C Table 5: Current Experience	Type of area (now)	Percentage
Asian-origin-non-USA born	City	17%
	Rural area	2%
	Small town	3%
	Suburb	78%
Latino-origin-non-USA born	City	50%
	Small town	3%
	Suburb	47%
US born	City	18%
	Small town	5%
	Suburb	76%

Appendix C Table 6: Preferred Areas	Preferred area	Percentage
Asian-origin-non-USA born	City	12%
	Rural area	10%
	Small town	3%
	Suburb	75%
Latino-origin-non-USA born	City	67%
	Rural area	3%
	Suburb	27%
	Did not answer	3%
US born	City	23%
	Rural area	7%
	Small town	9%
	Suburb	61%

<b>Appendix C Table 7: Past v. Now</b>	<b>Type of area (past)</b>	<b>Type of area (now)</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Asian-origin-non-USA born (60)	City (43)	City	7	16%(7/43)
		Rural area	1	2%
		Small town	1	2%
		Suburb	34	79%
	Rural area (4)	City	1	25%
		Small town	1	25%
		Suburb	2	50%
	Small town (1)	Suburb	1	100%
	Suburb (12)	City	2	17%
		Suburb	10	83%
Latino-origin-non-USA born (30)	City (21)	City	11	52%
		Small town	1	5%
		Suburb	9	43%
	Did not answer (1)	City	1	100%
	Rural area (2)	City	1	50%
		Suburb	1	50%
	Suburb (6)	City	2	33%
		Suburb	4	67%
US born (55)	City (12)	City	4	33%
		Small town	1	8%
		Suburb	7	58%
	Rural area (1)	City	1	100%
	Small town (11)	City	1	9%
		Suburb	10	91%
	Suburb (31)	City	4	13%
		Small town	2	6%
	Suburb	25	81%	

<b>Appendix C Table 8: Past vs. Preferred</b>	<b>Type of area (past)</b>	<b>Preferred area</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	
Asian-origin-non-USA born (60)	City (43)	City	7	16%	
		Rural area	3	7%	
		Small town	1	2%	
		Suburb	32	74%	
	Rural area (4)	Rural area	2	50%	
		Suburb	2	50%	
	Small town (1)	Small town	1	100%	
		Suburb (12)	Rural area	1	8%
	Latino-origin-non-USA born (30)	City (21)	City	15	71%
			Did not answer	1	5%
Did not answer (1)		Suburb	5	24%	
		City	1	100%	
Rural area (2)		City	2	100%	
Suburb (6)		City	2	33%	
		Rural area	1	17%	
US born (55)		City (12)	Suburb	3	50%
			City	5	42%
		Rural area (1)	Rural area	2	17%
	Small town		2	17%	
	Small town (11)	Suburb	3	25%	
		City	1	100%	
	Suburb (31)	Rural area	1	9%	
		Suburb	9	82%	
		City	5	16%	
		City or rural	1	3%	
Small town		3	10%		
Suburb		22	71%		

Appendix C Table 9: Now vs. Preferred	Type of area (now)	Preferred area	Count	Percentage
Asian-origin-non-USA born (60)	City (10)	City	5	50%
		Suburb	5	50%
	Rural area (1)	Rural area	1	100%
	Small town (2)	Rural area	1	50%
		Suburb	1	50%
	Suburb (47)	City	2	4%
		Rural area	4	9%
		Small town	2	4%
		Suburb	39	83%
Latino-origin-non-USA born (30)	City (15)	City	14	93%
		Suburb	1	7%
	Small town (1)	City	1	100%
	Suburb (14)	City	5	36%
		Did not answer	1	7%
		Rural area	1	7%
		Suburb	7	50%
US born (55)	City (10)	City	6	60%
		Rural area	1	10%
		Suburb	3	30%
	Small town (3)	Small town	2	67%
		Suburb	1	33%
	Suburb (42)	City	6	14%
		City or rural	1	2%
		Rural area	2	5%
		Small town	3	7%
		Suburb	30	71%

**Appendix D: Image Survey Analysis**

**A1**

A1 Score	Asian	Latino	US
1	22%	16%	11%
2	35%	47%	40%
3	23%	23%	20%
4	13%	7%	20%
5	7%	7%	9%



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**A2**

A2 Score	Asian	Latino	US
1	38%	23%	53%
2	29%	44%	24%
3	23%	20%	20%
4	7%	13%	2%
5	3%	0%	1%



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**A3**

A3 Score	Asian	Latino	US
1	28%	17%	27%
2	38%	67%	16%
3	17%	7%	24%
4	13%	3%	18%
5	2%	6%	13%
Did not answer	2%		2%



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(Appendix D, cont'd.)

**B1**

B1 Score	Asian	Latino	US
1	17%	3%	20%
2	37%	44%	33%
3	28%	30%	22%
4	15%	23%	24%
5	3%	0%	1%



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**B2**

B2 Score	Asian	Latino	US
1	22%	7%	7%
2	20%	23%	20%
3	37%	37%	44%
4	17%	27%	20%
5	3%	6%	9%
Did not answer	1%		



Image source: [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)

**B3**

B3 Score	Asian	Latino	US
1	10%	0%	5%
2	20%	24%	18%
3	42%	36%	35%
4	25%	26%	33%
5	2%	10%	9%
Did not answer	1%	4%	



Image source: [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)



(Appendix D, cont'd.)

**C1**

C1 Score	Asian	Latino	US
1	0%	3%	4%
2	5%	3%	15%
3	18%	10%	18%
4	42%	27%	38%
5	35%	57%	25%



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**C2**

C2 Score	Asian	Latino	US
1	0%	3%	9%
2	3%	0%	15%
3	3%	3%	12%
4	22%	14%	22%
5	72%	80%	42%



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**C3**

C3 Score	Asian	Latino	US
1	5%	13%	13%
2	15%	10%	20%
3	28%	20%	22%
4	37%	24%	22%
5	15%	33%	22%
Did not answer			1%



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(Appendix D, cont'd.)

**D1**

D1 Score	Asian	Latino	US
1	13%	10%	7%
2	12%	47%	33%
3	42%	23%	31%
4	25%	10%	13%
5	5%	10%	15%
Did not answer	3%		1%



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**D2**

D2 Score	Asian	Latino	US
1	3%	0%	9%
2	7%	7%	25%
3	30%	20%	29%
4	40%	50%	29%
5	20%	23%	8%



Image source: [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)

**D3**

D3 Score	Asian	Latino	US
1	0%	0%	2%
2	8%	13%	4%
3	25%	20%	18%
4	40%	40%	40%
5	27%	27%	36%



Image source: [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)

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