



# Rowan County Built Environment & Policy Scan

Healthy Rowan-Novant Health | April 2022



**CENTRALINA**  
REGIONAL COUNCIL



# Plan, Policy, & Environmental Scan

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# Rowan County Built Environment & Policy Scan

## Study Purpose:

- Conduct an inventory of Rowan County's built environment and policies using indicators of physical activity, healthy eating, and preventive healthcare access
- Provide insight into Rowan County's current state for each indicator to inform decisions around future investment, programming, and policy surrounding healthy communities





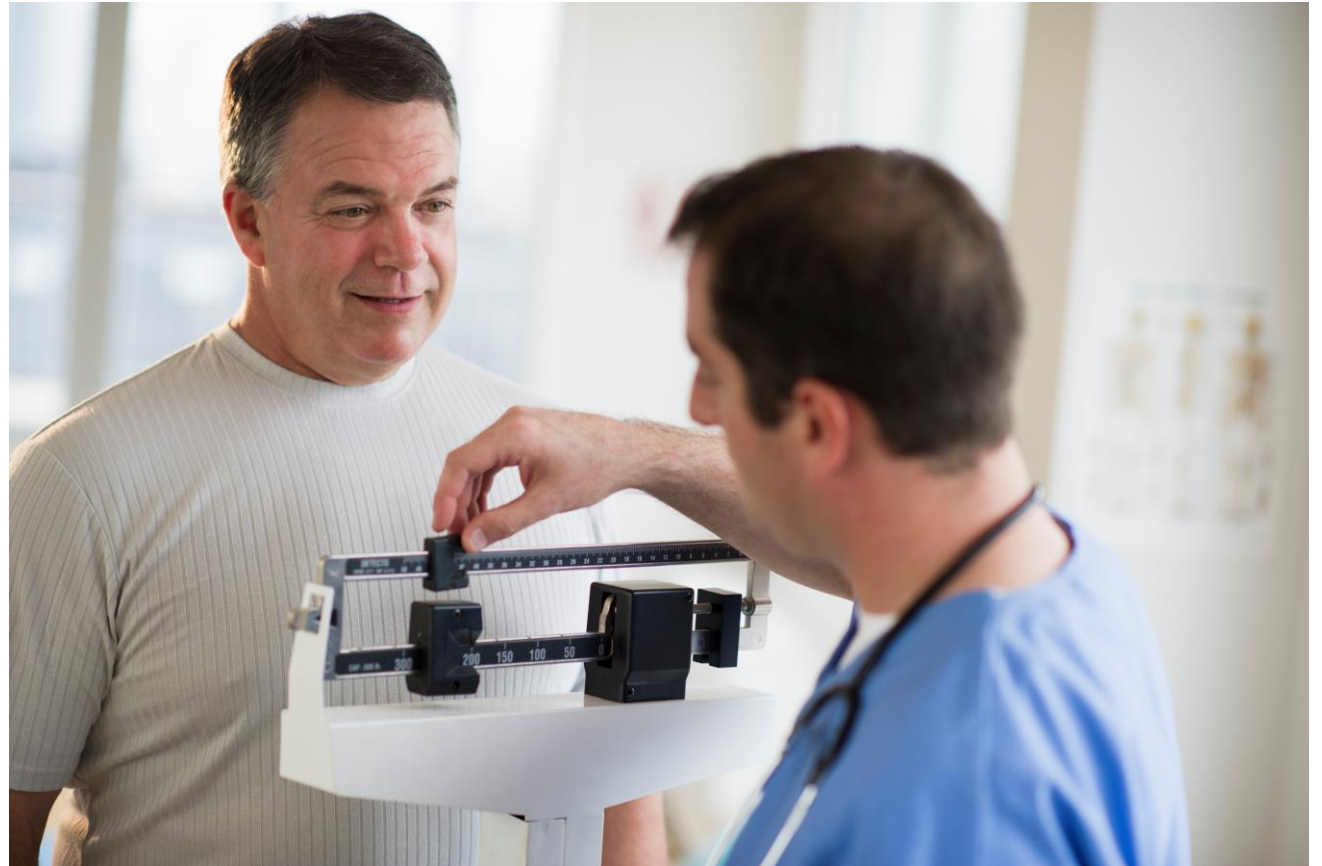
# Connection to County Health Needs Assessment (CHNA)

## CHNA Priority Focus Areas

- Substance Abuse
- Mental Health
- Healthy Lifestyle Behaviors

All three of these areas are impacted by the availability and accessibility of health resources in one's community, including:

- Opportunities for physical activity
- Access to healthy food
- Availability of medical care



# Methodology

1. Identify areas of greatest need (Health Needs Index Priority Areas)
2. Map health indicators
3. Identify populations in proximity to abundant health resources and populations lacking access to those resources
4. Analyze opportunities to improve access to health and wellness, with special emphasis on Health Needs Index Priority Areas



# Rowan County Health Needs Index

## *Geographic Illustration of Greatest Needs*






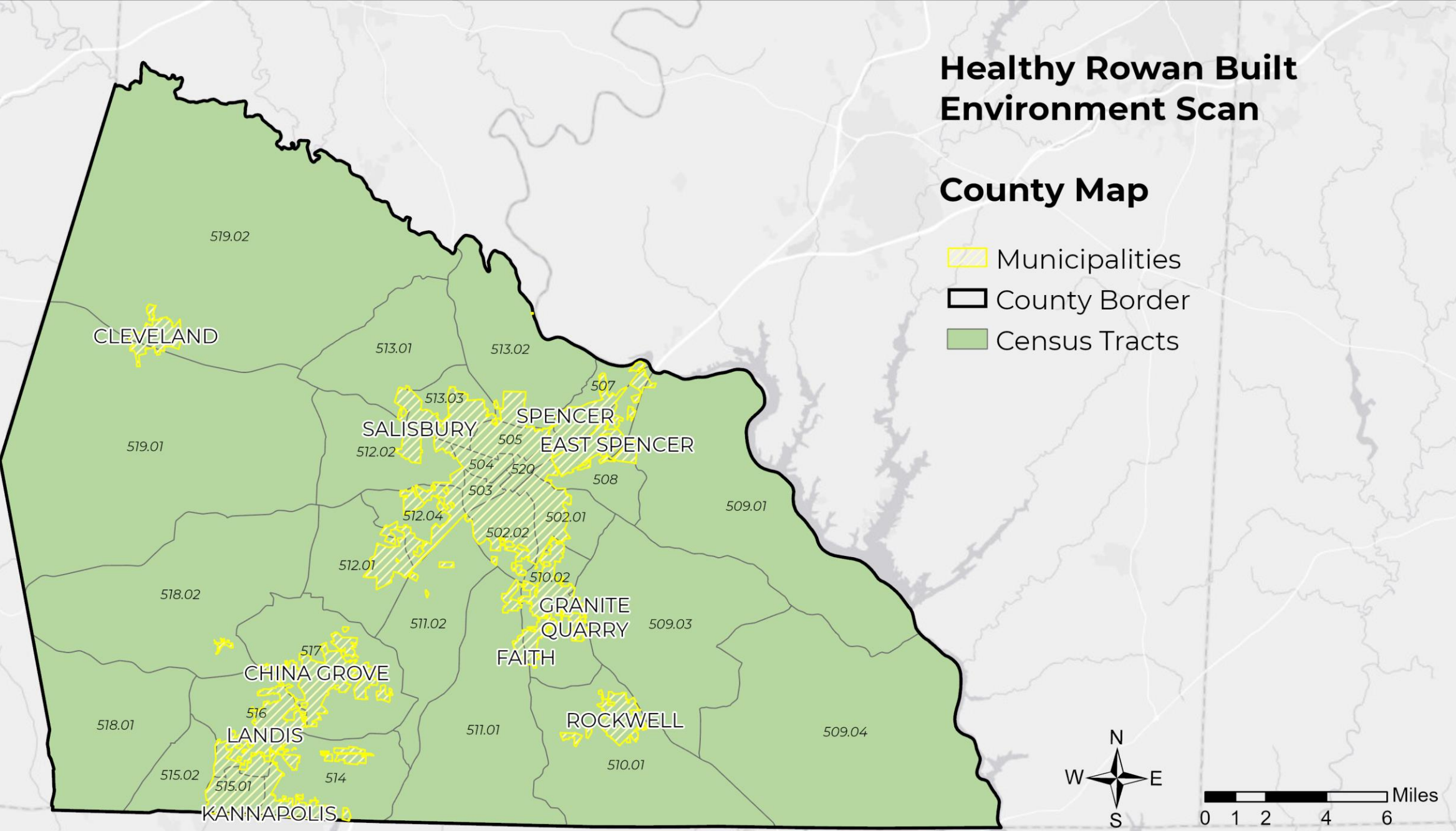
- Priority Areas for Focused Activity and Investment
- Geography Based On:
  - Cause of Death in Rowan County
    - Cancer
    - Heart Disease
    - Chronic Respiratory Conditions (COPD, Asthma)
  - Older Adult Population
  - Population Living Below the Poverty Line
  - Households Without Vehicle Access



# Healthy Rowan Built Environment Scan

## County Map

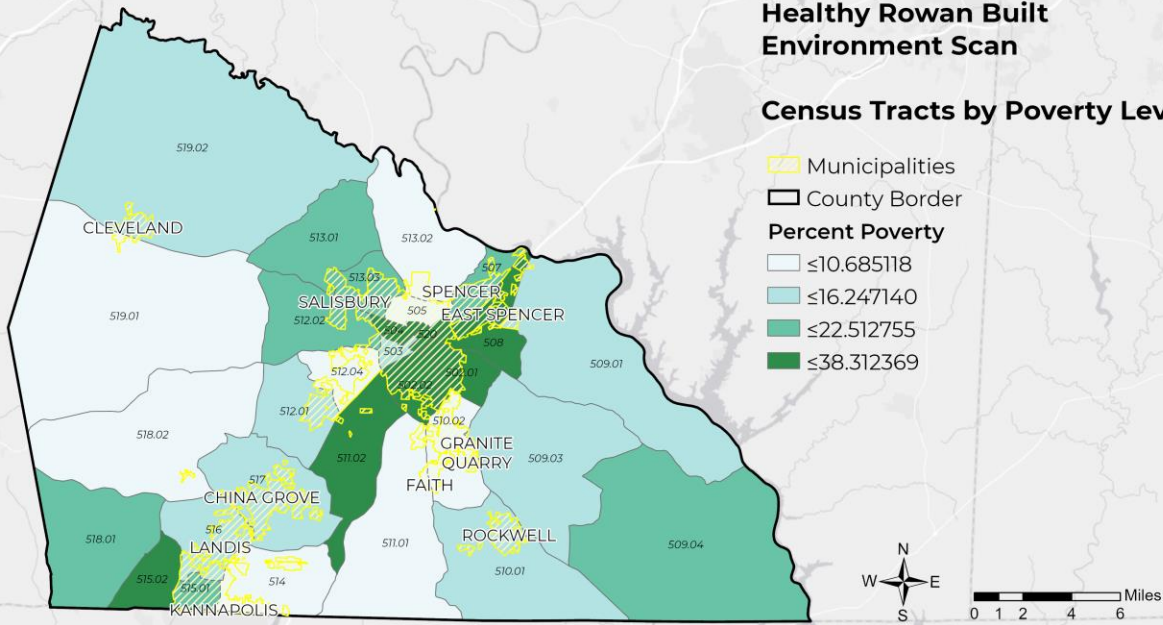
-  Municipalities
-  County Border
-  Census Tracts



## Healthy Rowan Built Environment Scan

### Census Tracts by Poverty Level

- Municipalities
- County Border
- Percent Poverty
  - $\leq 10.685118$
  - $\leq 16.247140$
  - $\leq 22.512755$
  - $\leq 38.312369$

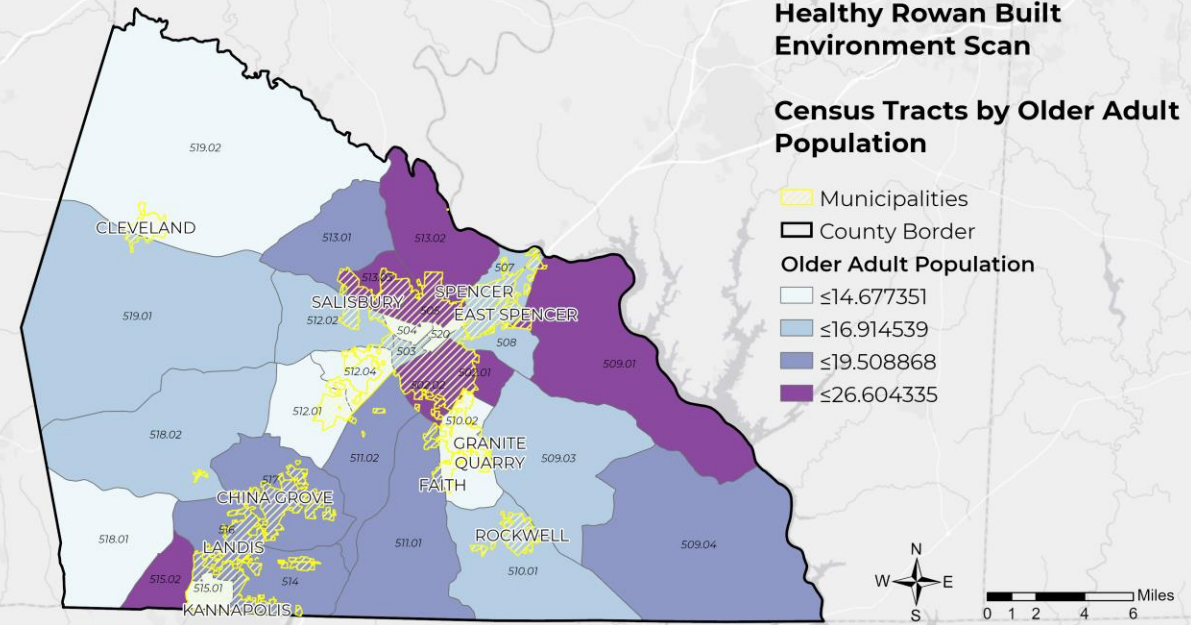


Rowan County, State of North Carolina DOT, Esri, HERE, Garmin, GeoTechnologies, Inc., USGS, EPA

## Healthy Rowan Built Environment Scan

### Census Tracts by Older Adult Population

- Municipalities
- County Border
- Older Adult Population
  - $\leq 14.677351$
  - $\leq 16.914539$
  - $\leq 19.508868$
  - $\leq 26.604335$

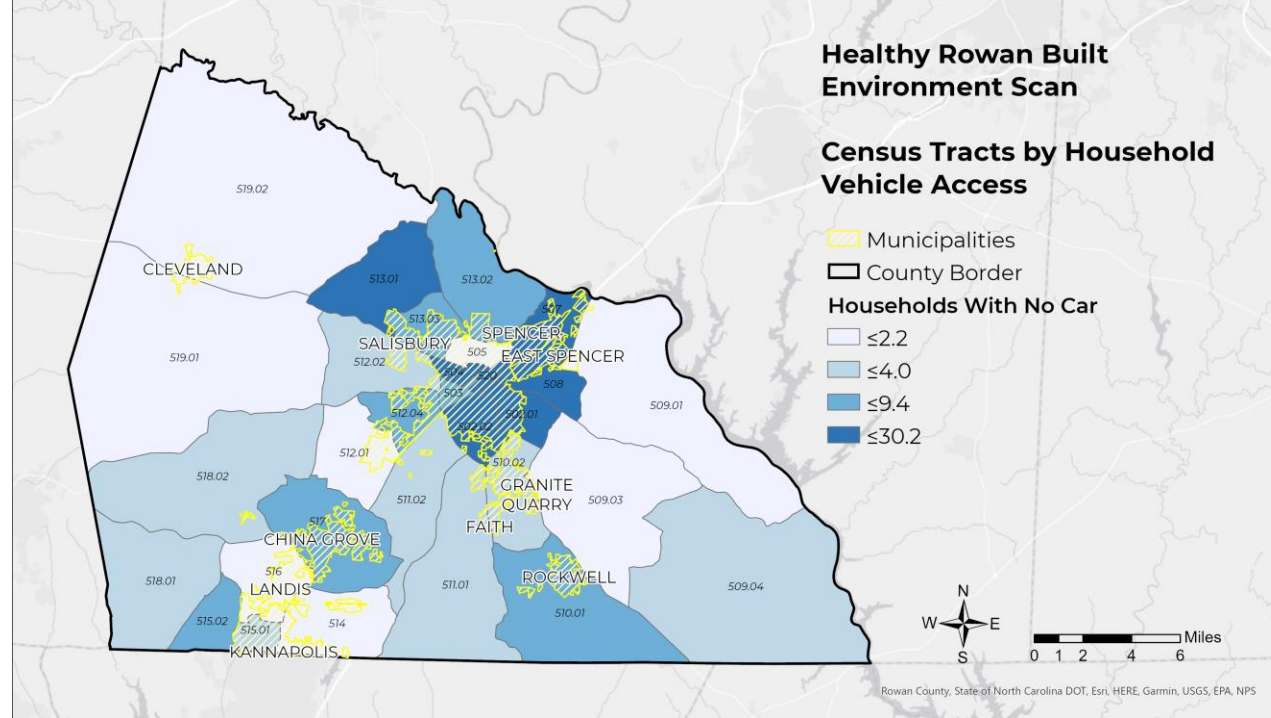


Rowan County, State of North Carolina DOT, Esri, HERE, Garmin, GeoTechnologies, Inc., USGS, EPA

## Healthy Rowan Built Environment Scan

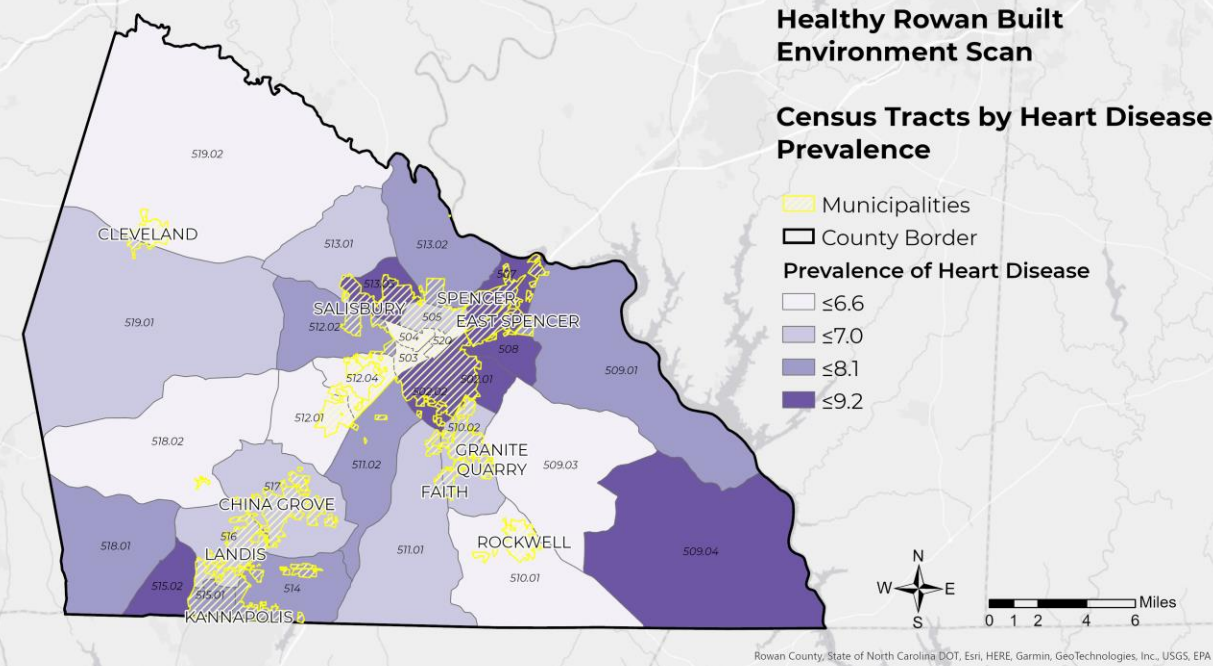
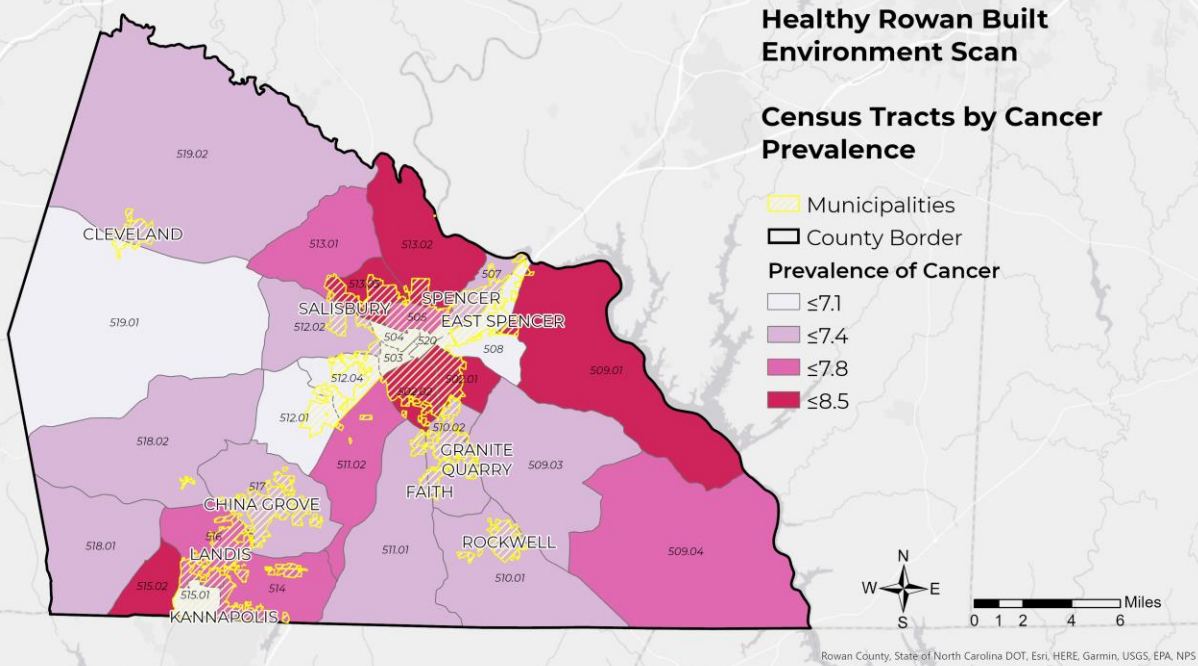
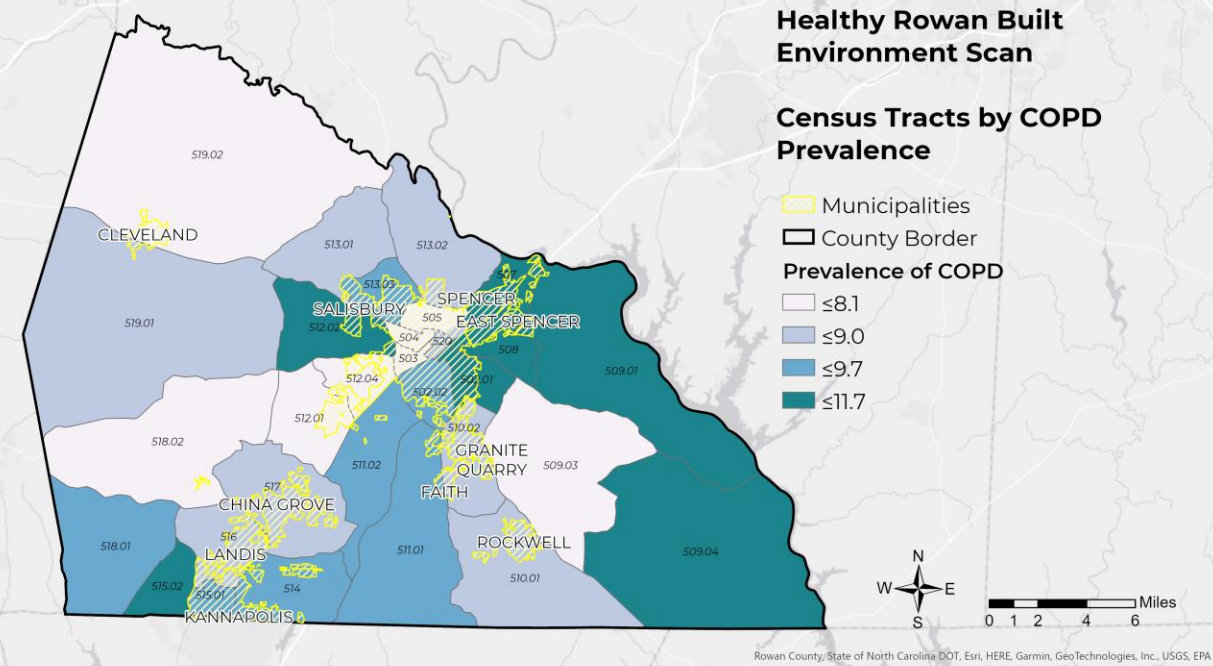
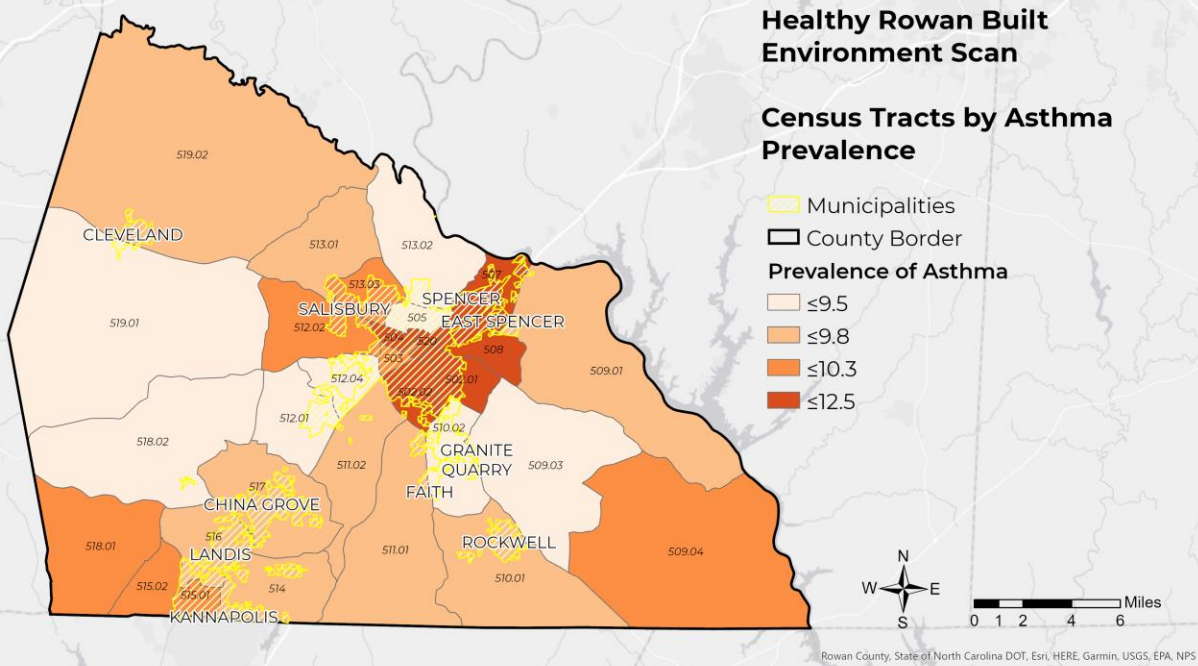
### Census Tracts by Household Vehicle Access

- Municipalities
- County Border
- Households With No Car
  - $\leq 2.2$
  - $\leq 4.0$
  - $\leq 9.4$
  - $\leq 30.2$



Rowan County, State of North Carolina DOT, Esri, HERE, USGS, EPA, NPS

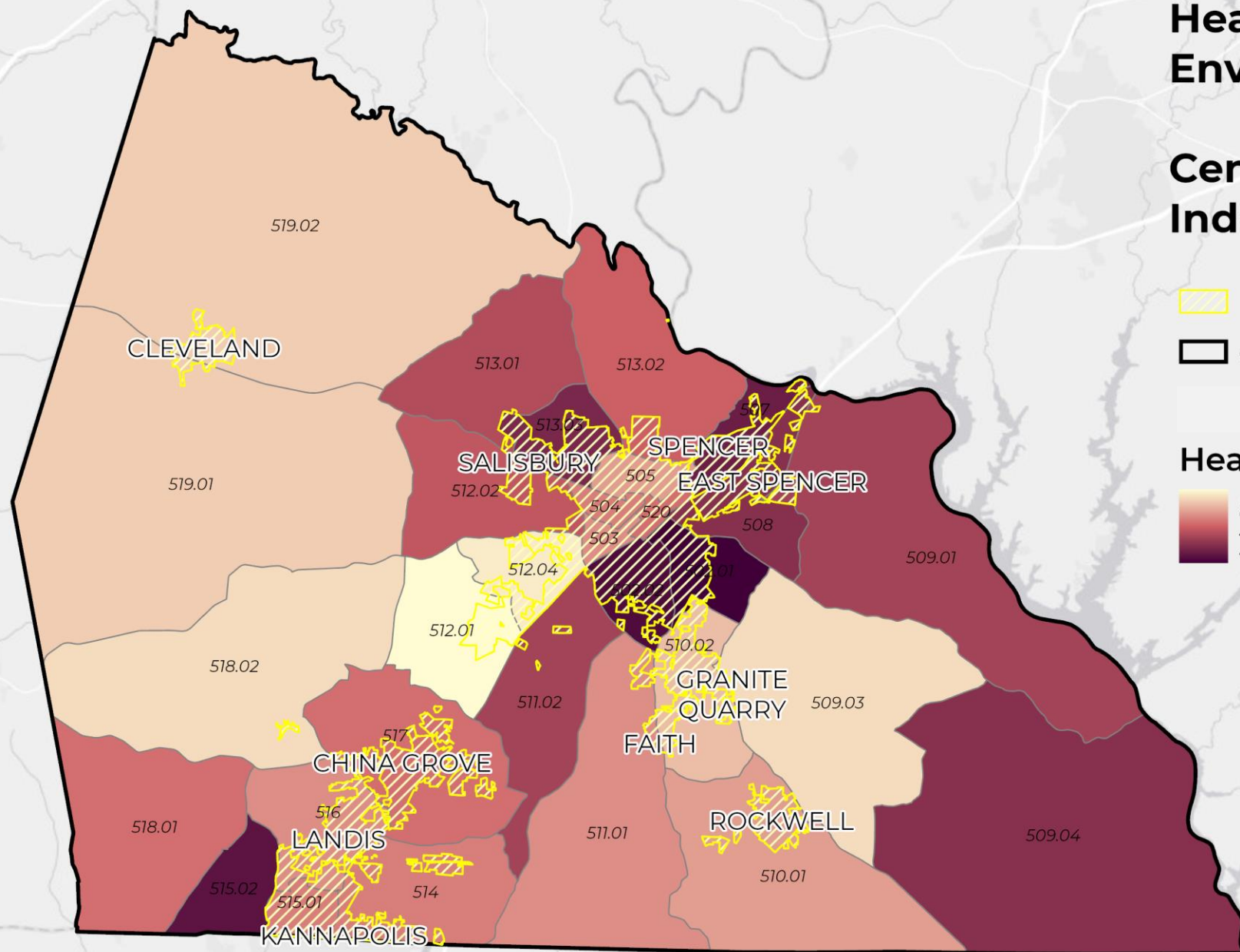




# Census Tracts by Health Needs Index

 County Border

8.0  
28



A scale bar labeled "Miles" with markings at 0, 1, 2, 4, and 6. The segment between 2 and 4 is shaded black.




# Healthy Rowan Built Environment Scan

## Health Needs Index Priority Areas

 Municipalities

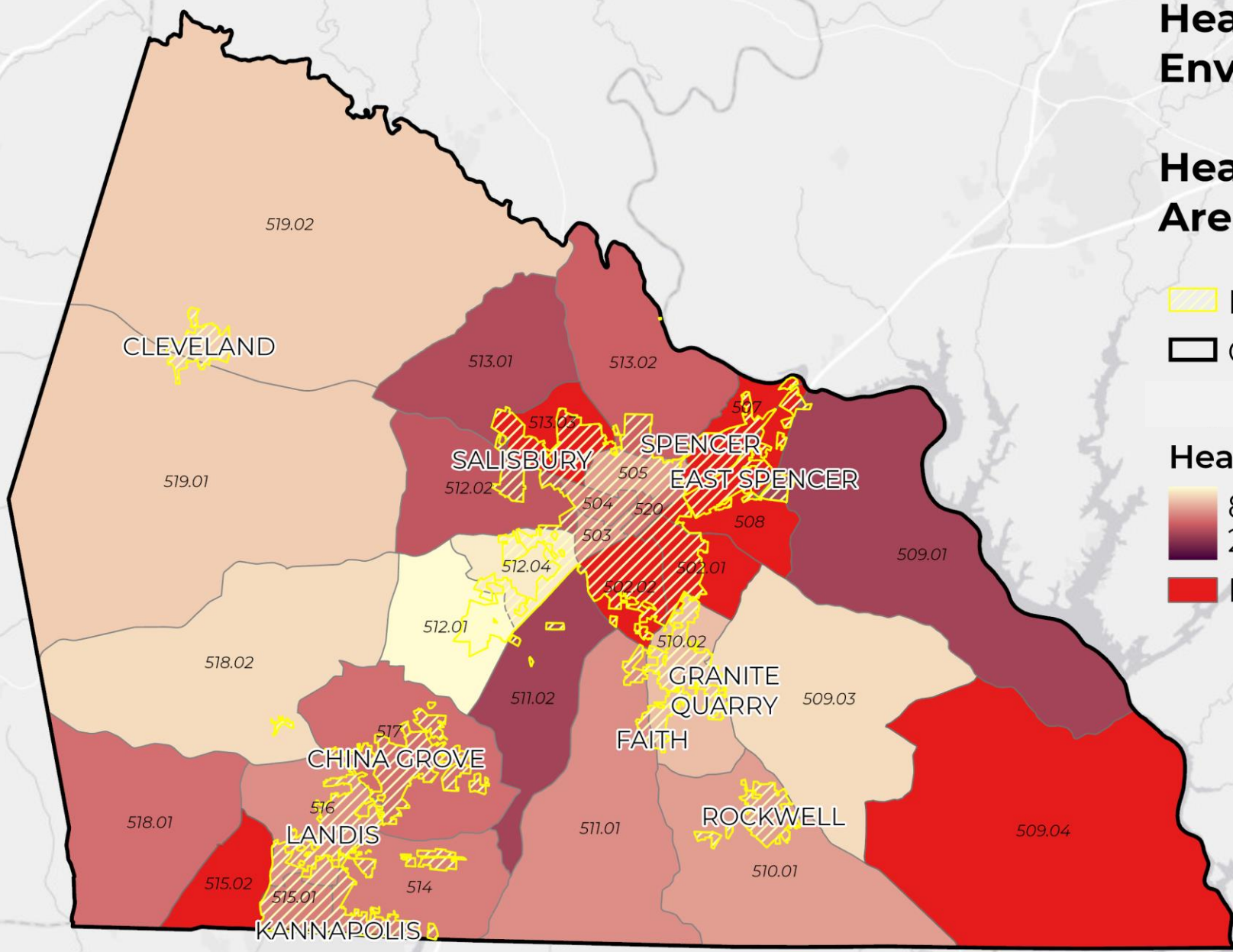
 County Border

### Health Needs Index

 8.0

 28

 Priority Areas





# Physical Activity Indicators



## Access to Recreational Facilities

1. Percent of population within 1 mile of a park
2. Percent of population within 1 mile of a recreational facility
3. Percent of population within 1 mile of a greenway
4. Greenway miles per 1,000 persons

## Multi-modal Transportation Access to Recreation

5. Pedestrian and/or bike plan for community (plan age)
6. Number of recreational facilities with transit access
7. Number of recreational facilities with bike lane access

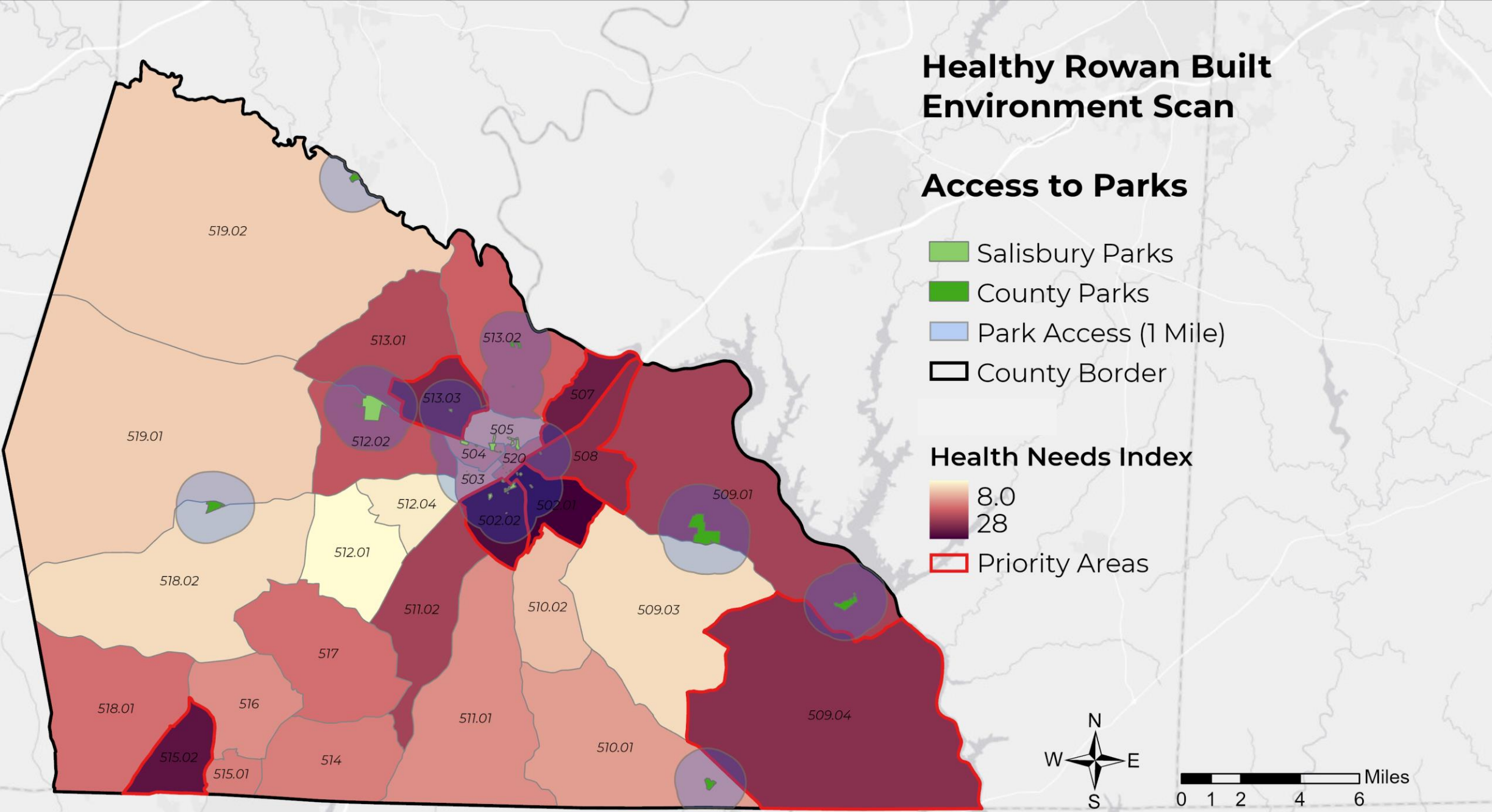
# Healthy Rowan Built Environment Scan

## Access to Parks

- Salisbury Parks
- County Parks
- Park Access (1 Mile)
- County Border

## Health Needs Index





- 8.0
- 28
- Priority Areas





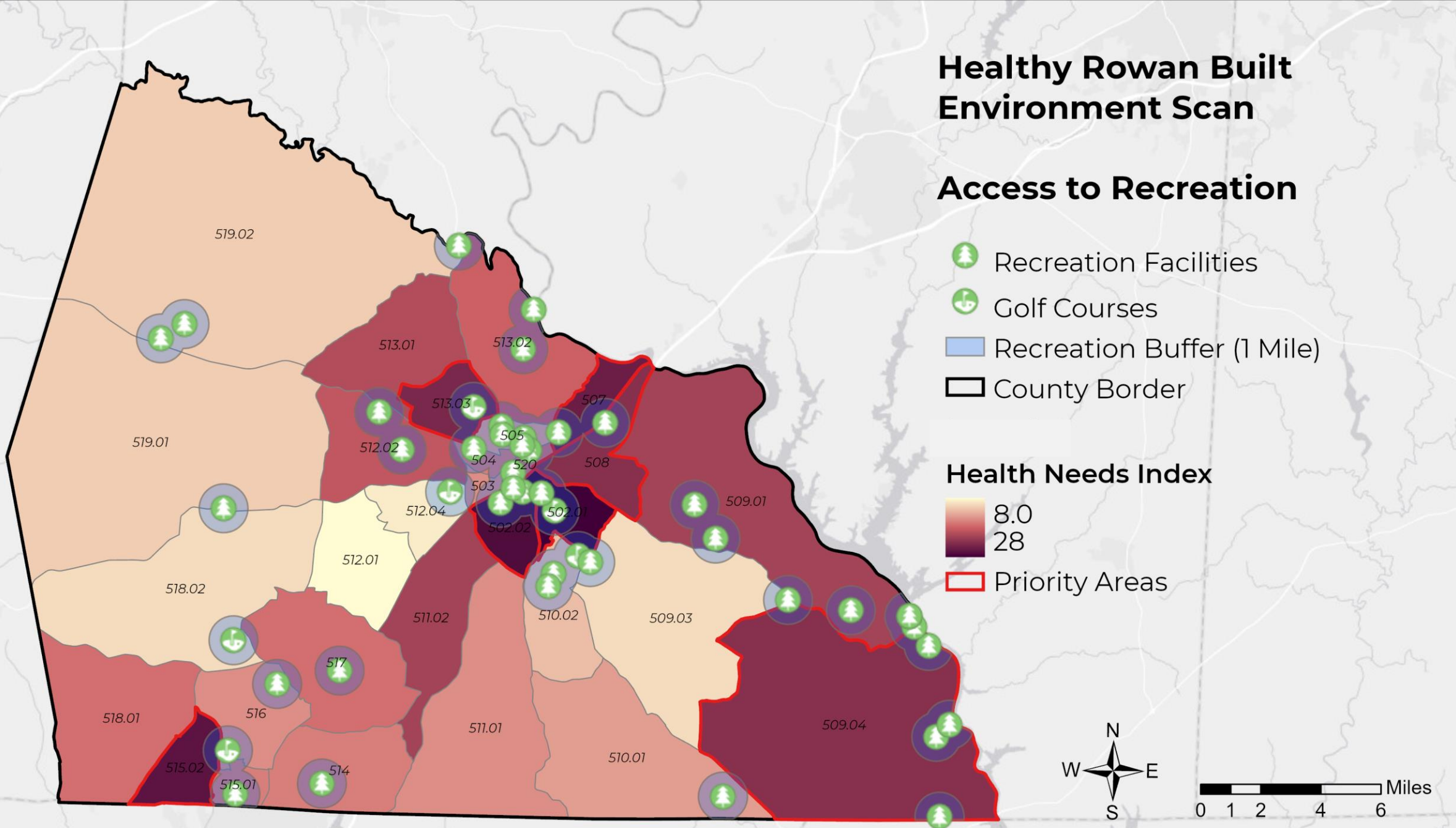
# Healthy Rowan Built Environment Scan

## Access to Recreation

-  Recreation Facilities
-  Golf Courses
-  Recreation Buffer (1 Mile)
-  County Border

## Health Needs Index

-  8.0  
28
-  Priority Areas





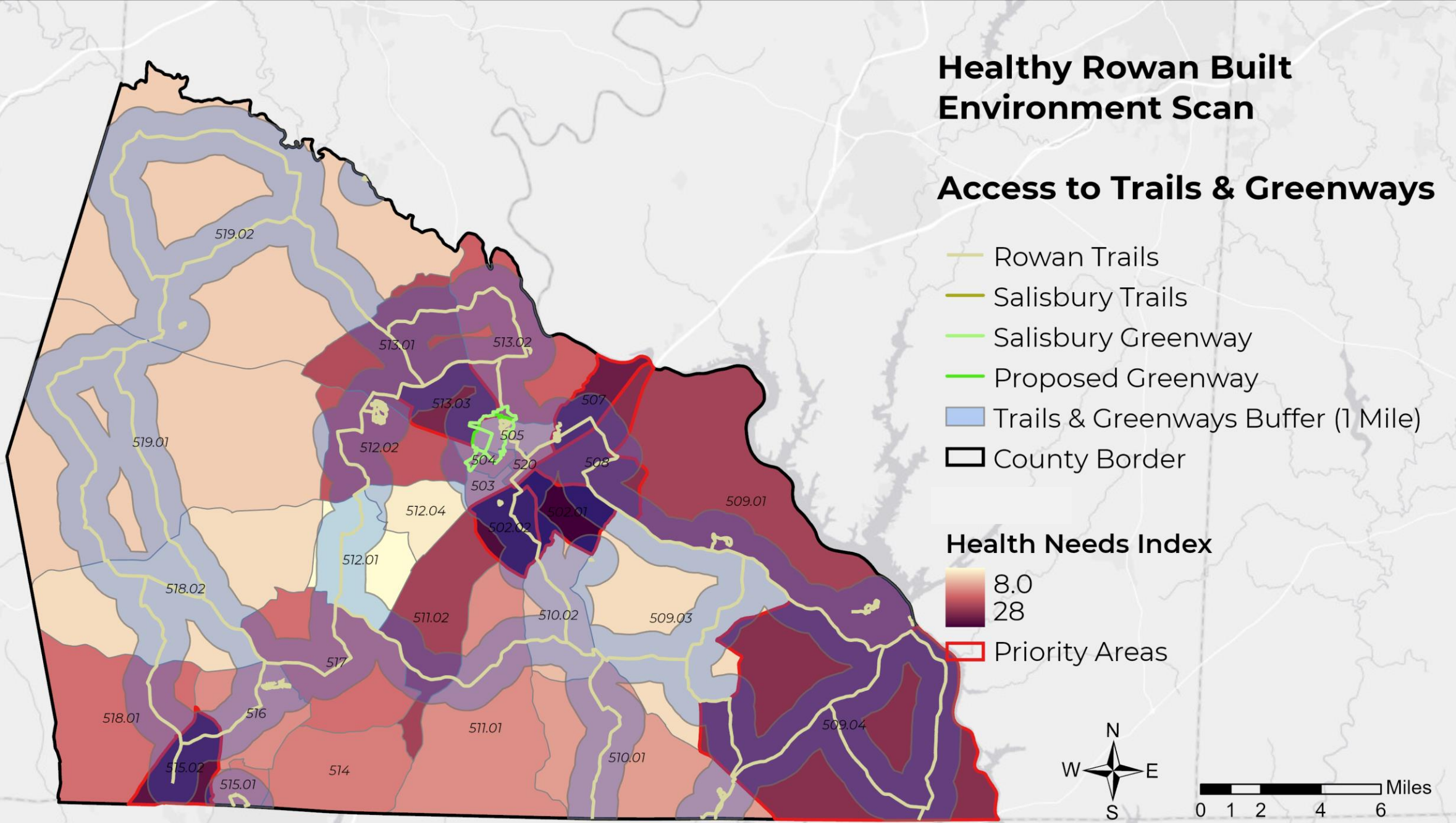
# Healthy Rowan Built Environment Scan

## Access to Trails & Greenways

- Rowan Trails
- Salisbury Trails
- Salisbury Greenway
- Proposed Greenway
- Trails & Greenways Buffer (1 Mile)
- County Border

## Health Needs Index

- 8.0
- 28
- Priority Areas



# Other Physical Activity Indicators



Greenway Miles per 1,000 persons: 2.34 mi

Pedestrian and/or bike plans for communities since 2000: 5 communities with plans



# Healthy Food Indicators



## Access to Healthy Foods

- 9. Percent of population within 1 mile of a grocery store
- 10. Percent of population within 1 mile of a fast-food restaurant

## Food Insecurity

- 12. Stores participating in SNAP per 1,000 persons
- 13. Percent of population within 1 mile of a store selling alcohol
- 14. Percent of population within 1 mile of a store selling tobacco



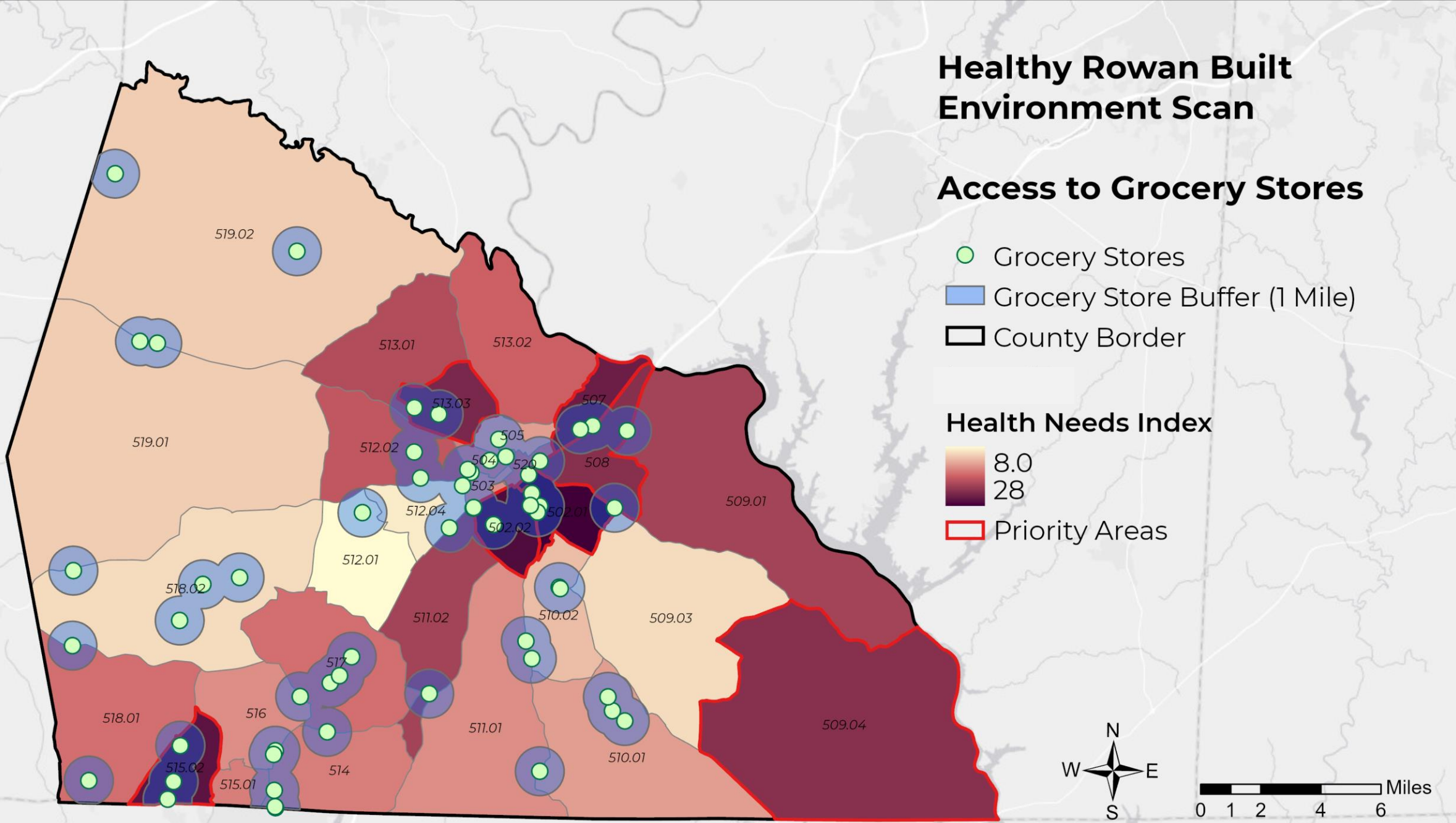
# Healthy Rowan Built Environment Scan

## Access to Grocery Stores

- Grocery Stores
- Grocery Store Buffer (1 Mile)
- County Border

## Health Needs Index

- 8.0
- 28
- Priority Areas



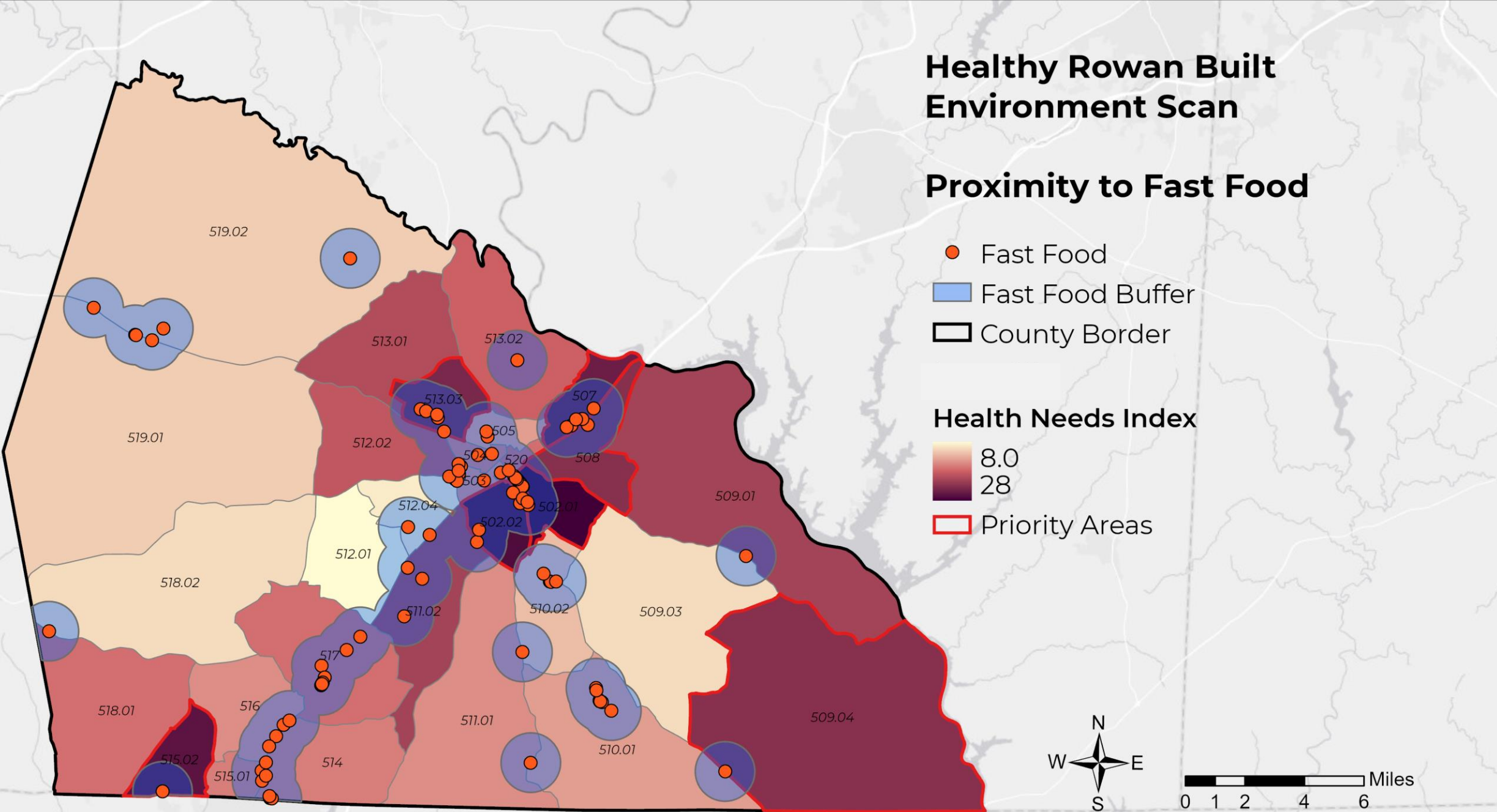
# Healthy Rowan Built Environment Scan

## Proximity to Fast Food

- Fast Food
- Fast Food Buffer
- County Border

## Health Needs Index

- 8.0
- 28
- Priority Areas





# Healthy Rowan Built Environment Scan

## Proximity to Stores Selling Alcohol

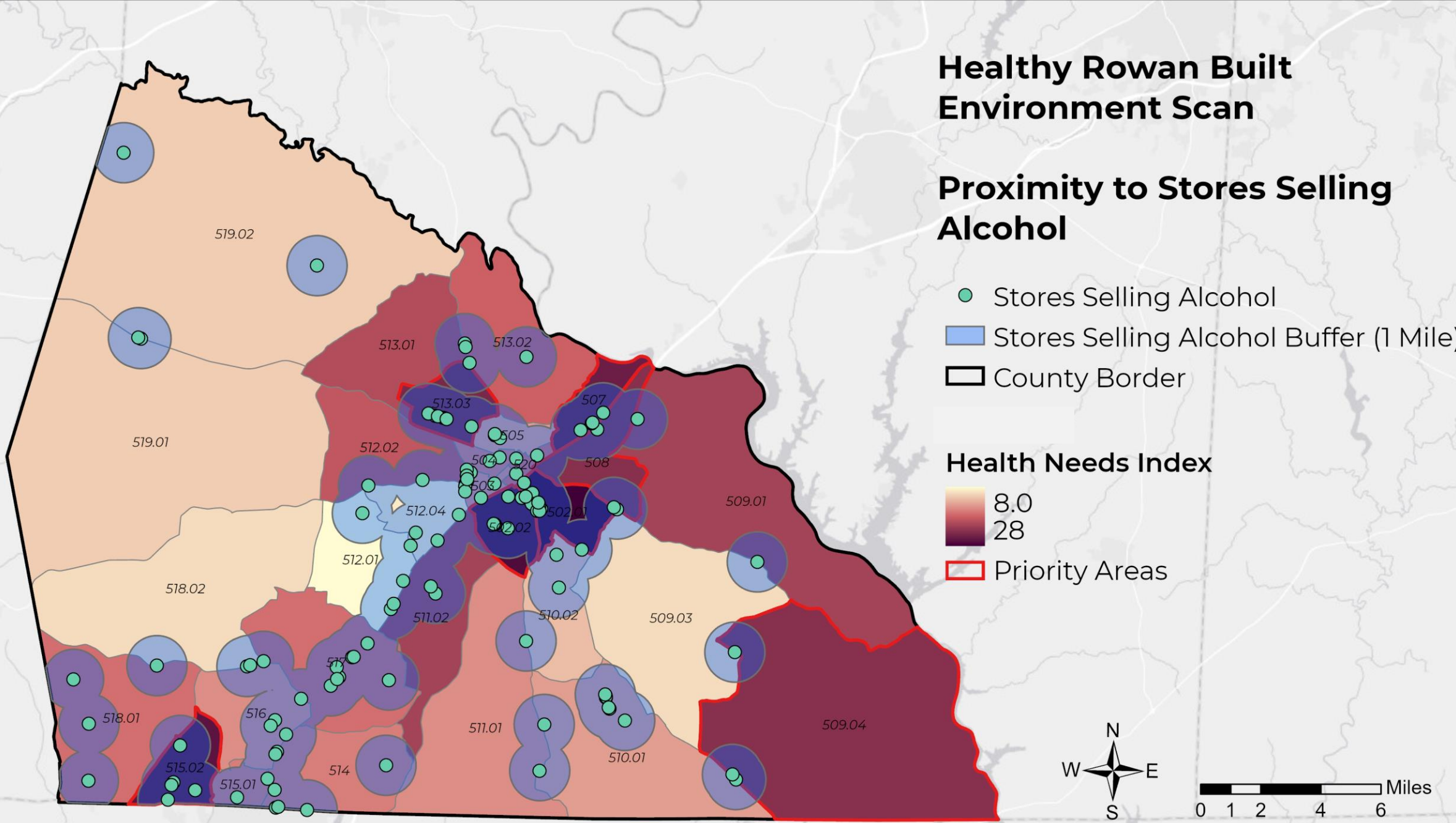
- Stores Selling Alcohol
- Stores Selling Alcohol Buffer (1 Mile)
- ▭ County Border

## Health Needs Index

8.0

28

Priority Areas





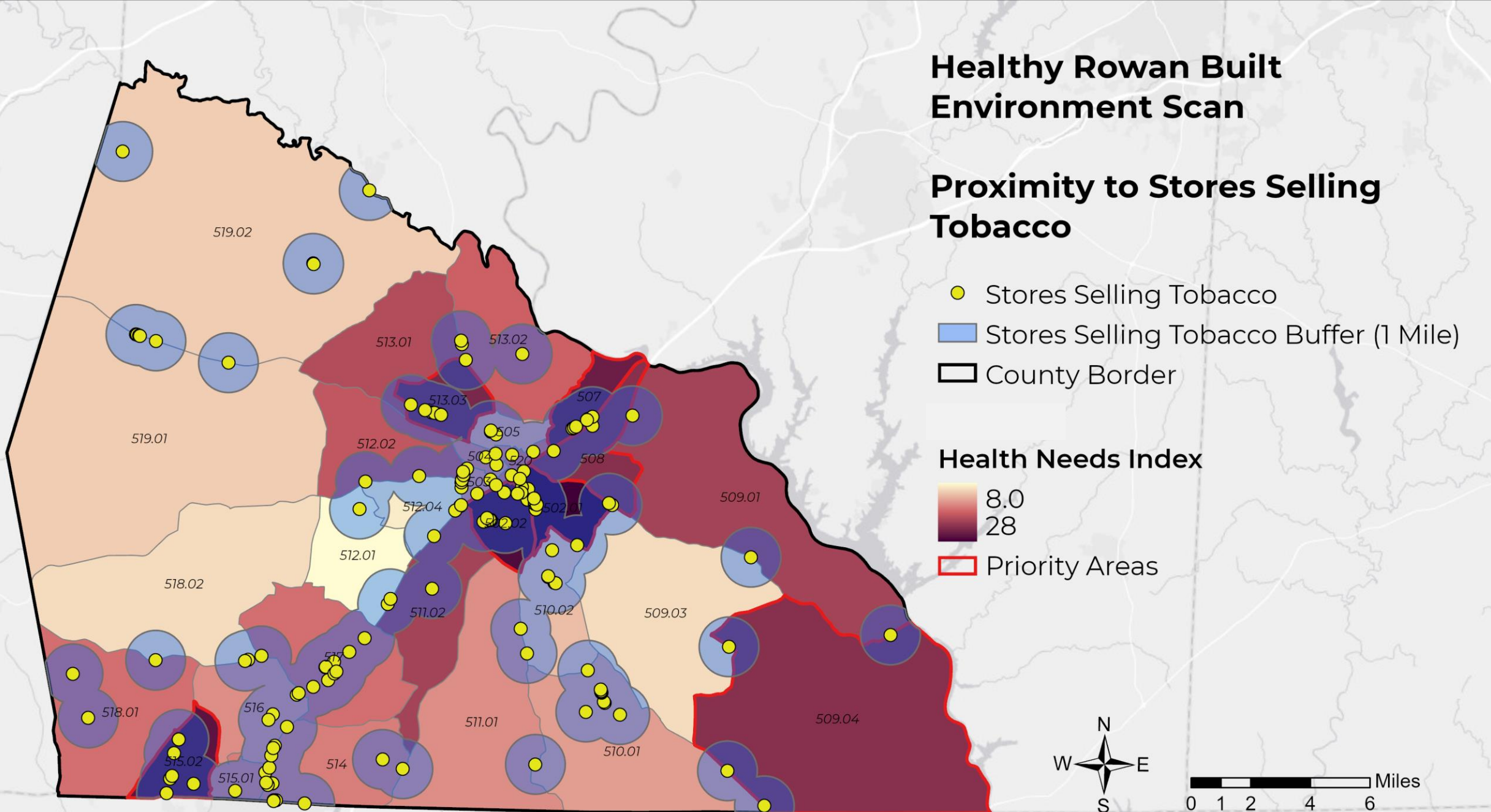
# Healthy Rowan Built Environment Scan

## Proximity to Stores Selling Tobacco

- Stores Selling Tobacco
- Stores Selling Tobacco Buffer (1 Mile)
- ▭ County Border

## Health Needs Index

- 8.0
- 28
- ▭ Priority Areas



# Preventive Healthcare Indicators



## Access to Preventive Healthcare

- 15. Number of doctors per 1,000 persons
- 16. Percent of population within 2 miles of a medical facility
- 17. Percent of population within 2 miles of a community pharmacy



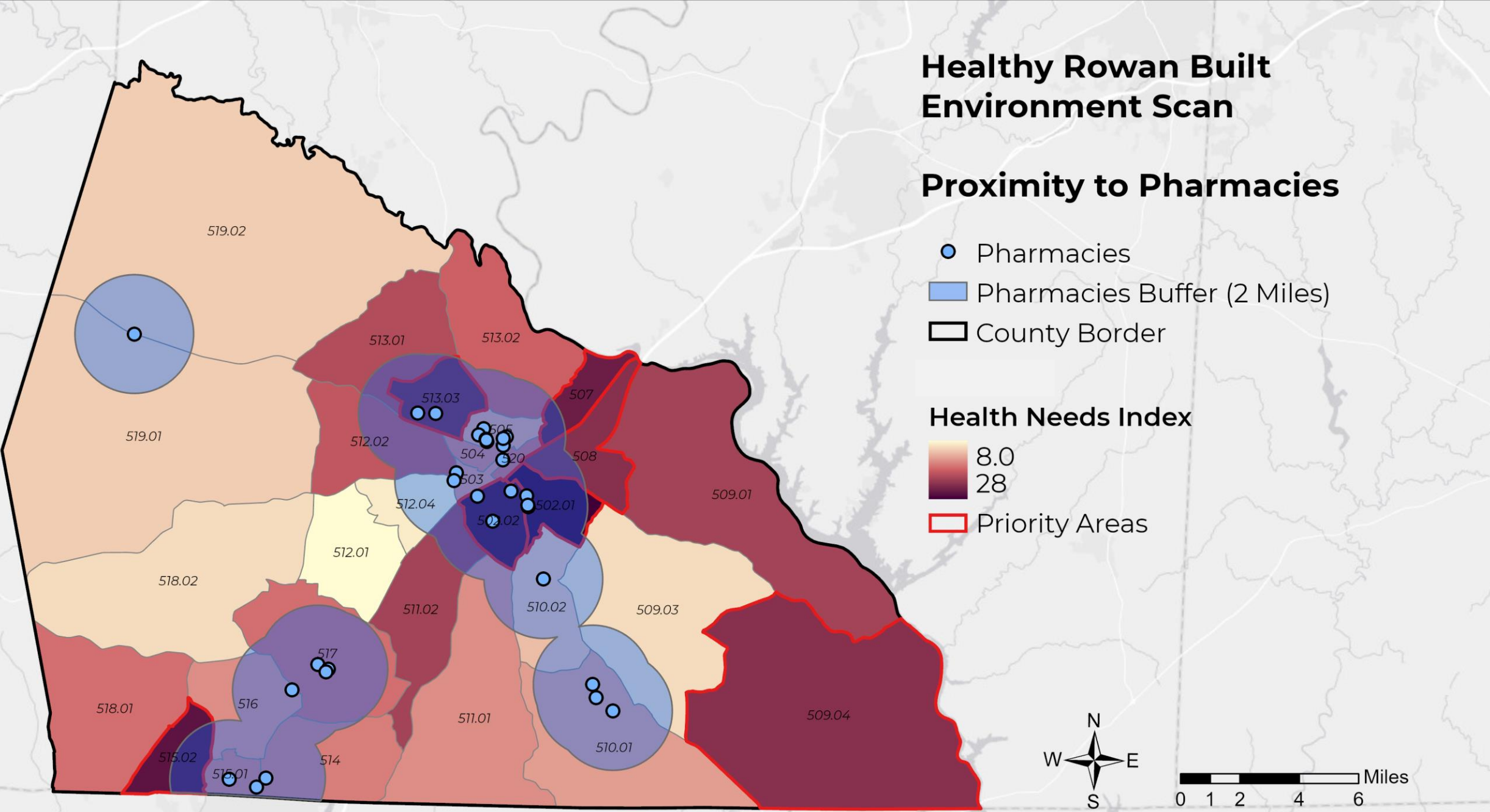
# Healthy Rowan Built Environment Scan

## Proximity to Pharmacies

- Pharmacies
- Pharmacies Buffer (2 Miles)
- ▭ County Border

## Health Needs Index

- 8.0
- 28
- Priority Areas



# Healthy Rowan Built Environment Scan

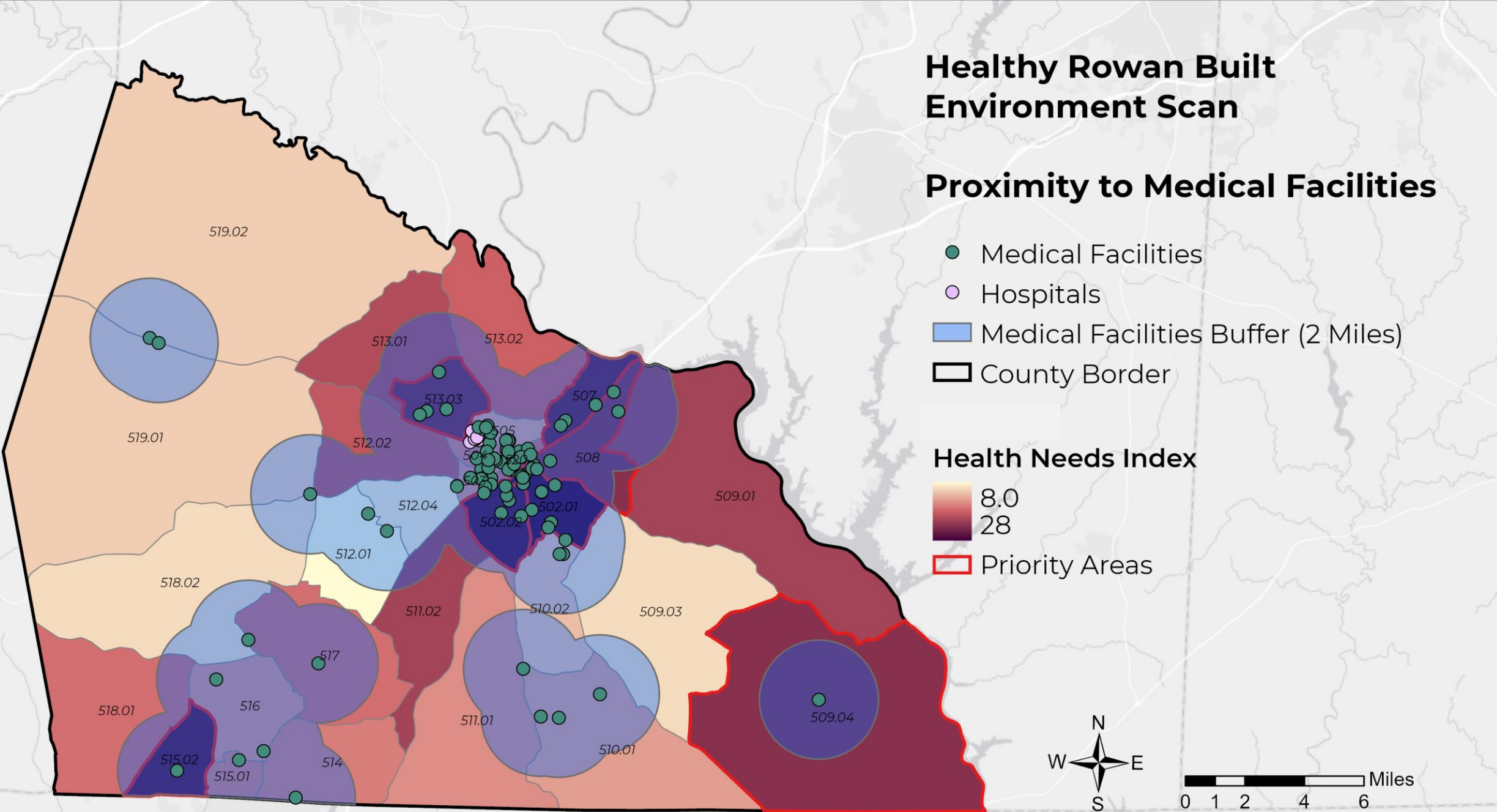
## Proximity to Medical Facilities

- Medical Facilities
- Hospitals
- Medical Facilities Buffer (2 Miles)
- ▭ County Border

## Health Needs Index

8.0  
28

Priority Areas





# Recommended Next Steps for Rowan County

## Potential future actions to improve access to Physical Activity.

- ***Prioritize investments into areas of greatest need (see Health Needs Index map).***
- Increase access to existing and planned park and recreational facilities through policy interventions:
  - Remove policy barriers that prohibit open access to school play fields, outdoor recreational facilities
  - Update zoning codes to require usable open space, trails, and recreation facilities that support the Rowan County system as residential and non-residential projects are built
  - Modify codes to require safe sidewalk and/or multi-use trail infrastructure along transportation corridors
  - Support mixed-use development proposals that allow pedestrian and bike connections between areas to live, work and play
- Increase access to existing and planned park and recreational facilities through infrastructure investments:
  - Invest in sidewalks connecting neighborhoods to park and recreation facilities
  - Reinstate the Rowan Express fixed-route transit service to increase access to physical activity opportunities
- Expand multi-use trail system to act as a recreational facility and transportation network.
- Develop marketing and communication materials to increase awareness of existing and planned parks, recreational facilities and programming.



# Recommended Next Steps for Rowan County

## Potential future actions to improve access to Physical Activity.

- Support employers through physical infrastructure investments that provide active commuting options.
- ***Support new parks and recreation infrastructure in \_\_\_\_\_(see map).***
- Support recreation programming for all ages, balancing youth, adult and senior recreational activities.
- Support an “open streets” event allowing community members to gather, socialize, walk, run, bike, and skate in selected streets temporarily closed to traffic.
- Develop and/or update pedestrian and bike infrastructure plans.





# Recommended Next Steps for Rowan County

## Potential future actions to improve access to Healthy Food.

- *Prioritize investments into areas of greatest need (see Health Needs Index map).*
- Increase access to healthy foods through program and policy interventions:
  - Educate on healthy food practices including classes on healthy cooking, canning, home gardening
  - Develop incentives for providing healthy foods in convenience and corner stores
  - Support policies to allow/encourage community gardens, residential gardening, fruit and vegetable stands
  - Remove zoning regulatory barriers for raising chickens and bees
  - Establish partnerships between farmers and consumers for purchase/delivery of farm products
  - Consider density and/or location restrictions on fast food outlets related to schools
- Increase access to healthy foods through infrastructure investments:
  - Increase farmer's market locations
  - Invest in community refrigerators to encourage healthy food sharing by restaurants, grocers and farmers that have access to "day old" food products
  - Reinstate the Rowan Express fixed-route transit service to increase access to healthy food choices
- Lead by example by providing healthy food options at Rowan County events, work sites.



# Recommended Next Steps for Rowan County

## Potential future actions to improve access to Preventative Healthcare.

- **Prioritize investments into areas of greatest need (see Health Needs Index map).**
- Increase access to healthcare through program and policy interventions:
  - Support employer-based health services such as on-site nurses to improve preventative care, reduce time away from office, etc.
  - Include health as a factor for economic development incentives (prioritize employers that include health insurance, sick leave, parental leave, etc.).
- Increase access to healthcare through infrastructure investments:
  - Reinstate the Rowan Express fixed-route transit service to increase access to primary doctors, the Veterans Administration services and pharmacies
  - Support health department satellite offices in areas of need to increase opportunities for preventative care
  - Seek private sector partnerships to create a mobile unit program offering a variety of services throughout the county
- Take advantage of technologies to support health services through text message reminders, telemedicine, etc.
- Develop a communication campaign to inform residents about how to access existing health services.

