Sprawling commercial and residential development in outer suburbs and exurban areas has for a number of years masked increasingly severe socioeconomic problems in suburban America. In recent decades income declines, crime increases, and tax base erosion have affected many suburbs to an extent previously seen only in central cities.

In Confronting Suburban Decline William H. Lucy and David L. Phillips examine conditions and trends in cities and suburbs since 1960, arguing that beginning in the 1980s, the United States entered a "post-suburban" era of declining suburbs with maturation of communities accompanied by large-scale deterioration. In-depth case studies are provided of Richmond, Virginia and Washington, D.C., along with examples from Minnesota, Oregon, Maryland, Tennessee, and other locations. In addition, the book offers information and statistics on income, population, and racial transitions in 554 suburbs in the nation's twenty-four largest metropolitan areas.

Making the case that a high quality natural and built environment is key to achieving economic stability, the authors set forth a series of policy recommendations with federal, state, regional, and local dimensions that can help contribute to that goal.

Confronting Suburban Decline provides a detailed look at the causes of and responses to urban and suburban decline. Planners and policymakers as well as students and researchers involved with issues of land use, economic development, regional planning, community development, or intergovernmental relations will find it a valuable resource.

The authors examine:
- why suburban decline has become widespread
- how the "tyranny of easy development decisions" often results in new housing being built outside of areas that people prefer
- how strategic planning can help assess dangers
- how some suburbs have stabilized or revived
- how interactions between residential mobility and the age, size, and location of housing can help policy makers anticipate dangers and opportunities facing neighborhoods and jurisdictions

William H. Lucy is professor in the Department of Urban and Environmental Planning at the University of Virginia and author of Close to Power (Planners Press, 1988).

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Suburban decline varied considerably among the metropolitan areas in our sample. For example, relative income decline had hit all of Denver’s suburbs but only 43 percent of San Diego’s suburbs. Suburbs declining faster than central cities ranged from 52 percent in the Kansas City area to none in the Baltimore and Milwaukee areas. They are coauthors of Confronting Suburban Decline: Strategic Planning for Metropolitan Renewal (Island Press, 2000). Recommended Reading. confronting suburban decline. The first lesson is that local governments are able to confront suburban decline and revitalize aging communities, but the ability to carry out and. This was only possible because Baltimore County had jurisdiction over all of its territory. The second lesson is that confronting suburban decline requires the political willingness to confront the problem. Baltimore County’s leaders.

@inproceedings{Lucy2000ConfrontingSD, title={Confronting Suburban Decline: Strategic Planning For Metropolitan Renewal}, author={William H. Lucy and David Lee Phillips}, year={2000} }. William H. Lucy, David Lee Phillips. Published 2000. Geography. Sprawling commercial and residential development in the suburbs can mask severe socioeconomic problems more usually associated with inner cities, such as income decline, crime increase and tax base erosion.