Comprehensive Plans

Creating a Framework for Urban Forest Management

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Refresher: What is a comprehensive plan?

- Defined in statutes
- Document that captures long-term goals and policies
- Used to guide decisions about future growth and development (both public and private)

Why do we need these plans?

Each and every person impacts the growth of a community.
The role of planners is to guide sustainable community growth.

- Encourage regional approach to development and planning
- Maintain community character
- Enhance economic climate of region
- Protect and preserve natural resources
- Provide and improve recreational opportunities and parks
- Enhance the existing transportation system to improve regional access
- Ensure appropriate and quality housing stock
- Provide clean, potable water to residents

What Happens When You Plan…

And when you do not.

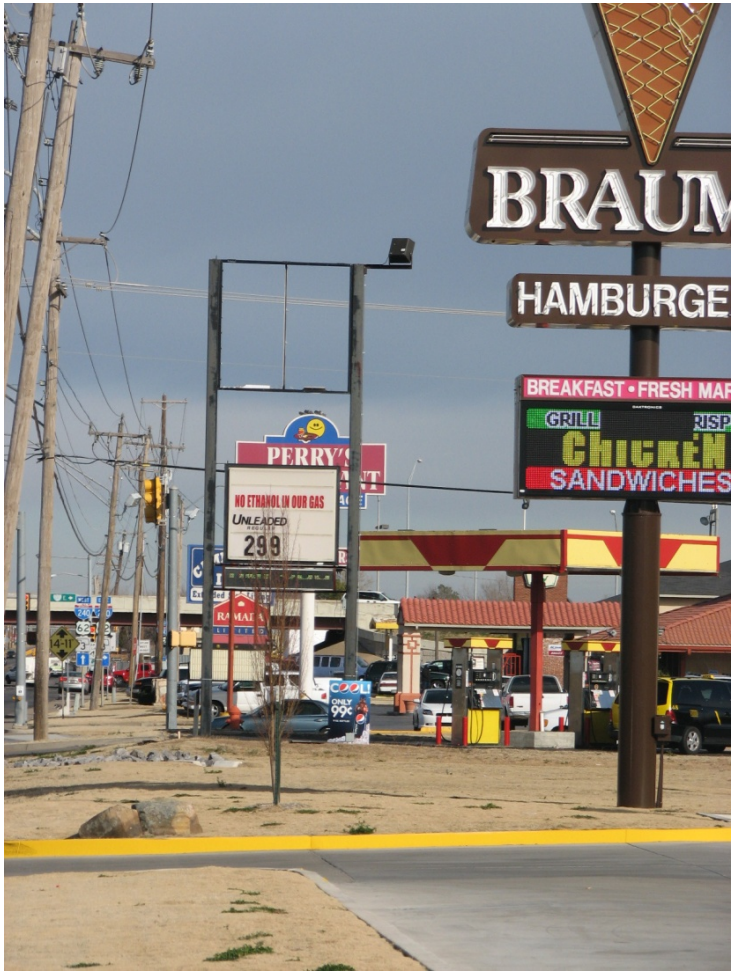
Which Do You Prefer?

A

B

Which Do You Prefer?

A



B

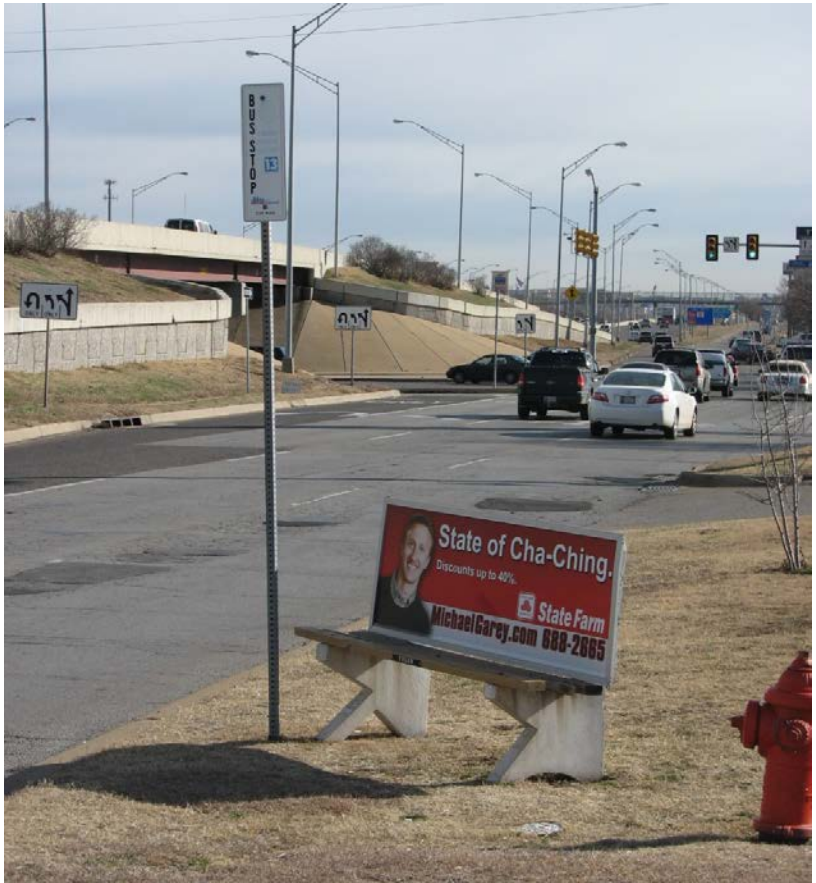
Which Do You Prefer?

A

B

Which Do You Prefer?

A



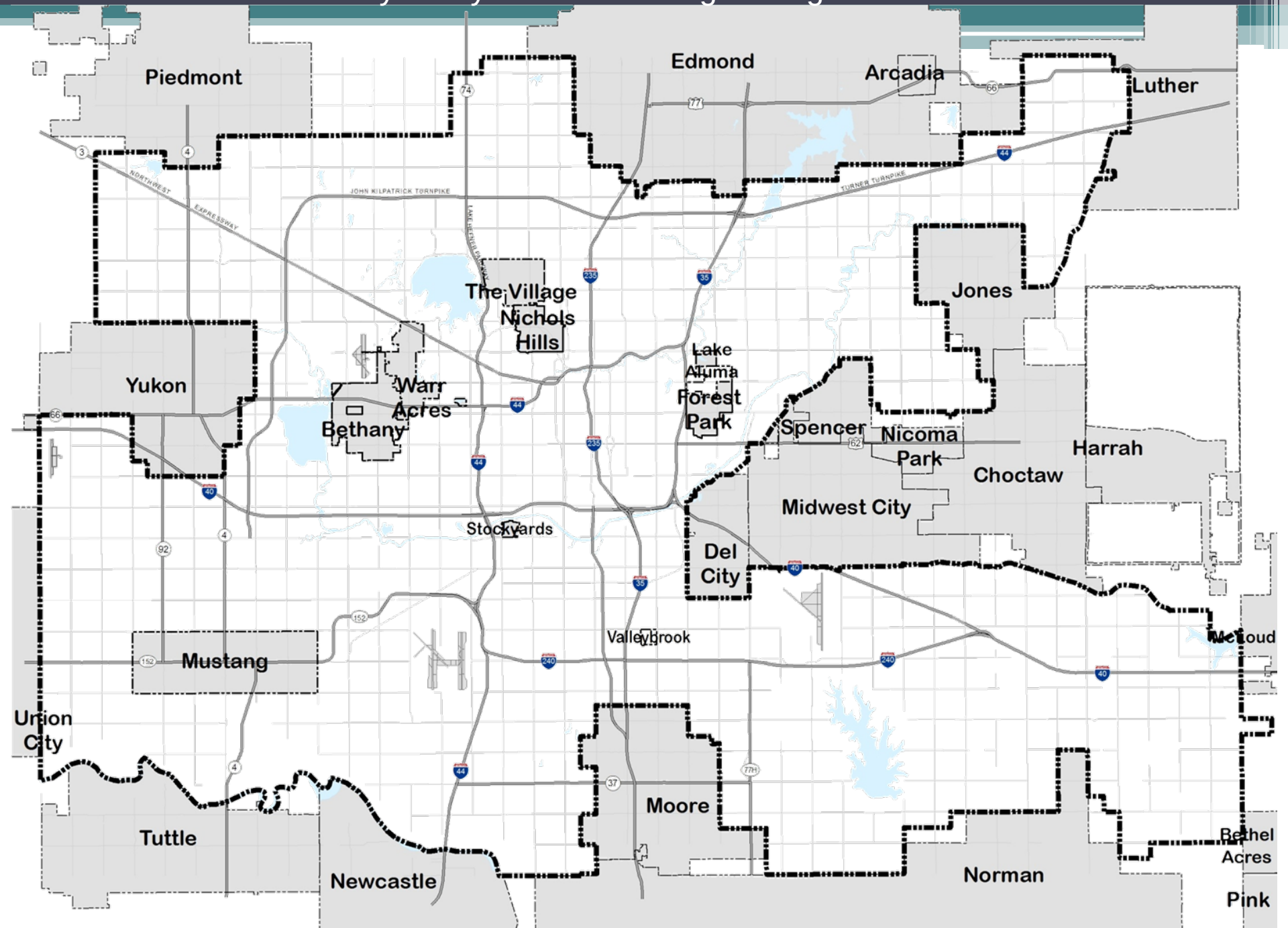
B

Which Do You Prefer?

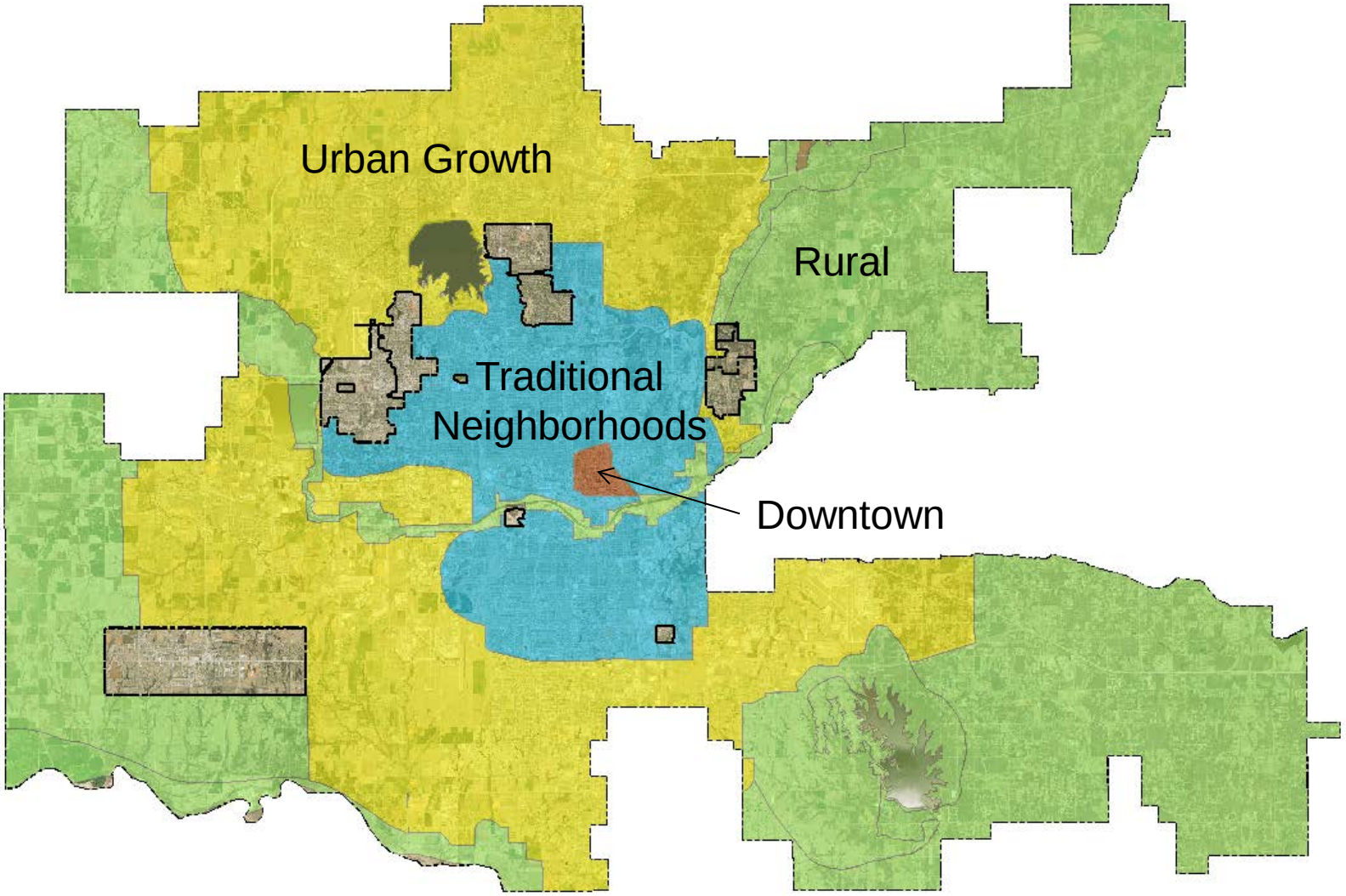
A

B

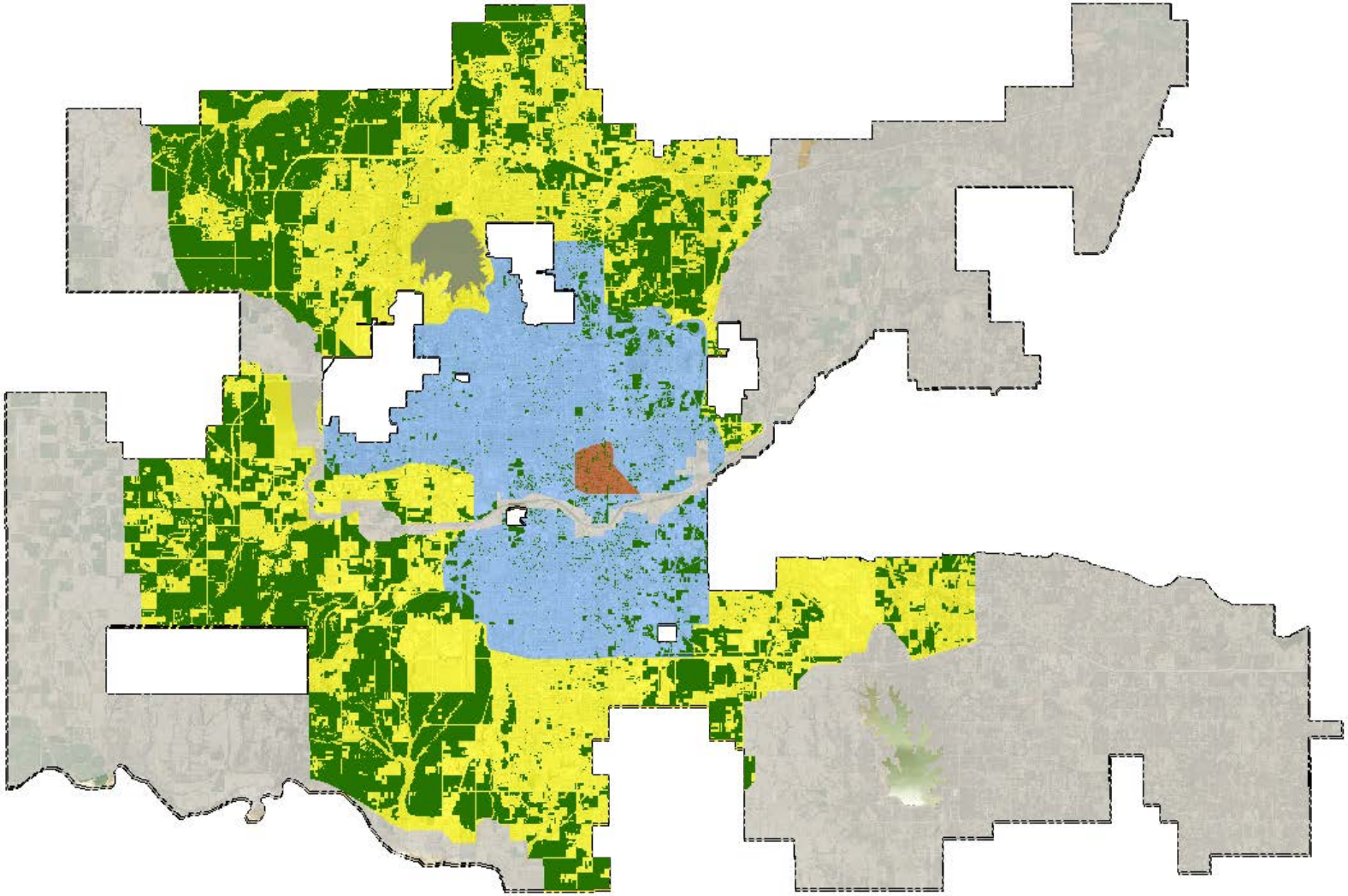
Oklahoma City – City Limits and Neighboring Jurisdictions



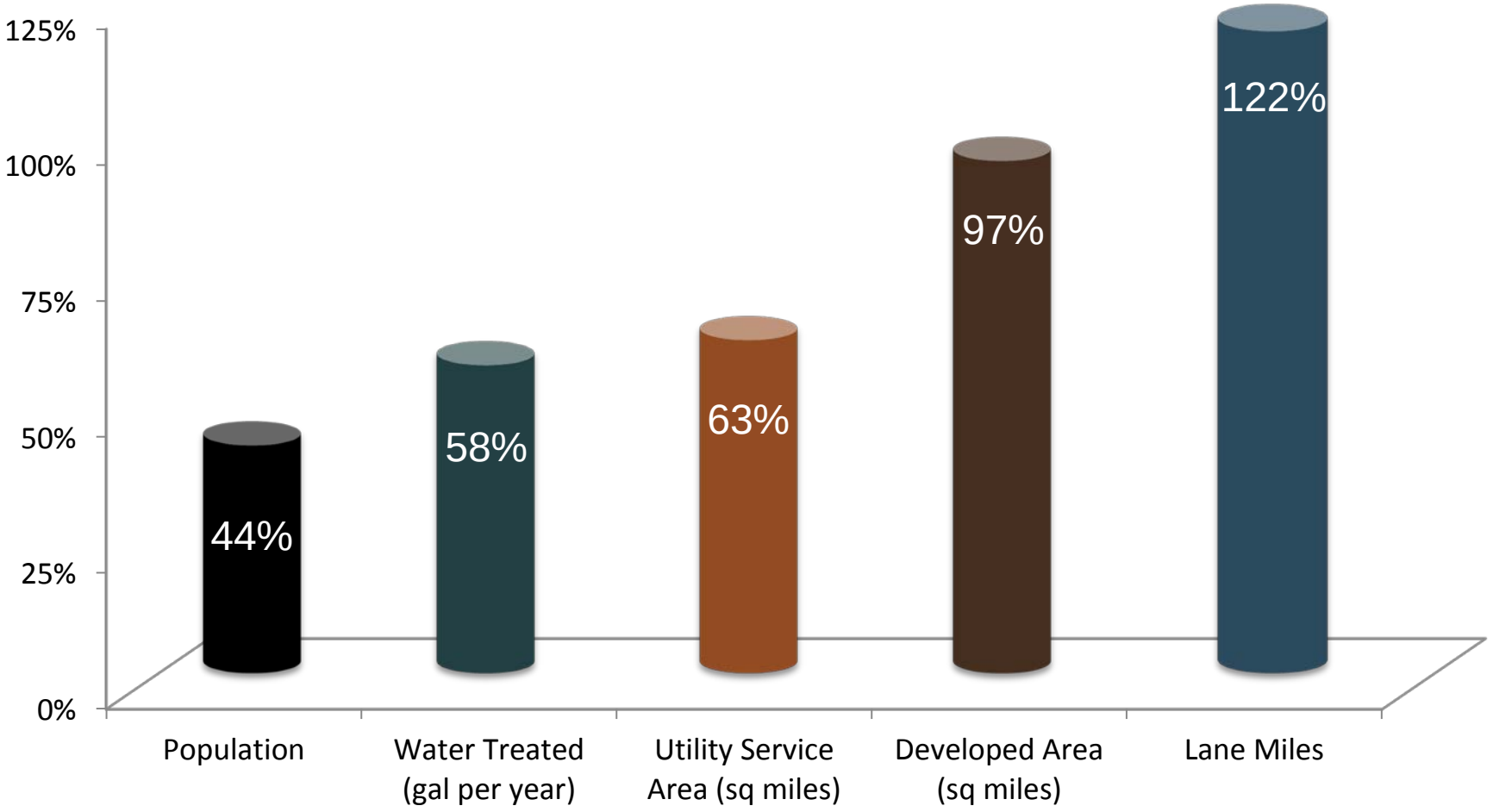
Existing development patterns



Capacity for Growth



Oklahoma City's Historical Growth: 1977-2009



Pattern of Sprawl

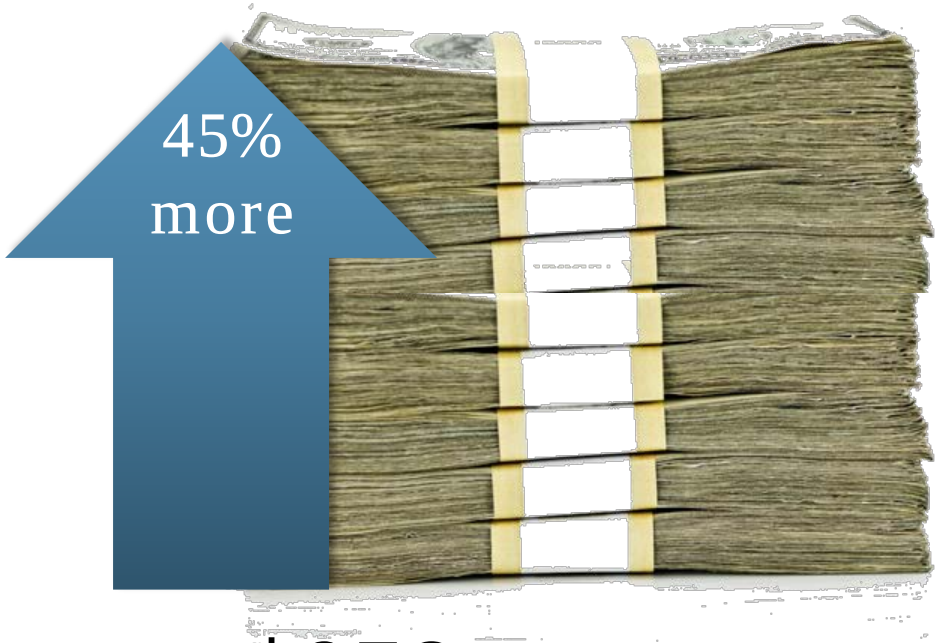
Cost of Sprawl

1977

(adjusted for inflation)

$663 per person

2009

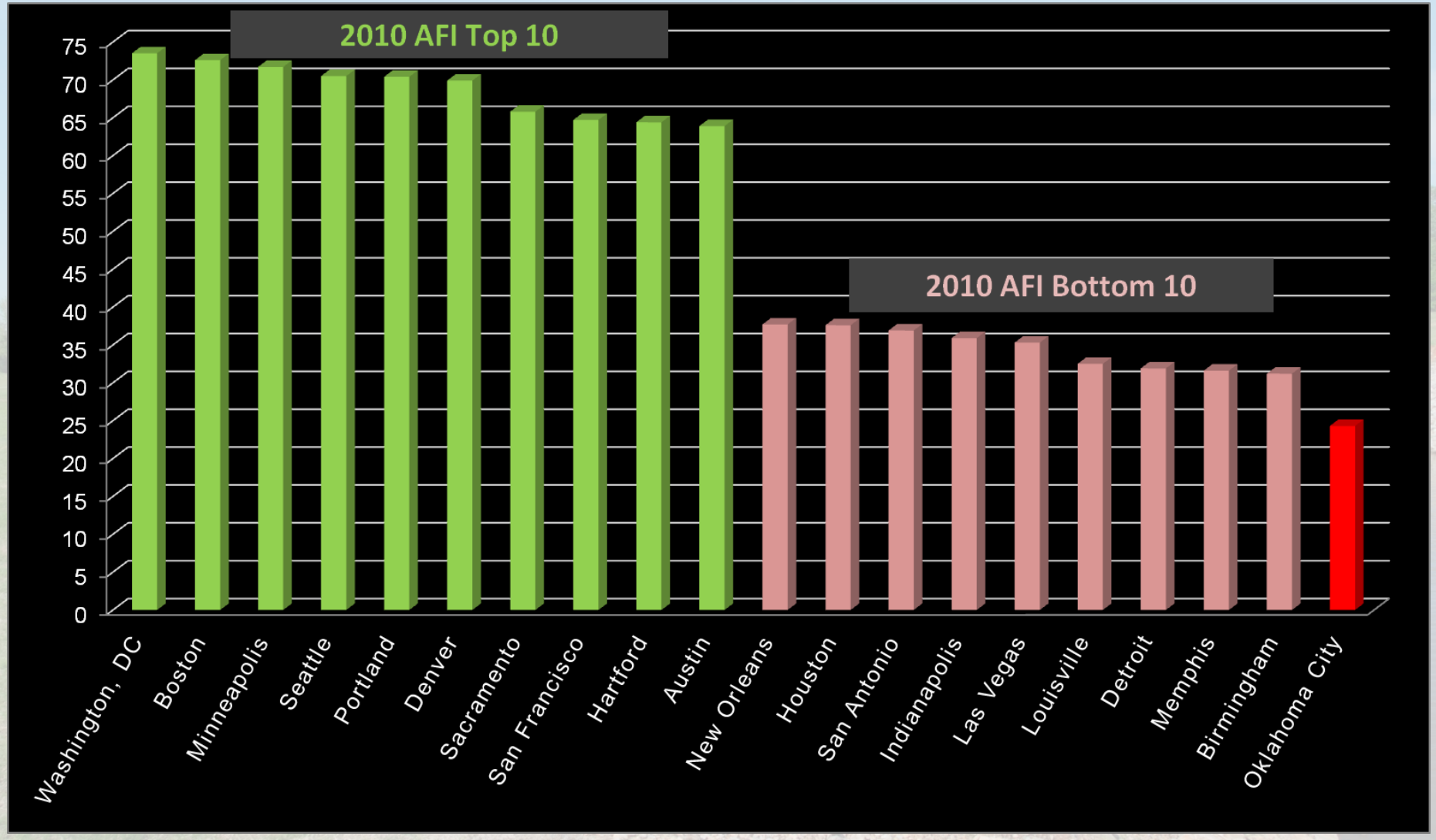


$958 per person

Basic City Services

Built Environment & Public Health

American Fitness Index Rankings



Lifestyle

- Oklahoma City #2 “Fattest City”
- (29 % of residents are clinically obese)

- Our residents spend 13% more time watching TV than average

- 83% of residents do not eat the recommended servings of fruit and vegetables per day
- source: 2009 Men’s Fitness Study

Demographics

- 67% of population is now Caucasian
  - compared to 75% in 1990
- 15% of population is now Hispanic
  - compared to 5% in 1990
- 70% projected increase in age 65 and older population in 20 years

Transportation

- 64% of ozone causing pollutants are caused by automobiles
- Average person drives 40% more than two decades ago
- Over 99% of trips are by automobile

Environment

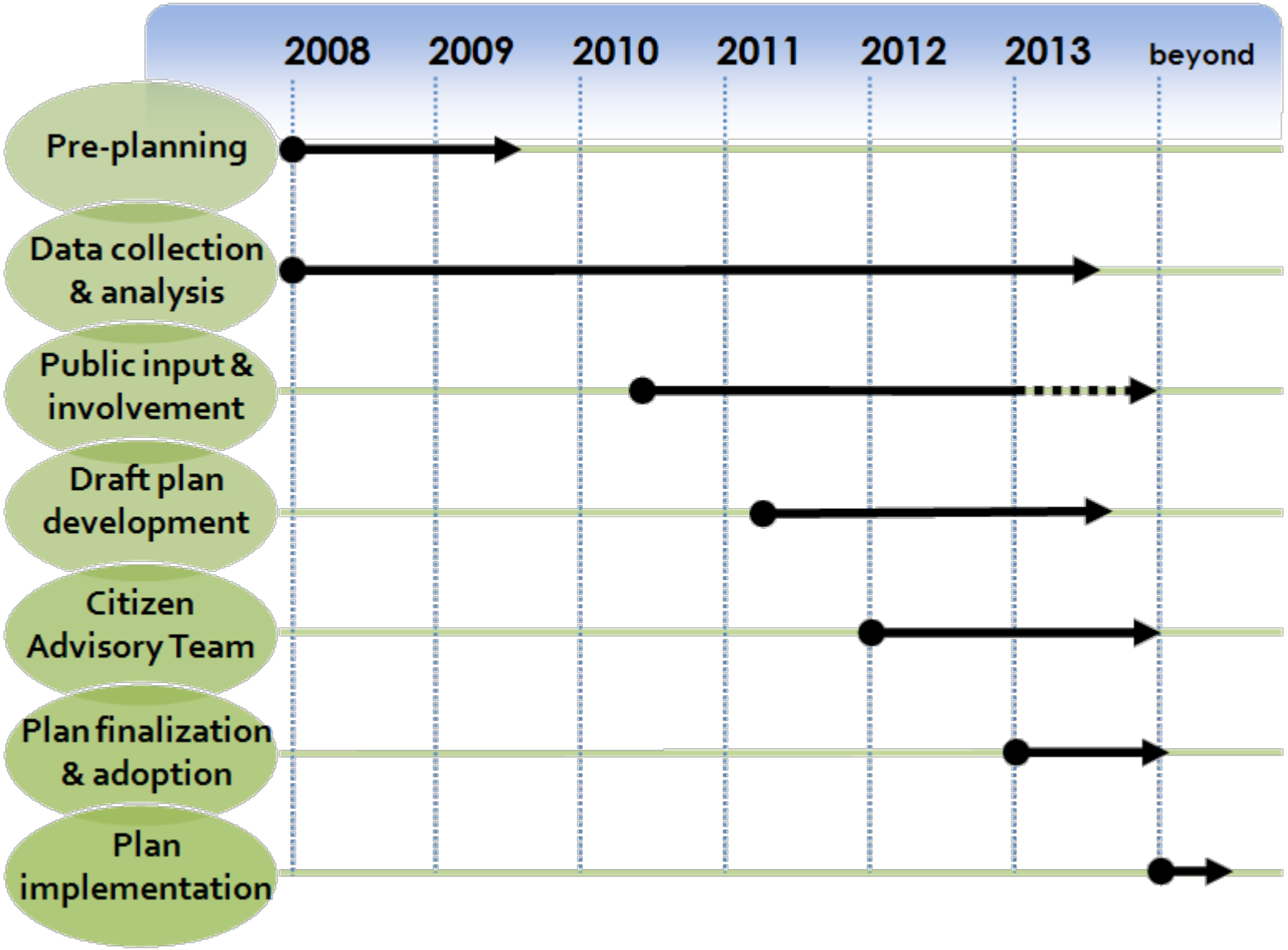
- 70% of major streams and lakes do not meet water quality standards
- 60% decrease in forest cover
- At risk of not meeting federal air quality standards

planokc
planning for a healthy future

Remember the Basic Ingredients?
Steps in Developing a Comprehensive Plan

- Establish a **vision** for where the community wants to be
- Identify **issues and trends** that are affecting the community
- Conduct **survey and analysis** to confirm issues & trends
- Set **goals and objectives** for addressing those issues
- Develop **policies and strategies** to achieve goals, and
- Determine **priorities, responsibilities**
- Create an **implementation plan** to measure and ensure progress

plan**okc** process and timeline



Elements of planOKC

- sustainokc • Future Land Use
- connectokc • Transportation
- greenokc • Environmental & Natural Resources
- liveokc • Communities
- enrichokc • Preservation, Appearance & Culture
- playokc • Parks and Recreation
- strengthenokc • Economic Development
- serveokc • Public Services
- gookc • Implementation

Environmental & Natural Resources

purpose

greenokc is the environmental and natural resources element of planokc. The purpose of this element is to assess the impacts of development on biological systems, and to mitigate negative impacts on those systems through better land use management and development practices. Focusing on prioritizing valuable natural resources and green infrastructure will result in a healthy environment that is consolidated, not fragmented, and self-sustaining.

greenokc
environmental & natural resources

topic areas

- Biological resources
- Water resources
- Environmental hazards
- Atmosphere and climate
- Agriculture and food
- Open space, connectivity and fragmentation
- Green building and sustainable development

analysis includes

- Sensitive/problem areas composite
- Ecosystem services scoring system
- Critical conservation areas
- Agricultural lands assessment
- Sustainable development practices / green buildings

Public Involvement Process

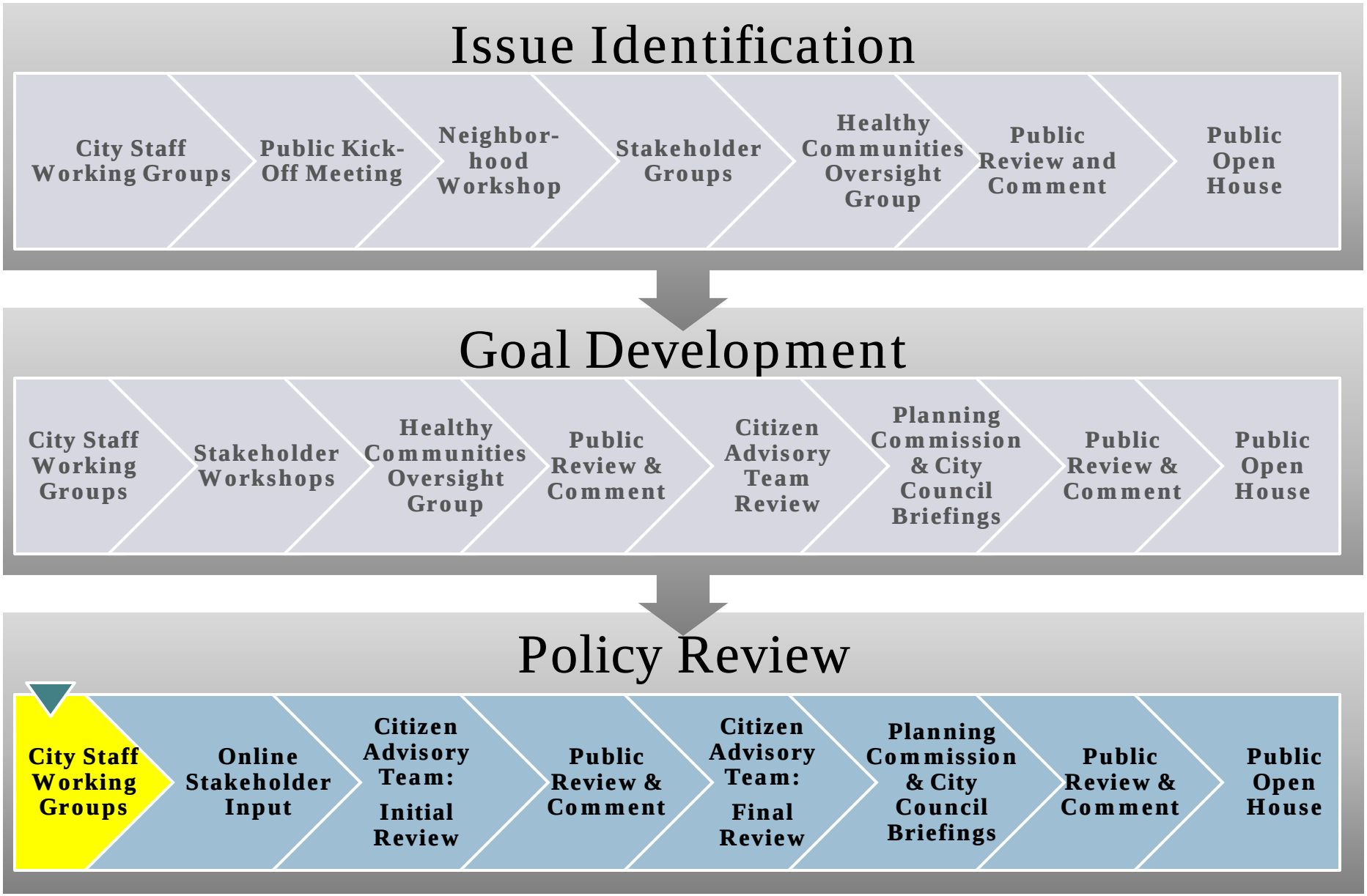
Phase 1 **Identify Issues**

Phase 2 **Set Goals**

Phase 3 **Review Policies**

- City Staff Working Groups
- Stakeholder Groups
- Healthy Communities Oversight Group
- Citizen Advisory Team
- General Public Input - Website

Public Input Process



Phase 1 – Issue Identification

Draft Issues (Planning Staff)

↓

City Staff Working Groups

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Stakeholder Groups

↓

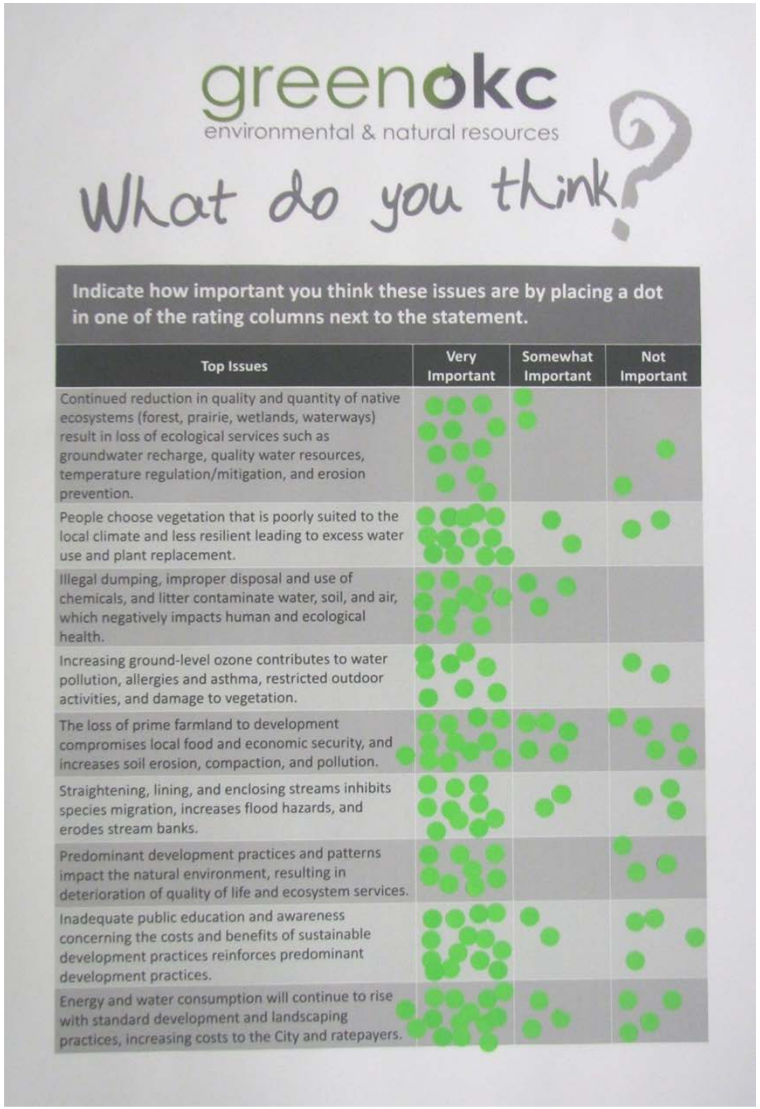
HCOG Review

↓

Public Comment Period

Top rated issues for greenokc
(based on opinion/perception, facts, studies, analyses)

- **Energy & water consumption** will continue to rise with standard development and landscaping practices, increasing costs to the City and ratepayers.
- People choose vegetation that is poorly suited to the local climate and less resilient leading to **excess water use & plant replacement**.
- Inadequate public education and awareness concerning the costs and benefits of **sustainable development practices** reinforces predominant development practices.



Interim Step: Analysis

What resources do you have?

- Native Tree Inventory
- Significant Tree Inventory
- Critical Wildlife Habitat

Do you have the ability to conduct your own analysis?

- Environmentally Sensitive Land Use Designation

Special Studies of plan**okc**

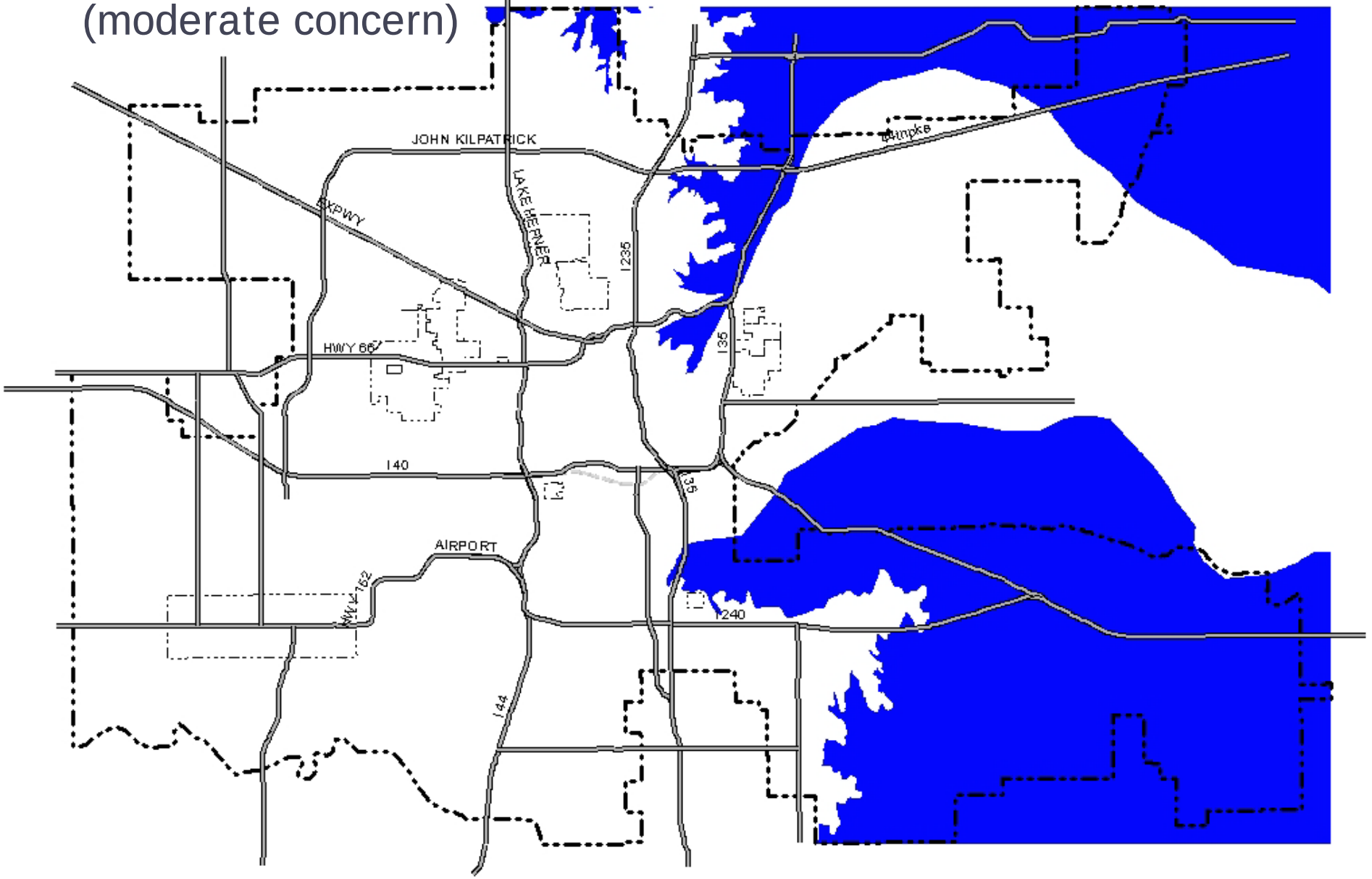
- Employment Land Needs Assessment & Action Plan
- Housing Demand Study
- Retail Plan
- Parks Master Plan
- Growth Scenarios Analysis
- Community Appearance Survey
- Transit Service Study
- plan**okc** Citizen Survey

Environmental Analysis

- WATER
  - Aquifer Vulnerability
  - 100 Year Floodplain
  - Wetlands
- HABITAT
  - Tier 1 Species
  - Protected Species Habitat
  - Areas of conservation
  - Significant vegetation
  - Special Status species

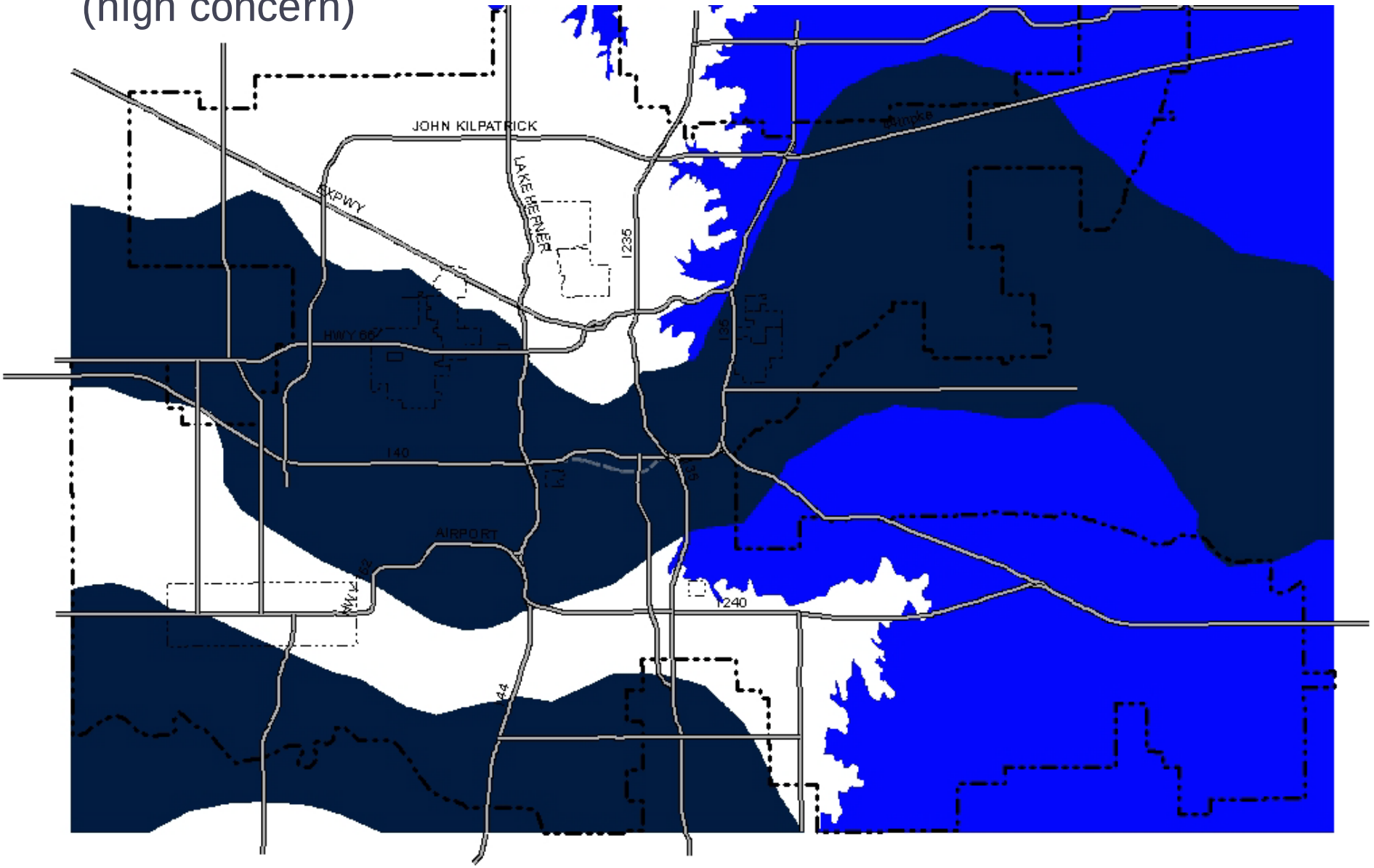
Aquifer vulnerability

(moderate concern)

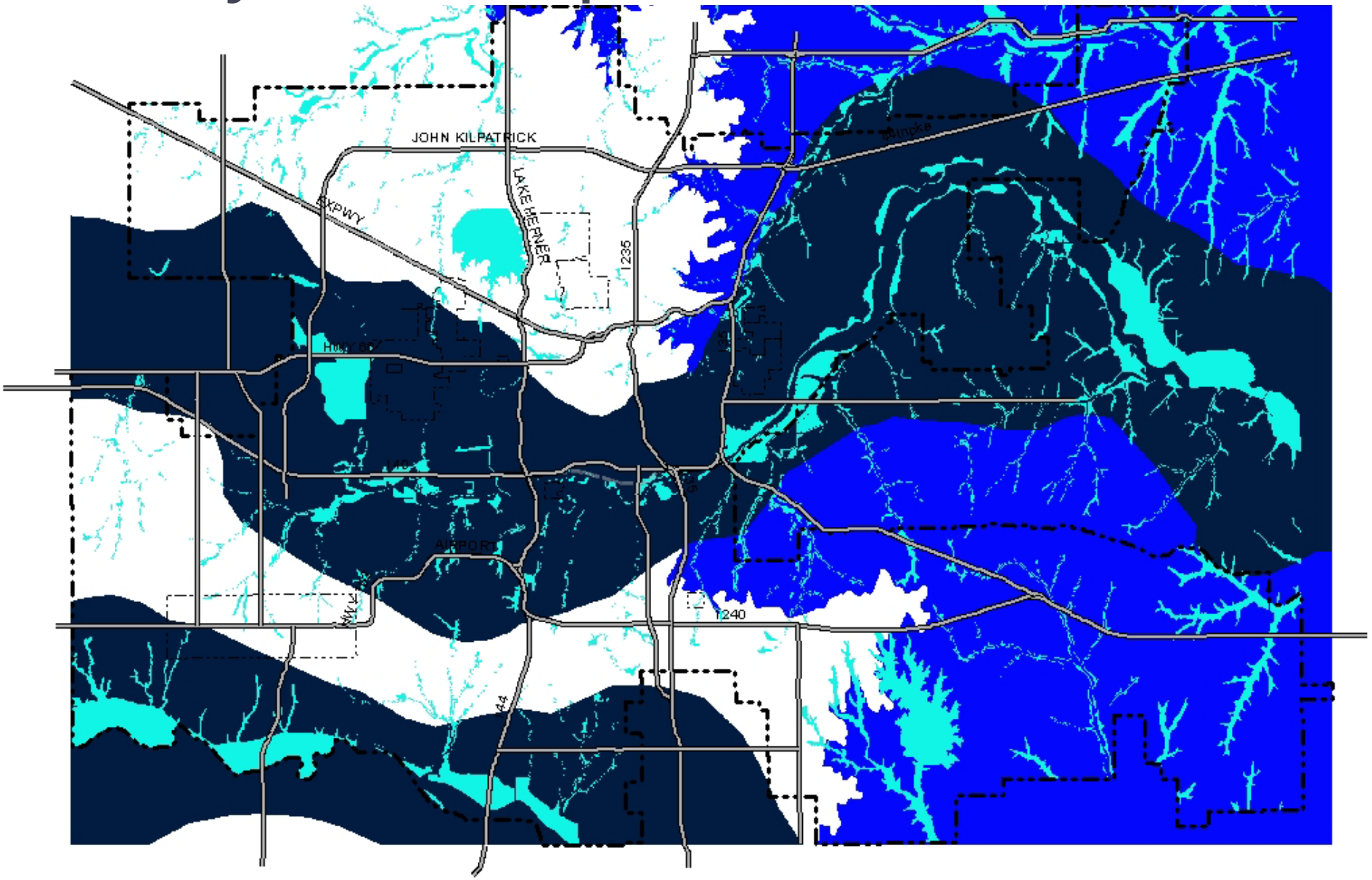


Aquifer vulnerability

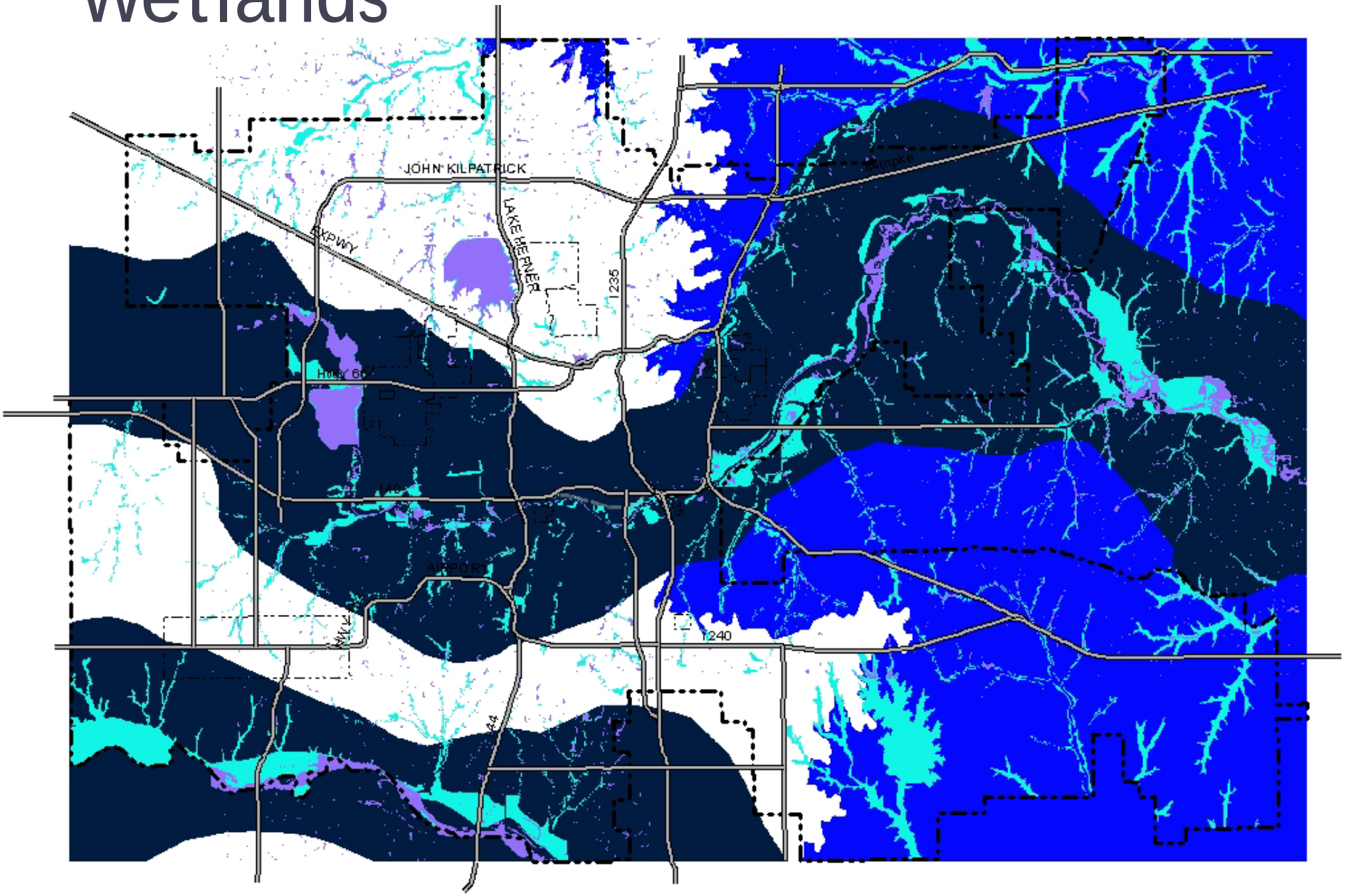
(high concern)



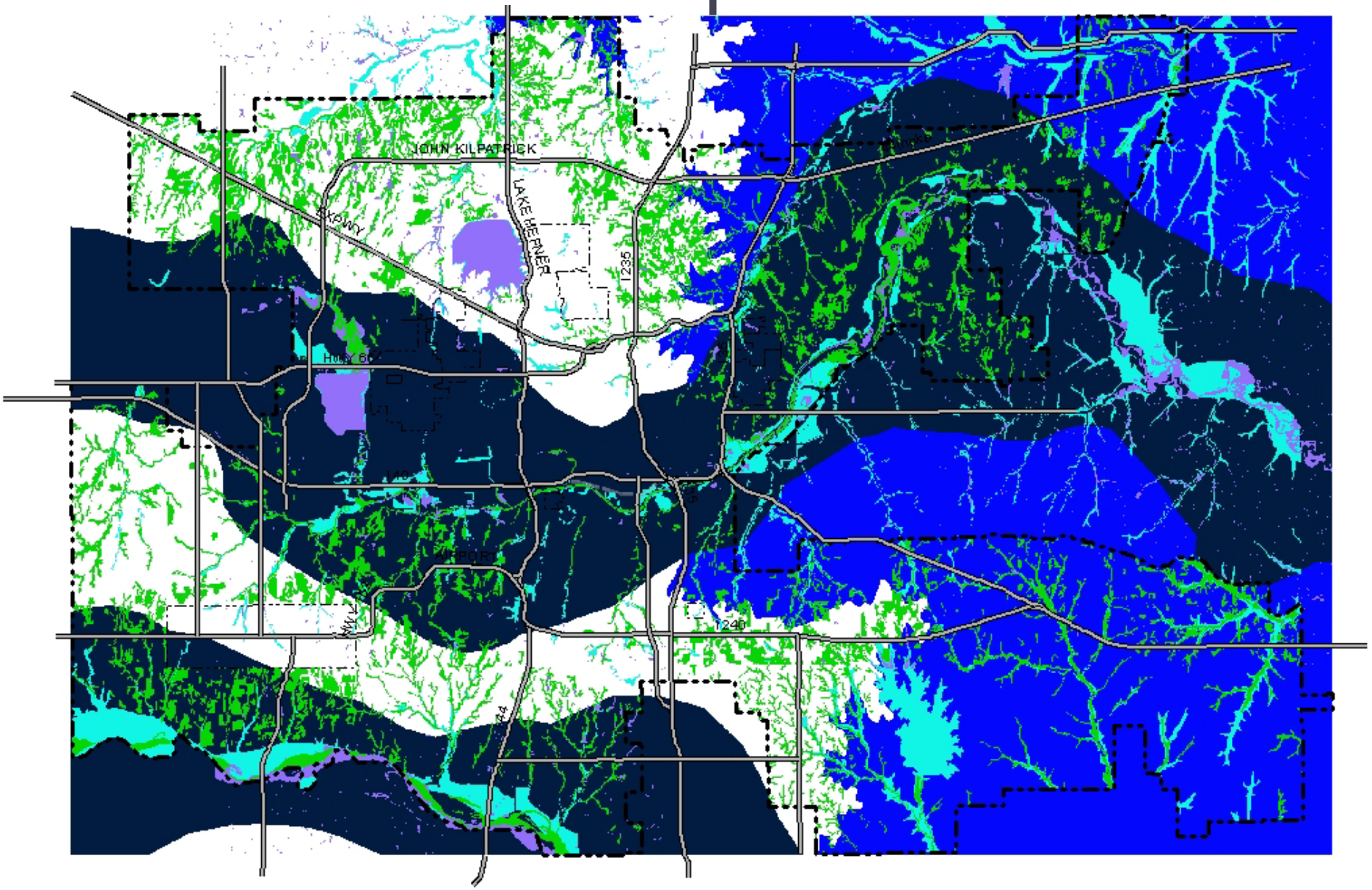
100 year floodplain



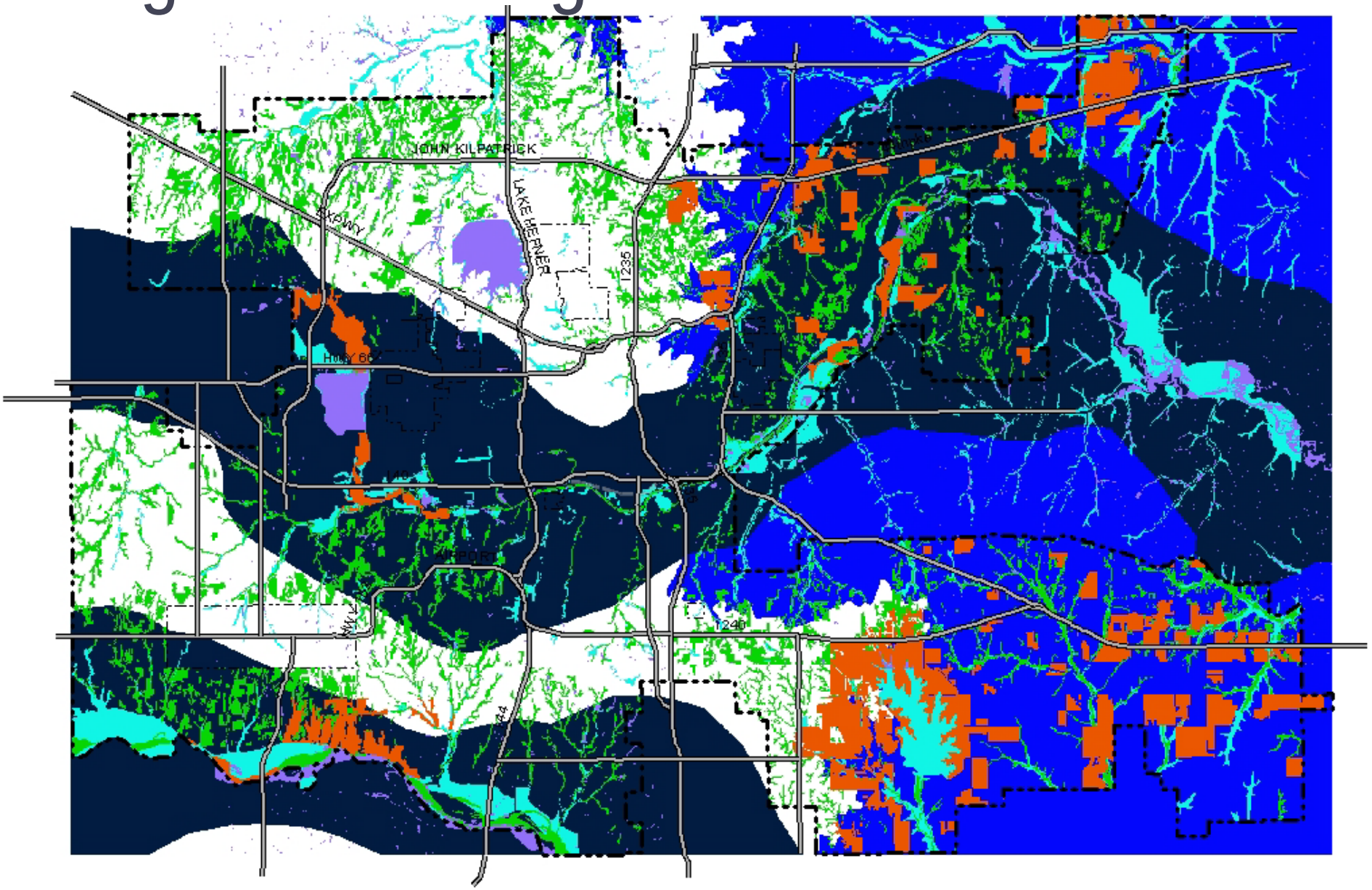
Wetlands



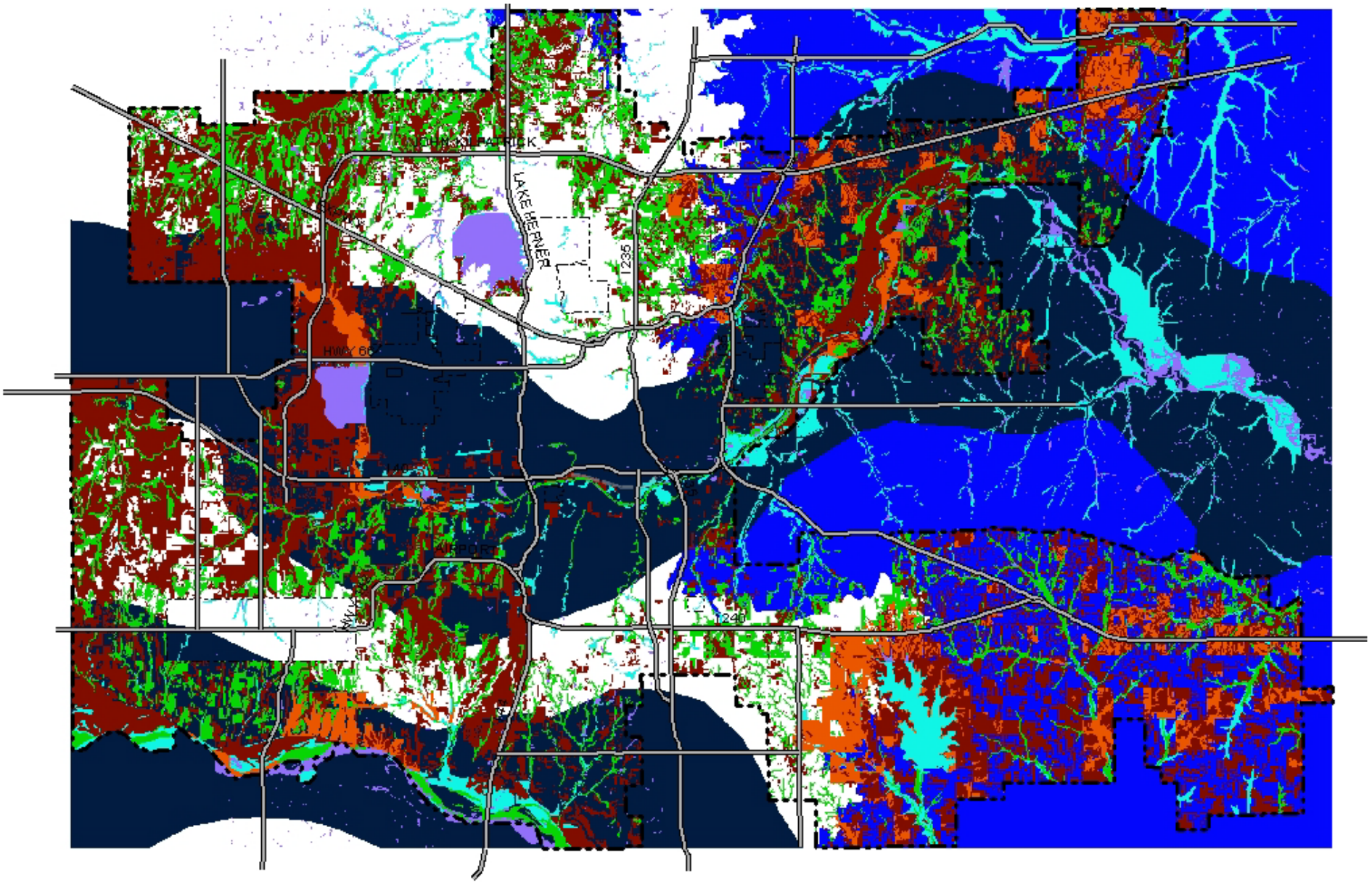
Erosion and flood prone soils



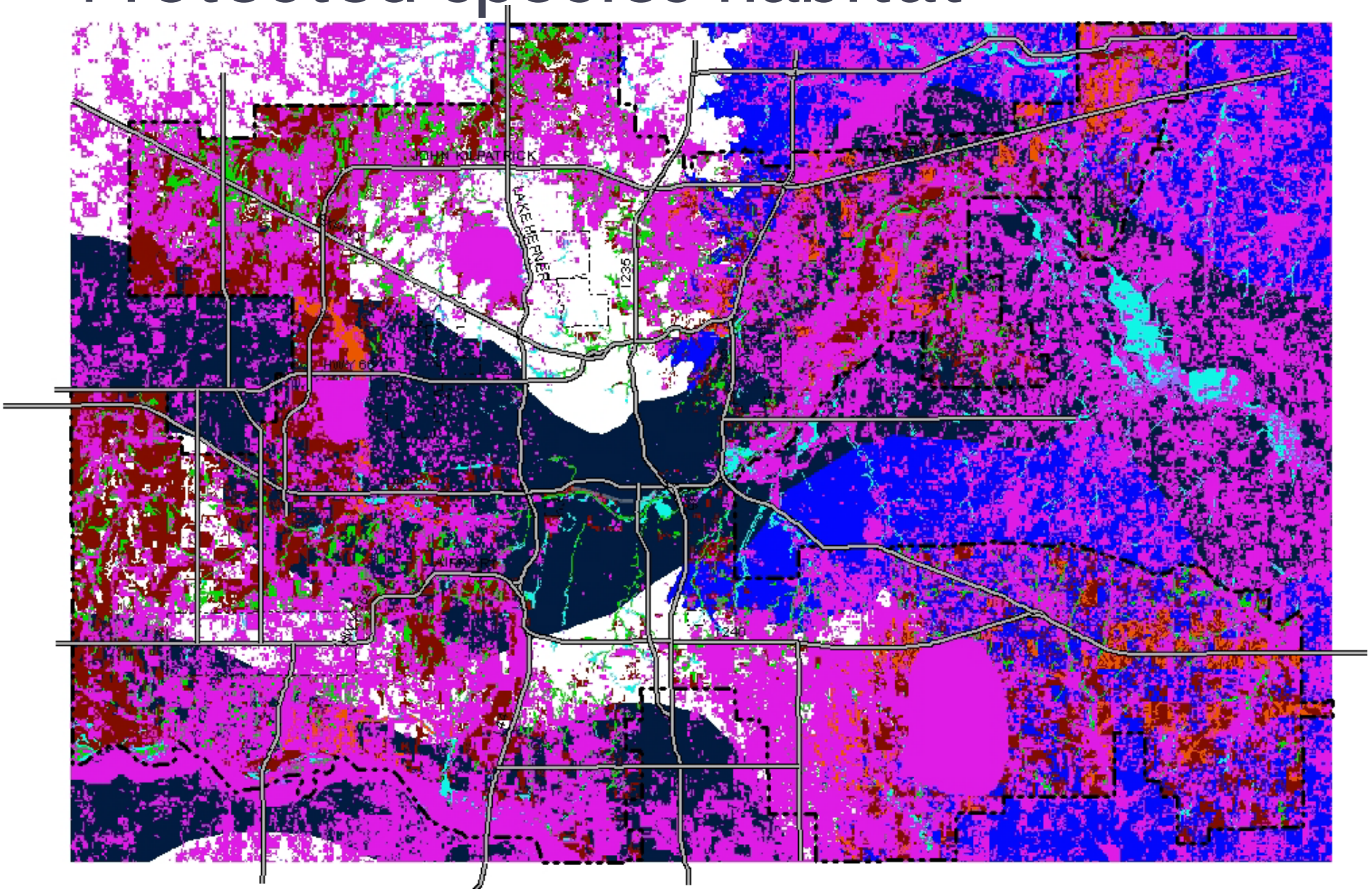
Significant vegetation



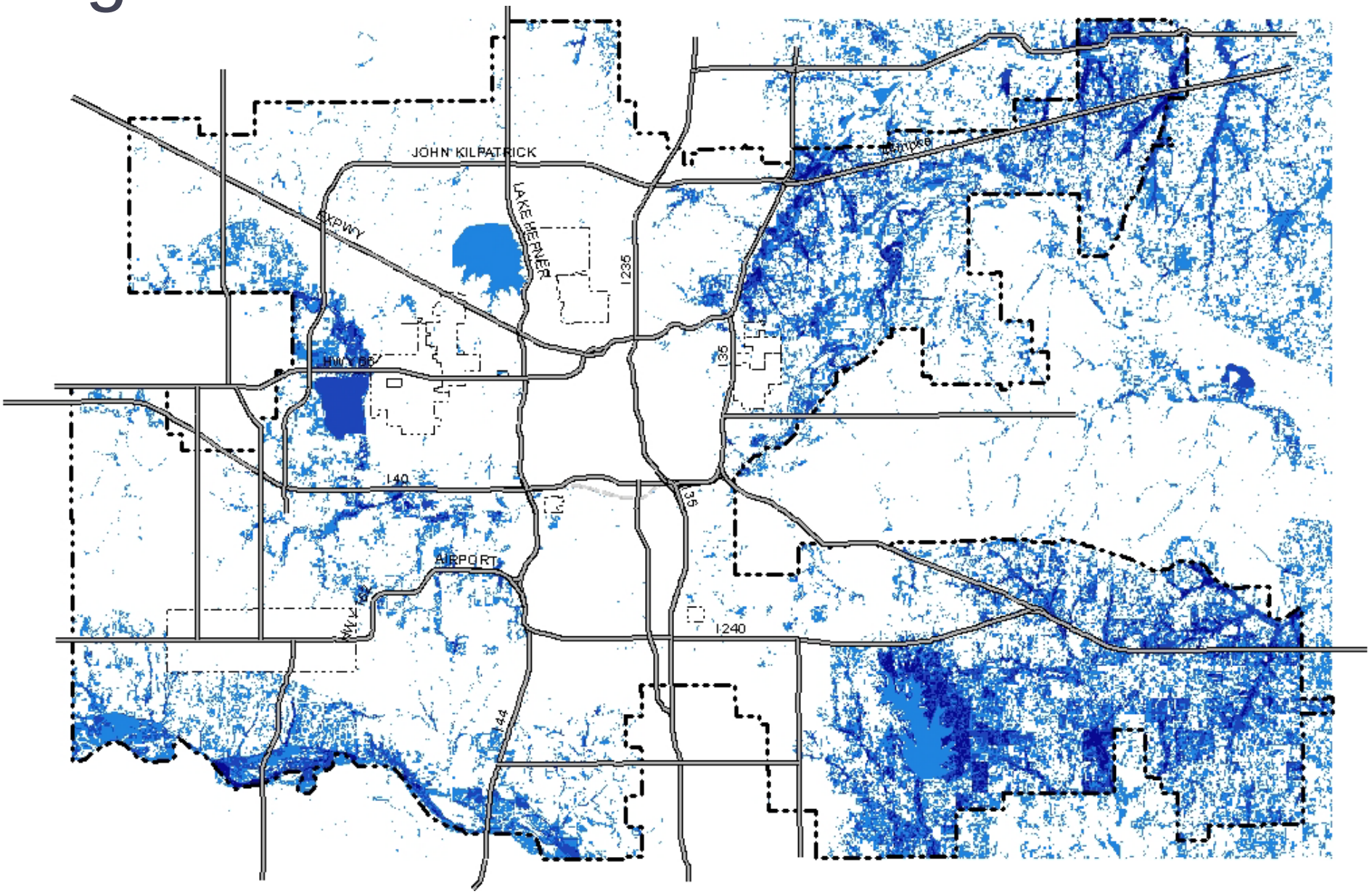
Prime farmland



Protected species habitat



greenokc critical areas



Phase 2 – Goal Development

- Draft Goals (Planning Staff)
- City Staff Working Groups
- Stakeholder Workshop
- HCOG Review
- Citizen Advisory Team Review
- Public Comment Period

Goal Setting

- Set goals and objectives that address issues
  - Seek input, support, and consensus from stakeholders (citizens, developers, landowners)
  - If possible, establish benchmarks and indicators that can be measured to show progress toward reaching goals (such as forest cover lost/gained)

"A goal without a plan is just a wish."

Antoine de Saint-Exupery

greenokc Goals

- Biological Resources
  - Biological resources are valued, protected and preserved.
- Water Resources
  - Oklahoma City enjoys a sustainable supply of clean drinking water, conserves waterways, wetlands and other water resources, and employs practices that protect water quality.
  - Flooding risk is minimized.
- Environmental Hazards
  - Environmental hazards in Oklahoma City are managed, remediated, and mitigated to minimize risks to public safety.

greenokc Goals

- Atmosphere and Climate
  - Oklahoma City consistently achieves high air quality ratings and actively pursues ways to protect air quality.
  - The built environment of Oklahoma City is designed to minimize the effects of urban heat islands.
- Agriculture and Food
  - Oklahoma City protects and supports the ability of residents and businesses to grow, process, distribute, and sell food products.

greenokc Goals

- Open Space, Connectivity and Fragmentation
  - Oklahoma City has an interconnected network of green spaces and protects its environmental assets.
- Green Building and Sustainable Development
  - Oklahoma City is a model of energy efficiency and conservation, and sustainable building practices and products.
  - Context-sensitive development and redevelopment support a healthy balance between the built and natural environments.

Phase 3 – Policy Review

- Draft Policies (Planning Staff)
- City Staff Working Groups
- C.A.T. Review
- Stakeholder Groups
- HCOG Review
- Public Comment Period
- C.A.T. Confirmation

Policies and Strategies

- Establish policies and develop strategies to address issues and pursue goals
  - Changes to municipal ordinances and subdivision regulations
    - tree preservation requirements
    - development regulations
    - conservation/mitigation requirements
    - urban agriculture ordinances

Policies and Strategies

- Changes to land use designations or zoning districts
  - environmental conservation districts limiting uses and development practices
  - use of Planned Unit Developments in specific cases
- Changes to policy and procedure beyond regulatory controls
- Changes to legislation
- Establishment of partnerships and programs

Implementation Framework

- Ensure available resources for successful implementation of recommended policies and strategies
- Identify responsible parties
- Determine priorities for tasks
- Assign timelines for each task
- Establish methods/frequency for reporting progress

Plan Implementation

- Ensure available resources for successful implementation of recommended policies and strategies
- Determine responsible parties, priorities, timelines
- Establish methods/frequency for reporting progress
- Ownership is essential to success of the plan
  - City Departments
  - Organizations
  - Businesses
  - Agencies
  - Members of the community

“Invest in the future because that is where you are going to spend the rest of your life.”
Habeeb Akande

Brainstorm how an Urban Forester can contribute to the comprehensive planning process

- Data / studies / resources
- Indicators and Targets
- Strategies
- Partnerships & Programs
- Other ways?