



**SECTION 5. PROJECTIONS/FUTURE DEMAND**

**A. Introduction**

This section of the plan focuses on future growth and demand which may have an impact on land use. Forecasts of growth and demand are, at best, difficult. Constantly changing local, regional, national, and international factors significantly influence the City of Roanoke Rapids and the surrounding region.

**B. Population**

Table \_\_\_\_ provides the population forecasts through 2030 for the counties located within the Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments (COG).

**Table \_\_\_\_.** 2030 Population Forecasts, Upper Coastal Plain COG Counties

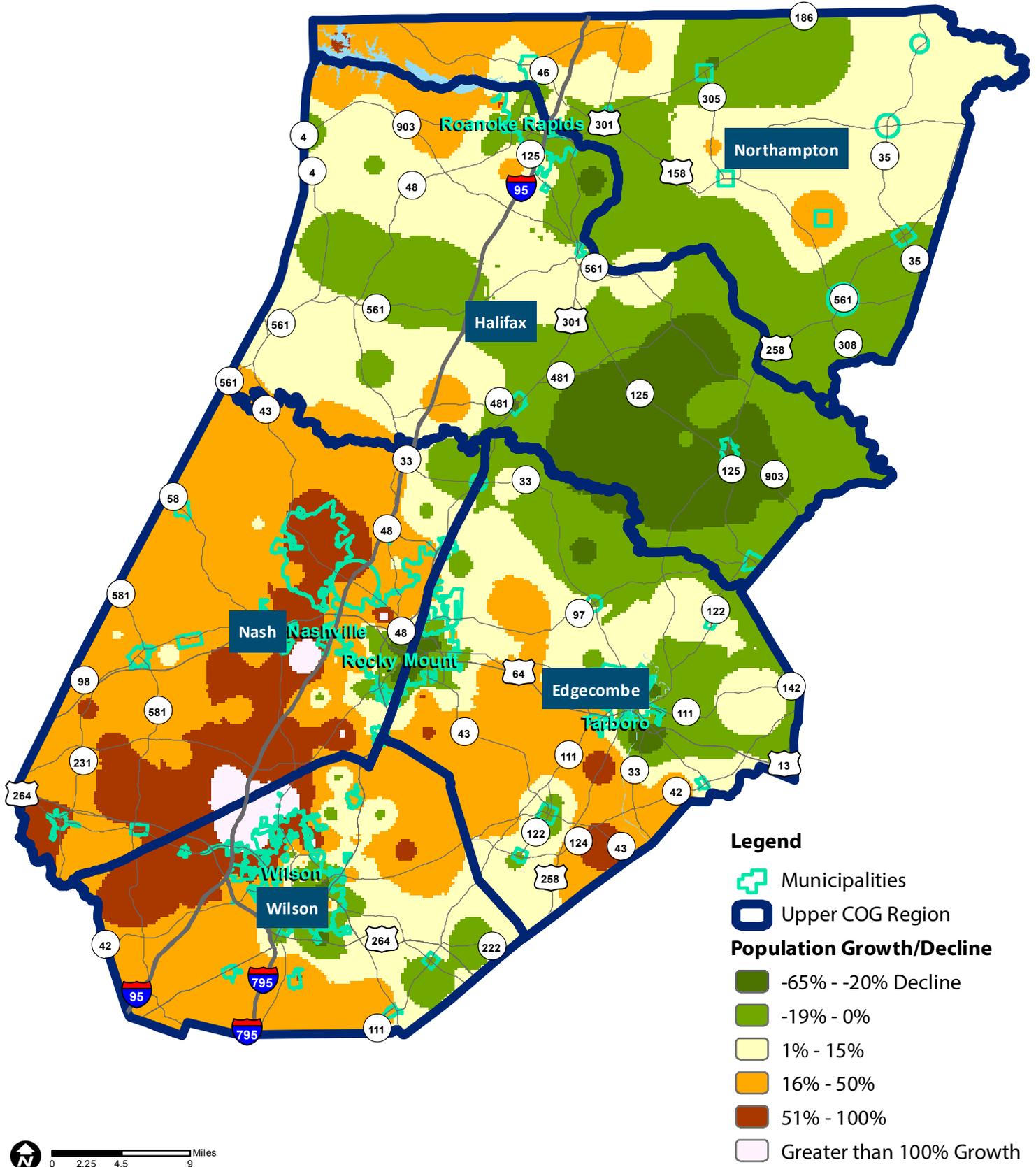
<u>Area Name</u>	<u>2030</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2010</u>
Edgecombe County	62,699	61,556	60,224	58,633	56,552
Halifax County	49,809	51,014	52,218	53,423	54,691
Nash County	120,655	114,548	108,443	102,339	95,840
Northampton County	25,345	24,091	23,131	22,469	22,099
Wilson County	<u>96,197</u>	<u>92,575</u>	<u>88,950</u>	<u>85,323</u>	<u>81,234</u>
	354,705	343,784	332,966	322,187	310,416

Source: NC Office of State Planning.

From 2010 to 2030, the population for the entire COG area is expected to increase from 310,416 to 354,705, an increase of 44,284, or 14.3%. By contrast, the Halifax County population is expected to decrease from 54,691 in 2010 to 49,809 in 2030, a decrease of 4,882, or 8.4%. This downward growth trend represents a continuation of the declining population trend in some areas of the Upper Coastal Plain COG region for the period from 1990 to 2010, as shown on Map \_\_\_\_, Population Growth/Decline 1990-2010.

No population increase has been forecast for Roanoke Rapids. From 1980 to 2010, the City population increased by 7.2% (see Table 1, page 3-3). However, from 2000 to 2010, the City's population decreased by 1,203, a 7.1% decline from the 2010 population of 15,754. To sustain its current population, the City will have to stimulate growth within its existing corporate limits. The City's future population base will be largely dependent upon actions taken by the City to attract investment and population as opposed to external factors driving increases in the City's population.

# Map X: Population Growth/Decline 1990 - 2010 (Percent)





### C. Housing

Replacement of an aging housing inventory may be the greatest challenge confronting housing in Roanoke Rapids (see Table 5, page 3-6). Without significant construction of new housing, approximately 95% of Roanoke Rapids' housing inventory will be 30 years old or older by 2030, and the existing housing over 30 years old will then be over 50 years old. Much of the existing older housing is already in need of repair. Even with no population growth, the need for new housing construction will increase.

### D. General Economic Development

Roanoke Rapids, the major population center for Halifax County, is designated as a "micropolitan area," which means it is a significant center of population and production, drawing workers and shoppers from a wide local area. Roanoke Rapids is the hub of the micropolitan area, which incorporates Halifax and Northampton Counties. As a regional employment, health care, and retail hub, the Roanoke Valley is gaining attention nationwide for manufacturing, retail, and tourism development. In 2010, *Site Selection Magazine* reported the Roanoke Rapids, NC, Micropolitan Area as one of the Top 12 Micropolitan Areas in the United States.

The following summarizes the acres of vacant land within the City and its ETJ.

**Table \_\_\_\_.** Vacant Acreage by Land Suitability

<u>Land Suitability</u>	<u>Corporate Limit Vacant Acreage</u>		<u>ETJ Vacant Acreage</u>	
	<u># of Acres</u>	<u>% of Total</u>	<u># of Acres</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Least	168.76	8.53%	44.41	3.27%
Low	113.50	5.74%	55.96	4.11%
Moderate	229.18	11.59%	1,196.84	88.00%
High	1,466.31	74.14%	62.81	4.62%
Total	1,977.75	100.00%	1,360.03	100.00%

\* See Land Suitability Analysis, page 4-35.

Source: HCP, Inc.

The majority of land (>74%) in the corporate limits of the City is considered highly suitable for development, and in the ETJ, most of the land (88%) is moderately suitable for development. Much of the acreage is adjacent to the I-95 corridor and accessible by utilities.



In addition to highly desirable vacant land, Roanoke Rapids offers the following assets:

- ▶ Strategic highway network, including Interstate 95, US Highways 158 and 301, with easy connections to Interstate 85 and US 64
- ▶ Less than 90 minutes from three international airports
- ▶ Easy access to the Ports of Virginia and Ports of Morehead City and Wilmington, NC
- ▶ CSX Transportation Class A Rail Line
- ▶ Over 100,000 cars travel the Interstate 95 corridor daily through Halifax County
- ▶ Halifax Corporate Park, a 700-acre Certified Industrial Park
- ▶ Industrial-quality water, sewer, electrical, natural gas, and telecommunication services
- ▶ Highly productive labor force and award-winning worker training programs
- ▶ Outstanding and affordable quality of life that includes two beautiful lakes, the Roanoke river, a rich history, and vibrant culture.

All of these economic advantages make it imperative that areas suitable for economic development be viewed as a future growth asset/stimulant.

#### 1. *Uptown/Downtown Areas*

The core or central commercial areas for Roanoke Rapids are located on Roanoke Street and are locally referred to as Uptown and Downtown. These are generally delineated on Map \_\_\_\_\_. Downtown is generally between the river and Third Street, while Uptown is generally located between Twelfth and Ninth Streets. These areas have experienced the same problems of decline experienced by small to medium sized municipalities throughout eastern North Carolina.

Both areas have experienced:

- Out-migration of businesses
- Vacant buildings
- Poor street and parking area lighting
- Poor landscaping
- Safety concerns
- Declining building conditions
- Increased off-street parking
- Renovation/redevelopment of the Mill property adjacent to the Uptown area.

All of these issues must be addressed to successfully market and revitalize the central commercial areas and to preserve Roanoke Rapids' core identity.



## 2. *Brownfield Sites*

There may be brownfield sites within Roanoke Rapids' planning jurisdiction. A brownfield is a property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that there are more than 450,000 brownfields in the U.S. Cleaning up and reinvesting in brownfield properties increases local tax bases, facilitates job growth, utilizes existing infrastructure, and both improves and protects the environment.

The following properties, identified by the Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments, may be potential brownfield sites:

- Corner of 5<sup>th</sup> and Jackson Streets, Roanoke Yarn and Die Plant
- East 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Reinco Chemical Company
- 900 Jefferson Street, Patterson Property (degree of Phase II environmental assessment completed; construction of athletic complex pending)
- 1015 Monroe Street, Rosemary Mill I
- 1200 Henry Street, Rosemary Mill II
- 97 Roanoke Avenue (NC 48), Old Gas Station
- 200 Block of Roanoke Avenue (NC 48), People's Theater Block
- 642 Roanoke Avenue (NC 48), Old Fire Station
- Corner of Jefferson & 14<sup>th</sup> Streets, Pine State Creamery
- Julian Allsbrook Highway, Chevrolet Dealership
- 1228 Roanoke Avenue (NC 48), White Motors
- 300 Jackson and East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street; Old Dry Cleaners

Clean-up of these properties will enhance economic opportunities in Roanoke Rapids, increase adjacent property values, and stabilize land use within the community.

It should be understood that brownfield clean-up and redevelopment often poses the following challenges:

- **Environmental Liability Concerns.** Developers and property owners want to manage past and future liabilities associated with the property's environmental history.
- **Financial Barriers.** Private lenders are often reluctant to give loans for potentially impaired lands. In some cases, clean-up costs for a property may ultimately be more than the property's value.
- **Clean-up Considerations.** A brownfields redevelopment timeline may take longer than typical real estate development due to environmental assessment and clean-up activities.
- **Reuse Planning.** A reuse plan based on community goals or sound economic and environmental information (e.g., market potential) may be lacking.



An action which must be taken early in the potential redevelopment of a brownfield site is identifying the presence and extent of contamination, essential to evaluating risk, limiting liability, and determining an appropriate reuse. A Phase I environmental assessment should be performed to identify the presence, type, and extent of contamination that may exist on-site. If required, a Phase II assessment may be conducted to sample or test for specific hazards that may have been identified in Phase I and to help develop a remedial action plan. EPA grant funding is available to assist with the brownfield process, including clean-up.

Brownfield redevelopment typically follows one of the following two scenarios:

#### **Private Redevelopment**

In a typical, privately driven redevelopment scenario, a developer takes responsibility for the entire redevelopment process but may require some limited public investment to first define the extent of contamination on-site. The first step is for the developer to take title of the land via purchase or conveyance, and plan for the property's reuse. Given the developer's financial resources, private financing will need to be identified either through debt or equity. Public funding, such as an EPA Brownfields Assessment grant, might be used to identify and quantify the property's contamination and define the environmental clean-up required. The developer completes all environmental clean-up activities, meeting the state's voluntary clean-up program requirements and other applicable federal or state regulations. Once clean-up is considered complete by the appropriate regulatory authority, the property may be redeveloped.

#### **Public-Private Redevelopment**

A public-private partnership is an agreement between at least one public-sector entity and one private-sector organization to combine resources and efforts to accomplish a common goal. The level of participation can vary from all public to nearly all private. In typical public-private partnerships associated with brownfields restoration, the public entity usually sponsors the project and provides some initial funding, often for assessments that remove contamination uncertainties and for infrastructure to support development; a private-sector developer then funds and manages the pre-development and construction process.

The composition of the public-private partnership is unique for each brownfields project. Public-private partnerships are often successful because initial public investments provide the necessary incentives for private-sector development and operation. These collaborations reduce the financial burden on the public sector while accelerating property clean-up, redevelopment, and community revitalization.

Source: EPA.

### **3. *Infill Development/Return of Investment***

In 2011, the North Carolina State Legislature revised the state statutes which regulate municipal annexations. As a result, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to accomplish involuntary annexations. Realistically, municipalities must primarily expect to expand their tax base and population within existing corporate limits. Only voluntary annexations should be expected as a means of geographic expansion.



As a result of the annexation situation, infill development must be primarily relied upon to increase tax base and expand the city's critical mass of population. The density of development within the city's existing corporate limits must increase. This process will be crucial to Roanoke Rapid's economic advancement.

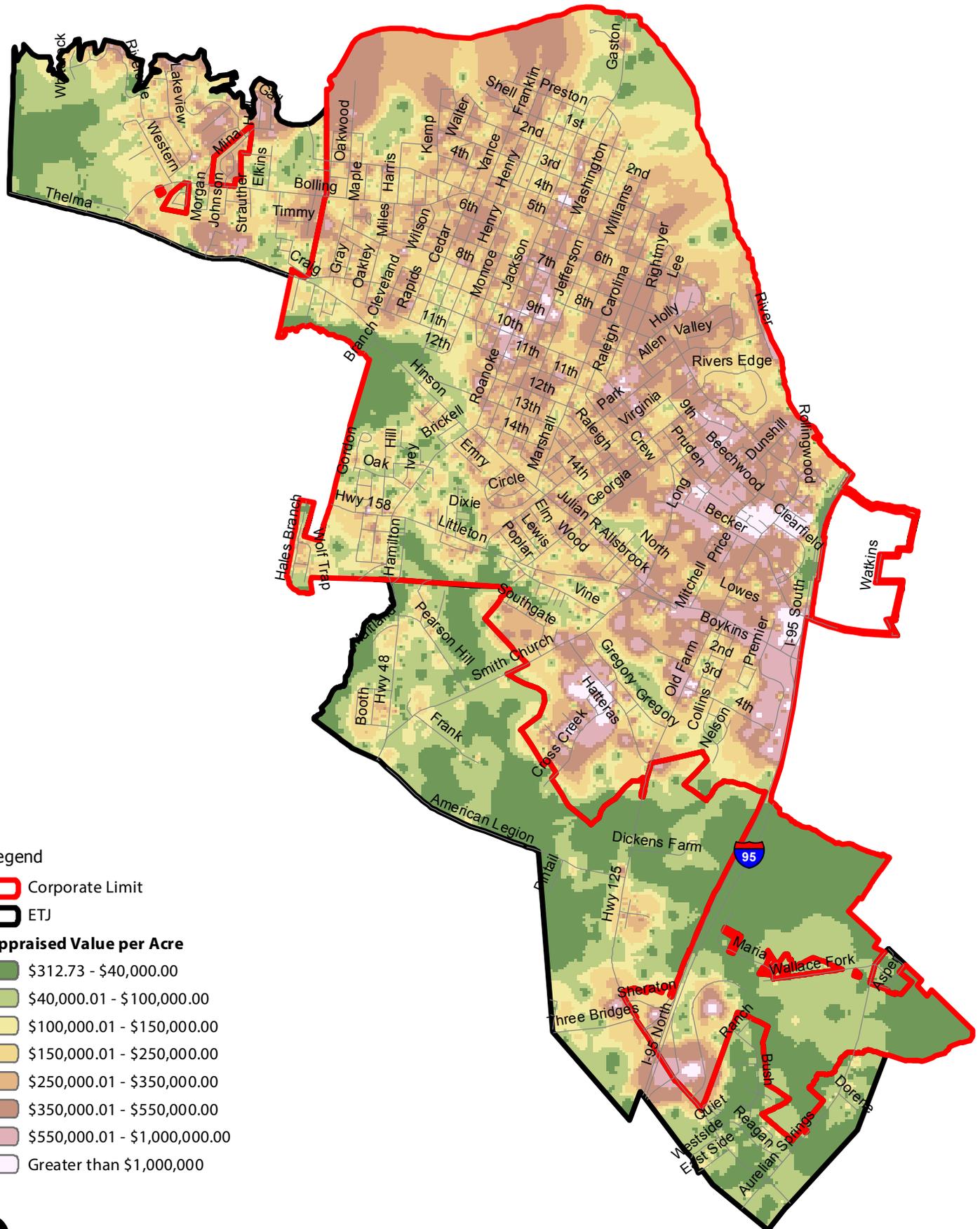
Infill development is development or redevelopment of land that has been bypassed, has remained vacant, and/or is underused as a result of the continuing urban development process. Generally, the areas and/or sites are not particularly prime quality; however, they are usually served by or are readily accessible to infrastructure (services and facilities) provided by the applicable local government entity. Use of such lands for new housing and/or other urban development is considered a more desirable alternative to continuing to extend the outer development pattern horizontally, thus necessitating a higher expenditure for capital improvements than would be required for infill development. Capital improvements such as water/sewer infrastructure and roads are often required for greenfield development. As such, a financial burden is placed on the city to provide these improvements, whereas development of underutilized infill property may not carry such a burden.

The use of infill development promotes the best use of resources and, in turn, will tend to have a positive impact upon the tax base. Infill development will also be a positive influence on return of investment (ROI) for the city. Generally, municipal revenues are generated by property tax, sales tax (retail), fees, enterprise funds (public utilities funds not available to Roanoke Rapids), and the lease or sale of assets.

**Map**\_\_\_ depicts the distribution of appraised property tax value per acre within the city's planning jurisdiction. It is obvious that the highest appraised tax values are within the city's Roanoke Avenue core commercial areas (uptown and downtown) and in outlying multi-family developments. **Table**\_ provides the average per acre tax values for land use categories within the city's planning jurisdiction.

The highest per acre tax value within the corporate limits is multi-family development. However, both multi-family development and single-family development generate higher demand for services than other land use categories. Such services include, but are not limited to: police, fire, community facilities, recreation, and infrastructure. Within the ETJ, the highest tax value category is office and institutional, followed by commercial; single-family is the third highest.

# Map X: Appraised Value per Acre



1,400 700 0 1,400 2,800 Feet



**Table \_\_. Roanoke Rapids Tax Values**

Planning Jurisdiction	
Existing Land Use Category	Tax Value per Acre
Multi-Family Residential	\$804,390
Commercial	\$541,129
Office & Institutional	\$477,272
Single-Family Residential	\$318,727
Industrial	\$206,150
Active Recreation	\$81,426
Vacant	\$57,913
Passive Open Space	\$34,673
Rural Residential/Agriculture	\$23,100
Corporate Limit	
Existing Land Use Category	Tax Value per Acre
Multi-Family Residential	\$849,192
Commercial	\$553,232
Office & Institutional	\$494,033
Single-Family Residential	\$337,999
Industrial	\$211,461
Active Recreation	\$81,426
Vacant	\$66,344
Rural Residential/Agriculture	\$65,696
Passive Open Space	\$44,129
ETJ	
Existing Land Use Category	Tax Value per Acre
Office & Institutional	\$281,365
Commercial	\$253,437
Single-Family Residential	\$214,569
Multi-Family Residential	\$179,089
Industrial	\$127,548
Vacant	\$44,496
Rural Residential/Agriculture	\$12,079
Active Recreation	N/A
Passive Open Space	N/A

Source: HCP, Inc., and Halifax County Tax Records.

Planning and capital project investment decisions not tied to immediate life safety or capacity deficiencies should be subjected to a return on investment analysis as part of the prioritization process. The return on capital projects should be based on the ability of the project to catalyze private investment, make efficient use of existing infrastructure, and generate new net revenues.



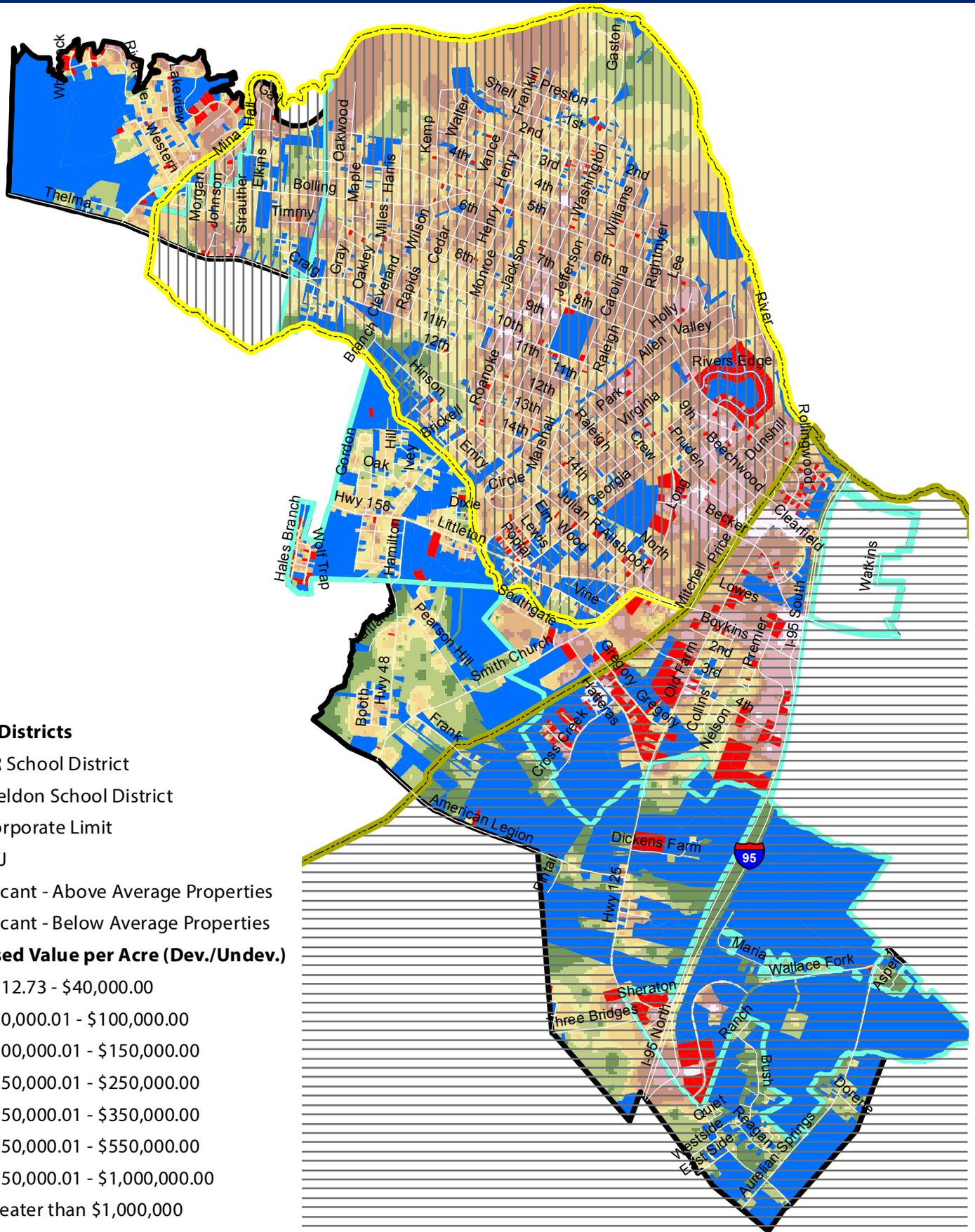
Map \_\_\_ delineates the vacant parcels within the city's planning jurisdiction. There are \_\_\_ acres of vacant parcels within the City and \_\_\_ vacant parcels within the ETJ. The parcels are separated for the city and ETJ by those above or below average tax value. Those parcels below average tax value may be depressed or undervalued and more lucrative for infill development. The vacant parcels within the ETJ are not subject to city property taxes or Roanoke Rapids School District taxes. In 2013, the property tax rates per \$100 valuation were:

Halifax County	=	\$0.68
Roanoke Rapids	=	\$0.624
Roanoke Rapids School District	=	\$0.21
Weldon School District	=	\$0.17

As a result, an acre of commercial property in the ETJ (\$541,129 tax value, see Table \_\_\_\_\_) had an annual tax burden of \$3,679.68. A similarly valued commercial property located within the city and Roanoke Rapids School District had an annual tax burden of \$8,192.69; and in the Weldon School District an annual tax burden of \$7,976.24, an annual differential of \$4,513.01 and \$4,296.56 respectively.

The city's future actions must include a focus on making vacant, underutilized, and undervalued parcels within the city more cost competitive than those in the ETJ. Such actions may include: waiver of permit fees, tax incentive financing, expedited processing of applications, and other identified options. Infill development focus or priority areas should be identified in the city's future land use planning.

# Map X: Vacant Property Tax Values



## Legend

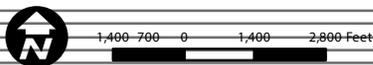
### School Districts

- RR School District
- Weldon School District
- Corporate Limit
- ETJ

- Vacant - Above Average Properties
- Vacant - Below Average Properties

### Appraised Value per Acre (Dev./Undev.)

- \$312.73 - \$40,000.00
- \$40,000.01 - \$100,000.00
- \$100,000.01 - \$150,000.00
- \$150,000.01 - \$250,000.00
- \$250,000.01 - \$350,000.00
- \$350,000.01 - \$550,000.00
- \$550,000.01 - \$1,000,000.00
- Greater than \$1,000,000





**E. Health and Wellness Assessment/Future Land Use Impact**

*1. Health, Wellness, and the Built Environment*

Public health and wellness is affected in many ways by the design of the built environment. In Roanoke Rapids, as in other places across the country, the design of our roadways, residential developments, and settlement patterns all contribute to the relative health and wellness of citizens. For the purposes of this assessment, wellness is defined in the physical dimension as the need for regular physical activity and physical development that encourages learning about diet and nutrition.

In the United States, the automobile is often the dominant force driving urban design. The vast demand for private vehicular transportation regularly dictates the scale of our streets, the relationship between buildings, and the speed at which we experience our environment.

Examining Julian R. Allsbrook Highway in the picture to the right, it is clear that this area was built to be traveled by the car. If this environment were designed to accommodate the pedestrian and bicyclist, then buildings would likely front the street, the signs would be smaller, and sidewalks would be present. As it is, few people would choose to walk or cycle this road - leaving little or no options for active transportation.



Additionally, land use decisions can also have an effect on the health and wellness of individuals.

Studies have shown that urban areas with a range of land uses increase the walkability of an area and subsequently lessen vehicular miles of travel. Traditional zoning districts often restrict multiple uses making new development single use in nature, and thus, contributing to a lack of walkability.

The creation of the health and wellness related elements in the comprehensive plan use multiple academic and research based reports to establish criteria and factors related to health and the built environment.

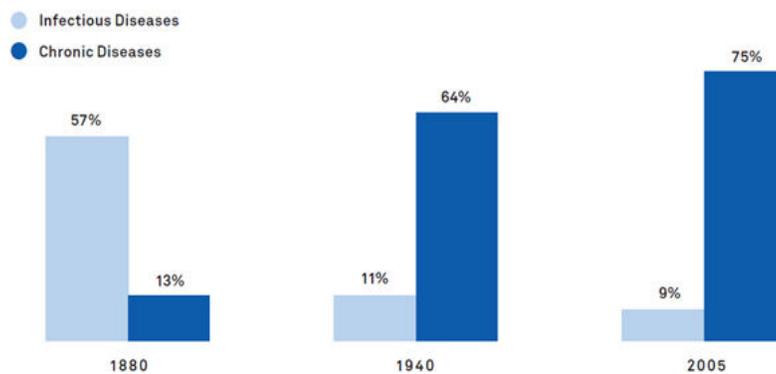
In Roanoke Rapids, a number of the leading causes of death are more prevalent in minority populations as compared to whites, thus creating large racial disparities. Heart disease and diabetes in particular are prime examples of those disparities. The death rate for diabetes is two to three times higher in African Americans than Whites.



## 2. Chronic Disease Factors

Chronic disease differs from infectious disease (or communicable disease) in the way it occurs in individuals. Infectious diseases usually occur because of contact with an affected host, while chronic diseases may occur solely as a result of a sedentary lifestyle. Common infectious diseases of current and past years include tuberculosis, Ebola, malaria, measles, and HIV/AIDs.

Infectious diseases were once the primary cause of death in the United States a century ago, but proper hygiene, environmental design, and immunization has led to the downfall of such disease in the United States (see Figure \_\_\_\_).



Source: The City of New York Summary of Vital Statistics 2005

Figure \_\_\_\_ . Infectious Diseases Versus Chronic Diseases, 1880 - 2005

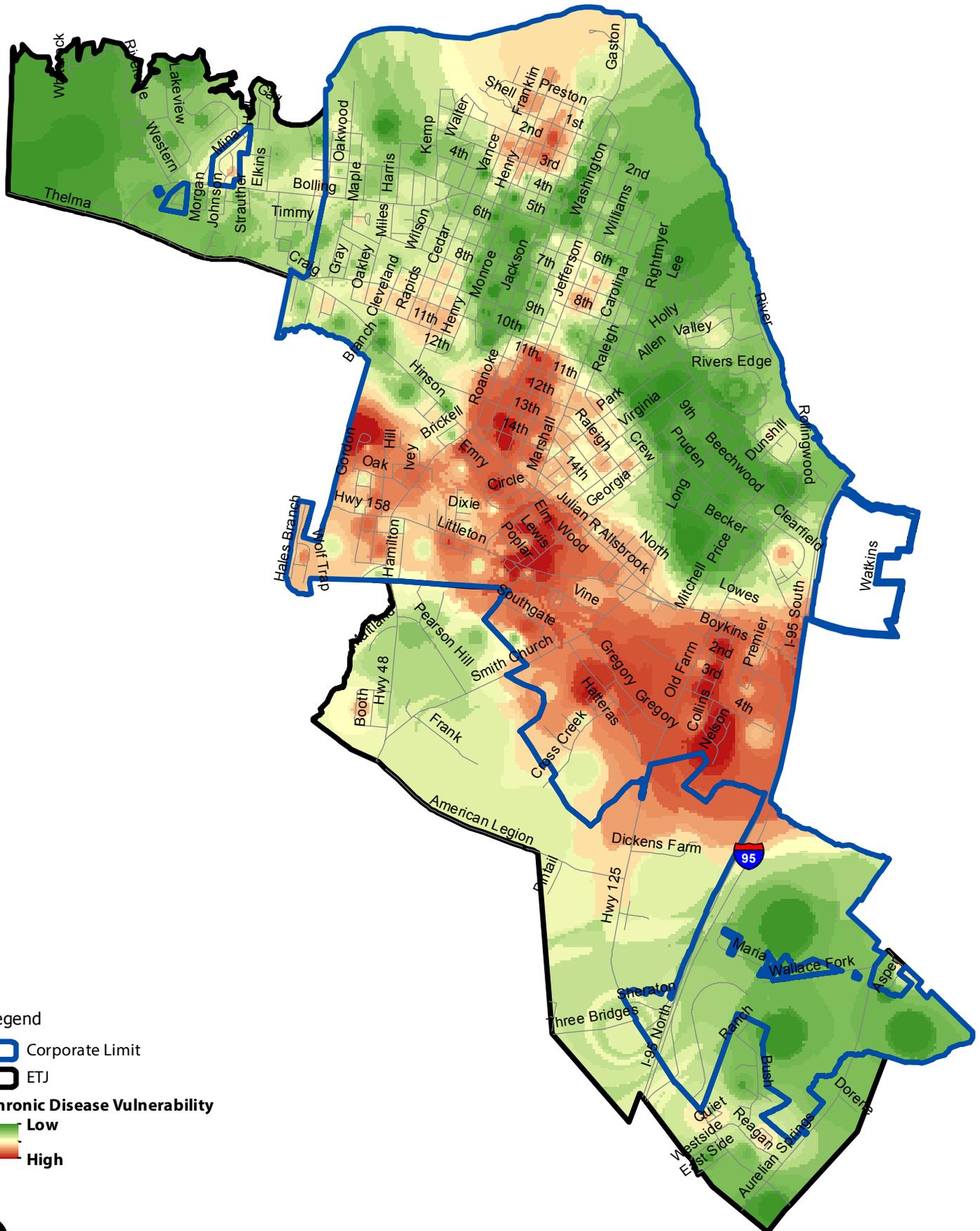
Whereas infectious diseases were the gravest health threats of an earlier era, the largest killers of our time are chronic diseases such as heart disease and strokes, cancers, and diabetes, for which the leading risk factors are obesity, physical inactivity, poor diets, and smoking. Map \_\_\_\_ delineates population vulnerable to chronic disease.

### a. Obesity Mechanisms

Obesity results from a positive caloric balance in that the intake of calories is greater than caloric expenditure. Nutrition plays a direct role in determining caloric balance by being the sole variable accounting for caloric intake. Caloric output, however, is dependent on three specific variables. These include physical activity, resting metabolism, and the thermogenic effect of food. Thermogenesis occurs when your body raises its core temperature. When your body increases its heat or energy output, your metabolism increases and your fat cells are used as the main source of energy. Of the three variables, physical activity is the most often altered in order to increase caloric expenditure<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>Obesity in the Lower Socio-Economic Status Segments: Forum on Public Policy 2008.

# Map X: Population Vulnerable to Chronic Disease





Exhaustive study has taken place to identify the primary causes of obesity in the United States. In general, obesity tends to be a multi-faceted problem with no one solution to combating its occurrence. However, there are certain segments of the population that are more likely to be obese as it is more prevalent in the low socioeconomic status (SES) segments of society. Investigations have shown similar results in urban, suburban, and rural communities<sup>2</sup>.

In addition, a childhood spent in poor social and economic conditions has been shown to lead to a less healthy adulthood. In both adolescent boys and girls, low SES and parental education levels were related to an unfavorable risk factor profile indicating a need for early intervention in low SES communities<sup>1</sup>.

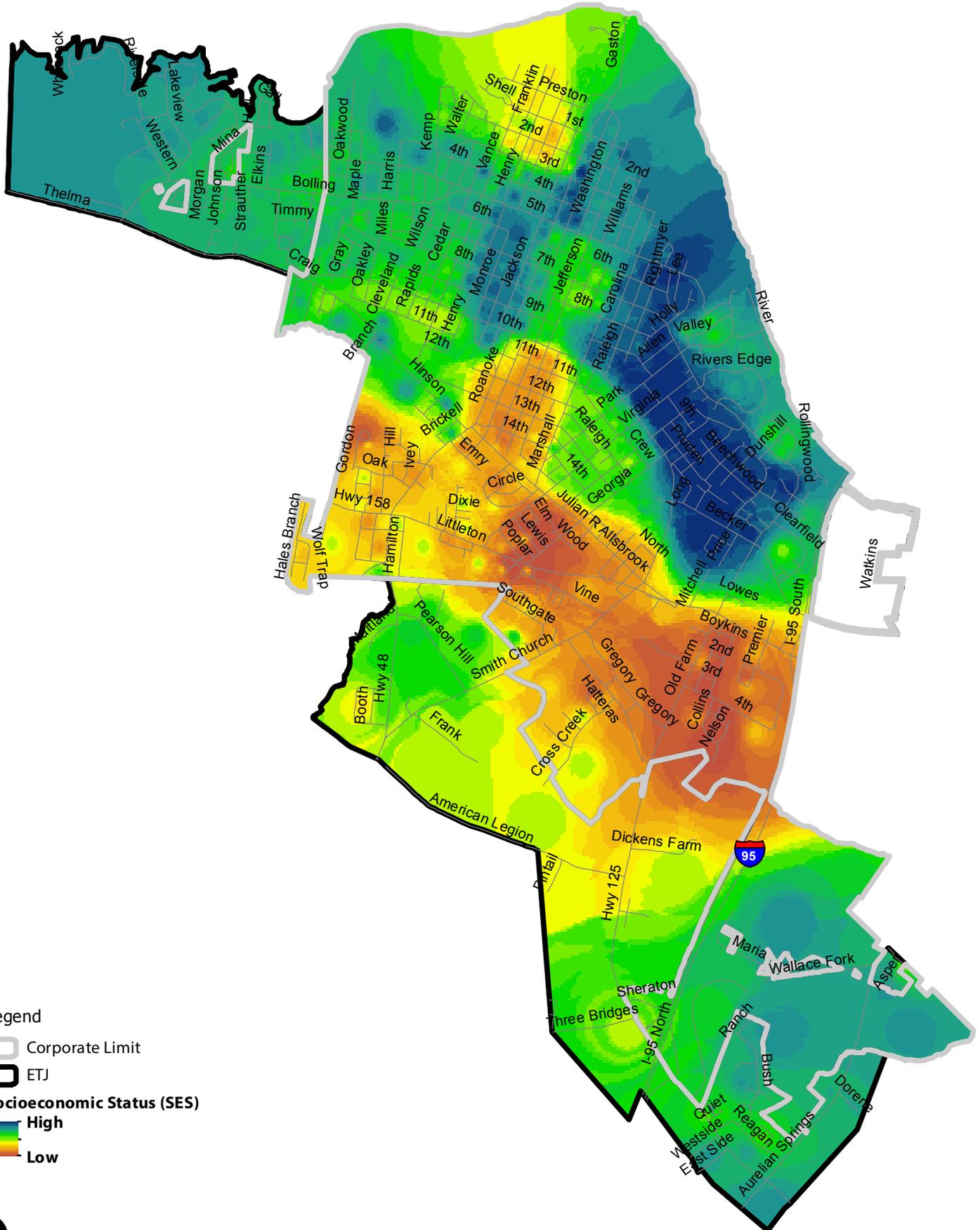
To identify areas of the Roanoke Rapids planning jurisdiction that are considered low in socioeconomic status, GIS analysis was used. Census estimates for educational attainment, employment, and income levels were combined to locate these areas. Concentrations of low SES are found on Map \_\_\_\_.

The highest concentration of low SES individuals can be found in a corridor lying between the City's southern corporate limit boundary and Julian R. Allsbrook Highway.

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<sup>2</sup> The Obesity Epidemic in the United States—Gender, Age, Socio-Economic, Racial/Ethnic, and Geographic Characteristics: A Systematic Review and Meta-Regression Analysis: *Epidemiologic Reviews* 2007; 29:6-8.

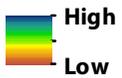
# Map X: Socioeconomic Status



**Legend**

-  Corporate Limit
-  ETJ

**Socioeconomic Status (SES)**



1,400 700 0 1,400 2,800 Feet



b. Nutritionally Disparate

Food is essential for life. Yet unlike other enduring necessities – water, air, and shelter – food has not been considered a priority for planning by state and local officials and decision makers. Increasing access to and encouraging consumption of fresh, healthy foods are important ways to address disease incidence and health care expenditures.

North Carolinians face a number of health challenges related to our food system. Food insecurity is present across the state, which exists when an individual or family lacks adequate or consistent access to the foods necessary to lead an active, healthy lifestyle.

Children's health and wellbeing are connected to diet, nutrition, and food security. Access to an ample quantity and variety of fruits and vegetables at school, at home, and in the community is critical. Access is especially important for school-age children, given that poor dietary habits can linger or worsen into the high school years and adulthood.

In Roanoke Rapids, there are 7 establishments that offer full service grocery items. For the purposes of this assessment, a "full service grocery" is defined as an establishment that is open 7 days a week, offers a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables at a competitive price, and accepts EBT (Electronic Benefits Transfer) and WIC (Benefits for Women, Infants, and Children). Full service grocery stores are located closer to higher socioeconomic status areas of the city (see Table \_\_\_\_).

**Table \_\_\_\_ . Full Service Groceries in Roanoke Rapids**

<b>Company</b>	<b>Address</b>
Just Save	33 Becker Drive
Food Lion	2500 W. 10 <sup>th</sup> Street
Food Lion	175 Roanoke Avenue
Food Lion	1201 Weldon Road
Save-A-Lot	1160 Julian R. Allsbrook Highway
Elias Butcher Shoppe, Inc.	944 Raleigh Drive
Wal-Mart Supercenter	251 Premier Boulevard

Source: \_\_\_\_\_.





c. Access to Physical Activity and Recreation Facilities

Research shows that the one of the number one ways to offset weight gain is through increased physical activity. Coincidentally, individuals looking to increase physical activity encounter barriers when access to recreational facilities is limited.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, the following is a list of items that can be accomplished through increased or regular physical activity:

- Weight control;
- Reduced risk of cardiovascular disease;
- Reduced risk of type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome;
- Reduced risk of some cancers;
- Stronger bones and muscles;
- Improved mental health and mood;
- Improved ability to do daily activities and prevent fall (older adults);
- Increased chances of living longer.

Map \_\_\_\_ delineates access to active recreational facilities.

d. Neighborhood Safety

Neighborhood safety and perception of crime are consistently cited in studies as a barrier to walking or physical activity. Low SES areas often report higher perceptions of neighborhood crime, unattended dogs, and untrustworthy neighbors. Perception of lower neighborhood safety and social disorder are also significantly associated with less recreational physical activity. Substandard housing and vacant or deteriorated structures lead to relative sense of safety in neighborhoods.

Public health officials have often cited neighborhood safety as a significant barrier to outdoor physical activity. Map 2A, page 4-7A, delineates criminal activity within Roanoke Rapids.

# Map X: Proximity to Public Open Space

## Legend

 Corporate Limit

 ETJ

## Proximity to Public Open Space

 Less than 1/4 Mile

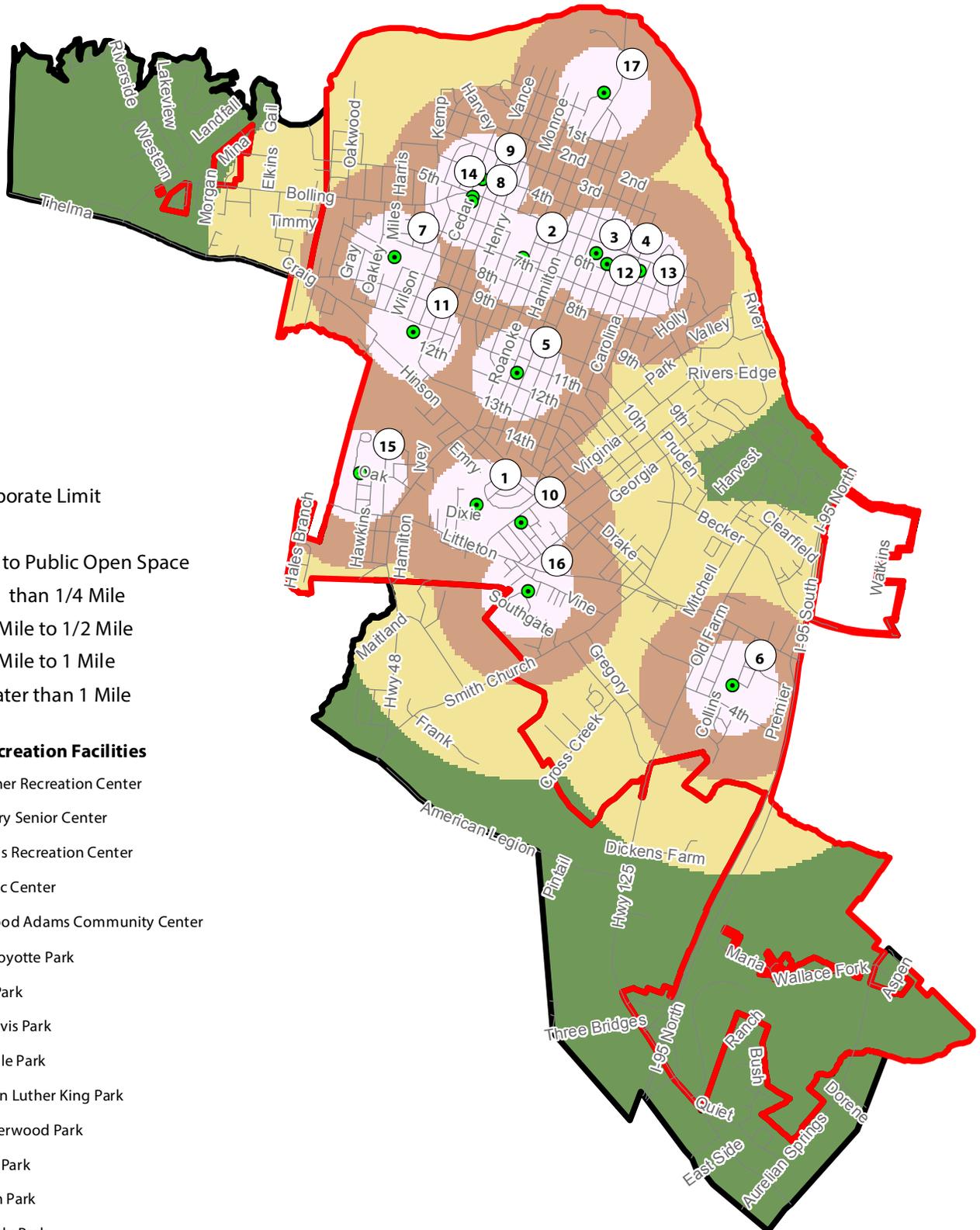
 1/4 Mile to 1/2 Mile

 1/2 Mile to 1 Mile

 Greater than 1 Mile

## Parks and Recreation Facilities

1. Chaloner Recreation Center
2. JO Story Senior Center
3. TJ Davis Recreation Center
4. Aquatic Center
5. Kirkwood Adams Community Center
6. Chockoyotte Park
7. Emry Park
8. CW Davis Park
9. Rochelle Park
10. Martin Luther King Park
11. Ledgerwood Park
12. Long Park
13. Smith Park
14. Melody Park
15. Wheeler Park
16. Southgate Park
17. Roanoke Canal Trail & Museum



1,600 800 0 1,600 3,200 Feet