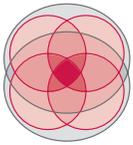


THE GEOGRAPHY OF

# Opportunity

A framework to boost collaborative efforts and expand opportunity across the greater New Orleans region





**KIRWAN INSTITUTE**  
for the Study of Race and Ethnicity



**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**



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The Kirwan Institute works to create a just and inclusive society where all people and communities have opportunity to succeed.

#### **WHAT IS OPPORTUNITY MAPPING?**

Opportunity mapping uses neighborhood-based information and mapping to understand the challenges impacting our neighborhoods. We are able to identify opportunity-rich communities—those marked by characteristics such as high performing schools, high property values, high employment rates, and positive health outcomes, as well as who has access to these communities—and better understand what needs to be remedied in opportunity-poor communities.

#### **WHY MAP NEIGHBORHOOD CONDITIONS?**

Neighborhood conditions and proximity to opportunities such as high performing education or sustainable employment have a critical impact on quality of life and self advancement—even more so than lifestyle choices. Social factors like poverty, unemployment, housing, education, and the food system collectively exert an impact on health. Even life expectancy can now be predicted by zip code.

*The Kirwan Institute continually tracks this research and keeps an updated annotated bibliography of relevant research literature. For more information, visit [kirwaninstitute.osu.edu](http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu).*



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# The Geography of Opportunity

## In Greater New Orleans



To View Online Map

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# Mapping Opportunity in the Super Region

## THE OPPORTUNITY COMMUNITIES FRAMEWORK

The *Opportunity Communities* framework is a method of analysis that reflects the multi-faceted nature of opportunity by incorporating many indicators of community well-being into a single index.

These indicators encompass education, health, transportation, employment, housing, and civic engagement. Because of the complexity and inter-linkage of all of these issues, no single organization or institution can effectively address all aspects of opportunity. It is for this reason that GNOF has sought to convene stakeholders from a variety of domains related to public health, transportation, and economic and community development.

For the Gulf Coast super region containing New Orleans and Baton Rouge, events such as Hurricane Katrina and the BP Oil Spill have highlighted existing inequalities in access to opportunity. In the years since these events, **efforts to rebuild the region have often reflected those pre-existing inequalities and even exacerbated them.**

It is because of this struggle to balance the scales of access that the Greater New Orleans Foundation (GNOF) has enlisted the help of the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity to map the current landscape of opportunity of the region.

This report employs Kirwan's *Opportunity Communities* framework to visualize how access to many facets of opportunity varies by geography and race. It then identifies the structural and institutional factors that must be addressed in order to create a more equitable and economically resilient region.

## KEY FINDINGS

The opportunity maps reveal inequity in access to opportunity on the levels of geography, race, and infrastructure.

**Geography:** In terms of geography, the urban centers of Baton Rouge contain a large number of the high or very high opportunity tracts, whereas the rural, northern-most parishes and coastal parishes show large pockets of low and very low opportunity.

**Race:** Analysis of where different demographic groups are located in the region reveals a stark racial divide in terms of access to opportunity. Over 58% of the

white population of the super region is located in high or very high opportunity areas. Conversely, 55% of African Americans live in low or very low opportunity tracts.

**Housing:** The opportunity analysis reveals that areas of low opportunity contain a disproportionate amount of the region’s subsidized housing and affordable rental units, which limits low-income residents’ location choices and can concentrate disadvantage.

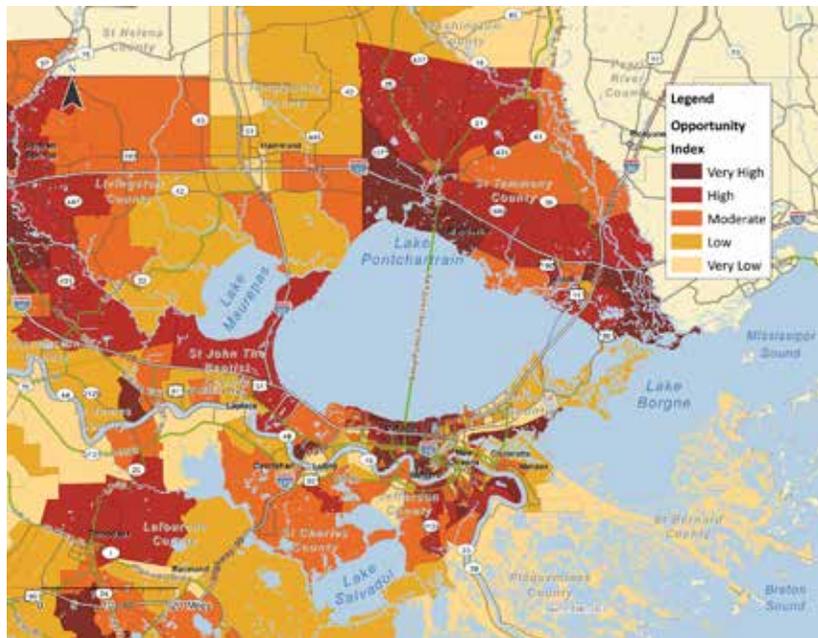
**Other Factors:** Some pockets of very low opportunity are characterized by low educational opportunity and limited public transportation infrastructure. Since education and transportation are two of the most important opportunities for getting out of poverty, these topics are further explored in the supplemental analysis of the appendix.

## ADDRESSING INEQUITY

# ANALYSIS IN THE REGION REVEALS A STARK RACIAL DIVIDE IN TERMS OF ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

Addressing the inequities of the New Orleans Super Region requires investment in both physical infrastructure and institutional capacity.

**Creating Linkages:** Housing and transportation play key roles in connecting households to opportunity. Improving affordable housing throughout the region can allow families to make choices about where to locate to be closest to the jobs, schools, and social supports that are important to them. At the same time, appropriate transportation networks allow people across the region to access diverse resources that may not be located in their immediate neighbor-



The **Opportunity Maps** throughout this report will help entities to visualize data across the region and find new means of collaboration.

hoods. Creating linkages across the region through diversifying the locations of affordable housing and expanding public transportation networks allows for the flow of human and capital resources that is vital to a region’s economic development.

**Collaborating for Sustainability:** No single organization can possibly address every aspect of opportunity. In order to expand opportunity throughout the region, there must be more collaboration at the institutional level, and among local organizations. Increased communication, trust, and accountability across many organizations is the only way for the region to achieve equitable and sustainable growth and to leverage existing investments to the maximum benefit of all people.

**Making Space for Equitable Participation:** Truly inclusive collaboration can only happen if all people are allowed to participate in decision-making. Recruiting underrepresented groups to become more civically engaged ensures that ap-

propriate investments are made in the areas that need it most.

.....

**Creating greater equity** is an admirable goal in and of itself, but it also serves the purpose of creating improved resilience and sustainability. Extending opportunity access to more people means creating a whole region that is healthier, more educated, and more productive. Striving for equity, therefore, is the key to sustainable growth in the long term.

In 2013, The Greater New Orleans Foundation commissioned the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity to work with a stakeholder committee of leaders from across the 16-parish super region<sup>1</sup>, shown in **Figure 1.1**, to assess the geography of opportunity among the region's communities. In addition, Kirwan was asked to foster a stakeholder dialogue around coordinating and targeting investments with a focus on equitable reinvestment, in order to improve access to opportunity for all of the people and communities in the super region.

**A**s the maps in this report show, the footprint of opportunity is uneven, both across the region and within the region's two largest cities, New Orleans and Baton Rouge. We hope that our analysis, maps and recommended strategies help frame coordinated and equitable revitalization efforts across the Greater New Orleans super region.

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the needs of the devastated New Orleans region captured the attention of the nation. Resources and assistance came to the region from far and wide. The community scrambled to repair and rebuild houses, reopen businesses, and restore critical transportation connections. Repairing and rebuilding required a coordinated effort. Much of the Gulf Coast region became aware of its vulnerabilities, its strengths, and its linked fate.

The Unified New Orleans Plan is one example of the kind of coordination and participation that became necessary as a result of recent disasters. In addition to being required for the release of federal aid, creation and approval of the Plan demonstrated the ability of various stakeholders to collaborate towards a common goal of community revitalization. In the years since the storm, there have been subsequent disasters, such as the BP oil spill. Each new crisis reiterates the need for equitably-coordinated investment and cooperation.

**The following report contains** an overview of the Opportunity Communities Framework, including analysis of race and opportunity across the region, followed by a closer look at the geography of opportunity in New Orleans and Baton Rouge. The report concludes with a summary of how this work can be applied by community development stakeholders and grantees to forge a more unified and equitable future in the super region.

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**MUCH OF THE GULF  
COAST REGION  
BECAME AWARE OF  
ITS VULNERABILITIES,  
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ITS LINKED FATE**

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1. The Greater New Orleans Super Region, as defined by these parishes: Ascension, Assumption, East Baton Rouge, Jefferson, Lafourche, Livingston, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, Terrebonne, and Washington.



Figure 1.1 The 16-parish super region

# Communities of Opportunity Across the Super Region

Community opportunity is layered and dynamic. A community encompasses not just the built environment, but also the social, political, economic, civic, and educational landscapes of opportunity for individuals and families. High opportunity communities are places that have many strong support systems, integrated in ways that make for a healthy, sustainable environment. Community development efforts must be equally as dynamic and integrated. For example, investments in education must be made in conjunction with those in health, housing, and transportation in order to create sustainable communities of opportunity for all people.

In addition to the need for investment into multiple opportunity pathways, we must acknowledge that where one lives within a region has a significant impact on the opportunities one can access to promote individual, family, and community well-being. School quality, exposure to the effects of crime and concentrated poverty, and access to healthy food are just a few of these place-based factors. Across the country, the Institute has found that people of color and vulnerable populations are often concentrated in “low opportunity” neighborhoods, due to the historical (and sometimes ongoing) neglect and disinvestment. Unfortunately, low opportunity neighborhoods can depress individual life outcomes. In fact, life expectancy can now be predicted by zip code (Figure 2.1)<sup>2</sup>.

Figure 2.2 demonstrates a bird’s eye view of the opportunity landscape of the

## VULNERABLE POPULATIONS ARE OFTEN CONCENTRATED IN “LOW OPPORTUNITY” NEIGHBORHOODS, DUE TO THE HISTORICAL NEGLECT AND DISINVESTMENT

super region. Areas of high and very high opportunity are concentrated in the urban centers of Baton Rouge and New Orleans and most of St. Tammany Parish. Communities of high opportunity also exist south and west of New Orleans in Ascension, Livingston, Terrebonne, and Lafourche Parishes. Areas of low and very low opportunity are concentrated in the rural northern-most parishes of the region, coastal parishes, and are found within the urban centers. In particular, Washington, Tangipahoa, and St. Bernard Parishes experience low and very low levels of opportunity.

Solutions for mitigating low opportunity communities may differ in urban centers like New Orleans or Baton Rouge, compared to

rural or coastal parishes like St. Bernard or Tangipahoa. However, policy makers can work together to address common challenges across jurisdictional boundaries, while also focusing on the individual needs of each Parish. Each individual parish has unique attributes which contribute positively to the overall character of the super region. Capitalizing on these attributes while collectively addressing various

urban, coastal, and rural needs can benefit individual communities and the super region.



Figure 2.1 Life expectancy at birth by zipcode (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation)

2. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Commission to Build a Healthier America. Overcoming Obstacles to Health in 2013 and Beyond; Braveman P & Egerter S, Center on Social Disparities in Health, University of California, San Francisco. New Orleans: Short Distances to Large Disparities in Health.

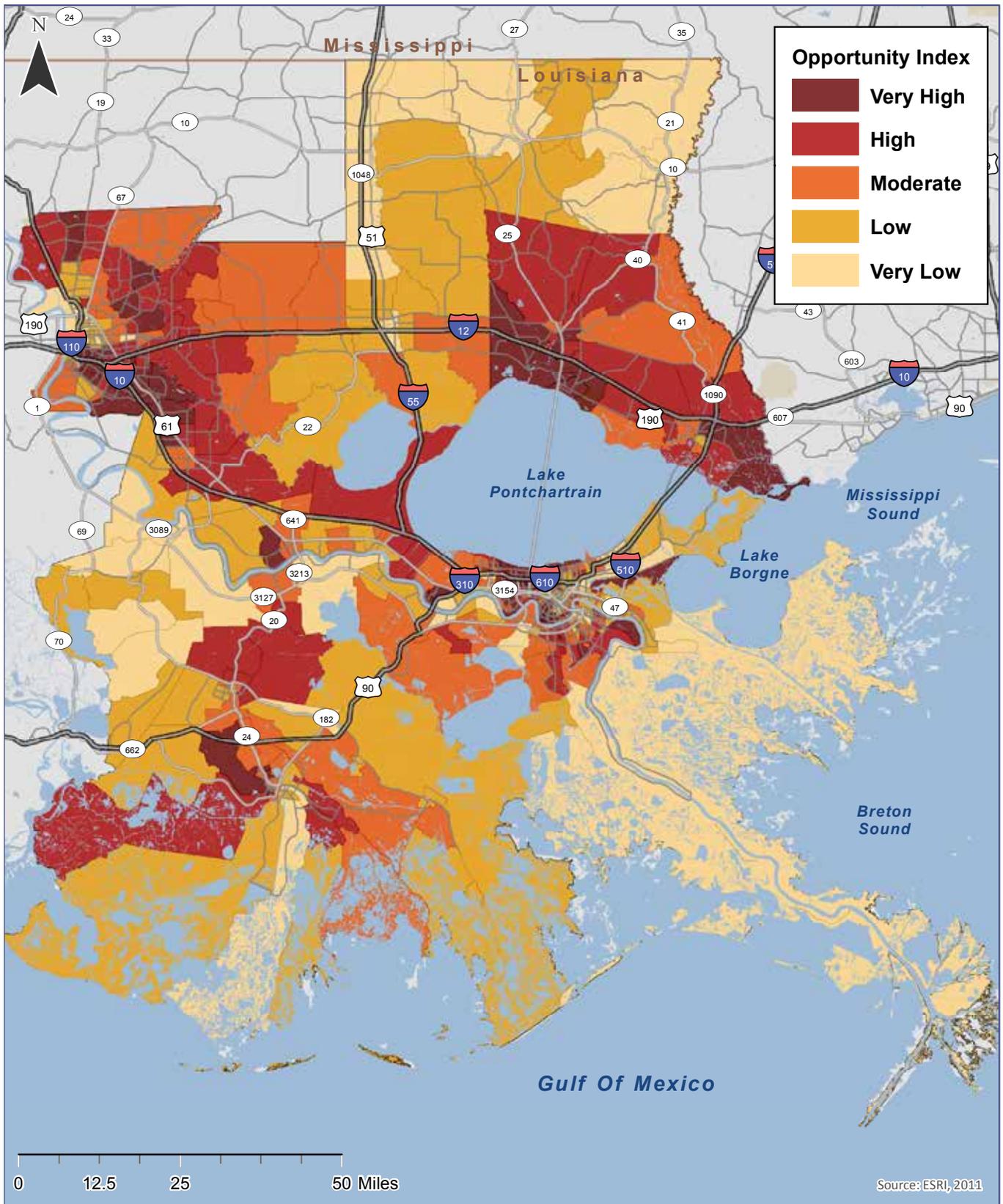
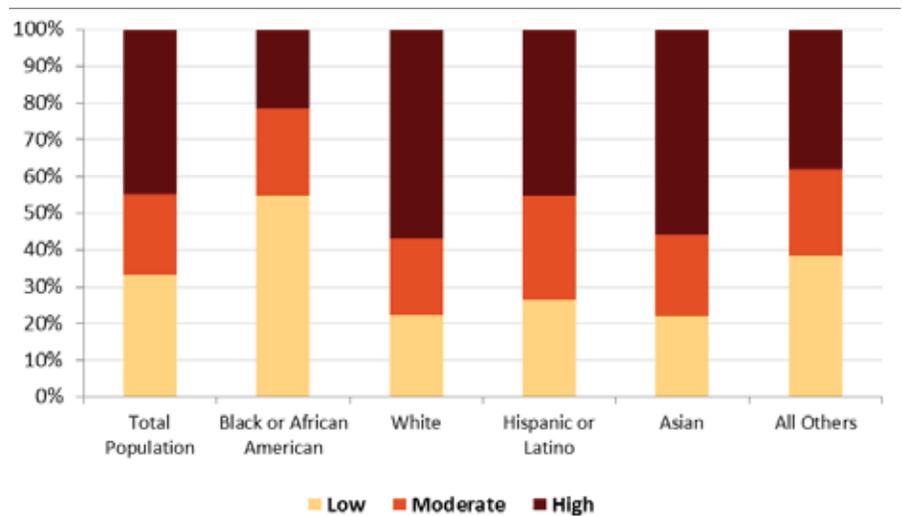


Figure 2.2 Bird's eye view of the opportunity landscape of the super region

# Race and Opportunity Across the Super Region

Access to opportunity across the super region can differ for people of different races. **Figures 3.1 and 3.2** show the population of the region by race and opportunity. Whites comprise over half of the total population of the super region with over fifty-eight percent of the population living in high or very high opportunity areas. Conversely, the African American population makes up nearly thirty-two percent of the total population in the region, but roughly fifty-five percent of African Americans live in areas of low or very low opportunity. Less than thirty percent of the Hispanic or Latino population in the region lives in low or very low opportunity areas, while just over twenty percent of Asians and Whites in the region live in low opportunity areas. The Asian population largely experiences higher opportunity than other minority races in the region, with an opportunity distribution similar to that of the White population.

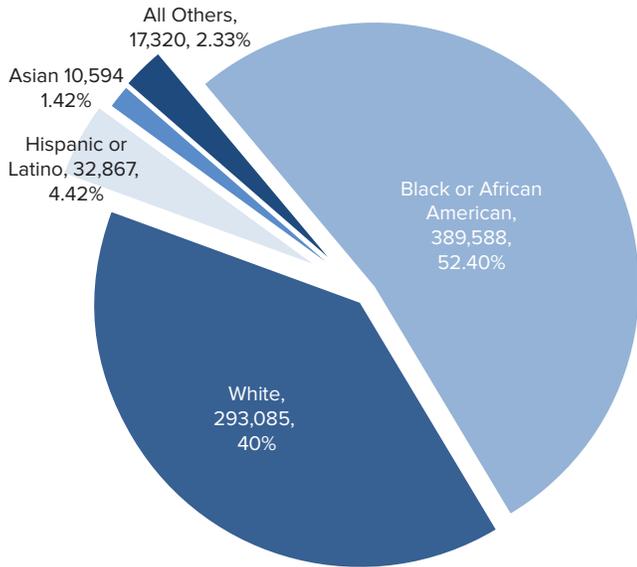
These disparities are further illuminated by **Figures 3.3 and 3.4**, which break down high and low opportunity by race. Seventy-five percent of people living in high opportunity areas in the super region are White. However, Whites do make up the majority in the region, and thus also make up forty percent of the population living in low opportunity areas. African Americans make up fifty-two percent of the total population of the super region living in low opportunity areas. These charts clearly illustrate how differently-situated communities of color are throughout the region, and demonstrate the need for policy to correct such systemic inequities.



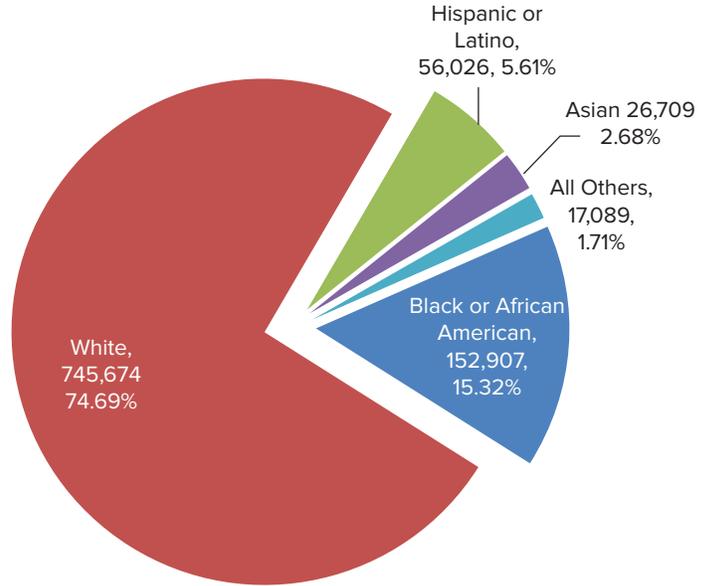
Opportunity	Total Population	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	White	Other Races
Very High	461,868	12,483	49,282	24,421	368,251	7,431
High	536,537	14,226	103,625	31,605	377,423	9,658
Moderate	490,657	10,541	166,388	34,899	268,115	10,714
Low	418,964	4,651	182,909	19,395	202,224	9,785
Very Low	324,490	5,943	206,679	13,472	90,861	7,535
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,232,516</b>	<b>47,844</b>	<b>708,883</b>	<b>123,792</b>	<b>1,306,874</b>	<b>45,123</b>

**Figures 3.1 and 3.2** Population of the region by race and opportunity

### LOW OPPORTUNITY



### HIGH OPPORTUNITY



Figures 3.3 and 3.4 High and low opportunity by race

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**THESE CHARTS CLEARLY ILLUSTRATE HOW DIFFERENTLY-SITUATED COMMUNITIES OF COLOR ARE THROUGHOUT THE REGION, AND DEMONSTRATE THE NEED FOR POLICY TO CORRECT SUCH SYSTEMIC INEQUITIES.**

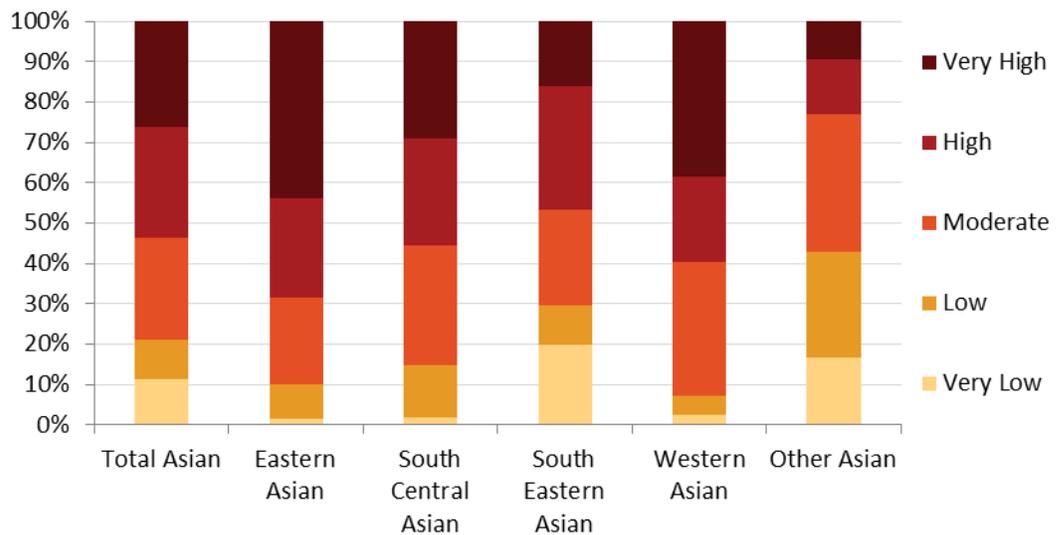
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Further, when examining such large diverse populations, disparities within races can be missed, especially when overall opportunity is relatively high, as is the case with the Asian population in the super region. Cultural and linguistic differences can be significant barriers to opportunity for immigrant populations; recognition of these differences within races as well as between them can increase the effectiveness of policies designed to increase access to opportunity. Additional analysis of the Asian population in the super region shown in **Figures 3.5** and **3.6** reveal that those of “South Eastern Asian” and “other Asian” descent are more likely to live in low opportunity areas.

Although there are broad trends in opportunity across the super region, each parish has unique attributes and its own racial composition. **Figures 3.7** and **3.8** illustrate the breakdown of population by race in each Parish within the

super region. African Americans clearly make up the majority of the population in Orleans, St. James, and St. John the Baptist Parishes and nearly half in East Baton Rouge, while Whites comprise the majority in all other parishes. Jefferson Parish has the largest Hispanic/Latino and Asian populations, making it more diverse than many other parishes in the super region. However, Jefferson Parish is also home to a smaller percentage of African Americans and a larger percentage of whites than other parishes. Both Orleans and Baton Rouge Parishes house the largest cities in the region and as such, additional analysis on these two cities is provided in the following pages.

**Figures 3.5 and 3.6**  
Asian population of the region by opportunity

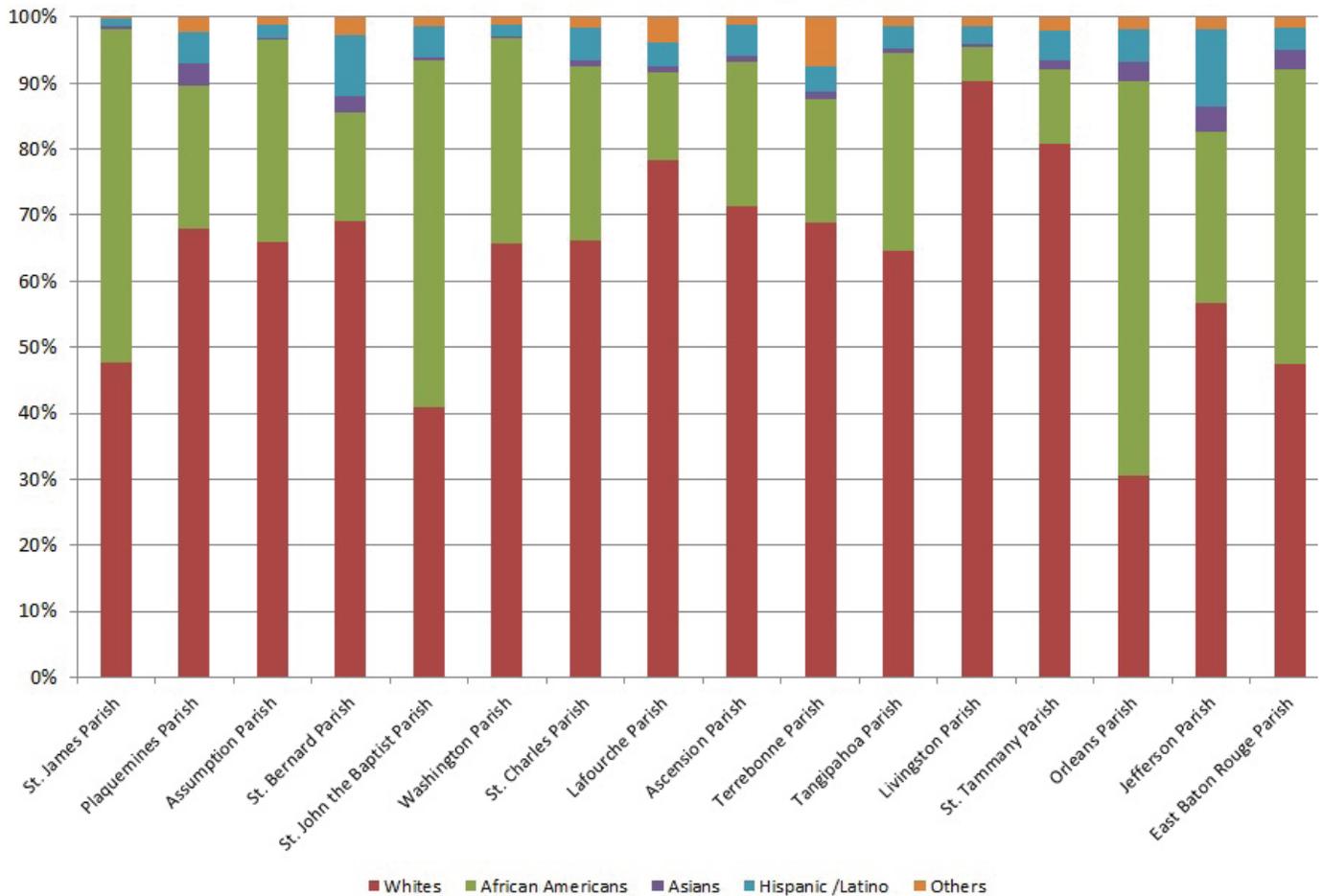


Opportunity	Total Asian	Eastern Asian	South Central Asian	South Eastern Asian	Western Asian	Other Asian
Very High	9214	3249	1938	2925	1078	24
High	9745	1839	1792	5490	589	35
Moderate	8881	1587	1989	4289	929	87
Low	3458	642	863	1761	125	67
Very Low	3970	114	129	3612	72	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>35,268</b>	<b>7,431</b>	<b>6,711</b>	<b>18,077</b>	<b>2,793</b>	<b>256</b>

Parish	Total Population	Whites	African Americans	Asians	Hispanic /Latino	Others
Ascension Parish	105,208	74,970	23,165	952	4,802	1,319
Assumption Parish	23,421	15,446	7,170	41	482	282
East Baton Rouge Parish	442,175	209,382	198,241	12,364	15,466	6,722
Jefferson Parish	432,310	245,520	111,850	16,582	50,761	7,597
Lafourche Parish	95,895	75,155	12,826	693	3,467	3,754
Livingston Parish	125,732	113,445	6,521	527	3,607	1,632
Orleans Parish	321,409	98,246	191,611	9,398	16,603	5,551
Plaquemines Parish	22,976	15,609	5,002	764	1,075	526
St. Bernard Parish	32,347	22,379	5,321	748	3,023	876
St. Charles Parish	52,662	34,820	13,911	489	2,562	880
St. James Parish	22,064	10,523	11,149	83	236	73
St. John the Baptist Parish	46,310	18,900	24,386	223	2,182	619
St. Tammany Parish	231,629	187,143	26,281	2,929	10,542	4,734
Tangipahoa Parish	119,891	77,545	35,940	789	3,975	1,642
Terrebonne Parish	111,518	76,920	20,873	1,147	4,153	8,425
Washington Parish	46,969	30,871	14,636	115	856	491
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2,232,516</b>	<b>1,306,874</b>	<b>708,883</b>	<b>47,844</b>	<b>123,792</b>	<b>45,123</b>

**Figures 3.7 and 3.8**  
Breakdown of population by race in each Parish within the super region

### Census Tract and Race by Parish



# The Geography of Opportunity in New Orleans

## OPPORTUNITY AND RACE

As the maps show, place matters in New Orleans, just as it does in cities and regions across the U.S. **Figure 4.1** shows opportunity by neighborhood across the City of New Orleans and reflects historical patterns of inequity, as well as disparity in the distribution of relief resources administered since 2005. As the map shows, areas with high access to opportunity are most prevalent in the north and the southwest portion of the crescent, while areas of low opportunity are concentrated in the center and east of the city.

**Figures 4.2–4.5** show comprehensive opportunity by race (White, African American, Hispanic/Latino, and Asian) in New Orleans. When comparing each of these maps, the stark stratification between the White and African American populations in New Orleans is apparent. This separation also follows the lines of opportunity. The White population is highly concentrated in areas of high or moderate opportunity mostly in the northeast and southern portions of the city with very few residing in lower opportunity tracts. The African American population, on the other hand, is highly concentrated in areas of low and moderate opportunity in the center, the west, and the periphery of the city. The Hispanic/Latino population is scattered throughout the city with concentrations in the north-western portion of the city. Opportunity for this population is mixed. Like the White population, the Asian population in New Orleans is concentrated in areas of high and moderate opportunity. However, there is one exception to this trend within the Asian population in New Orleans; in the northeastern corner of the city there is a Vietnamese community living in a very low opportunity tract. Knowledge of who is living in low opportunity areas gives policy makers the opportunity to respond to cultural differences when crafting policies aimed at increasing access to opportunity.

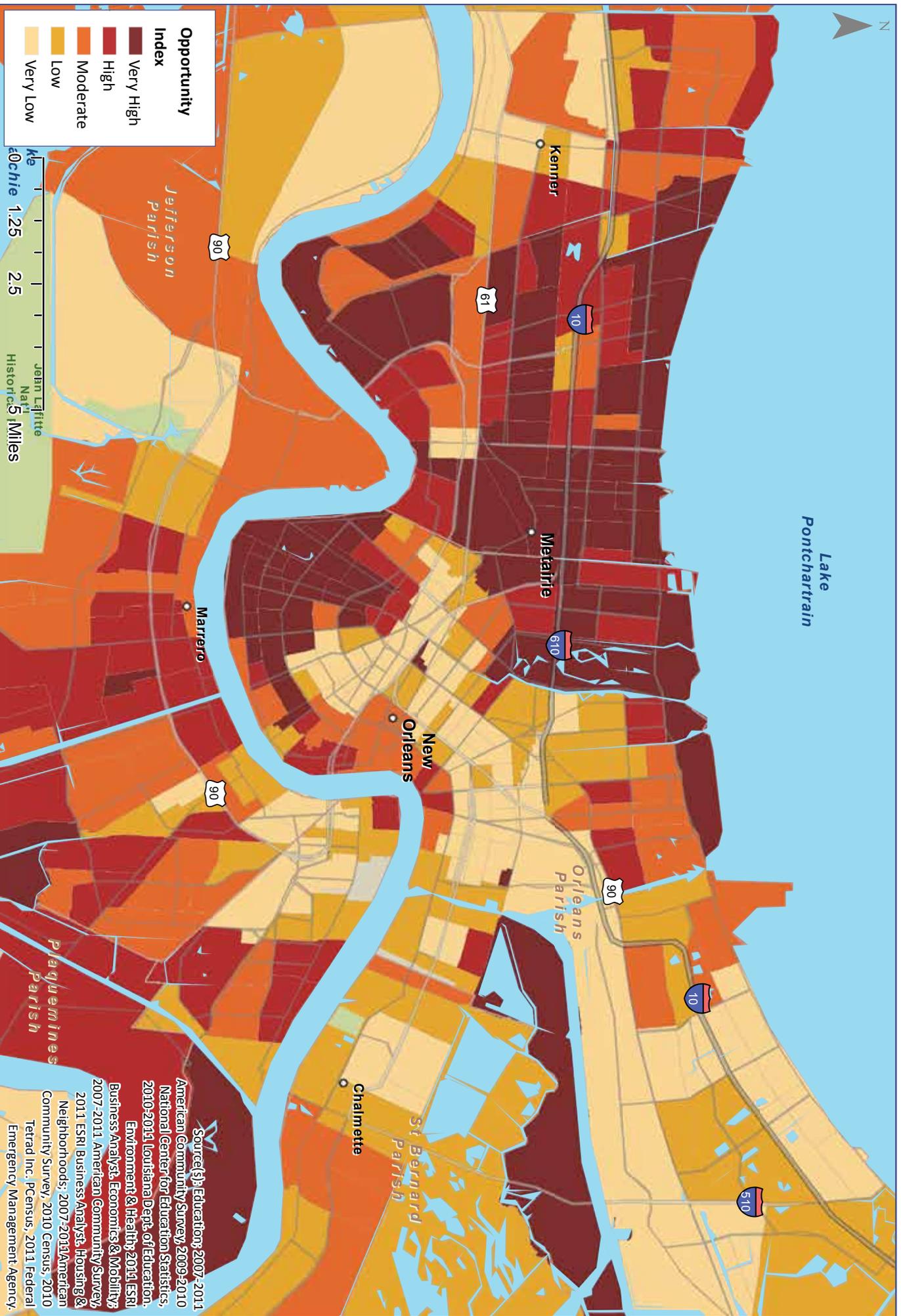
## OPPORTUNITY AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

When low income people are priced out of high opportunity areas, they are often left with few options but to live in areas of low or very low opportunity. When public housing or other types of housing assistance are made available only in low and very low opportunity areas, this can exacerbate concentrated poverty. Such a pattern is apparent in the city of New Orleans. **Figures 4.6** and **4.7** illustrate comprehensive opportunity in New Orleans, overlaid by number of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) developments (4.6) and housing vouchers (4.7). It is clear that the location of HUD developments and acceptance of housing vouchers is most prevalent in tracts with low and very low access to opportunity. Although there are some HUD units in moderate opportunity (and one in high opportunity) areas, they represent a relatively small proportion of assisted housing options.

## HOMEOWNERSHIP

Because of the complexity of all housing related issues in post-Katrina New Orleans, current housing conditions are in many ways indicative of resource allocation and opportunity. **Figure 4.8** divides housing into three types by parish: owner occupied, renter occupied, and HUD developments. Assumption Parish exhibits the highest percentage of owner occupied units and the lowest percentages of renter occupied and HUD developments. Conversely, Orleans Parish has the lowest percentage of owner occupied units and the highest percentages of renter occupied units and HUD developments.

Strategies to increase access to opportunity in regards to housing will likely take different shapes for different parishes. The barriers to increasing opportunity in urban Parishes like Orleans, East Baton Rouge, and Jefferson are quite different from the obstacles faced by rural and coastal parishes.



**Figure 4.1 – Comprehensive Opportunity in New Orleans** Opportunity relative to the census tracts in New Orleans. Data representing education, environment and health, economics and mobility, and housing and neighborhoods was compiled into an index to represent access to opportunity.

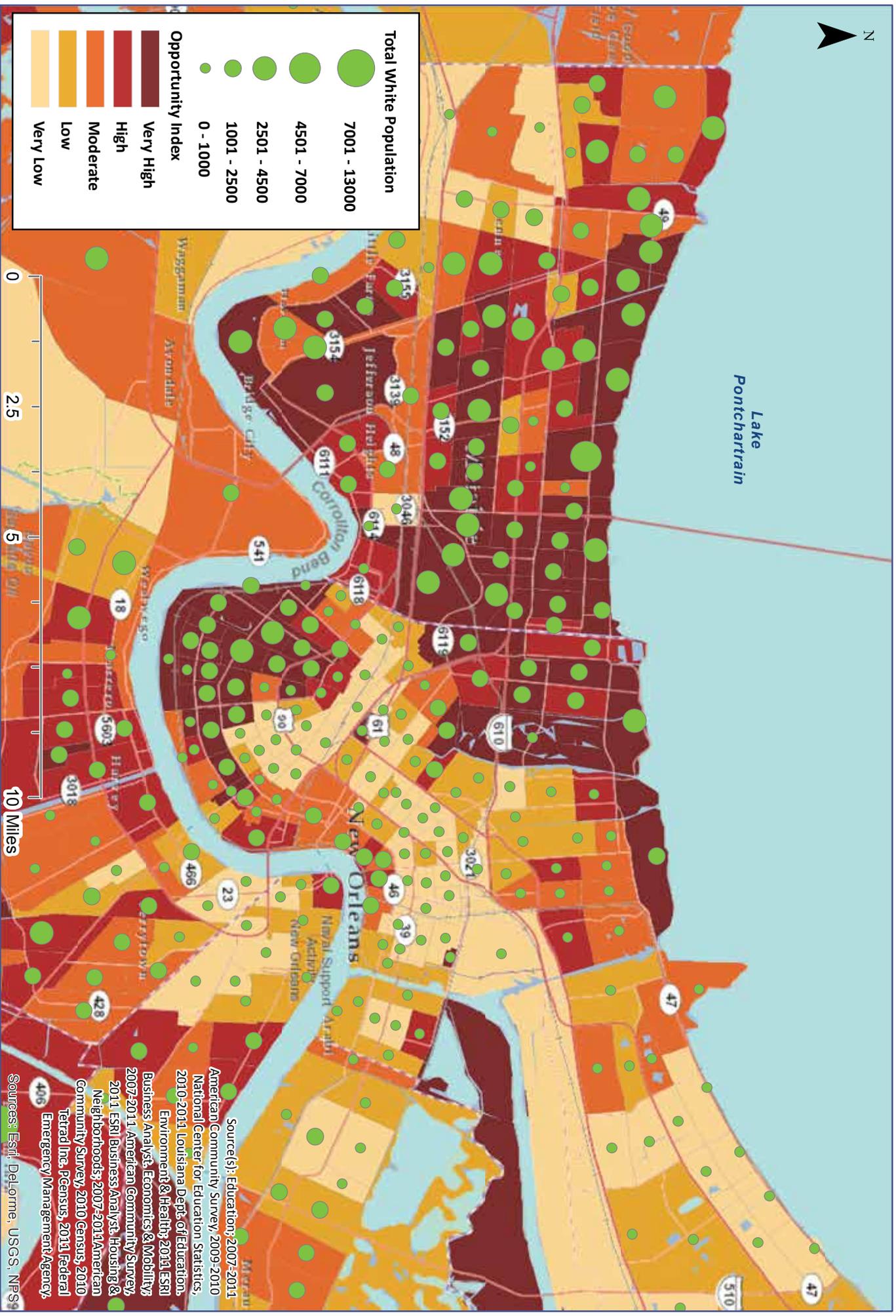
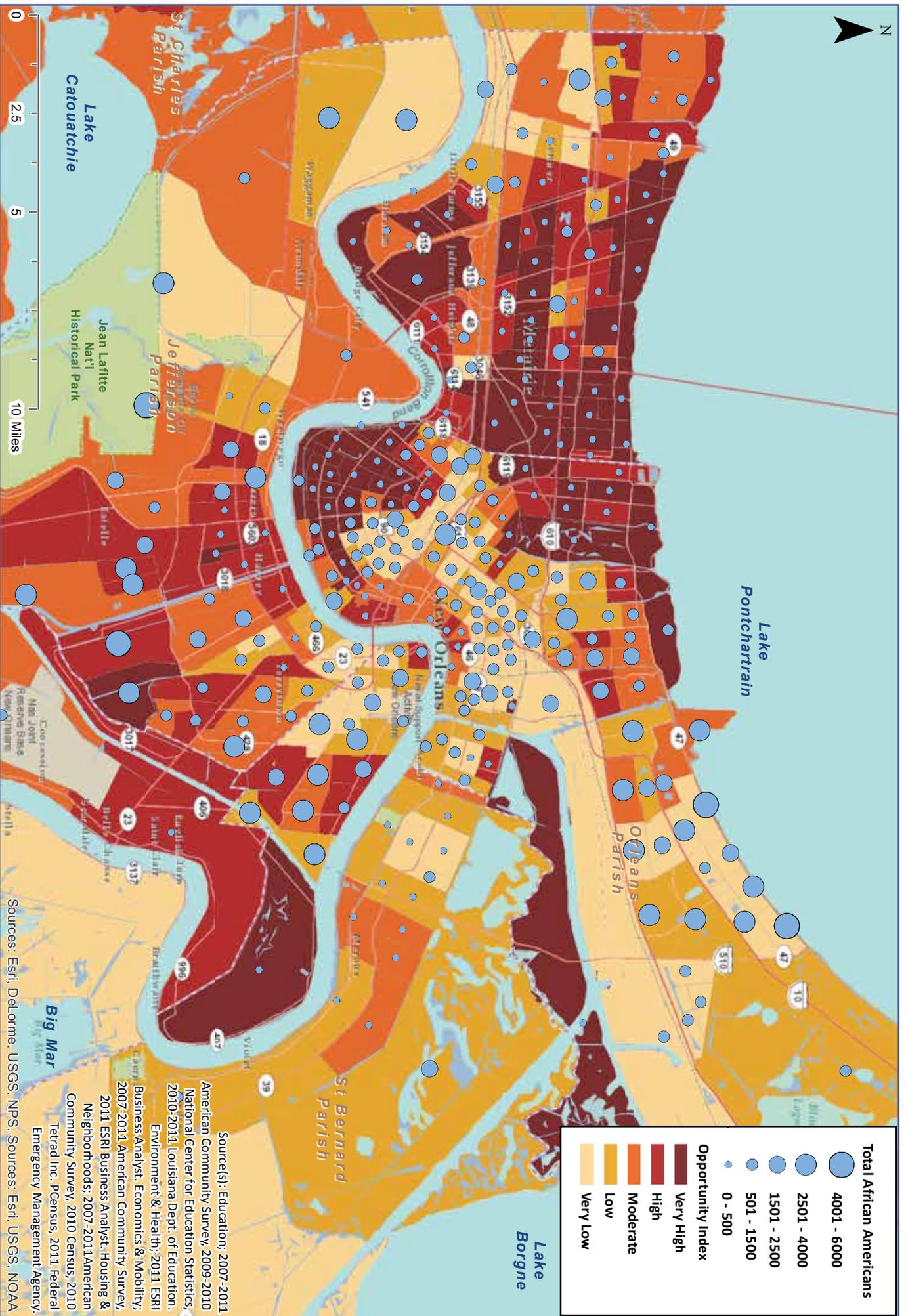
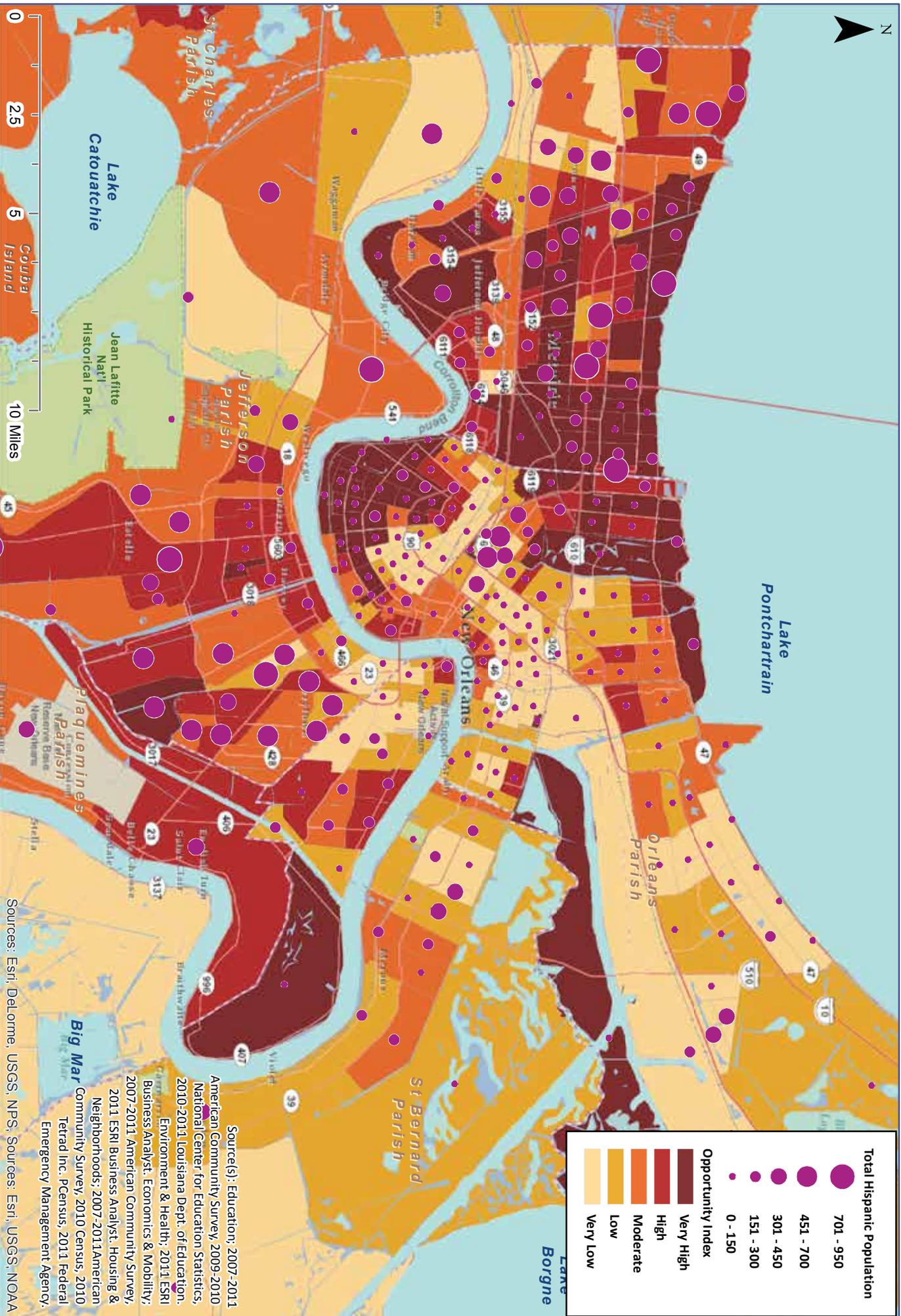


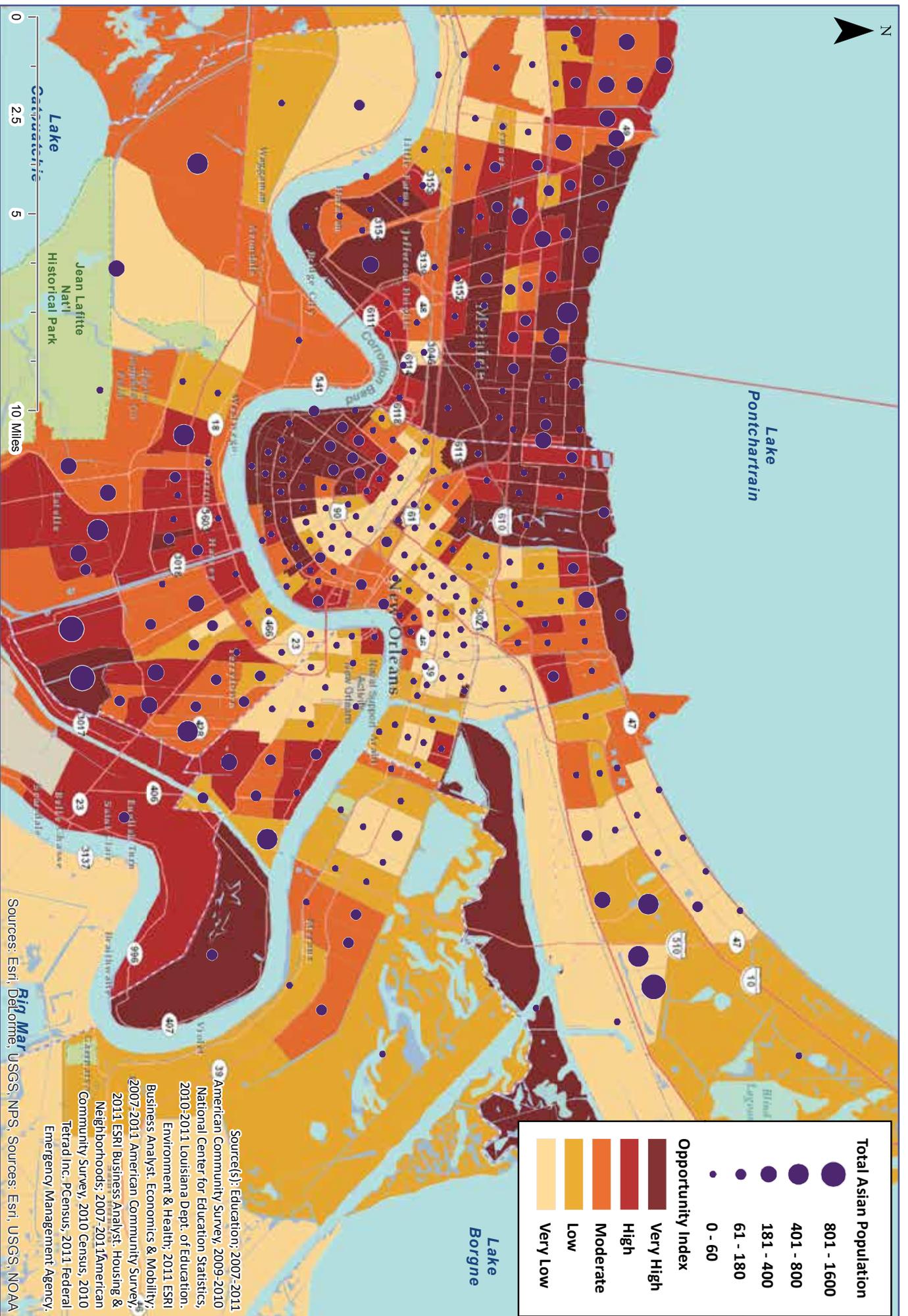
Figure 4.2 – White Population Overlaid with Opportunity Index Opportunity relative to the total White population within each census tract



**Figure 4.3 – African American Population Overlaid with Opportunity Index Opportunity relative to the total African American population within each census tract**



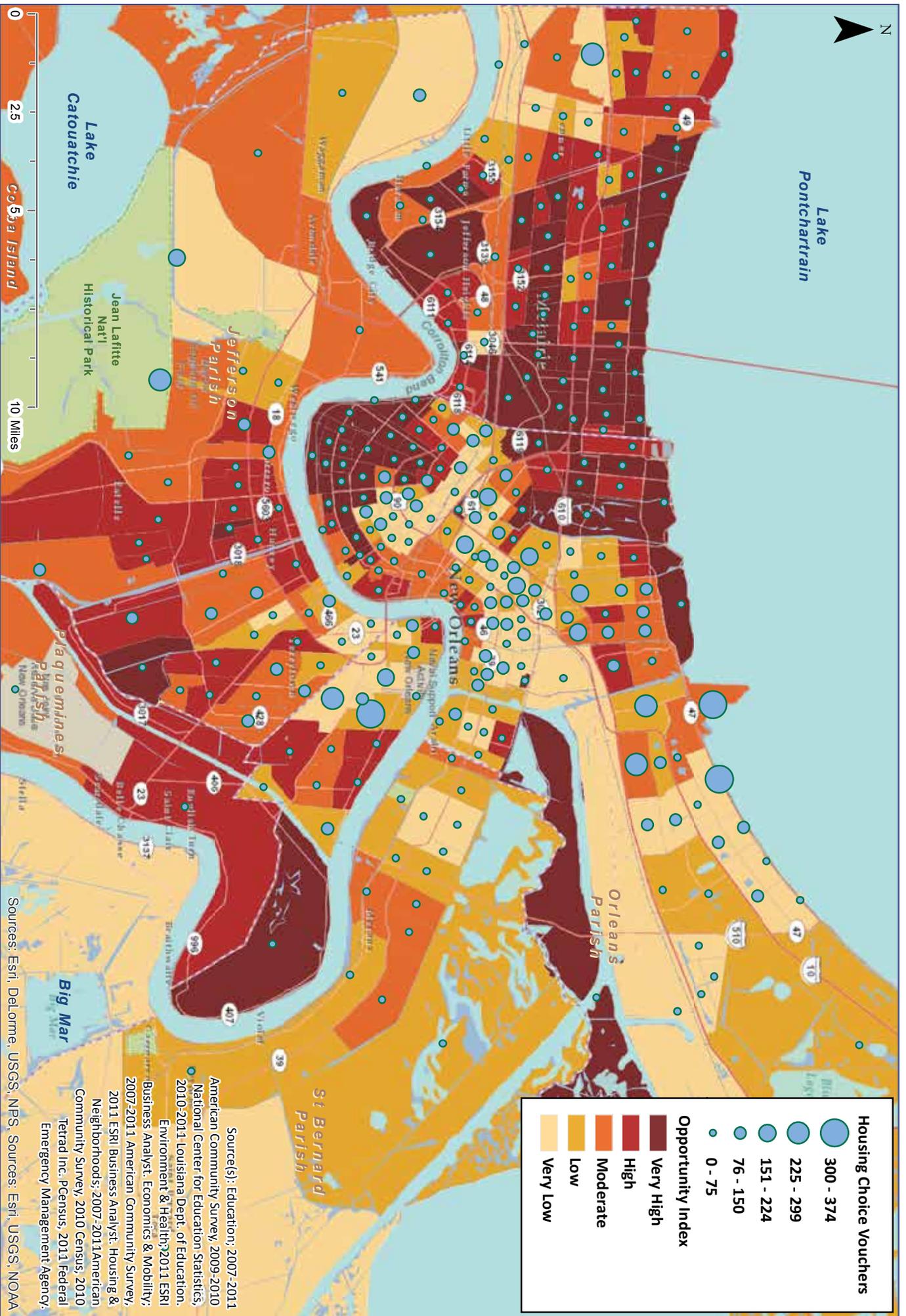
**Figure 4.4 – Hispanic Population Overlaid with Opportunity Index Opportunity relative to the total Hispanic population within each census tract**



**Figure 4.5 – Asian Population Overlaid with Opportunity Index Opportunity relative to the total Asian population within each census tract**



Figure 4.6 – HUD Developments Opportunity relative to the total number of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) developments



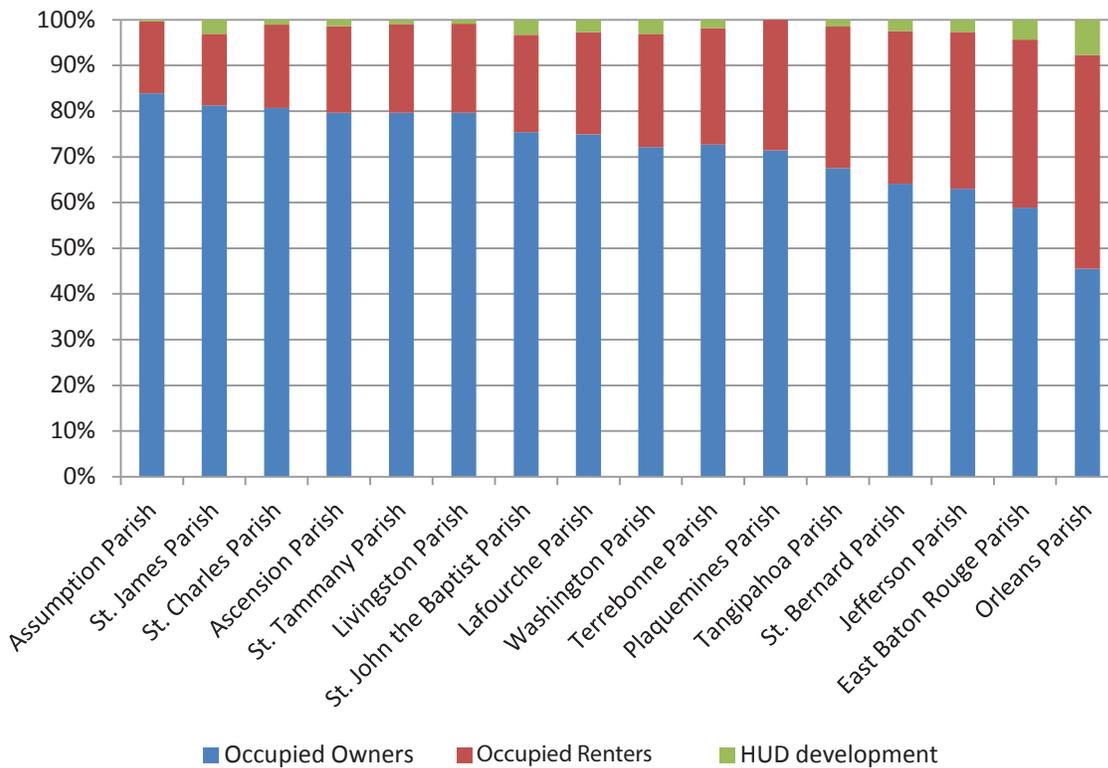
**Figure 4.7 – Housing Choice Vouchers Overlaid with Opportunity Index**  
 Housing Choice vouchers in relation to opportunity in New Orleans

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**POST-KATRINA NEW ORLEANS  
FACES UNIQUE CHALLENGES  
TO INCREASING OPPORTUNITY  
IN REGARDS TO HOUSING FOR  
ITS RESIDENTS**

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**Housing and Parish**



**Figure 4.8** Housing types by parish: owner occupied, renter occupied, and HUD developments

# The Geography of Opportunity in Baton Rouge

## OPPORTUNITY AND RACE

**Figure 5.1** below shows the comprehensive opportunity of Baton Rouge. Low opportunity is extremely concentrated in the central and northwestern portions of the city. Areas of moderate opportunity seem almost to buffer these low opportunity tracts from the high and very high opportunity tracts which surround the city. Beyond this ring of high and very high opportunity tracts is another ring of moderate opportunity tracts.

**Figures 5.2–5.5** show the comprehensive opportunity in Baton Rouge overlaid by race (White, African American, Hispanic/Latino, and Asian). **Figure 5.2** shows the White population in Baton Rouge. The White population is generally concentrated in high and moderate opportunity tracts on the southern and eastern portions of the city, with a relatively small percentage of the city's White population living in tracts with low or very low access to opportunity.

**Figure 5.3** shows comprehensive opportunity with the African American population. Here, like in the maps for New Orleans, there is some apparent separation between the White and African American populations in Baton Rouge. This is most apparent in the low and very low opportunity tracts in the center of the city and the high and very high opportunity tracts to the east. However, the racial stratification is not as stark as in New Orleans and there are many more African Americans living in high and very high opportunity areas in Baton Rouge, particularly to the south.

**Figure 5.4** shows the Hispanic/Latino population and opportunity in Baton Rouge. The Hispanic/Latino population is highly concentrated on the south and eastern portions of the city. However, the population lives largely in areas of high and very high opportunity. Finally, **Figure 5.5** shows opportunity and the concentration of Asian population in the southern part of the city. However, in this case, there are only scatterings of population to the east and some small clusters to the north as well. Access to opportunity for the Asian population is mixed with larger clusters living in tracts with very low and moderate access to opportunity than found with the Hispanic/Latino population. In addition, when comparing the maps to one another, one can see how races are segregated in the city by the fact that often, clusters of dots do not appear to overlap between races.

## HOUSING AND OPPORTUNITY

Baton Rouge exhibits similar yet more moderate patterns of separation as compared to New Orleans, as shown in **Figures 5.6** and **5.7**. Though the majority of both HUD developments and voucher units are located in low and very low opportunity areas, both Baton Rouge maps show clusters of developments and voucher units in high and very high opportunity areas in the southern and eastern portion of the parishes. Such knowledge can inform policymakers looking to place new HUD developments or attempting to incentivize landlords in higher opportunity areas to accept housing vouchers.

The dramatic population shifts in the region that took place after Katrina are well documented<sup>3</sup>, and the impact of such shifts on housing in Baton Rouge is still being felt, as the city is now home to between 50,000 and 100,000 residents from other parts of the region. As the housing market in Baton Rouge continues to settle, intentional efforts must be made to expand housing opportunity to all residents.

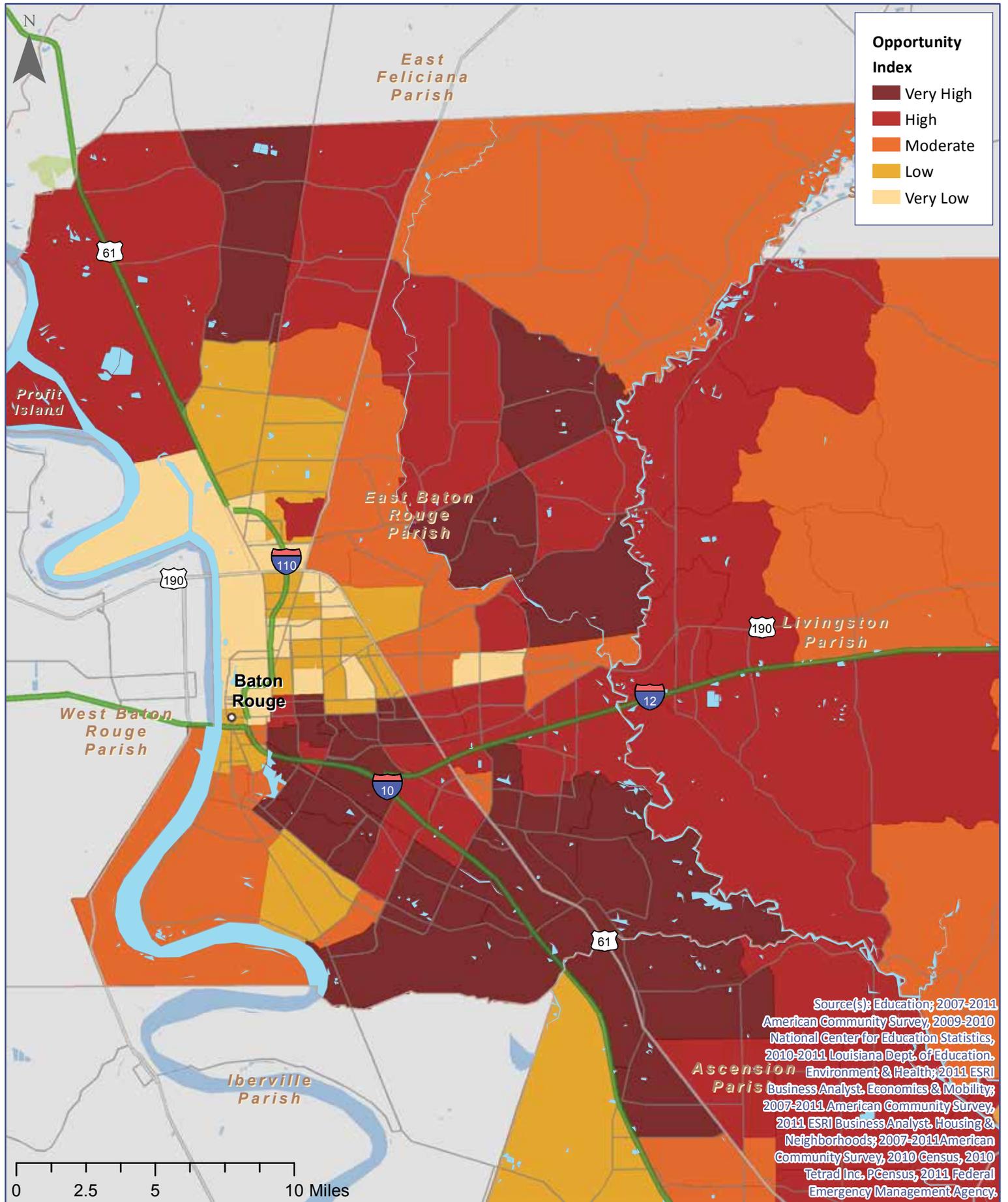
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**AS THE HOUSING MARKET IN BATON ROUGE CONTINUES TO SETTLE, INTENTIONAL EFFORTS MUST BE MADE TO EXPAND HOUSING OPPORTUNITY TO ALL RESIDENTS.**

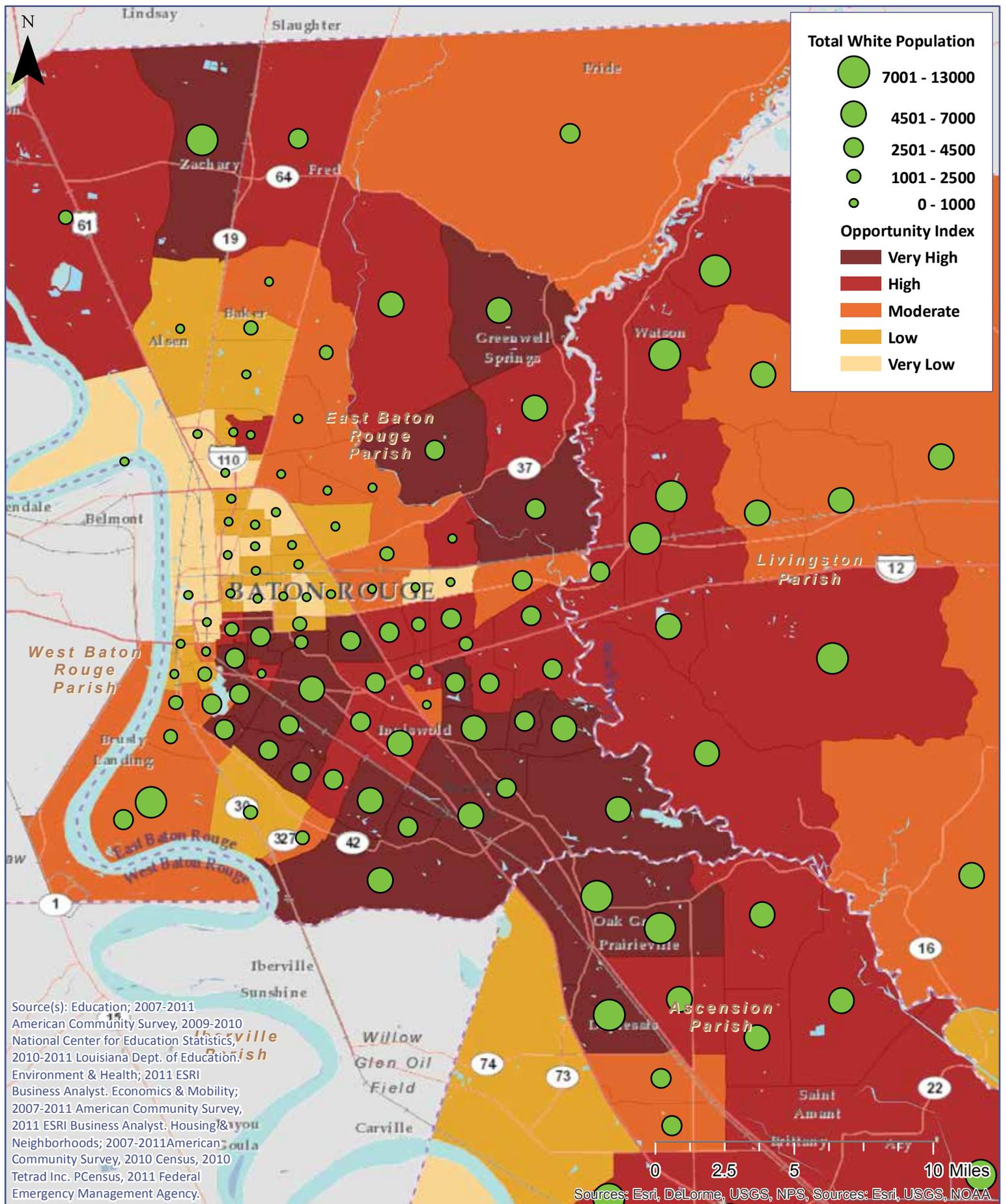
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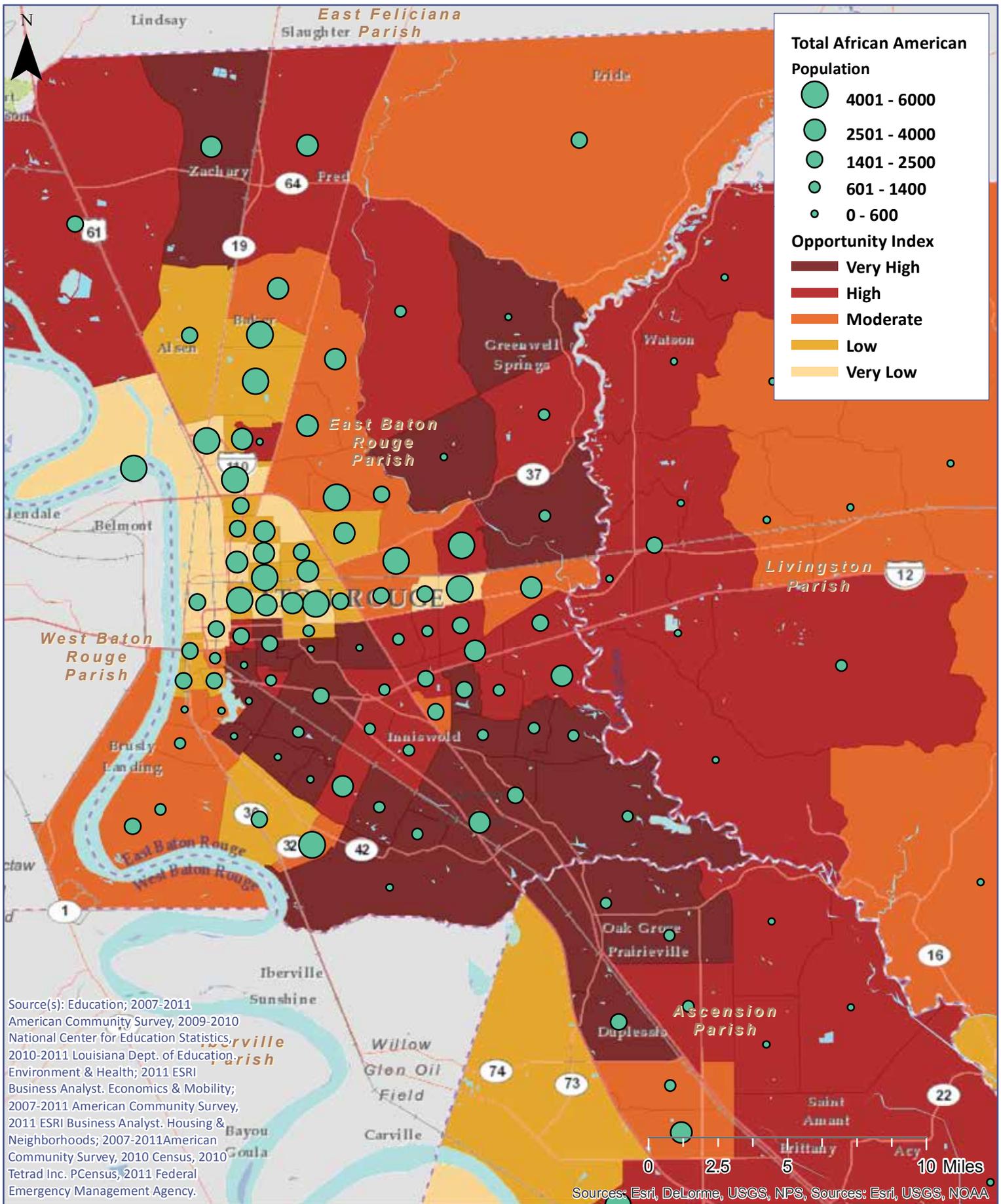
3. Post-Katrina Baton Rouge Struggles With Its Identity. Kevin Johnson, USA Today. February 22, 2007



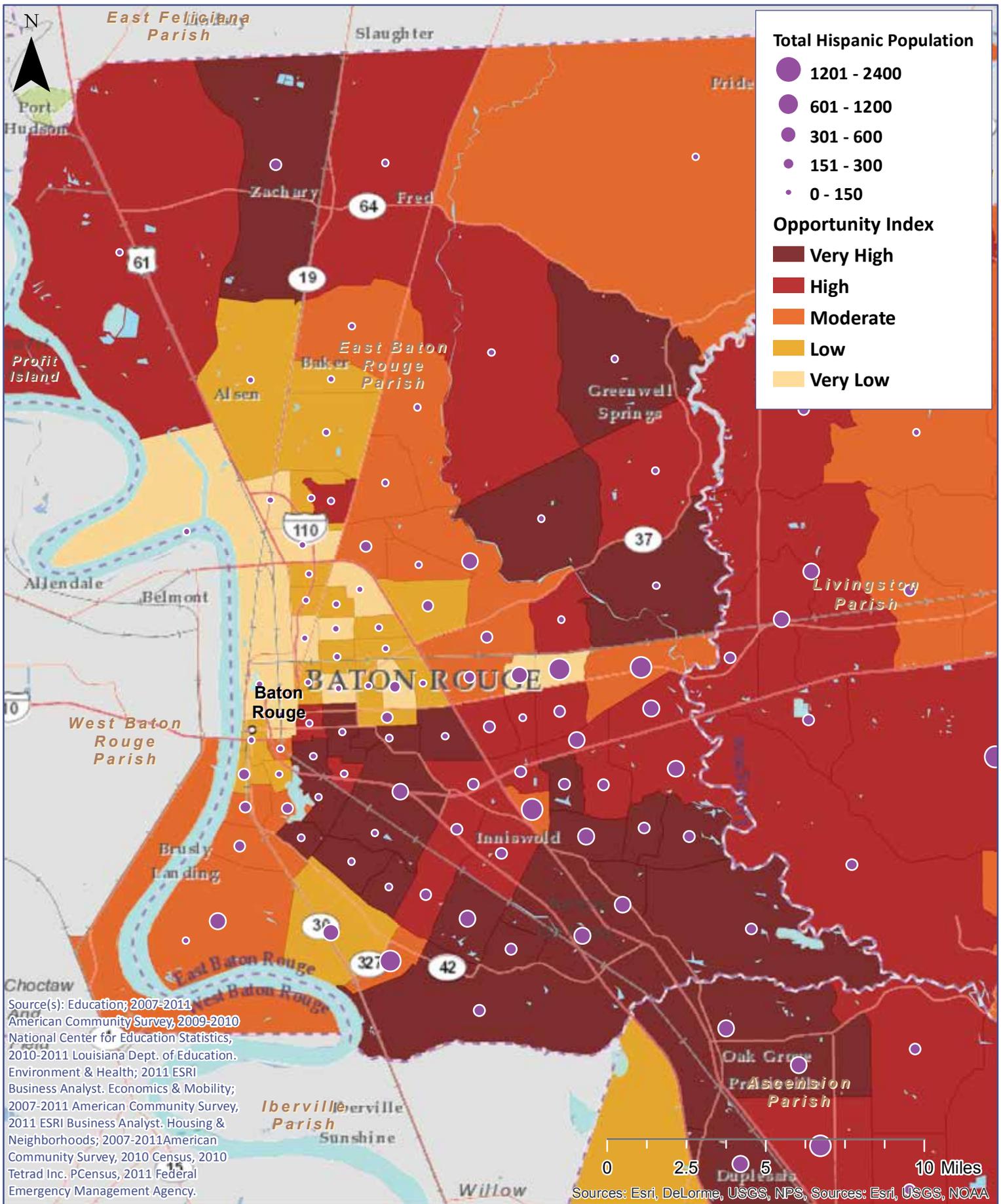
**Figure 5.1 – Comprehensive Opportunity in Baton Rouge** Opportunity relative to the census tracts in Baton Rouge. Data representing education, environment and health, economics and mobility, and housing and neighborhoods was compiled into an index to represent access to opportunity.



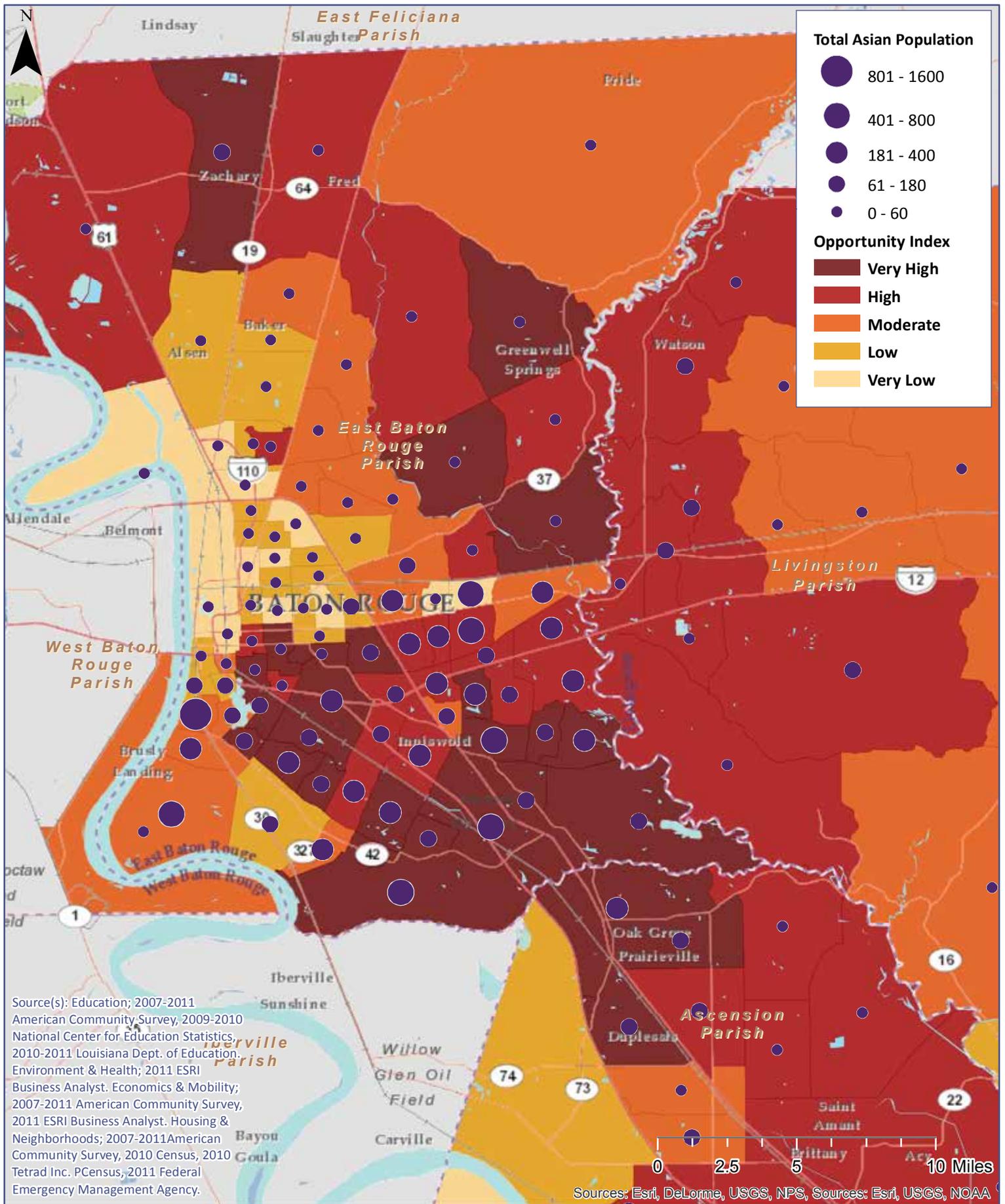
**Figure 5.2 – White Population Overlaid with Opportunity Index** Opportunity relative to the White population within each census tract



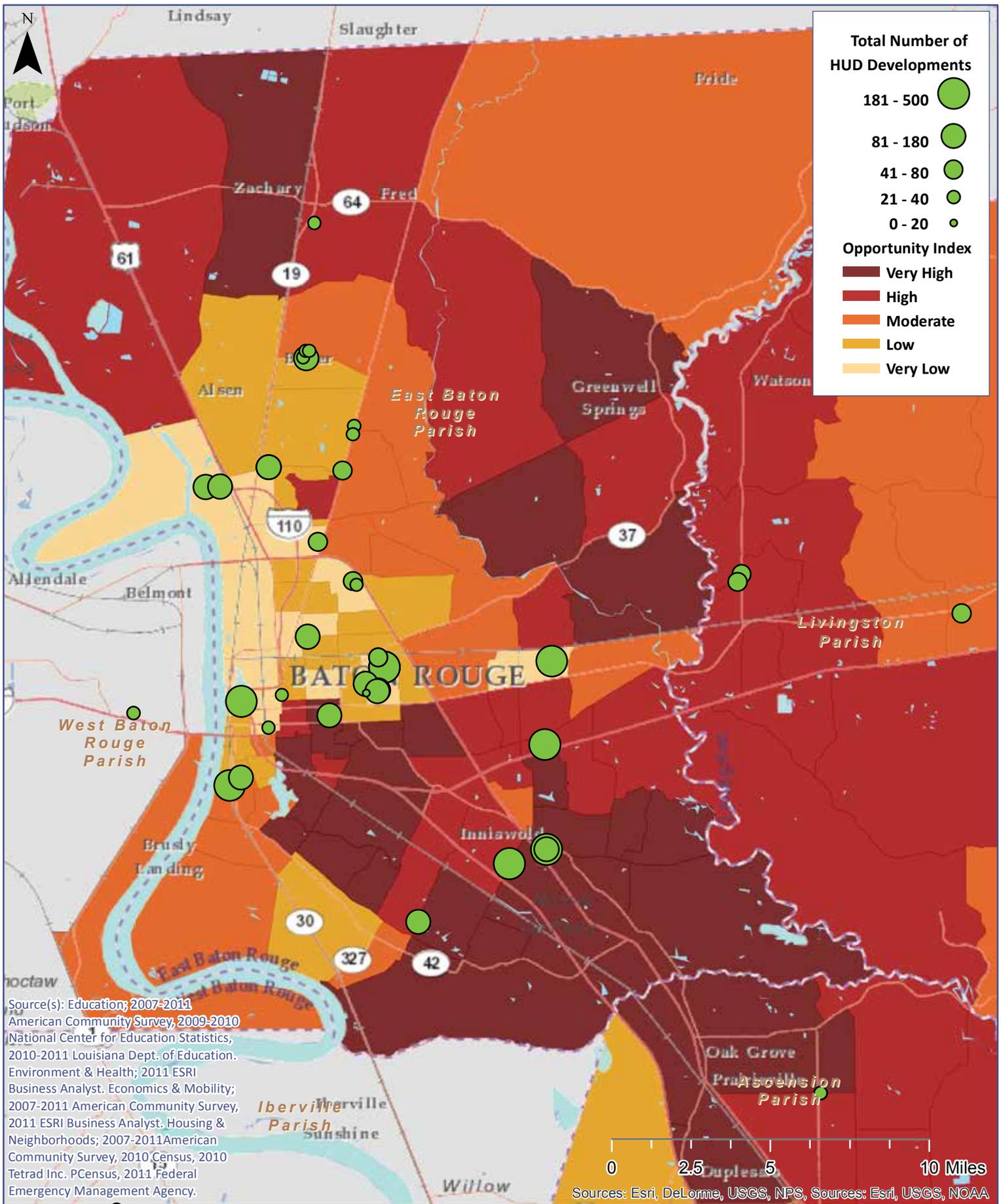
**Figure 5.3 – African American Population Overlaid with Opportunity Index** Opportunity relative to the African American Population within each census tract



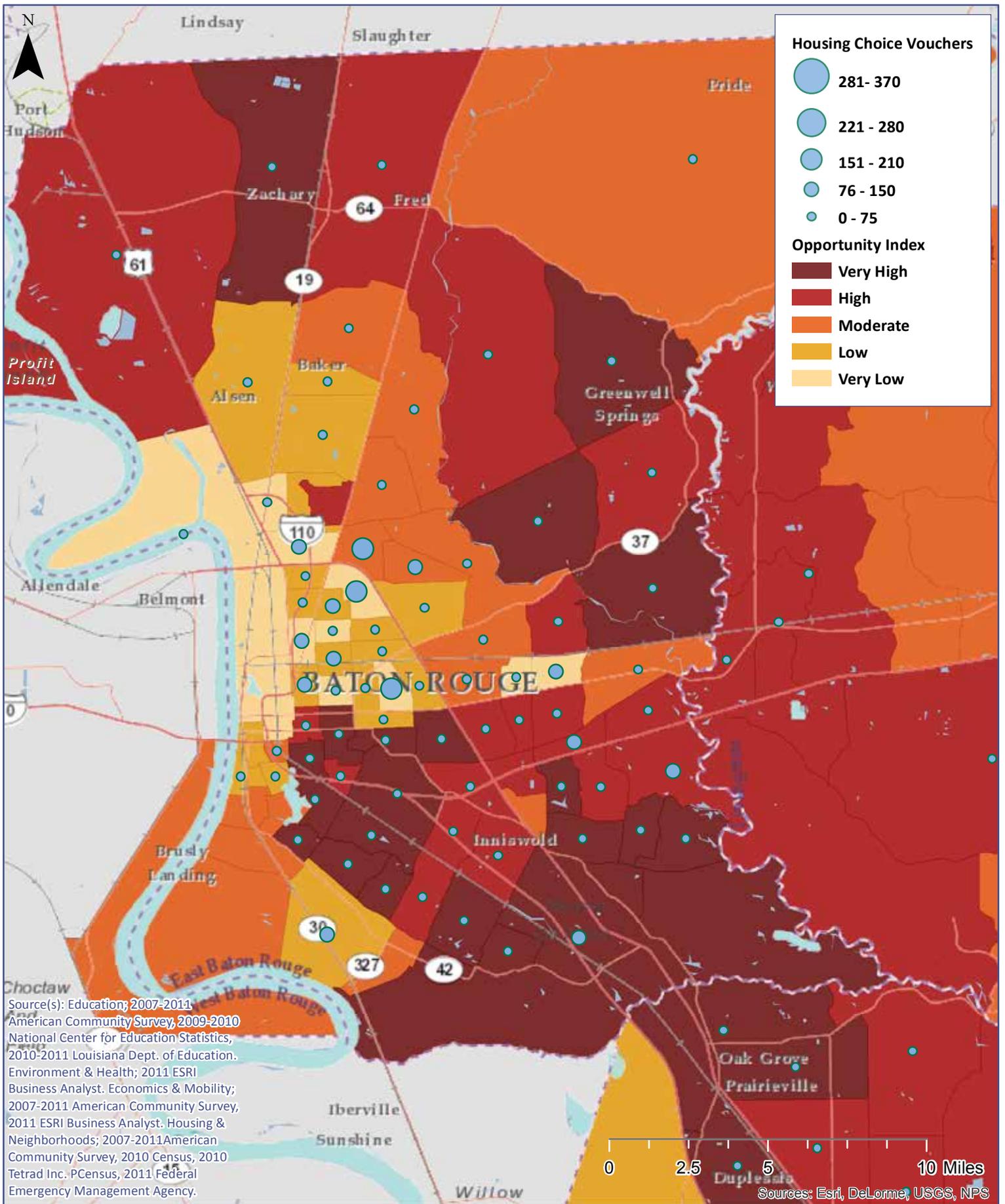
**Figure 5.4 – Hispanic Population Overlaid with Opportunity Index** Opportunity relative to the total number of Hispanics within each census tract



**Figure 5.5 – Asian Population Overlaid with Opportunity Index** Opportunity relative to the Asian Population within each census tract



**Figure 5.6 – HUD Developments in Baton Rouge** Opportunity relative to the total number of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) developments



**Figure 5.7 – Housing Choice Vouchers Overlaid with Opportunity** Housing Choice Vouchers in relation to opportunity

# Regional Revitalization for Equity and Opportunity

This opportunity mapping initiative began in order to convene community development and equity leaders from across the Greater New Orleans Super Region in an effort to produce a framework for increasing opportunity for all in the region. The perspective from which the super region’s challenges are approached today will lay the foundation for investments for years to come.

**A** Communities of Opportunity frame emphasizes the need for GNOF grantees to collaborate in their initiatives and investments in equity, so as to improve opportunity across the super region. Opportunity involves many different domains, including housing, education, health and transportation, all of which need to be intentionally supported.

When a region shares a common vision and channels resources in a strategic and coordinated manner, successes build upon one another, strengthening each individual parish as well as benefitting the region. The maps provided in this report, along with the online map, are intended to assist policy-makers in making those strategic decisions.

Of particular concern for the super region is the need for affordable housing, especially in Orleans Parish. Katrina destroyed or damaged a large portion of the region’s housing stock, and with it, greatly hindered the economy. The combined effects resulted in an overwhelming demand for affordable housing that persists to this day. During our conversations with many key leaders, this tenacious problem was raised over and over again. The strategic and coordinated work happening along the Claiborne Corridor in the Lower Ninth Ward provides an excellent example of how an understanding our linked fates combined with strategically-guided investment can work to expand opportunity. Such projects in targeted neighborhoods and communities across the region can, when coordinated, be transformative and affect all. Other notable

stakeholder interests and concerns included equitable access to transportation, high quality education for all, and issues relating to race, criminal justice, and civic engagement.

Recommendations for moving forward include investing in people, places, and linkages; communicating and acting upon our linked fates; providing a commitment to building trust and accountability across the region; strategic leveraging of investment and resources; expanding equitable civic engagement; and communicating equitable revitalization approach as an investment in regional economic competitiveness.

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## **INVEST IN PEOPLE, PLACE, AND LINKAGES**

Regions must be employing both in-place and mobility options in order to establish region-wide equity and opportunity. Expanding opportunity across the region also requires investing in strategic transportation linkages that break down barriers to opportunity. Especially in the context of the region's Mississippi delta geography, creating connections between housing, employment, education, and health centers is an important part of leveraging investments made in the people and places of greater New Orleans.

This means that breaking down transportation barriers across the Mississippi River should be a priority for policymakers and planners in order to expand access to jobs for all communities. It means that affordable housing policies should expand neighborhood choice for voucher holders. It also means that community benefit agreements should be further explored as a way to ensure that residents of historically disinvested neighborhoods are able to participate in the revitalization of their own communities.

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## **COMMUNICATE AND ACT ON LINKED FATES**

The widespread devastation of Hurricane Katrina and the hard work and commitment that rebuilding is requiring across the region has shown how the fates of communities across the super region are linked. The population shifts that took place continue to reverberate in the housing and job markets of the region, as well in its education and transportation systems. The BP oil spill and the widespread economic and environmental damage it caused reinforced the realization that communities and sectors across the region are symbiotic.

What happens in New Orleans affects Baton Rouge, and vice versa. State policies on things like education and incarceration have neighborhood-sized footprints, and the environmental damage to coastal regions causes economic reverberations throughout the Super Region and the entire Gulf Coast. The region can no longer afford to be provincial about economic growth, environmental sustainability, and access to opportunity for all communities.

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## **BUILD TRUST AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACROSS THE REGION**

Because the region is so interdependent, trust and accountability are essential ingredients of investing in economic, environmental, and social sustainability together. If the oil spill demonstrated anything, it was the importance of transparency and accountability. In order for the region to experience equitable and sustainable growth, trust and reciprocity must be valued in all communities and sectors of the region's economy.

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## **SUCCESSES BUILD UPON ONE ANOTHER, STRENGTHENING EACH INDIVIDUAL PARISH AS WELL AS BENEFITTING THE REGION**

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### **COLLABORATE AND LEVERAGE INVESTMENTS AND RESOURCES**

The scarcity of resources underscores the need for leveraging investments. Multi-dimensional challenges also call for maximizing investment. For example, coordinating policy and resources in education, housing, employment, and transportation not only makes sense from a financial perspective, but also from a pragmatic standpoint, since they are all interconnected. Efforts to link investments in the Bio District with those being made in employment, transportation, and housing is just one example of the many opportunities there are to invest in equitable community development holistically.

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### **EXPAND EQUITY AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION**

Equitable civic engagement and participation is critical to sustainable neighborhood revitalization. Thriving people and communities contribute to meaningful decision-making that impacts their futures. When significant portions of the community are unable to participate in this process, the assets, needs and concerns of many people can go unaddressed.

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### **COMMUNICATE EQUITY AS AN INVESTMENT IN REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS**

It isn't just the history, landscape, and architecture that makes the region so unique and economically competitive, but also the rich culture, and the many employees of the fishing, hospitality, and natural resources industries- in other words- the people. Without careful stewardship of its human capital and environmental resources, the region is vulnerable to instability and decline. Investing in the people and places across all 16 parishes is an investment in the economic sustainability and competitiveness of the entire region.

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# Appendix: Measuring The Geography of Opportunity

The regional opportunity data collection, analysis and mapping is the result of a collaborative effort between the Kirwan Institute, the Greater New Orleans Foundation and contributing stakeholders.

Indicators for each of the four main domains of the index—education, health and environment, transportation and economy, and housing and neighborhoods—were meticulously and collaboratively chosen, based upon findings from social science literature and local knowledge of key opportunity structures. The following metadata section provides the research backing, data source and methodology details for the indicators chosen to define neighborhood opportunity in this study.

Opportunity mapping is a process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting geographically referenced data to identify areas with more or less access to the infrastructure and services that people need to have healthy and productive lives. The Kirwan Institute pioneered the use of opportunity maps to empower communities, to connect residents to opportunity, and to build opportunity in communities where it is lacking.

### CALCULATING THE COMPREHENSIVE OPPORTUNITY INDEX

The Comprehensive Opportunity Index combines into a single measure data on several factors, each of which has been shown in the social sciences literature to influence one's ability to succeed in life. The chief assumption underlying this approach is that multiple neighborhood factors have a combined influence on neighborhood residents. Some characteristics of one's neighborhood have detrimental effects— for example, poverty, high crime, and the lack of healthy food choices— while others provide advantages— for example, access to transit, recreation and good schools. The Opportunity Index reflects the relative contributions of these positive and negative effects, by census tract, across a community, a city or a region.

The calculations behind the Greater New Orleans Opportunity Index are straightforward. Working in collaboration with the Kirwan Institute, stakeholders in the New Orleans/Baton Rouge super region organized by the Greater New Orleans Foundation selected an array of community indicators of well-being. The data for these indicators were collected at, or aggregated to, the Census Tract level.

The mean, standard deviation and z-score were calculated for each indicator across all census tracts in the super region. The use of z-scores makes it possible to compare and combine different sets of indicators — with differing units, magnitudes and ranges — into a single index value. Mathematically, the z-score measures the distance in units of standard deviations of a tract's value for an indicator from the average value for all tracts.

$$z_i = \frac{(x_i - \mu)}{\sigma}$$

Thus, a z-score of +1 represents a data value that is 1 standard deviation greater than the mean for all such data values.

As shown in **Figure A1**, indicators were grouped into four subject-area categories: Education (EDU), Environment & Health (EH), Economic Opportunity and Mobility (ECOM), and Housing and Neighborhoods (HN). The z-scores for the category indicators were averaged to produce four corresponding category sub-indices.

$$z_{EDU} = (EDU1Z + EDU2Z + \dots + EDU5Z)/5$$

$$z_{EH} = (EH1Z + EH2Z + \dots + EH5Z)/5$$

$$z_{ECOM} = (ECOM1Z + ECOM2Z + \dots + ECOM6Z)/6$$

$$z_{HN} = (HN1Z + HN2Z + \dots + HN6Z)/6$$

For purposes of averaging, higher z-scores were defined to correspond with positive life outcomes. For indicators for which a high indicator value reflects a negative influence (for example, high poverty rates), the indicator's z-score was multiplied by -1 before averaging with other indicator z-scores.

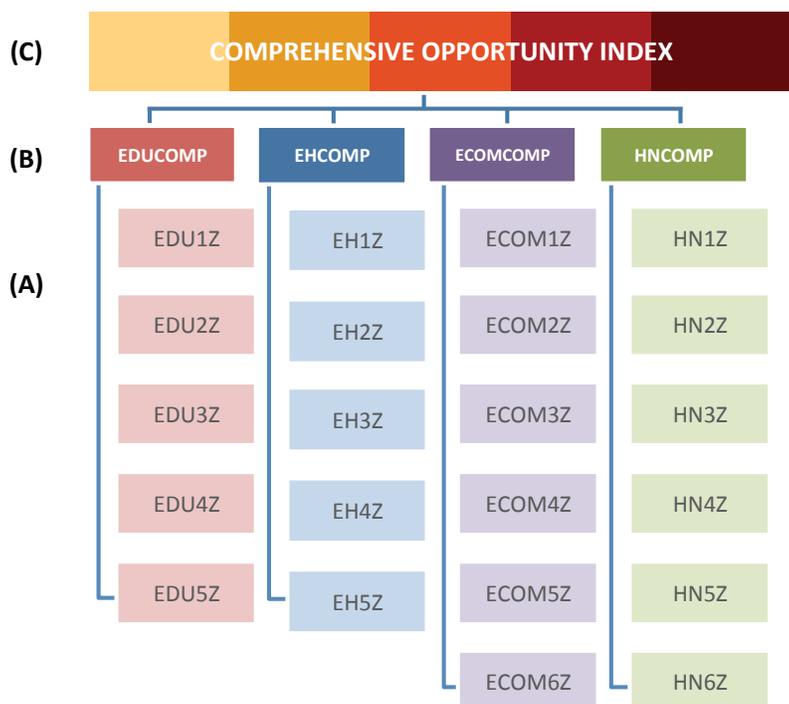
No weighting was applied in averaging the indicators; all indicators were treated as equal in importance.<sup>1</sup>

The category sub-indices are useful for drilling down into the index data, to ascertain whether one set of indicators or another is driving the Opportunity Index for a particular tract or neighborhood.

Finally, the sub-index z-scores were themselves averaged to produce the Comprehensive Opportunity Index.

$$\text{Comprehensive Opportunity Index} = (z_{EDU} + z_{EH} + z_{ECOM} + z_{HN})/4$$

Census tracts were then sorted into quintiles on the basis of their Comprehensive Opportunity Index values and assigned to the five Opportunity Levels: Very Low, Low, Moderate, High and Very High. Thus, Census tracts identified as “Very Low” opportunity comprise the lowest scoring 20% of tracts, while those identified as “Very High” comprise the highest scoring 20% of tracts.



**Figure A1: Calculating the Comprehensive Opportunity Index Score**  
(Abbreviations are defined in the indicator listing below)

(A) Twenty-two indicators in four subject areas were collected at the Census Tract level for the Greater New Orleans super region. A z-score was calculated for the distribution of each indicator across the region.

(B) The component z-scores were averaged by subject area to produce the four subject-specific sub-index scores (Education, Environment & Health, Economic Opportunity and Mobility, and Housing and Neighborhoods).

(C) The four sub-index averages were averaged to produce the Comprehensive Opportunity Index Score. The Comprehensive Index Scores were divided into quintiles to create the five opportunity categories: Very Low, Low, Moderate, High and Very High.

1. The literature provides little or no guidance on the relative influences of one quality of life indicator compared to another, and so no explicit weighting is employed in calculating the opportunity index or sub-indices. However, a de facto weighting of the individual indicators results if different numbers of indicators are included in the sub-indices that are averaged (non-weighted) to produce the overall index. For example, each of the six indicators in the ECOM and HN groups has less influence individually on the overall index than each of the five indicators in the EDU and EH groups.

Together, these four categories make up the comprehensive opportunity map for the Greater New Orleans Region. The maps for each category are constructed by calculating the equally-weighted average of all indicators in the category. The comprehensive map is therefore constructed by calculating the equally-weighted average of all four categories.



Category	Indicator	Description	Sign
<b>EDUCATION (EDU)</b>	EDU1	Educational attainment for population 25 years and over	Percent of population 25 and older who have received an Associate's degree or higher (+)
	EDU2	School poverty for neighborhood schools	The percentage of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches (-)
	EDU3	Performance scores for neighborhood schools	The school proficiency rate on mathematics and reading exam (+)
	EDU4	Teachers with Masters Degree or Higher	Average number of teacher experience (years teaching) for all teachers per school/percentage of teachers who have obtained a certification (+)
	EDU5	Education quality - Core classes taught by qualified teachers	percentage of teachers who have obtained a certification (+)
<b>ENVIRONMENT &amp; HEALTH (EH)</b>	EH1	Proximity to parks/Open spaces	Distance to the nearest park or open space (-)
	EH2	Proximity to Toxic Release Sites	Census tracts are ranked based on their distance from these facilities and the amount of toxic waste released (-)
	EH3	Proximity to Hospitals	Distance to nearest hospital (-)
	EH4	Health Care Access	Doctor to population ratio and proximity to health care providers (+)
	EH5	CRS Premium Discount Rates	(-)
<b>ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND MOBILITY (ECOM)</b>	ECOM1	Unemployment Rates	Percent of the civilian labor force unemployed (-)
	ECOM2	Population on Public Assistance	Percent of the population on public assistance (-)
	ECOM3	Proximity to employment	Number of jobs within 5 miles of census tract centroids (+)
	ECOM4	Employment competition	Ratio of jobs to labor force within 5 miles (+)
	ECOM5	Mean Commute Time	Average time to commute for the residents of the census tract (-)
	ECOM6	Automobile Access	Percentage with no car at home (-)
<b>HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS (HN)</b>	HN1	Property Values	Median home value (+)
	HN2	Housing Vacancy Rates	Percent of all housing units which are vacant (-)
	HN3	Housing Cost Burden	The percentage of all households that spend 30% or more of household income on housing costs (-)
	HN4	Crime Rates	An estimated index based on all personal and property crimes relative to total population (-)
	HN5	Poverty Rates	Percent of people below poverty for whom the poverty level has been determined by census tracts (-)
	HN6	Home Ownership	Percent of owner occupied homes (+)

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## 1. Education (EDU)

### 1.1. (EDU1) Educational attainment for population 25 years and over

Description: Adults age 25 and older with an Associate's degree or higher

Data Source: American Community Survey

Data Link/Location:

Geography: Census Tract

Date: 2007-2011

Methodology: Join the ACS data to census tract boundary based on tract ID

#### HOW IT RELATES TO OPPORTUNITY:

- Workers with higher levels of education earn more income than workers with less education. The earnings gap between education levels continues to increase. (J. C. Day & E. C. Newburger, *The big payoff: Educational attainment and synthetic estimates of work-life earnings* (2002) <http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/p23-210.pdf>)
- Living in neighborhoods with a higher percentage of adults with college degrees gives students higher expectations for their education and work prospects. (Orfield, G., & Lee, C. (2004, January). "Brown at 50: King's dream or Plessy's nightmare?" Cambridge, MA: The Civil Rights Project. Harvard University. January 2004.))
- Social networks are one of the primary channels through which job seekers find employment. Neighborhoods with adults that have college degrees offer social networks that can lead to better jobs. (Karen Chapple, "Overcoming mismatch: Beyond dispersal, mobility, and development strategies," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 72.3 (2006))
- "The presence of advantaged neighbors, in contrast, reinforces 'the perception that education is meaningful, that steady employment is a viable alternative to welfare, and that family stability is the norm, not the exception.'" (Crowder, K., & South, S. J. (2011). Spatial and temporal dimensions of neighborhood effects on high school graduation. *Social Science Research*, 40(1), 87-106)

### 1.2. (EDU2) School poverty for neighborhood schools

Description: The percentage of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches

Data Source: State Department of Education, Education Agency

Data Link/Location:

Geography: Point, School locations

Date: 2009-2010

Methodology: Each tract was assigned the student poverty ratio of the three elementary schools nearest the tract centroid (using "Near" tool in ArcMap). This process also considered school district boundaries, so as to assign data to tracts only according to the district in which the tract resides (Delete schools from different school zones and sorting them depending on the distance between tract centroid and school, and then pick the nearest three schools).

#### HOW IT RELATES TO OPPORTUNITY:

- Students enrolled in schools with higher socioeconomic status are more likely to attend college. (Orfield, G., & Lee, C. (2004, January). "Brown at 50: King's dream or Plessy's nightmare?" Cambridge, MA: The Civil Rights Project. Harvard University. January 2004.))
- Segregated schools that have a high percentage of students in poverty have "lower average test scores, fewer students in advanced placement courses, more limited curricula, less qualified teachers, less access to serious academic counseling, fewer connections with colleges and employers, more deteriorated buildings, higher levels of teen pregnancy, and higher dropout rates". (David R. Williams and Chiquita Collins, "Racial residential segregation: A fundamental cause of racial disparities in

- health,” 116 Public Health Reports (Sept/Oct 2001))
- Those who live in poverty as children are at a higher risk of being violent and for experiencing health problems as adults. (Helen Epstein, “Enough to make you sick?,” *The New York Times Magazine* (10/12/03)); (Youth and violence: A report of the Surgeon General (January 2001))
  - “The wealthiest 10% of school districts in the United States spend nearly 10 times more than the poorest 10%, and spending ratios of three-to-one across high and low-spending districts are common within states” (L. Darling-Hammond, “Recruiting teachers for the 21st century: The foundation for educational equity.” *Journal of Negro Education* 68: 254, 279 (2000))
  - “Segregated, urban schools are not as effective in helping to raise even high-achieving African American students out of poverty because a diploma from an inner-city school will never get them as far in the college admissions process or job search as one from a wealthy suburban school.” (A. S. Wells, “The “consequences” of school desegregation: The mismatch between the research and the rationale,” *Hastings Const’l L.Q.* 28: 771, 773 (2001))

### **1.3. (EDU3) Performance scores for neighborhood schools**

Description: The school proficiency rate on mathematics and reading exam

Data Source: Louisiana Department of Education

Data Link/Location:

Geography: Point, School locations

Date: 2010-2011

Methodology: Each tract was assigned the school proficiency rate of the three elementary schools nearest the tract centroid (using “Near” tool in ArcMap). This process also considered school district boundaries, so as to assign data to tracts only according to the district in which the tract resides (Delete schools from different school zones and sorting them depending on the distance between tract centroid and school, and then pick the nearest three schools).

#### **HOW IT RELATES TO OPPORTUNITY:**

- “Existing studies have confirmed that children’s proficiency in early mathematics tends to determine their attitudes toward mathematics and later mathematics achievement”. (Lee, J., Fox, J., & Brown, A. L. (2011). Content analysis of children’s mathematics proficiency. *Education and Urban Society*, 43(5), 627-341. doi: 10.1177/0013124510380906)
- Higher levels of achievement in mathematics in high school have been linked to higher wages later in life, even when accounting for level of education. (Rose, H., & Betts, J. R. (2004). The effect of high school courses on earnings. *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, 96(2), 497-513. doi: 10.1162/003465304323031076)
- Reading proficiency helps to determine students’ success in college. Students that require remedial work in college have a greater than 50% chance of dropping out. (Hock, M. F., & Deshler, D. D. (2003). “No Child” leaves behind teen reading proficiency. *Educational Digest*, 69(4), 27.)
- “Mathematics achievement is often characterized as a gatekeeper for college admission, a critical filter restricting choice of majors, and a significant predictor of overall college success.” (Nye, B., Hedges, L. V., & Konstantopoulos, S. (2001). The long-term effects of small classes in early grades: Lasting benefits in mathematics achievement at grade 9. *Journal of Experimental Education*, 69(3), 245-257)

### **1.4. (EDU4 and EDU5) Teachers with Master’s Degree or Higher and Education quality - Core classes taught by qualified teachers**

Description: Average number of teacher experience (years teaching) for all teachers per school/percentage of teachers who have obtained a certification

Data Source: Louisiana Department of Education

Data Link/Location:

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Geography: Point, School locations

Date: 2010-2011

Methodology: Each tract was assigned the percentage of high quality teachers of the three elementary schools nearest the tract centroid (using “Near” tool in ArcMap). This process also considered school district boundaries, so as to assign data to tracts only according to the district in which the tract resides (Delete schools from different school zones and sorting them depending on the distance between tract centroid and school, and then pick the nearest three schools).

**HOW IT RELATES TO OPPORTUNITY:**

- Teachers become more skilled at teaching with experience. On average students will learn more from an experienced teacher. (Muranane, R. J. & Philips, B. R. (1981). Learning by doing, vintage, and selection: Three pieces of the puzzle relating teaching experience and teaching performance. *Economics of Education Review*, 1, 453-465. )
- Teachers with higher qualifications improve student test scores in math and reading skills. (Darling-Hammond, L. (2000). Teacher quality and student achievement. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 8 (1))
- Poor schools are more likely to have less qualified and less experienced teachers. (L. Darling-Hammond, “Recruiting teachers for the 21st Century: The foundation for educational equity.” *Journal of Negro Education* 68: 254, 279 (2000))
- “Many studies have found that teachers in schools serving poor and minority children in large cities are more likely to be inexperienced, less likely to be certified, and less likely to have graduated from competitive colleges than are suburban teachers. They also score lower on standardized exams and are more likely to be teaching subjects for which they are not certified.” (Jacob, B. A. (2007). The challenges of staffing urban schools with effective teachers. *The Future of Children*, 17(1), 129-153)

## 2. Environment & Health (EH)

### 2.1. (EH1) Proximity to parks/Open spaces

Description: The distance to the nearest park or open space

Data Source: ESRI Business Analyst

Data Link/Location: [www.esri.com](http://www.esri.com)

Geography: Point, Park and Open Space locations

Date: 2011 or more recent local source(s)

Methodology: Each tract was given a value based on the distance between the tract’s centroid and the nearest park’s centroid (or open space’s centroid).

**HOW IT RELATES TO OPPORTUNITY:**

- “Insufficient physical activity contributes to obesity and the risk of complications from chronic conditions such as type 2 diabetes”. Children that have access to safe parks engage in more physical activity than those that do not. (Babey, S. H., Theresa, A. H., Hongjian, Y., & Brown, E. R. (2008). Physical activity among adolescents: When do parks matter?. *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*, 34(4), 345-348.)
- Research indicates that having access to parks and open spaces increases the amount of physical activity that residents participate in. (Abercrombie, L. C., Sallis, J. F., Conway, T. L., Frank, L. D., Saelens, B. E., & Chapman, J. E. (2008). Income and racial disparities in access to public parks and private recreation facilities. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 34(1), 9-15.)

### 2.2. (EH2) Proximity to Toxic Release Sites

Description: Census tracts are ranked based on their distance from these facilities and the amount of toxic waste released

Data Source: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Toxic Release Inventory

Data Link/Location: <http://www.epa.gov/tri/tridata/>

Geography: Point-based, Facility locations

Date: 2011

Methodology: The indicator is based on the proportion of each site's toxic release within a certain mile of area. Block group (or census tract) received a value if they were within a certain mile at least one toxic release site.

**HOW IT RELATES TO OPPORTUNITY:**

- Workers close to toxic waste release sites experience more health problems and lower productivity than average. (Ho, C. S., & Hite, D. (2009). Toxic chemical releases, health effects, and productivity losses in the United States. *Journal of Community Health*, 34(6), 539-46.)

**2.3. (EH3 and EH4) Proximity to Hospitals & Health Care Access**

Description:

Data Source: ESRI Business Analyst

Data Link/Location:

Geography:

Date: 2011 or better local source(s)

Methodology: Doctors to population ratio, proximity to health care providers, proximity to hospitals

**2.4. (EH5) CRS Premium Discount Rates**

Description:

Data Source: FEMA

Data Link/Location: <http://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program-community-rating-system>

Geography:

Date: 2011

Methodology:

**3. Economic Opportunity And Mobility (ECOM)**

**3.1. (ECOM1) Unemployment Rates**

Description: The percentage of the civilian labor force who are unemployed

Data Source: American Community Survey

Data Link/Location: [http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/aff\\_transition.html](http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/aff_transition.html)

Geography: Census Tract (2010)

Date: 2006-2010

Methodology: Join the census SF3 data to the census tract boundary

**HOW IT RELATES TO OPPORTUNITY:**

- Unemployment can affect both mental and physical health. The effects tend to be greater among individuals with low levels of education. The effects of job loss are greater in regions that are experiencing high unemployment. (Turner, J. B. (1995). Economic context and the health effects of unemployment. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 36(3), 213-229.)
- The chance that families will have to utilize public assistance increases when they experience job loss in an area of high unemployment as opposed to when experiencing job loss in an area of low unemployment. (Yeung, W. J., & Hofferth, S. L. (1998). Family adaptations to income and job loss in the U.S. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues*, 19(3))

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### 3.2. (ECOM2) Population on Public Assistance

Description: Percentage of people on public assistance

Data Source: American Community Survey

Data Link/Location: [http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/aff\\_transition.html](http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/aff_transition.html)

Geography: Census Tract

Date: 2006-2010

Methodology: Join the census SF3 data to the census tract boundary based on the tract ID

#### HOW IT RELATES TO OPPORTUNITY:

- Many job seekers get information about employment opportunities from their neighbors and other social contacts. If many of those contacts are on public assistance they will receive information on how to get public assistance as opposed to information about job openings that they would receive from employed neighbors. (George Galster and Sean P. Killen, "The geography of metropolitan opportunity: A reconnaissance and conceptual framework" Housing Policy Debate)
- In an experiment in Yonkers, New York families that moved from areas with high concentrations of poverty to areas with low concentrations of poverty experienced higher employment rates than those that stayed in the areas of highly concentrated poverty. (Fauth, R. C., Leventhal, T., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (2004). Short-term effects of moving from public housing in poor to middle-class neighborhoods on low-income, minority adults' outcomes. *Social Science & Medicine*, 59(11), 2271-2284.)
- "Socioeconomically disadvantaged adults fail to provide successful role models for neighborhood children." (Crowder, K., & South, S. J. (2011). Spatial and temporal dimensions of neighborhood effects on high school graduation. *Social Science Research*, 40(1), 87-106.

### 3.3. (ECOM3) Proximity to employment (job opportunities within 5 miles)

Description: Number of jobs within 5 miles of census tract centroids

Data Source: American Community Survey; Community Business Pattern; ESRI Business Analyst;

Data Link/Location: [www.esri.com](http://www.esri.com), <http://www.census.gov/econ/cbp/index.html>

Geography: Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ), Zip Code (CBP)

Date: ACS: 2006-2010, CBP: 2007, ESRI: 2011

Methodology: Each tract was assigned a value based on the traffic analysis zones whose centroids are within the tract's boundaries

#### HOW IT RELATES TO OPPORTUNITY:

- When considering whether an area has high employment opportunities it is important to factor in the surrounding areas. Residents living on the border of a census tract will have access to jobs in the neighboring tract. (J.F. Kain, "The Spatial Mismatch Hypothesis: Three Decades Later," 3.2 Housing Pol'y Deb. 3.2 (1992))
- The radius used to consider for employment opportunities must be somewhat limited. As commuting times increase, job seekers will require higher wages. (K. Ihlanfeldt & D. Sjoquist, "The spatial mismatch hypothesis: A review of recent studies and their implications for welfare reform," Housing Policy Debate 9 (1998))
- When job opportunities are located close to where a job seeker lives there are more opportunities to find jobs that may not be advertised outside of the local community. (Karen Chapple, "Overcoming mismatch: Beyond dispersal, mobility, and development strategies," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 72.3 (2006))
- Many job seekers may not have access to transportation and must rely on the local job market. (Richard Price and Edwin S. Mills, "Race and residence in earnings determination," *J. Urb. Econ.* 17 (1985))

### 3.4. (ECOM4) Employment competition (ratio of jobs to labor force within 5 miles)

Description: Percentage of number of jobs over total labor force within 5 miles of each

census tract's centroid

Data Source: American Community Survey; Community Business Pattern; ESRI Business Analyst;

Data Link/Location: [http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/aff\\_transition.html](http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/aff_transition.html)

Geography: Census Tract

Date: ACS: 2006-2010, CBP: 2007, ESRI: 2011

Methodology: Join the census SF3 data to census tract based on tract ID

**HOW IT RELATES TO OPPORTUNITY:**

- Too many unemployed residents and not enough job openings increases competition and therefore lowers wages for unskilled workers. This disproportionately affects workers in the inner-city where manufacturing jobs have been declining and moving to the suburbs. (Harry J. Holtzer, "The spatial mismatch hypothesis: What has the evidence shown?" *Urb. Studies* 28 (1991))
- "Uneven spatial distributions are particularly striking for low-skill jobs and less educated people. White suburban areas contain 69.4 percent of the lowest-skill jobs but only 40.6 percent of the least educated people, while the black central city holds 10.2 percent of these jobs and 15.6 percent of the least-educated people." (Michael Stoll, Harry Holtzer, and Keith Ihlanfeldt, *WITHIN CITIES AND SUBURBS: RACIAL RESIDENTIAL CONCENTRATION AND THE SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS SUBMETROPOLITAN AREAS* (1999), available on-line at: <http://ideas.repec.org/PaperSeries.html>.)
- African American workers are less likely to be able to make up for the jobs-to-population mismatch by increasing their commute times. (Harry Holzer, Keith Ihlanfeldt, and David Sjoquist, "Work, search, and travel among white and black youth," *Journal Of Urban Economics* 35 (1994))

**3.5. (ECOM5) Mean Commute Time**

Description: Average time to commute for the residents of the census tract

Data Source: American Community Survey

Data Link/Location: [http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/aff\\_transition.html](http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/aff_transition.html)

Geography: Census Tract

Date: 2006-2010

Methodology: Join the ACS data to the census tract boundary

**HOW IT RELATES TO OPPORTUNITY:**

- Residents in inner-city neighborhoods spend more time than average commuting. (Harry Holzer, Keith Ihlanfeldt, and David Sjoquist, "Work, search, and travel among white and black youth," *Journal Of Urban Economics* 35 (1994))
- This is partly due to jobs leaving the inner-city, and partly due to low automobile ownership rates of inner-city residents. As commutes become longer residents require more compensation for the added commuting time. This means fewer jobs to choose from for those with a slower means of transportation (such as an insufficient bus system). (Karen Chapple, "Overcoming mismatch: Beyond dispersal, mobility, and development strategies," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 72.3 (2006))

**3.6. (ECOM6) Automobile Access**

Description: The percentage with no car at home

Data Source: American Community Survey

Data Link/Location: [http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/aff\\_transition.html](http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/aff_transition.html)

Geography: Census Tract

Date: 2006-2010

Methodology: Join the ACS data to the census tract boundary

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#### HOW IT RELATES TO OPPORTUNITY:

- Without an automobile many families are unable to travel to areas with good employment prospects. (Richard Price and Edwin S. Mills, "Race and residence in earnings determination," J. Urb. Econ. 17 (1985))
- Even if residents have access to public transportation, it may not take them to neighborhoods of high opportunity. The effects of this are longer and more frequent periods of unemployment for those without cars in low opportunity areas. (Harry Holzer, Keith Ihlanfeldt, and David Sjoquist, "Work, search, and travel among white and black youth," Journal Of Urban Economics 35 (1994))

#### 4. Housing And Neighborhoods (HN)

##### 4.1. (HN1) Property Values

Description: Median home values

Data Source: American Community Survey

Data Link/Location: [http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/aff\\_transition.html](http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/aff_transition.html)

Geography: Census Tract

Date: 2007-2011

Methodology: Join the census SF3 data to census tract boundary

#### HOW IT RELATES TO OPPORTUNITY:

- Home values are an indicator of neighborhood quality. A resident's income alone will not necessarily determine whether they live in a home with a high property value or an area of high opportunity. (Woldoff, A., & Ovadia, S. (2008). Not getting their money's worth African-American disadvantages in converting income, wealth, and education into residential quality. Urban Affairs Review, 45(1), 66-91.)

##### 4.2. (HN2) Housing Vacancy Rates

Description: The percent of all housing units which are vacant

Data Source: Census

Data Link/Location: [http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/aff\\_transition.html](http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/aff_transition.html)

Geography: Census Tract 2010

Date: 2010

Methodology: Join census SF3 data to census tract boundary

#### HOW IT RELATES TO OPPORTUNITY:

- Research suggests that vacant homes have a greater negative effect on the value of surrounding homes than do homes in extended foreclosure. (Kobie, T. F., & Sugie, L. (2011). The spatial-temporal impact of residential foreclosures on single-family residential property values. Urban Affairs Review, 47(1), 3-30.)
- A study in Austin, Texas found that blocks with vacant homes have higher crime rates than blocks without them. (Spelman, W. (1993). Abandoned buildings: Magnets for crime?. Journal of Criminal Justice, 21(5), 481-495.)
- "Both theory and empirical evidence suggest that when several owners fail to maintain their properties, others nearby follow suit because their neighbors' inaction undermines property values. Rundown and abandoned properties can have a contagious effect that accelerates neighborhood decline." (Millennial Housing Commission. MEETING OUR NATION'S HOUSING CHALLENGES (2002). Page 11)

##### 4.3. (HN3) Housing Cost Burden

Description: The percentage of all households that spend 30% or more of household income on housing costs

Data Source: American Community Survey (ACS)

Data Link/Location: [http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/aff\\_transition.html](http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/aff_transition.html)

Geography: Census Tract

Date: 2007-2011

Methodology: Join the ACS data to census tract boundary

**HOW IT RELATES TO OPPORTUNITY:**

- Low income housing does not guarantee that residents will be able to afford their rent. Even though Programs like the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) help to create reduced rents, many residents are still paying more than 30% of their income toward housing. (Williamson, A. R. (2011). Can they afford the rent? Resident cost burden in low income housing tax credit developments. *Urban Affairs Review*, 47(6), 775-799. doi: 10.1177/1078087411417078)
- In many communities even full-time workers can be priced out of the housing market. Families are forced to choose between a high housing cost burden and commuting distance. (Tim Sullivan, Putting the force in workforce housing, 70 *PLANNING MAGAZINE* 26 (2004))

**4.4. (HN4) Crime Rates**

Description: An estimated index based on all personal and property crimes relative to total population

Data Source: Tetrad, Inc. Pcenus Dbx

Data Link/Location: <http://www.tetrad.com/software/pcensus/>

Geography: Census Tract (2010)

Date: 2010 or better local source(s)

Methodology: Data was translated to its 2010 equivalency through the parent-child relationship of the tract names, and the areal proportion of the 2010 children to the 2000 parent.

**HOW IT RELATES TO OPPORTUNITY:**

- “Violence has been associated with the low socioeconomic status (SES) and residential instability of neighborhoods”. (Youth and violence: A report of the Surgeon General (January 2001))
- “Overall, higher levels of perceived neighborhood safety were associated with lower levels of physical inactivity” (Neighborhood safety and the prevalence of physical inactivity -- selected states, 1996. (1999, February 26). *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 48(7), 143. Retrieved from <http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CA54068062&v=2.1&u=colu44332&it=r&p=AONE&sw=w>)
- Greenberg found that controlling crime and blight were the highest priorities on residents’ list of concerns (in neighborhoods considered “low quality”). (M. R. Greenberg, Improving neighborhood quality: A hierarchy of needs 10 (3) *Housing Policy Debate* 601-624 (1999))

**4.5. (HN5) Poverty Rates**

Description: Percentage of people below poverty for whom the poverty level has been determined by census tracts

Data Source: American Community Survey;

Data Link/Location: [http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/aff\\_transition.html](http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/aff_transition.html)

Geography: Census Tract

Date: 2007-2011

Methodology: None

**HOW IT RELATES TO OPPORTUNITY:**

- “Neighborhood affluence is a more powerful predictor of health status than poverty, above and beyond individual demographic background, socioeconomic status, health behaviors, and insurance coverage.” (Browning, Christopher R., and Kathleen A. Cagney, Moving beyond poverty: Neighborhood structure, social processes and health, 44 *JOURNAL OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL BEHAVIOR* 552-571 (December 2003))

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- According to a study of the effects on the Moving to Opportunity program, residents that moved from areas of highly concentrated poverty to areas with low concentrations of poverty experienced improved psychological and physical health. (Orr, Feins, Jacob, and Beecroft (Abt Associates Inc.) and Sanbonmatsu, Katz, Liebman and Kling (NBER), U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Policy Development and Research, Executive Summary of MOVING TO OPPORTUNITY INTERIM IMPACTS EVALUATION (September 2003))
  - Neighborhood poverty rates affect high school graduation rates and future earnings. (Galster, G., Marcotte, D. E., Mandell, M., Wolman, H., & Augustine, N. (2007). The influence of neighborhood poverty during childhood on fertility, education, and earnings outcomes. *Housing Studies*, 22(5), 723-751.)
  - High school graduates are less likely to get a job after school if they are from a neighborhood with high poverty. (M. A. Turner and D. Acevedo-Garcia, Why housing mobility? The research evidence today, 14 POVERTY & RACE RESEARCH ACTION COUNCIL NEWSLETTER (January/February 2005).

#### 4.6. (HN6) Home Ownership

Description: Percent of owner occupied homes

Data Source: Census

Data Link/Location: [http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/aff\\_transition.html](http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/aff_transition.html)

Geography: Census Tract

Date: 2010

Methodology: Join the census SF3data to census tract boundary.

#### HOW IT RELATES TO OPPORTUNITY:

- Home ownership is the primary source of wealth for most Americans. (David R. Williams and Chiquita Collins, "Racial residential segregation: A fundamental cause of racial disparities in health," 116 *Public Health Reports* (Sept/Oct 2001))
- High homeownership rates result in greater neighborhood stability. This can lead to other benefits such as increased college graduation rates of children whose parents own their home. (George Galster, Dave E. Marcotte, Marvin B. Mandell, Hal Wolman & Nancy Augustine (2007): The impact of parental homeownership on children's outcomes during early adulthood, *Housing Policy Debate*, 18:4, 785-827)

# Supplemental Opportunity Analysis

## EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

The index for education is comprised of data representing educational attainment, student participation in the National School Lunch Program, student proficiency in math and reading, the percent of teachers with Master’s degrees or higher, and the percent of students taught by qualified teachers. Educational opportunity across the region is mixed, with areas exhibiting the lowest opportunity concentrated in coastal and urban parishes. However, areas of very high opportunity are also found in urban parishes, illustrating the disparities in educational opportunity within parishes and across the region.

See Figure A.2: Educational Opportunity, next page

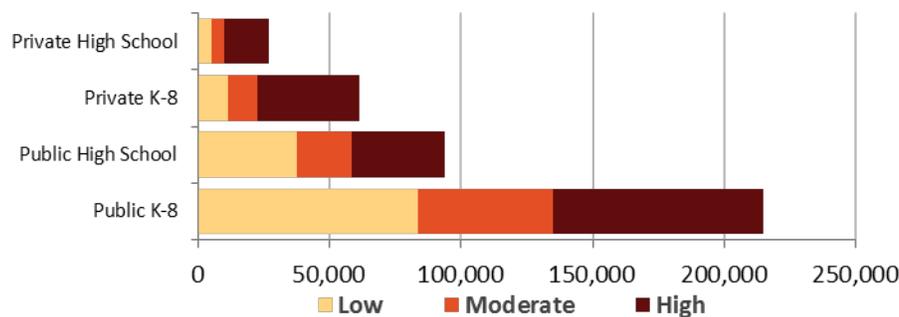
Due to the abundance of private schools serving the region, schools are not as easily tied to place as other neighborhood factors, yet educational achievement still mirrors other neighborhood conditions. Therefore, a deeper more nuanced anal-

ysis of schools needs to recognize the role of private schools in the spatial mismatch of educational opportunity across the region. The educational opportunity index here captures only educational opportunity in the public sector; it does not take into account the plethora of private schools available across the region. Because the data that was used to make the educational opportunity map is largely unavailable for the private schools in the region, additional analysis was performed to better capture both the public and private educational opportunity in the region. **Figure A.3** below divides school age children by school type and opportunity.

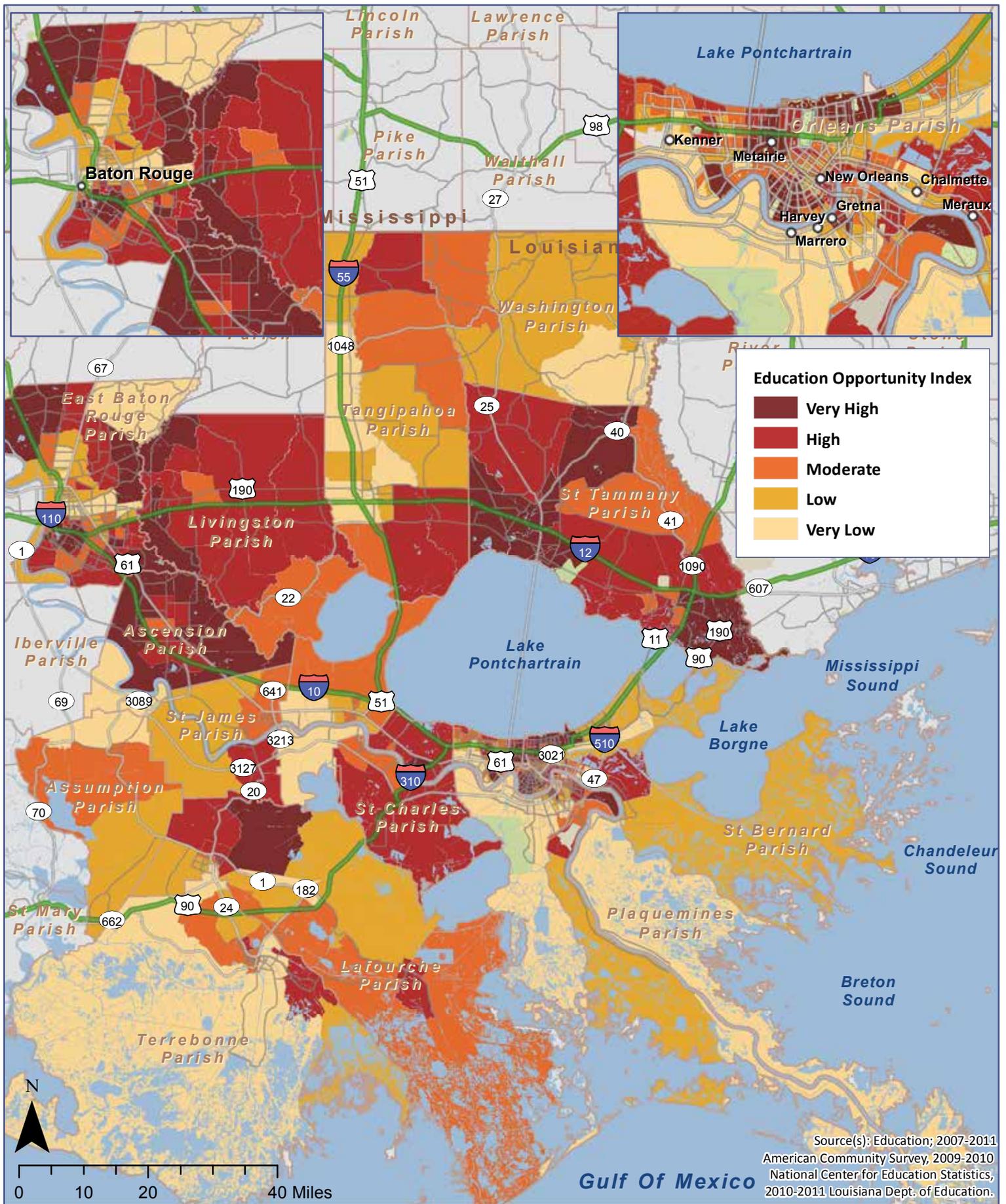
**Figure A.4** shows enrollment by opportunity. This chart shows that students living in higher opportunity areas are more likely to attend private schools while those living in lower opportunity areas are more likely to attend public schools. As families of means living in lower opportunity areas move their children out of the public system, the result is a spatial mismatch in educational opportunity across the region.

	Public	Public K-8	Public High School	Private	Private K-8	Private High School
Very Low	75,891	38,526	17,309	13,059	4,684	2,014
Low	93,186	44,978	20,461	16,985	6,588	3,029
Moderate	114,200	51,587	20,395	25,786	11,190	4,683
High	102,026	51,572	20,593	34,893	15,956	6,500
Very High	70,757	28,353	14,734	52,701	22,704	10,463
<b>Total</b>	<b>456,060</b>	<b>215,016</b>	<b>93,492</b>	<b>143,424</b>	<b>61,122</b>	<b>26,689</b>

Fig A.3 School age children by school type and opportunity



Figures A.4 Enrollment by opportunity



**Figure A.2 Educational Opportunity** Educational opportunity relative to the census tracts within the 16 parish New Orleans super region. Data representing adult educational attainment, student poverty, student performance, and teacher qualification was compiled into an index to represent access to educational opportunity.

**Public and private school enrollment** differs by parish, as shown below in **Figure A.5**. Parishes with the highest levels of private school enrollment are clustered around Lake Pontchartrain and include two urban parishes, Orleans and Jefferson, as well as St. John the Baptist Parish on the west end of the lake. School choice is an important characteristic of the Region’s education landscape, which has also experienced significant and uneven change since 2005.

**Figure A.6** shows how private and public school enrollment of children of color has changed for each parish over the past decade.

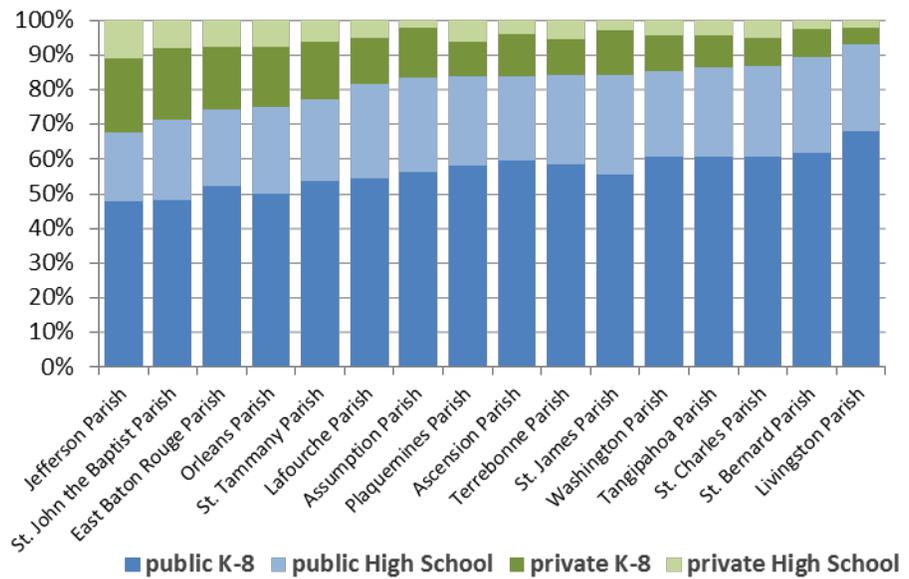


Figure A.5 Public and private school enrollment by parish

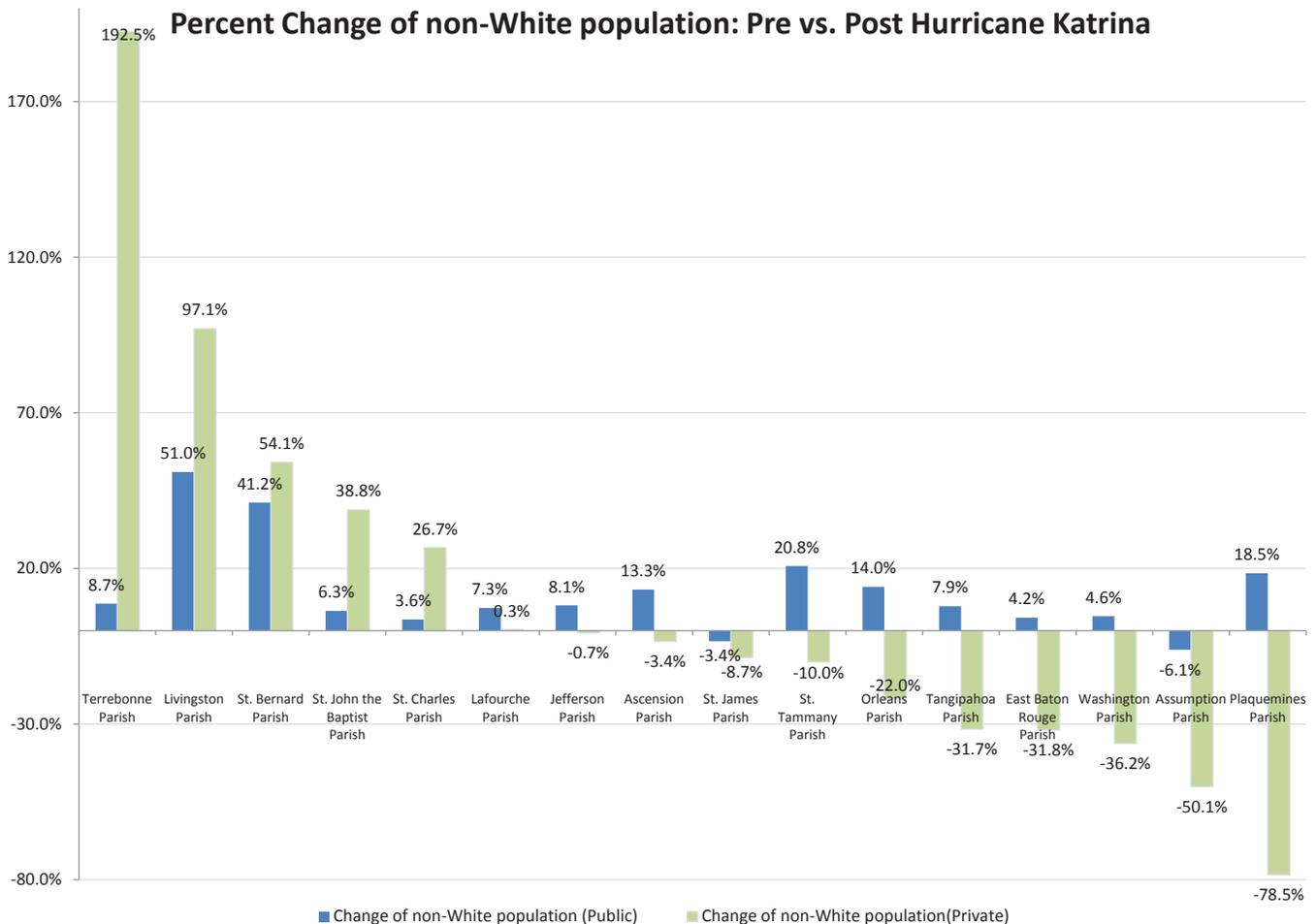
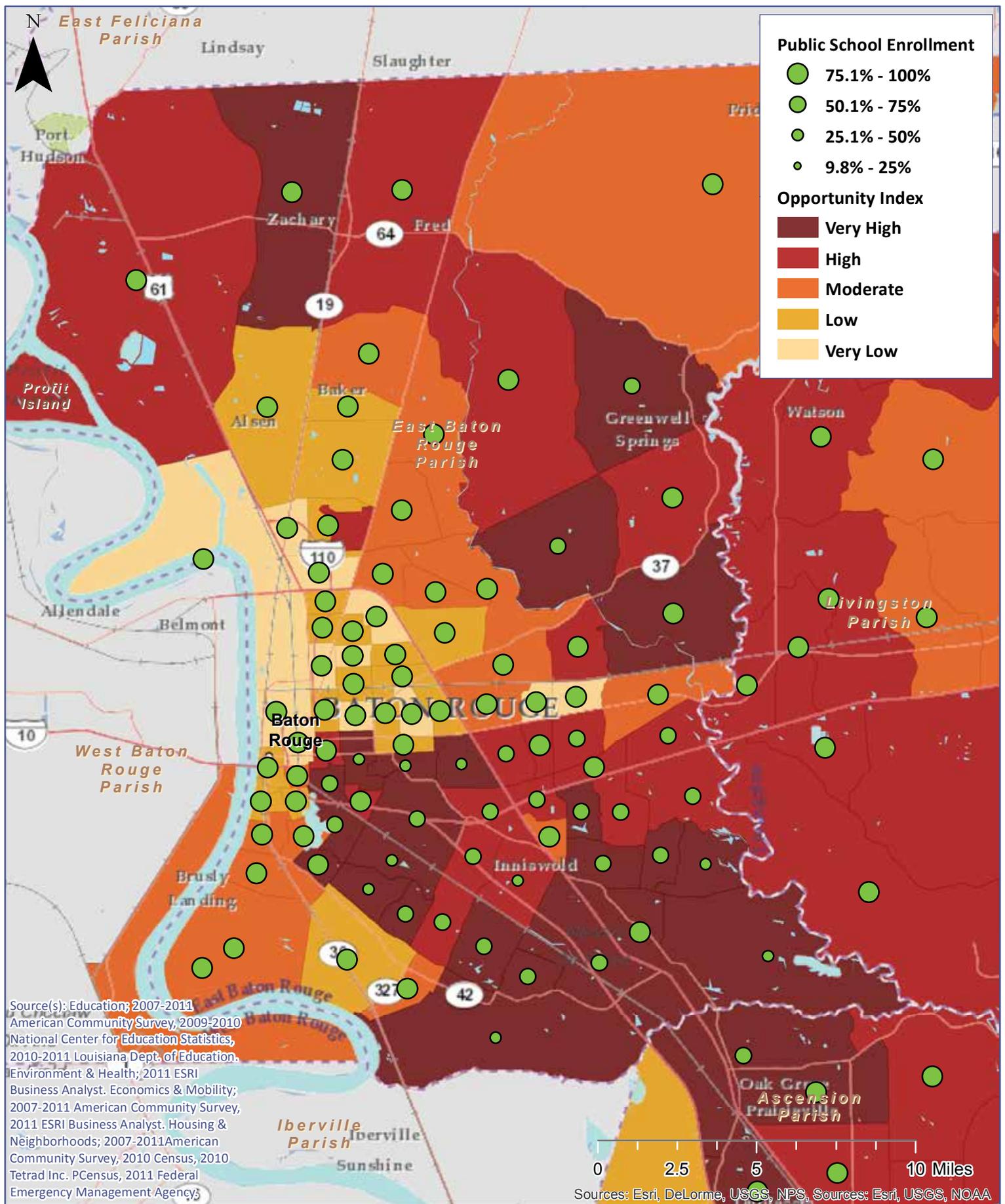


Figure A.6 Percent change of non-White population pre- vs post-Katrina

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Orleans and East Baton Rouge Parishes are the most populated and urban parishes in the super region and therefore warrant additional analysis. **Figures A.7** and **A.8** show comprehensive opportunity of New Orleans and Baton Rouge and school enrollment by type. These maps highlight the enrollment disparity between students living in low opportunity areas and those living in high opportunity areas, with private school enrollment much more prevalent in high and very high opportunity areas.

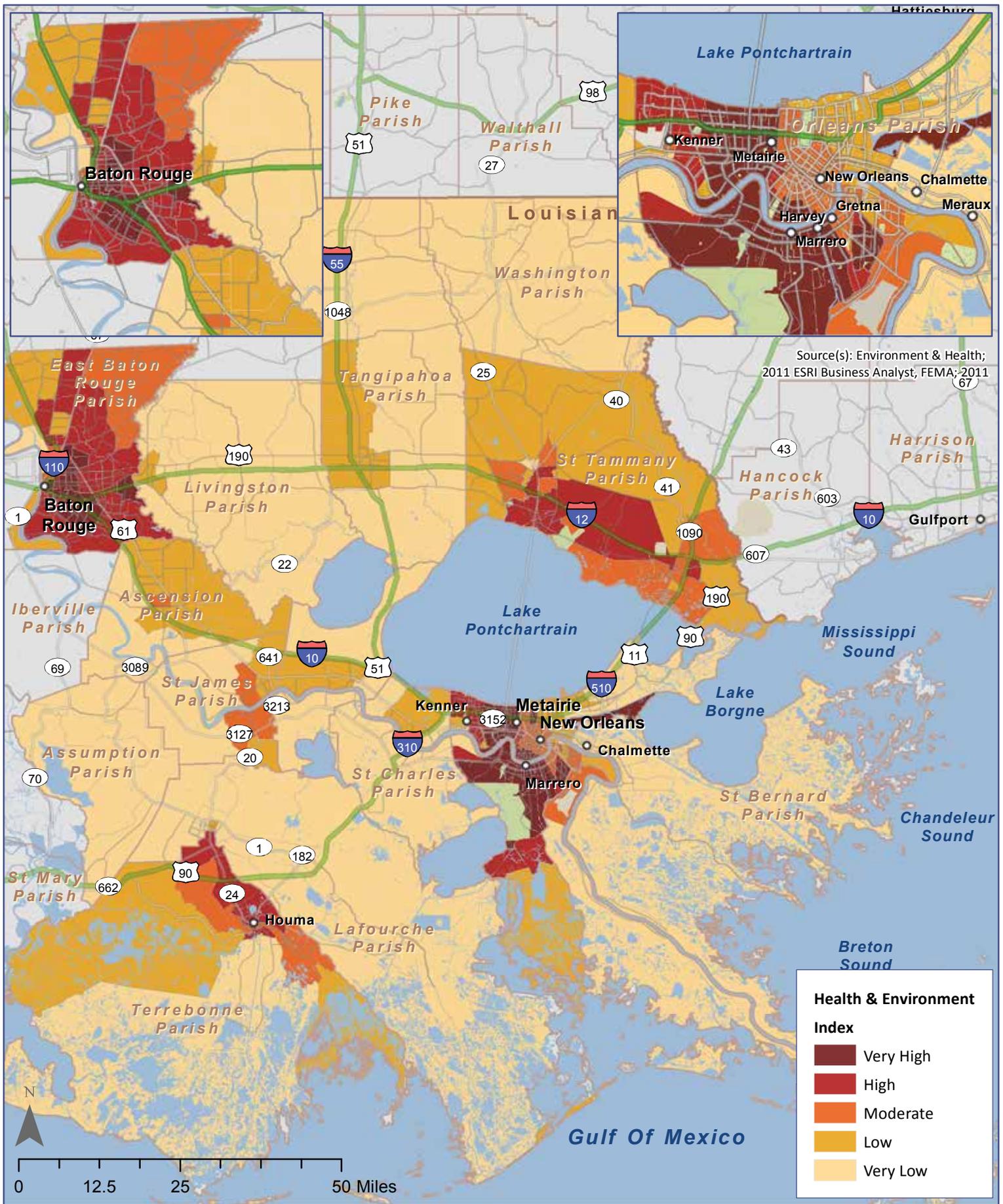




**Figure A.8 Comprehensive Opportunity in Baton Rouge by School Enrollment Type** Opportunity relative to the total number of students enrolled in public schools within each census tract

### **HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL OPPORTUNITY**

The environment and health opportunity map is comprised of data representing proximity to parks and open spaces, toxic release sites, hospitals, and primary care providers. This health and environmental index by itself illustrates the stark differences across the region, as the vast majority of parishes within the super region experience low and very low environment and health opportunity, while the urban places such as Baton Rouge and New Orleans experience high environment and health opportunity. Providing services such as parks, hospitals and primary care centers can be challenging in areas with low population density; stakeholders can aim for feasible, creative solutions, such as mobile health clinics, to improve health and environmental opportunity throughout the rural portions of the region.



**Figure A.9 Health and Environment Opportunity Index** This index is based upon data related to proximity to parks and open spaces, proximity to toxic waste release sites, proximity to hospitals, health care access and community rating system discount rates

### OPPORTUNITY AND TRANSIT

Transportation is one of many important features of place and opportunity. In a city with such a unique geography as New Orleans, support for multiple modes of transportation is critical to equitable movement of people and economic development. Public transit in particular remains a key component of the regional transportation system, especially for marginalized communities with few alternatives. In response to the growing concern for the transit network across New Orleans, the Kirwan Institute gave supplemental consideration to the relationship between opportunity and transit. **Figures A.10a** and **A.10b** reflect the strong spatial relationship between transit and access to opportunity, and show the particular importance for low-income areas that may otherwise be cut off from the City's areas of opportunity. Together these maps demonstrate the notion that investment in a dynamic and fully functional transportation system is an investment in the social equity and economy of the greater New Orleans region.

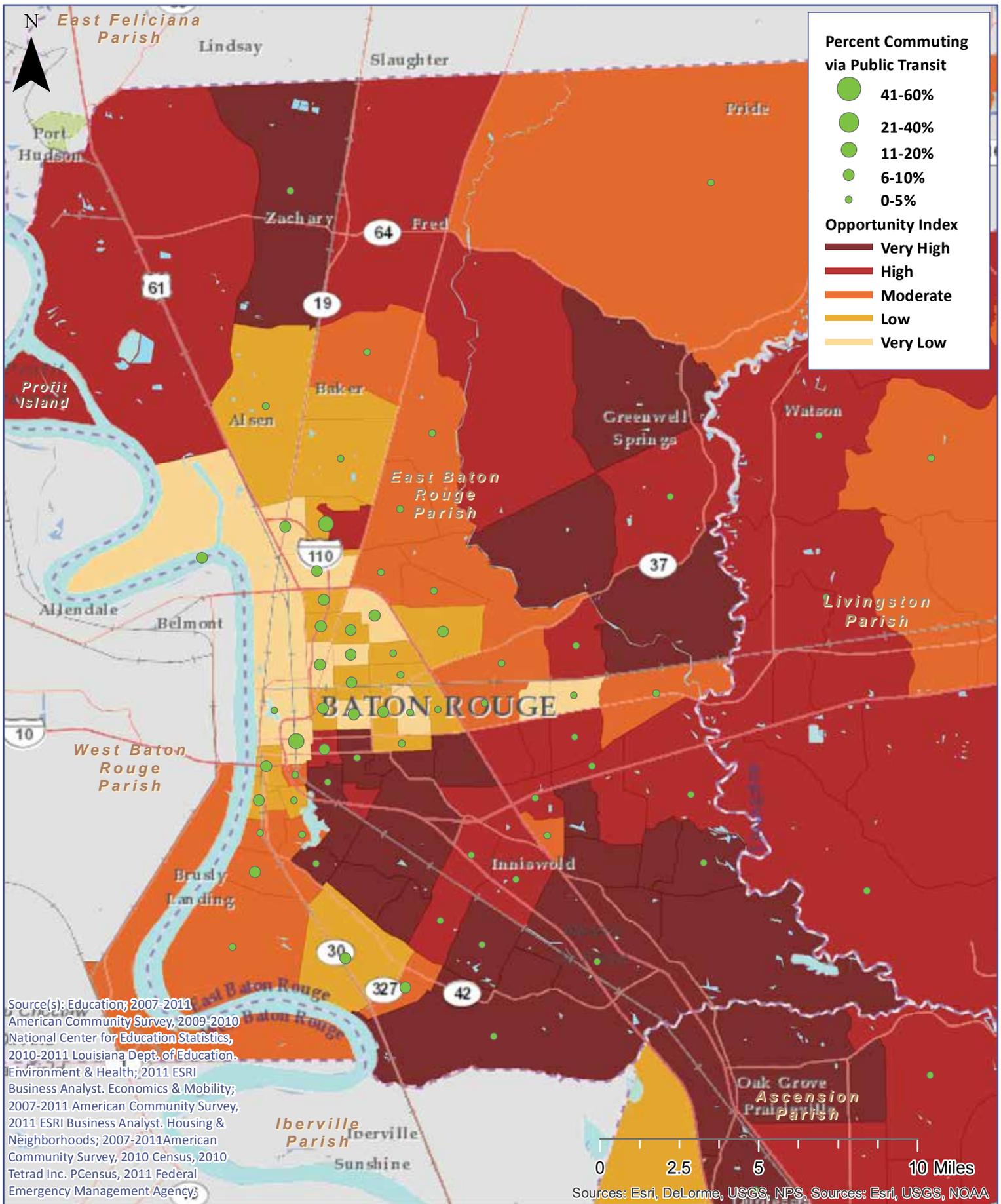
**Figure A.11** depicts transit dependency overlaid by poverty data in Baton Rouge. Transit use is lower in Baton Rouge as compared to New Orleans. However, the correlation between transit access and poverty are painfully stark in this map.



**Figure A10a Poverty, Transit Dependency, and Transit Service in New Orleans** Poverty rate overlaid by transit route service and the number of worker commutes by public transportation. The purpose of the map is to identify the transit dependent parts of the city that have limited transit service



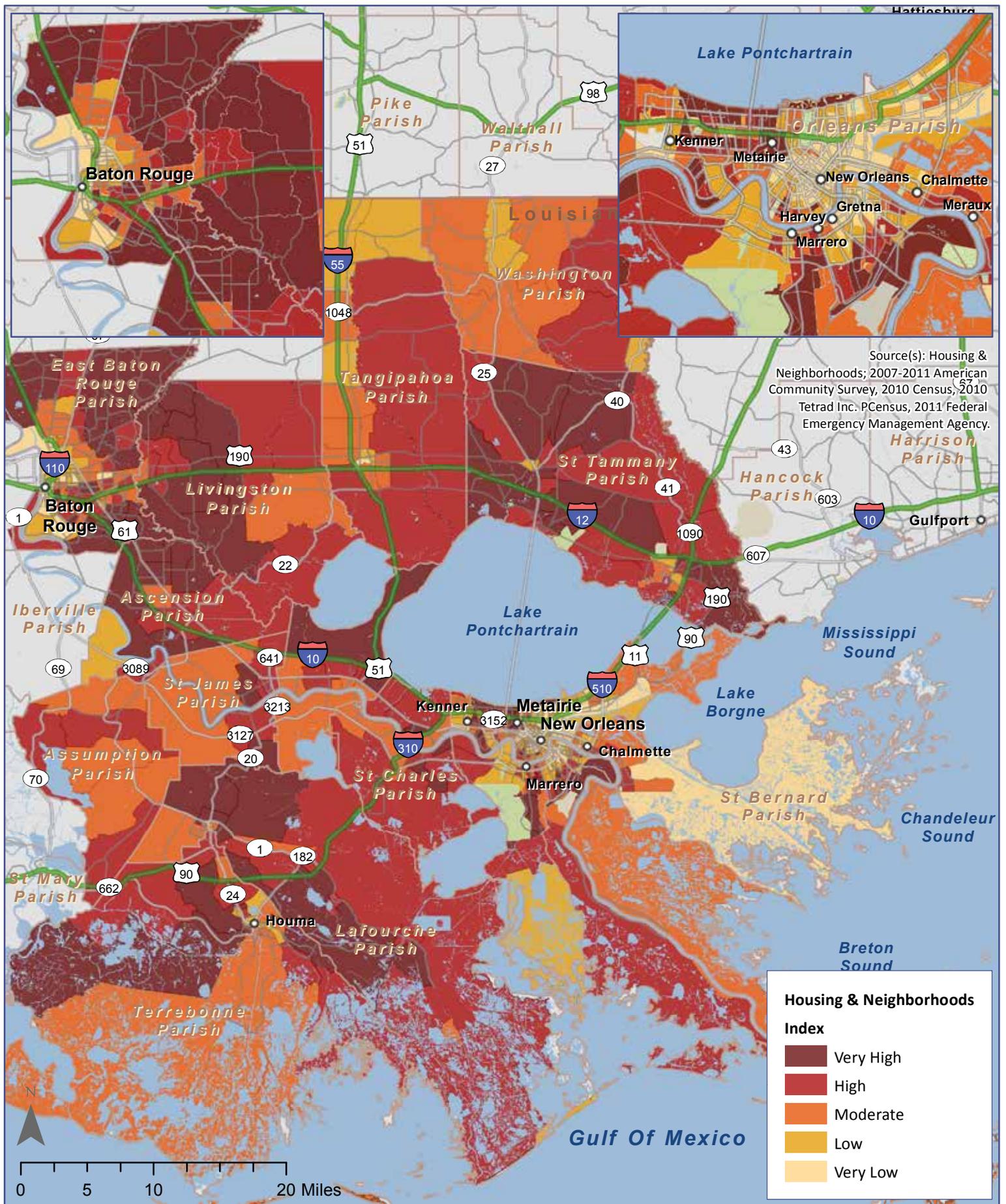
**Figure A.10b Percentage of Households Dependent Upon Public Transit**  
 Poverty rate overlaid by transit route service and the number of worker-commutes by public transportation. The purpose of the map is to identify the transit dependent parts of the city that have limited transit service.



**Figure A.11 Percentage of Households Dependent Upon Public Transit in Baton Rouge Opportunity in relation to the percentage of households dependent upon public transit**

### **HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD OPPORTUNITY**

The housing and neighborhood opportunity map is comprised of data representing property values, vacancy rates, housing cost burden, crime, poverty, homeownership, and flood insurance discounts. The region largely experiences moderate, high, and very high housing and neighborhood opportunity, with areas of low and very low opportunity concentrated in urban centers and in St. Bernard Parish, in particular. Often, rural and urban places experience low opportunity for different reasons, therefore increasing housing and neighborhood opportunity in Orleans and Baton Rouge may look very different from increasing housing and neighborhood opportunity in St. Bernard Parish.



**Figure A.12 Housing and Neighborhood Opportunity Index** This index is based upon data related to property values, housing and vacancy rates, housing cost burden, crime rates, poverty rates and home ownership



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