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# LGBTQ+ Affirming Locations of Greenville County

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# LGBTQ+ Affirming Locations of Greenville County

CJ Lane, Introduction to Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Fall 2016

## Introduction

This project explores the LGBTQ+ Affirming Locations of Greenville county. An LGBTQ+ affirming location is best summarized by this response, "It's a comfortable and welcoming place where it doesn't only feel like LGBT+ people are just being tolerated". This response was taken from a survey I sent out to LGBTQ+ Groups in the Greenville area and shows why it is important to identify locations in the Greenville county area. With People coming out and looking for support it is important for to know where they will not be discriminated against. The goal is to make a viewable map that can show people where in Greenville county they can go for restaurants, pharmacies, or hotels that will affirm LGBTQ+ folk. These policies have been shown to have economic benefits for both consumers and business sides.(Burns, 2011)

The importance of identifying LGBTQ+ locations has a great impact for LGBTQ+ folk. Businesses that have affirming policy have a higher retention rate of employees, higher job satisfaction, and less discrimination for both LGBTQ+ folk and non-LGBTQ+ folk. (Badgett, 2013) This means creating policy to fundamentally to ensure everyone is treated the same on the basis of gender-expression and sexual orientation creates a better work environment for everyone. This idea of knowing where affirming locations are in a particular area is important for people that move into the area for college, work, and other circumstances. (Robison 2012) There is an importance in the LGBTQ+'ness of an area for those people to feel like they belong in there community. The amount of affirming Locations in a given area can be used as a litmus test how accepting and supportive an area is for LGBTQ+ folk. This all boils down to the need for community. That people want to go to places that they know they are safe. (Perkins 2002) By cataloging and making available where LGBTQ+ affirming locations are is one step to build that community and make it more visible in ever growing areas like Greenville.

## Methods

The data for this project came from three sources local organizations, through survey results and The Human Rights Campaign's corporate equality index. The criteria for smaller businesses is mainly based off confirmation of the residents of Greenville county and from organizations. The three Local organizations I gathered information from were GenderBender (A Local Trans support Group), Parents and friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) and Upstate Pride. Gender Bender and PFLAG had local resource guides of assets in the area like: churches, law offices, food and many other categories. This was a vital part of getting local businesses, because most of these have been collected over years and have been confirmed as LGBTQ+ affirming locations. Upstate Pride had a slightly different criteria, because the main objective of Upstate Pride is to fundraise and gain sponsors to maintain and organize for a LGBTQ+ pride festival/march located in Spartanburg, SC. The locations gained from this organization is from are sponsors for the pride event. The list that I received was the sponsor list over the past five years. The assumption I ran off was if they are supporting a major LGBTQ+ event that they are an affirming location.

The next part of the results came from a survey I administered to Furman students and the greater Greenville community via social media. The survey asked locations that are LGBTQ+ affirming and garnered fruitful results. The reported results were mainly comprised of restaurants and a few other small business. The criteria for these reported locations were based off similar qualities as GenderBender and PFLAG. The survey went through institutional review board review at Furman University; all data was made anonymously and consent was made clear to take the survey.

To get the major corporations in the area was based of the Human Rights Campaign's equality index, the index bases the score on non-discrimination policy, healthcare options, and inclusiveness. The businesses included on the map all scored a one-hundred on the index. The policy for these large businesses reflect an overarching policy for the whole company; the individual locations in the Greenville area's management may not adhere to these high standards.

The GIS software that is used in this project is ArcGIS. I geocoded the addresses The data to plot all the points was put into a excel sheet and then uploaded into ArcGIS. After the upload, the data was Geocoded and plotted onto a map. The layers of the county and roads were uploaded through the Furman GIS database. The census data that was used came from the National Historic GIS database. These layers and the tools from the ArcGIS were the main sources used to create the maps.

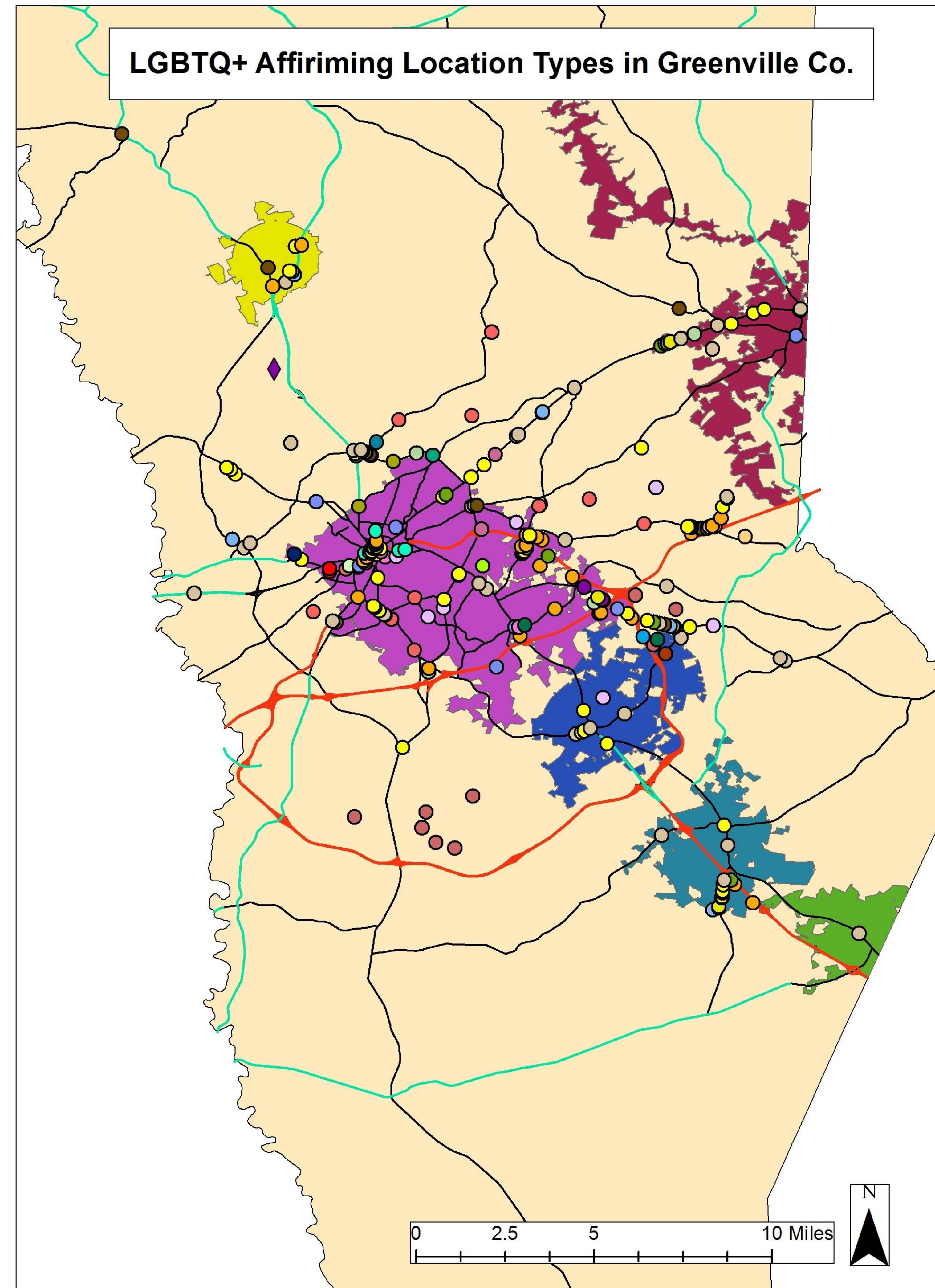


Figure 1: All locations in Greenville County

## Discussion

Plotted on the map the Locations on Greenville Show similar trends over multiple fields: religion, Health, and Big businesses. A majority of the locations follow one of three trends visible on Figure 1. The Locations are within city limits of major cities, the locations are near major roads, and/or clustered together in groups. The placement of the business in relation to city limits and proximity to major roads would make sense for all categories of locations, because that would help create an ease of access into the locations. From an economic perspective this would mean better accesses would mean more people could enter the establishment. If more people are able to go to the establishment there is a greater chance the location can be supported by its patrons. The small businesses and religious spaces are mainly concentrated in the different city limits of the county. (Figures 2 and 3)

The small business locations also correlates with population density in the county. The majority of small businesses are located in the densest parts of the county. This would make since, because the more people that live in these areas there would be more people who would shop and own businesses in those areas. There is a small discrepancy around the downtown Greenville area. This is due to the high retail space compared to the residential locations. This still fits into the narrative that is where people shop not where people live. (Figure 4)

Most of the businesses are in-between 15-25 minutes away from Furman's campus. As stated in figures previous this is mainly, because most of those businesses are in the downtown Greenville area and Woodruff road areas. This means most of these locations are accessible to Furman's student body, as-well by nearby residence.(Figure 5)

The last map I think sums up most of the data from previous maps. The density of the locations to one another points to these are very economically positive areas to have a business, They have high population or surrounded by high population areas. Also as the density map shows they are clustered in these more economically advantageous areas. Affirming or not for these businesses to survive they have to make money. This is also a positive thing for consumers, because they are easily accessible for most people with-in the county.(Figure 6)



Types of locations	Small Business	Large business	Grand Total
Alcohol	1		1
Animal	1		1
Bakery	1		1
Banking		52	52
Bar	4		4
Boutique	1		1
Call Center	1		1
Clothing		9	9
Coffee	5	16	21
Communication		19	19
Electronics		11	11
Entertainment	2		2
Fashion		1	1
Food		1	1
Hardware		5	5
Health		2	2
HIV/AIDS	2		2
Hotel		26	26
Insurance		2	2
Lawyer	4		4
Manufacturing		11	11
Non-Profit	1		1
Novelty		1	1
Office		5	5
Pharmacy	1	43	44
Printing	1		1
Realtor	1		1
Religious	13		13
Restaurant	7	3	10
Retailer		4	4
Technology		1	1
Therapy	7		7
Wellness	1		1
Grand Total	56	210	266

Figure 7: Pivot table showing numbers of affirming locations in the area

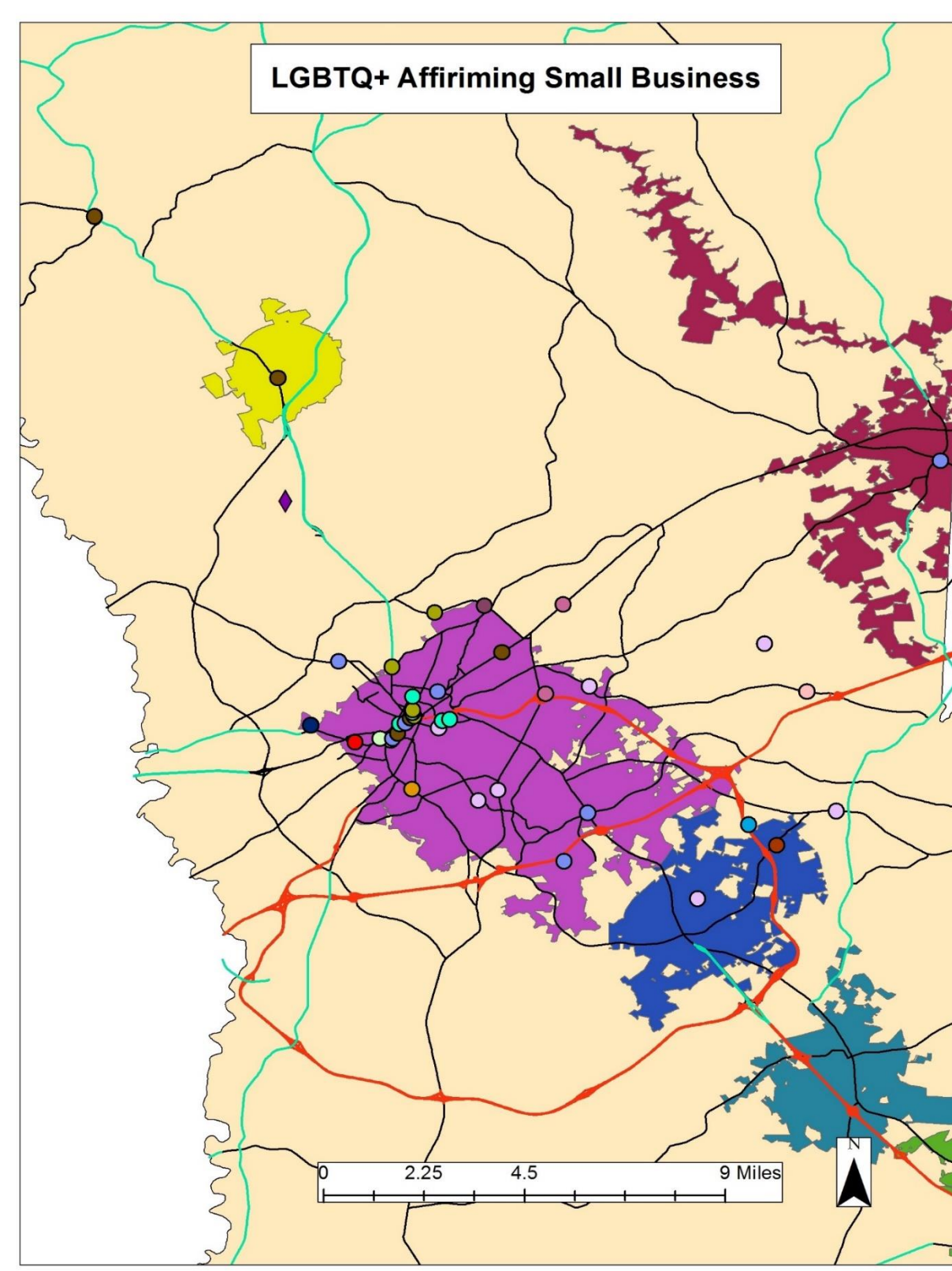


Figure 2: Small Businesses in Greenville Co.

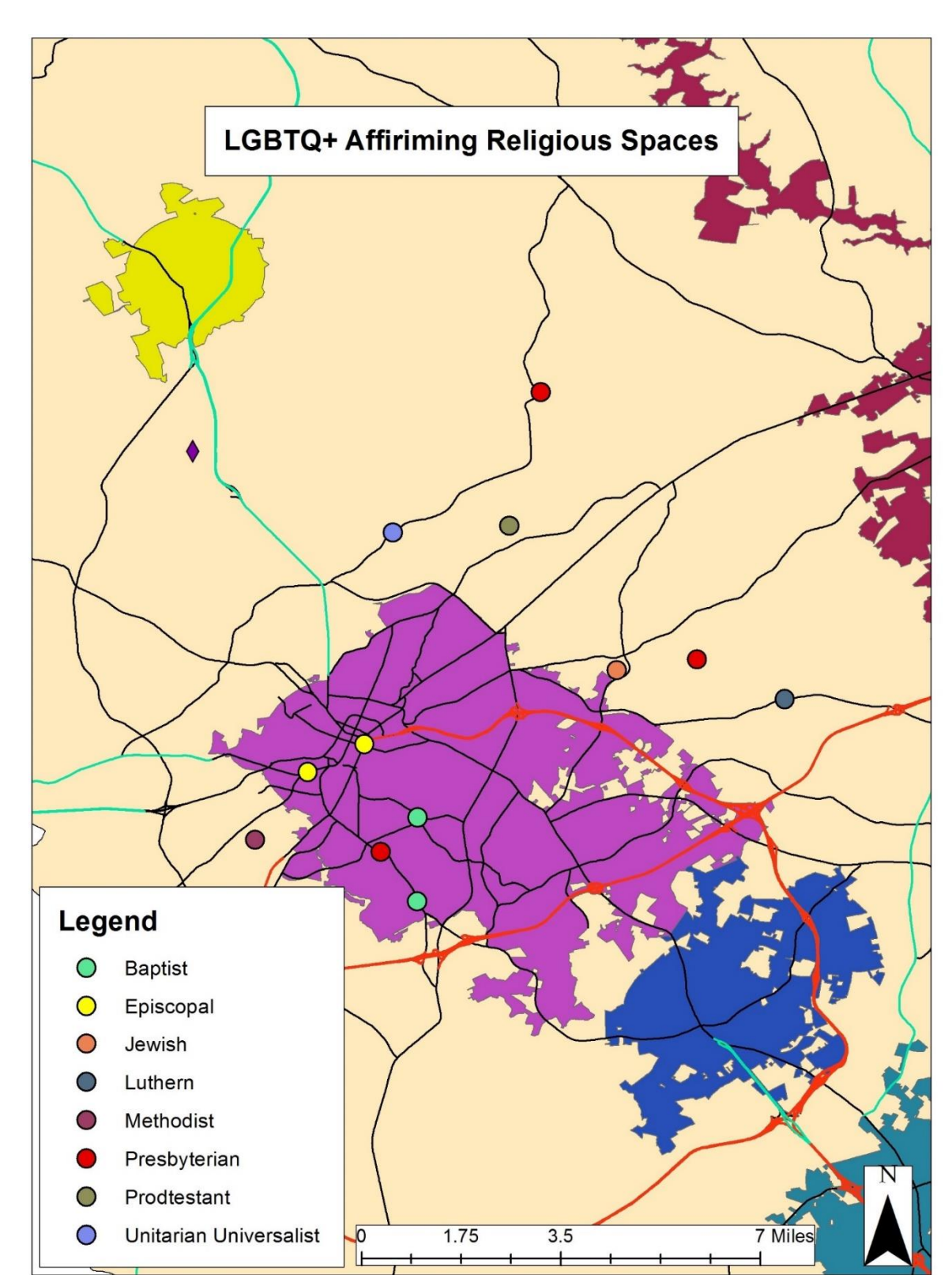


Figure 3: Religious Spaces in Greenville Co.

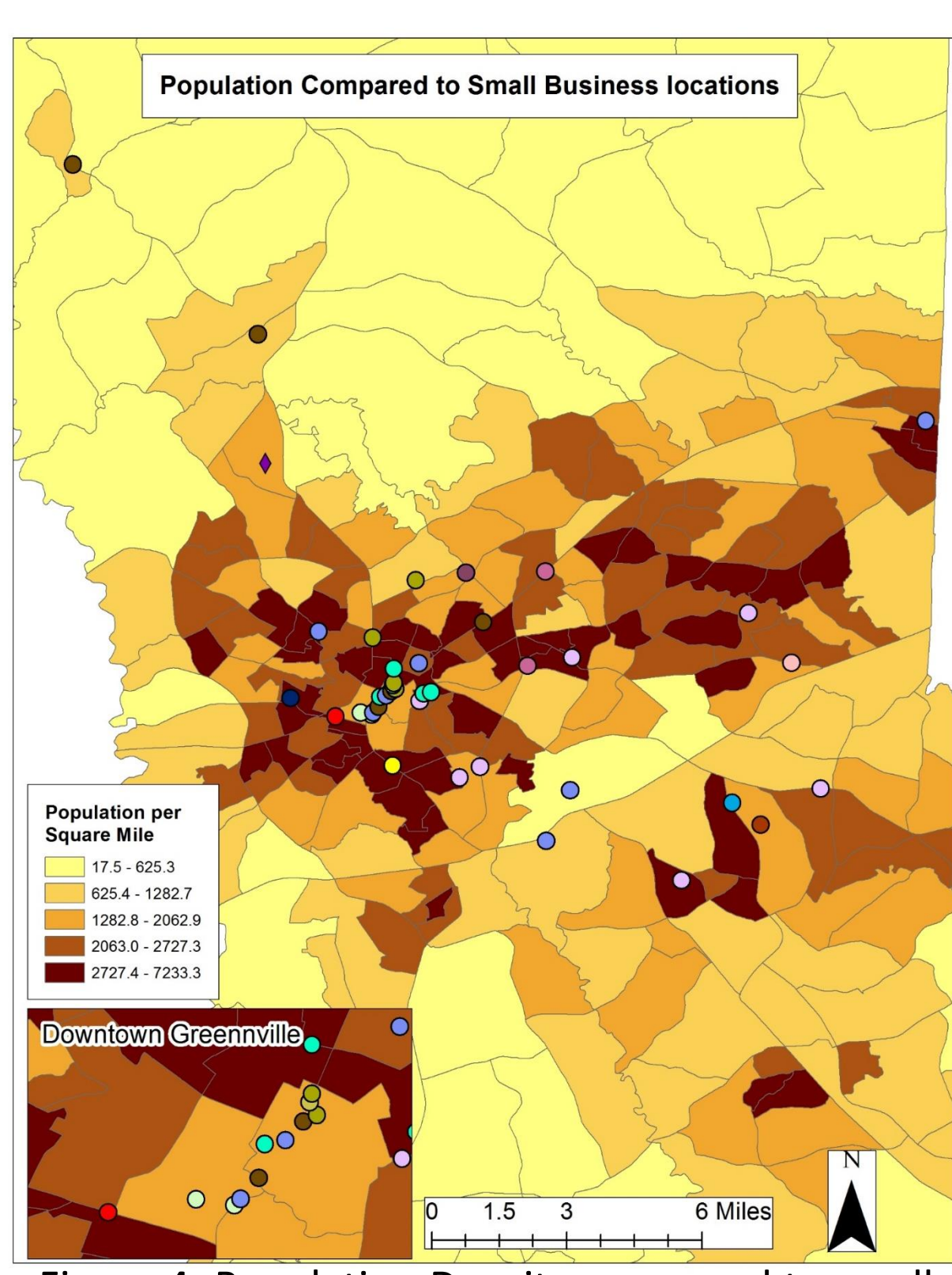


Figure 4: Population Density compared to small businesses

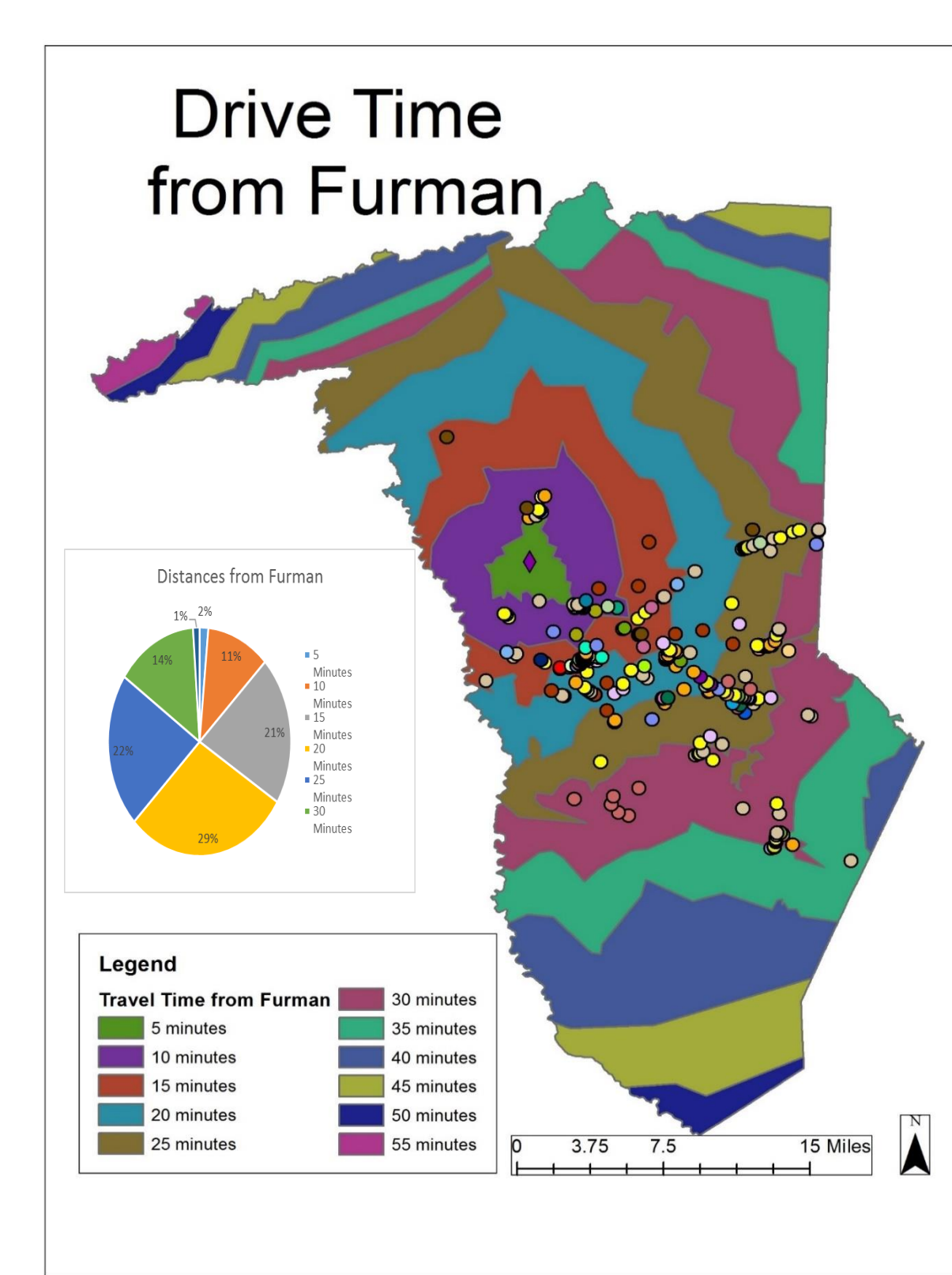


Figure 5: Drive time from Furman in minutes, using Trade-ring tool from Business Analyst toolset in ArcGIS

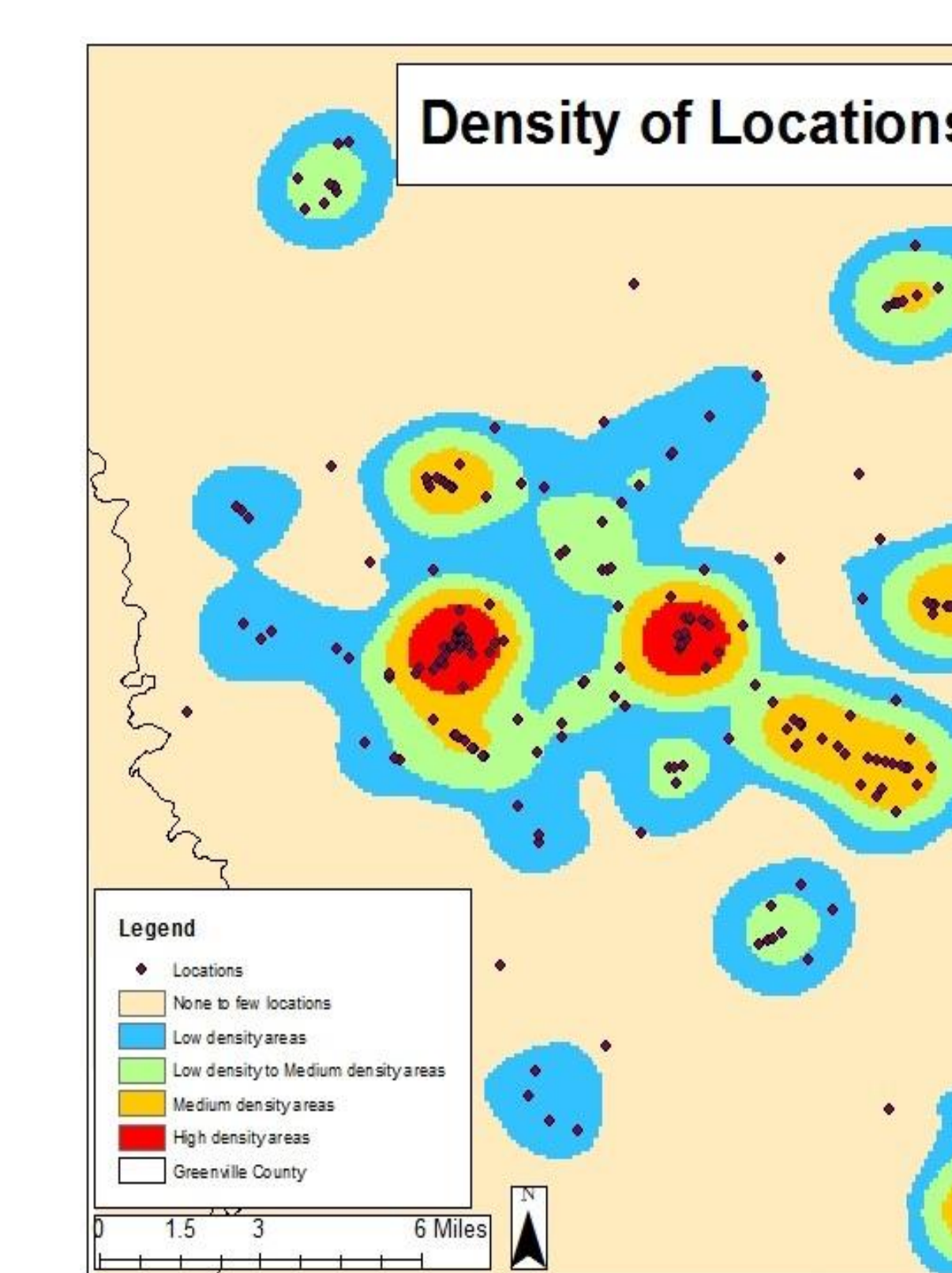


Figure 6: Density of businesses in proximity of each measured in square mile blocks

## Data Sources

- PFLAG, GenderBender, and Upstate Pride: LGBTQ+ location directories for Greenville SC
- Surveying: Small business data, and helping formulate a definition for affirming businesses
- Human rights campaign Equality Index: Large business information [www.hrc.org/campaigns/corporate-equality-index](http://www.hrc.org/campaigns/corporate-equality-index)
- National Historical Geographic Information System (NHGIS): Greenville County Population and Block Group Census data.
- All maps developed using Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) ArcDesktop, 10.4.3.

## References

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