

# America as Texas vs. California: Who's Moving Where Edition

By [Ryan Streeter](#)

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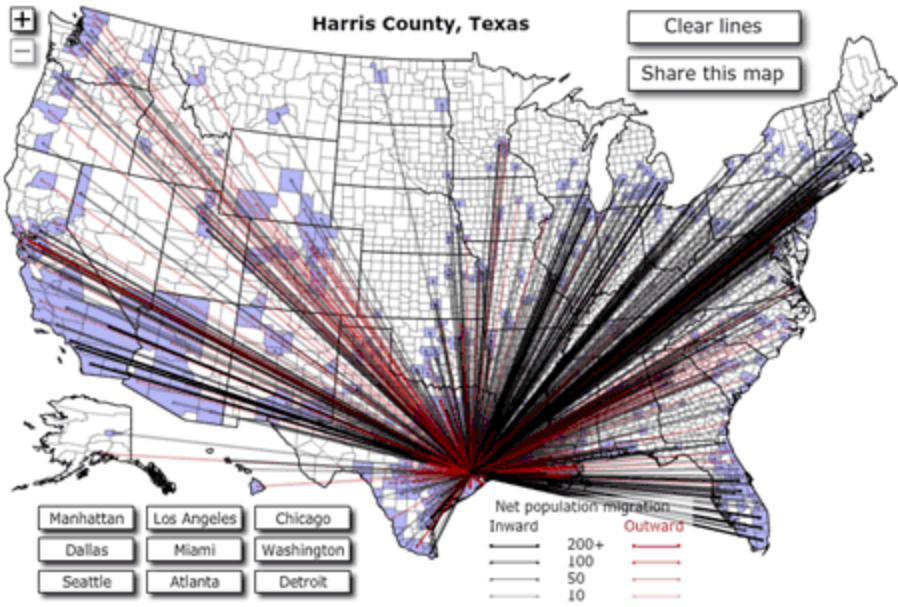
The Enterprise Blog has featured an occasional series comparing Texas and California as a way to draw conclusions about America as a whole.

Texas's low-cost, liberty-loving atmosphere has become an attractive alternative to California's oppressive public sector and dysfunctional policy environment. No amount of heart-melting vistas, celebrity sightings, or traipses through wine country can make up for what almost appears a strategic attempt by one of the nation's largest states to drive businesses and productive people away.

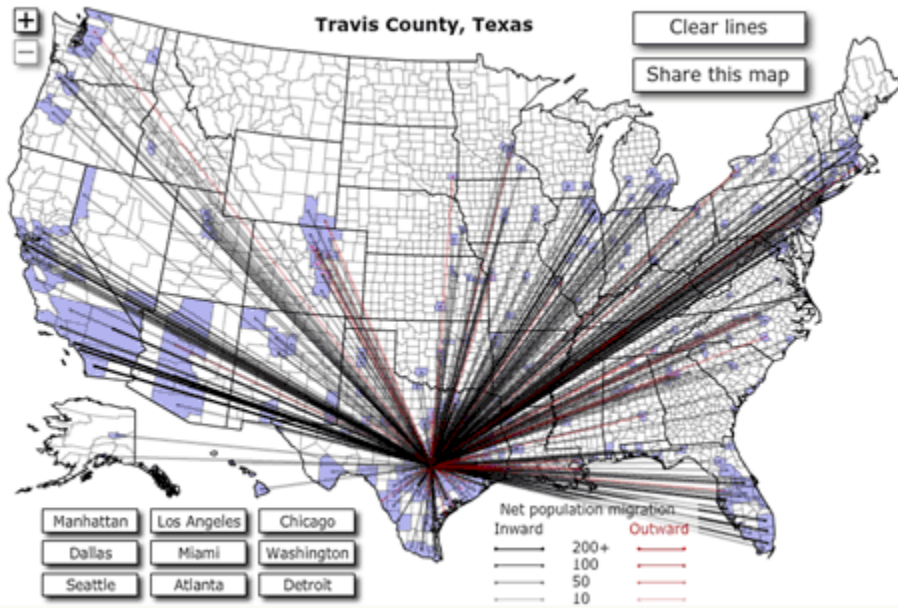
Thanks to an interesting [interactive map at Forbes.com](#), we now can see some visual evidence of the trends we have been discussing. The map shows county migration in the United States in pictorial form. Black lines show inward migration to a county, and red lines show outward migration. The thicker the line, the higher the volume.

If we look at Harris County, Texas, where Houston is located, we can practically hear a giant sucking sound as the state's largest city pulls people southward from the northeast, the Midwest, and elsewhere. Most of the outmigration is regional, with some identifiable patterns to the upper northwest. You get a similar picture when you look at the migration patterns to Dallas and Austin.

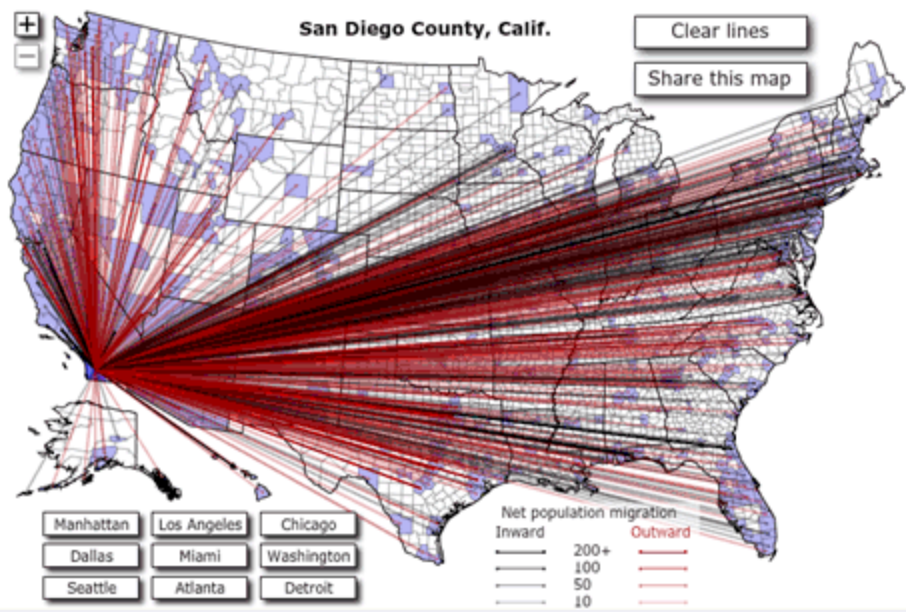
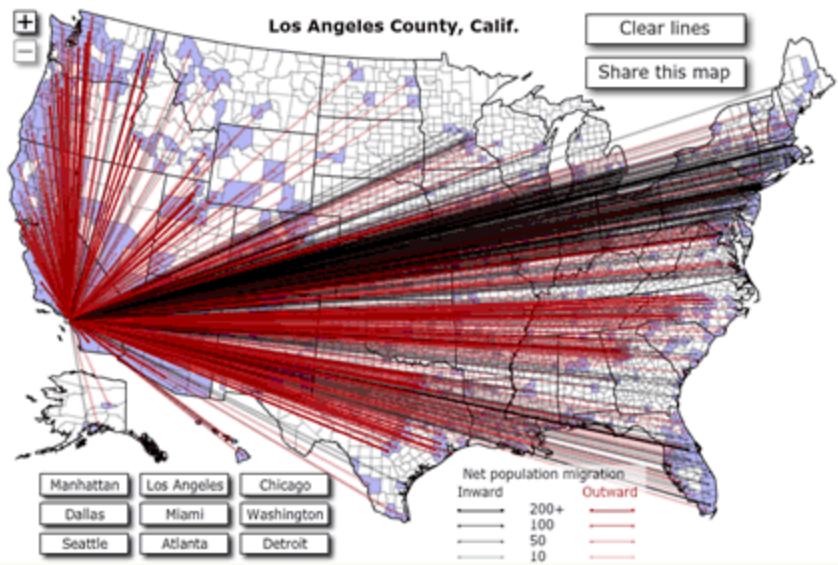
(see maps below)



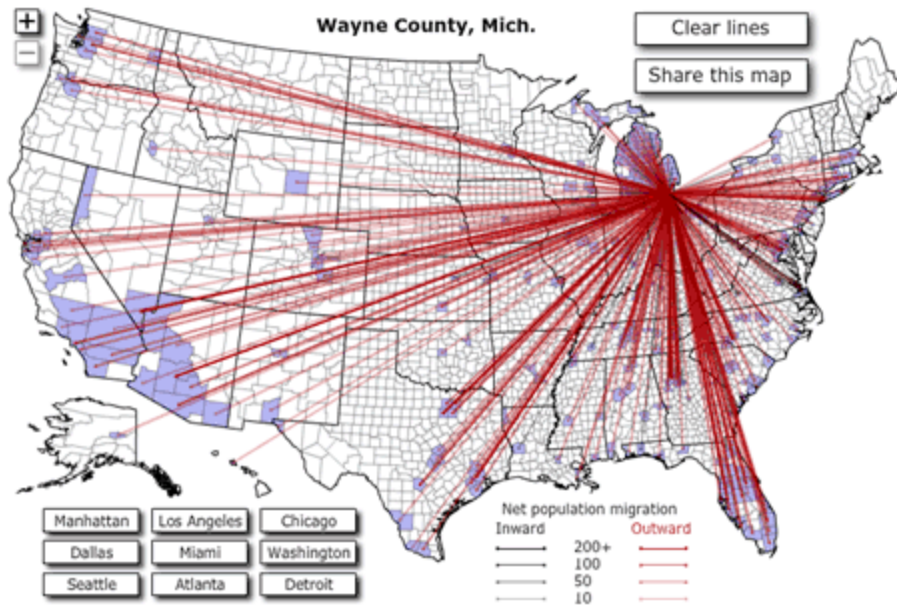
For example, Travis County, home to Austin, looks similarly like a bull's eye on the dartboard of appealing places to live. It's hard to find any distinct patterns of where people in Austin go when they leave the state. The red lines are thin indeed.



Now let's look at California. Aside from the appeal of Los Angeles to people living in the high-cost northeast (you might as well have good beaches and sunny weather if you're paying high taxes for bad services), it appears the city of angels is losing its heavenly radiance in a massive way. San Diego also looks very red. San Francisco (not included here) has a surprisingly black hue to it in defiance of that beautiful city's high cost of living, but it has a noticeably lower volume than the other great California cities.



Now, in a departure from the theme of the series, Detroit (Wayne County, Michigan) was so vividly depressing that I simply have to include it. Hardly anything shows the tragic effects of bad policy and under-performing industry than the picture below.



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Courtesy of JB Goodwin