



Proposed Urban Area Criteria for the 2020 Census

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Proposed Urban Area Criteria for the 2020 Census

Increase the
Minimum
Threshold to
Qualify as an
Urban Area

*Total housing units
or population*

1

Cease
Distinguishing
Different Types of
Urban Areas

2

Reduce the
Maximum
Distance of Jumps

3

No Longer Include
Low Density Hop
or Jump “Corridor”
in the Urban Area

4

Adoption of
Housing Unit
Density Threshold
for Qualification of
Census Blocks

5

Use of LEHD data
for Splitting
Agglomerations

6

Proposed Urban Area Criteria for the 2020 Census

1

**Increase the Minimum Threshold
to Qualify as an Urban Area**



Population: 10,000

OR



Housing Units: 4,000

2

**Cease Distinguishing
Different Types of Urban Areas**

Urban Clusters: Urban Areas
with population of 2,500 to
49,999

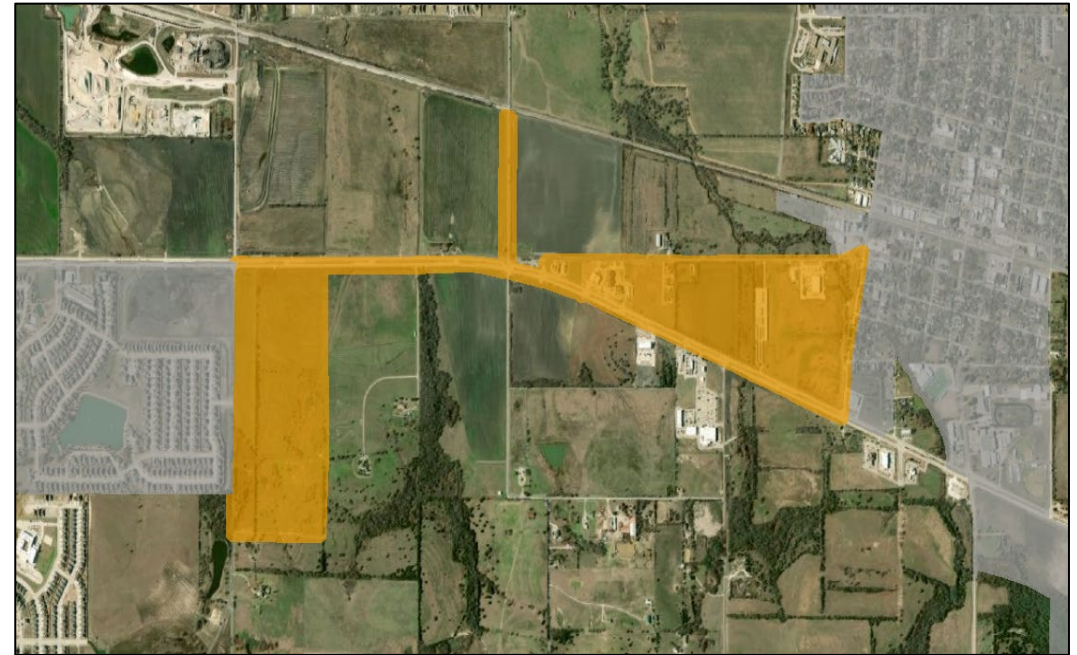
Urbanized Areas: Urban Areas
with population of 50,000 or
more

Proposed Urban Area Criteria for the 2020 Census

3 Reduce the Maximum Distance of Jumps

- From 2.5 miles back down to **1.5 miles**
 - Extended to 2.5 miles in 2000
 - Impervious surface added in 2010
 - Combination led to over-bounding in 2010
- Excluded territory still extends hops and jumps to maximum of 5 miles
 - Water and wetlands

4 No Longer Include Low Density Hop or Jump “Corridor” blocks in the Urban Area



- 2010 Jump Blocks
- 2010 Qualified Urban Blocks

Proposed Urban Area Criteria for the 2020 Census

5

Adoption of Housing Unit Density Threshold for Qualification of Census Blocks

385 housing units
(occupied or vacant)
per square mile

More direct measure
of developed
landscape

Ability to update
extent of Urban Areas
between censuses

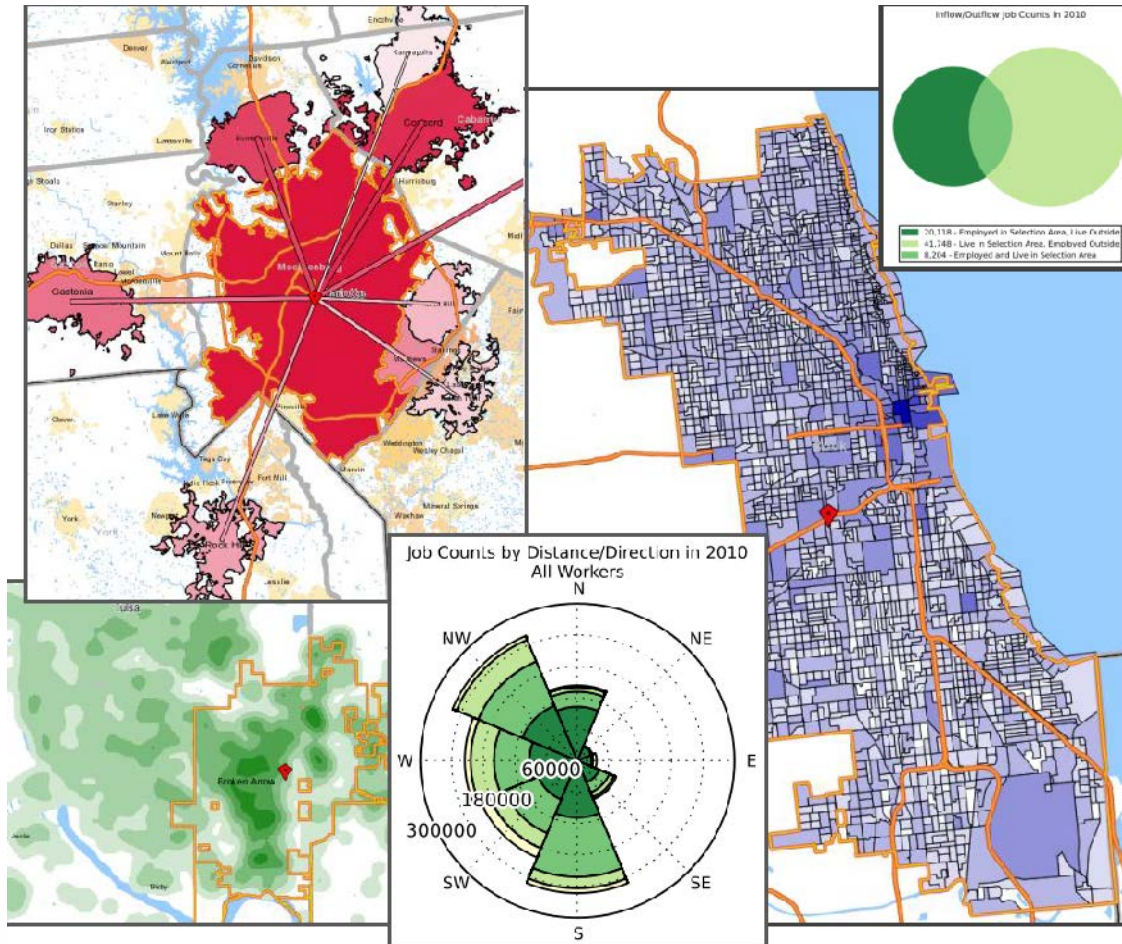
Equivalent to
1 housing unit
per 1.6 acres

Equivalent to
approximately
1,000 persons
per square
mile

Census block-level
housing unit counts
are invariant

Proposed Urban Area Criteria: Splitting

6 Utilization of Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) data



OD

Filename of the OD datasets are described by the following templates

[ST]_od_[PART]_[TYPE]_[YEAR].csv.gz where

[ST] = lowercase, 2-letter postal code for a chosen state

[PART] = Part of the state file, can have a value of either "main" or "aux". Complimentary parts of the state file, the main part includes jobs with both workplace and residence in the state and the aux part includes jobs with the workplace in the state and the residence outside of the state.

[TYPE] = Job Type, can have a value of "JT00" for All Jobs, "JT01" for Primary Jobs, "JT02" for All Private Jobs, "JT03" for Private Primary Jobs, "JT04" for All Federal Jobs, or "JT05" for Federal Primary Jobs.

[YEAR] = Year of job data. Can have the value of 2002-2018 for most states.

As an example the main OD file of Primary Jobs in 2007 for California would be the file: ca_od_main_JT01_2007.csv.gz

The structure of the OD files is as follows:

Origin-Destination (OD) File Structure			
Pos	Variable	Type	Explanation
1	w_geocode	Char15	Workplace Census Block Code
2	h_geocode	Char15	Residence Census Block Code
3	S000	Num	Total number of jobs
4	SA01	Num	Number of jobs of workers age 29 or younger ¹⁷
5	SA02	Num	Number of jobs for workers age 30 to 54 ¹⁷
6	SA03	Num	Number of jobs for workers age 55 or older ¹⁷
7	SE01	Num	Number of jobs with earnings \$1250/month or less
8	SE02	Num	Number of jobs with earnings \$1251/month to \$3333/month
9	SE03	Num	Number of jobs with earnings greater than \$3333/month
10	SI01	Num	Number of jobs in Goods Producing industry sectors
11	SI02	Num	Number of jobs in Trade, Transportation, and Utilities industry sectors
12	SI03	Num	Number of jobs in All Other Services industry sectors
13	createdate	Char	Date on which data was created, formatted as YYYYMMDD

LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES) Dataset Structure (V 7.5)

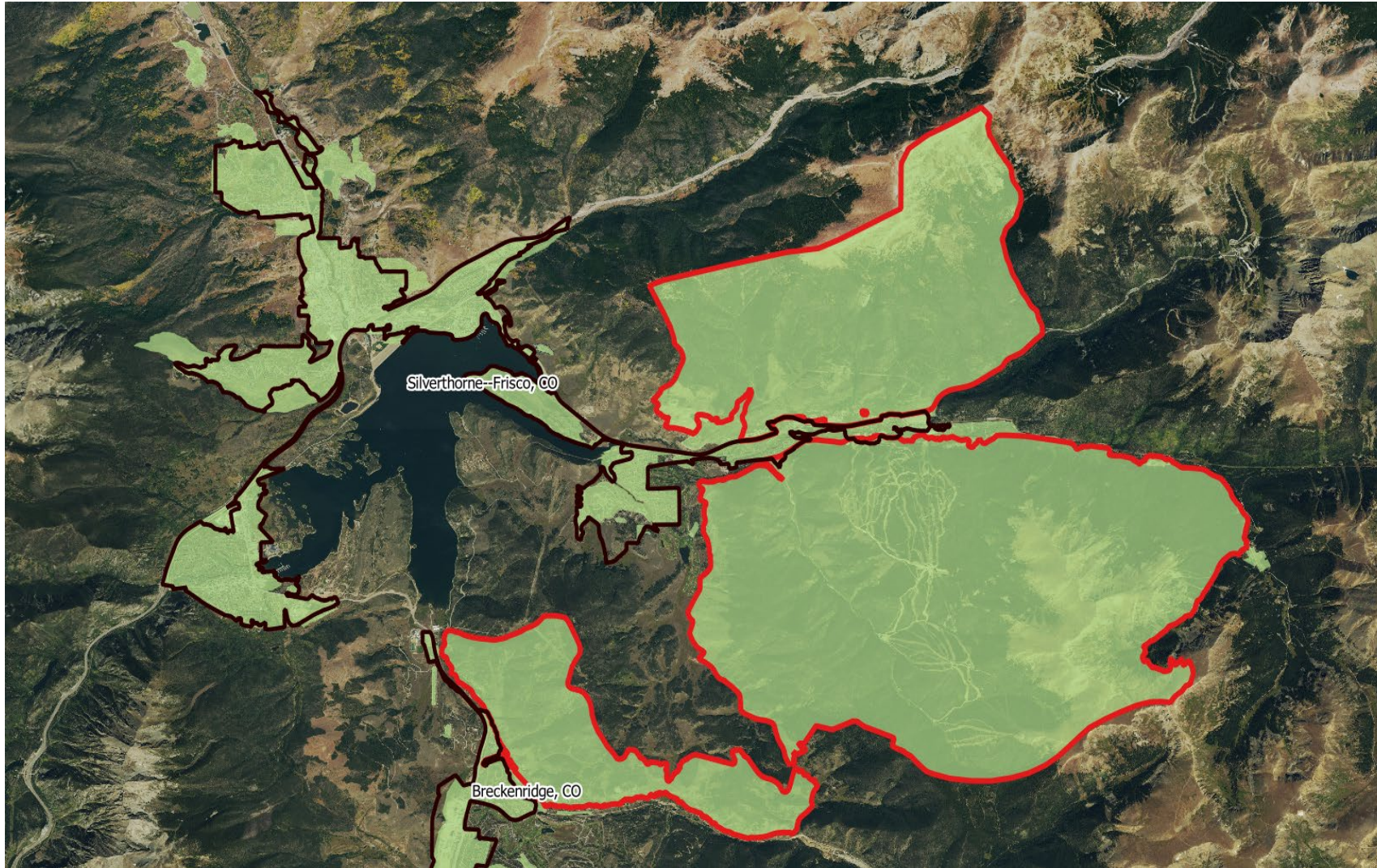
<https://lehd.ces.census.gov/data/>

Possible Criteria Changes: NLCD



New National Land Cover Database (2019) released since Proposed Urban Area Criteria was published

Possible Criteria Changes: Group Quarters



The proposed criteria specified automatically qualifying blocks with Group Quarters as urban if they were adjacent to already qualified urban area. During criteria testing, this led to large blocks with low housing and population expanding the urban areas, sometimes by miles. Further testing is continuing.

Possible Criteria Changes: Minimum Threshold

Minimum Urban Area
Qualification:

5,000 Persons
or
2,000 Housing Units

Oxford, NC

Dense “downtown” core
surrounded by lower
density development



Possible Criteria Changes: High Density Cores

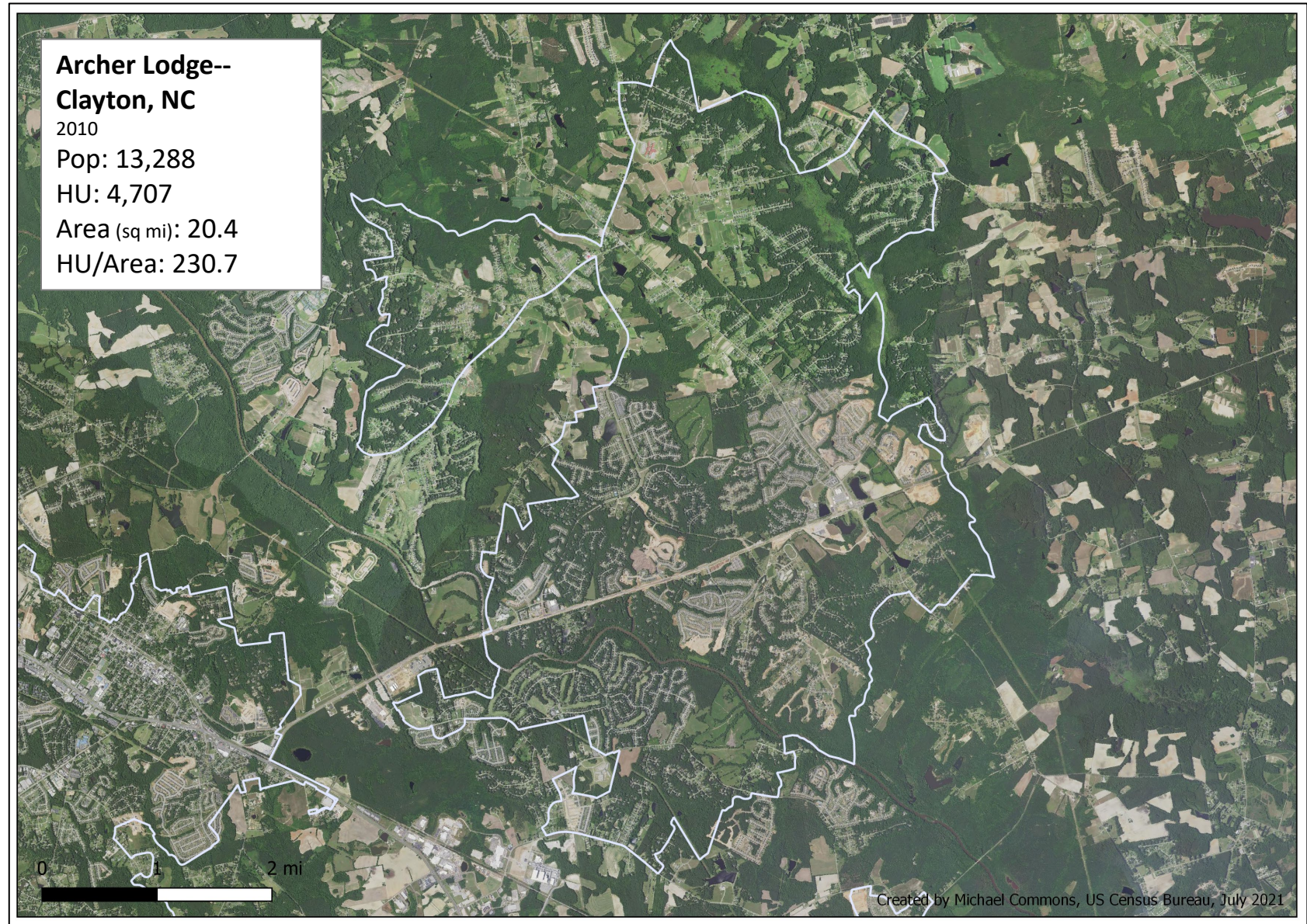
Minimum Urban Area
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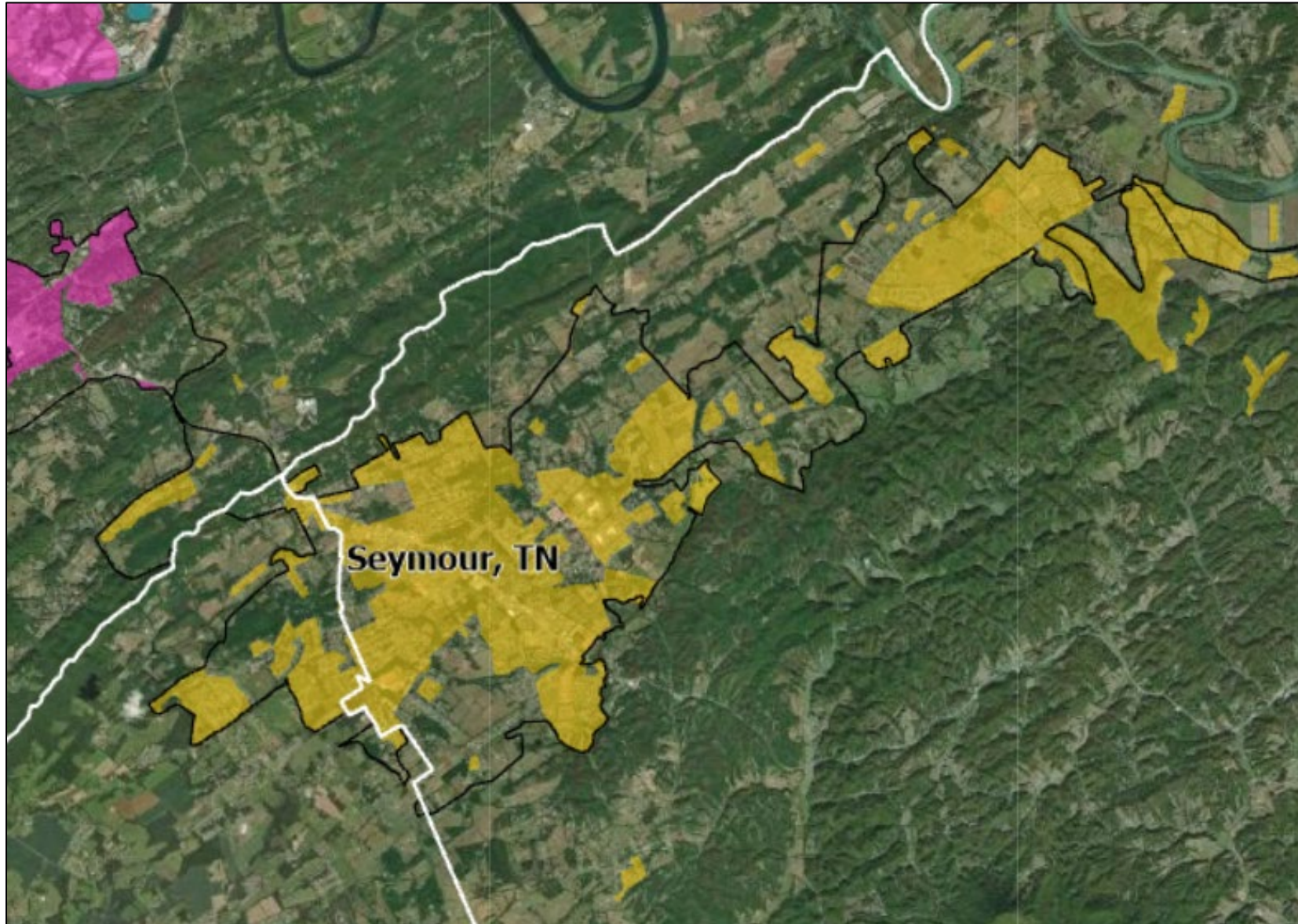
2,000 Housing Units

Archer Lodge – Clayton, NC

No dense core. Suburb of
Raleigh, mostly made up of
subdivisions



Possible Criteria Changes: Housing Unit Density



Possible Criteria Changes: Housing Unit Density

Density Classes

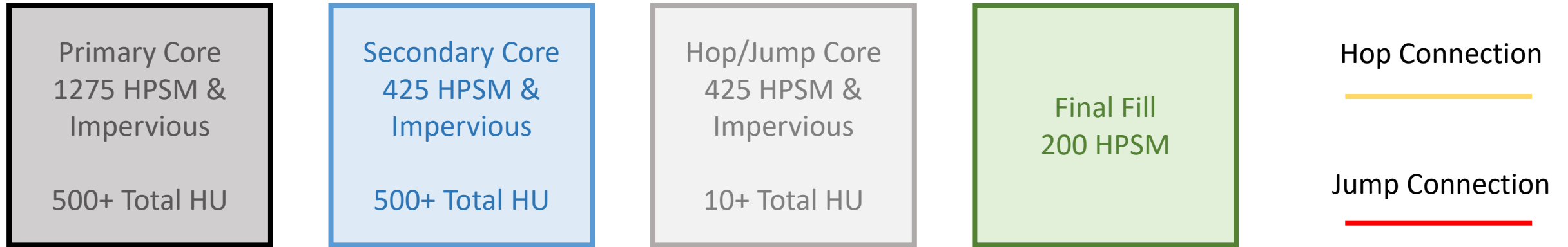
HU/Acre	Acres/HU	HU/Sq mi	Pop/Sq mi	Acres/Pop	Pop/Acre
2.00	0.5	1,280	3,328	0.19	5.20
1.00	1.0	640	1,664	0.38	2.60
0.67	1.5	427	1,109	0.58	1.73
0.60	1.7	385	1,001	0.64	1.56
0.50	2.0	320	832	0.77	1.30
0.40	2.5	256	666	0.96	1.04
0.33	3.0	213	555	1.15	0.87

Possible Criteria Changes: Housing Unit Density

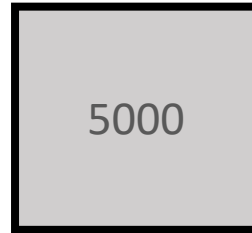
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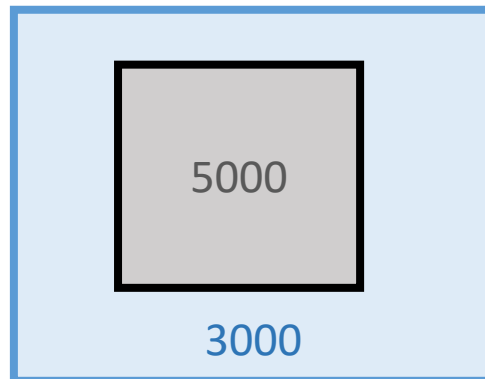
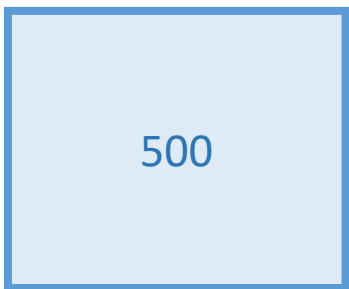
Possible Criteria Changes: Housing Unit Density



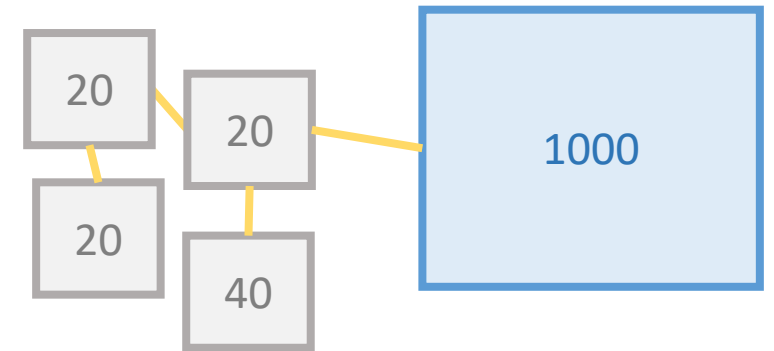
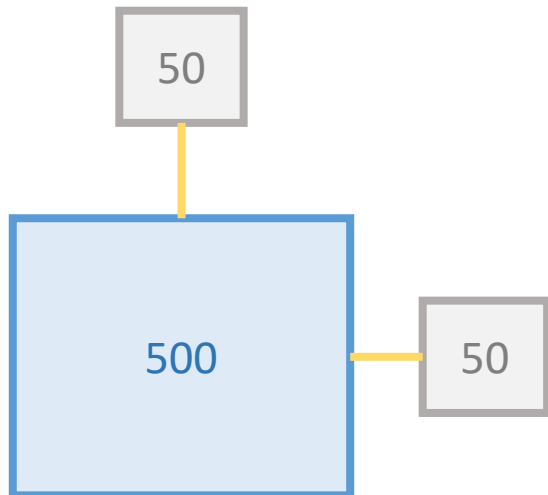
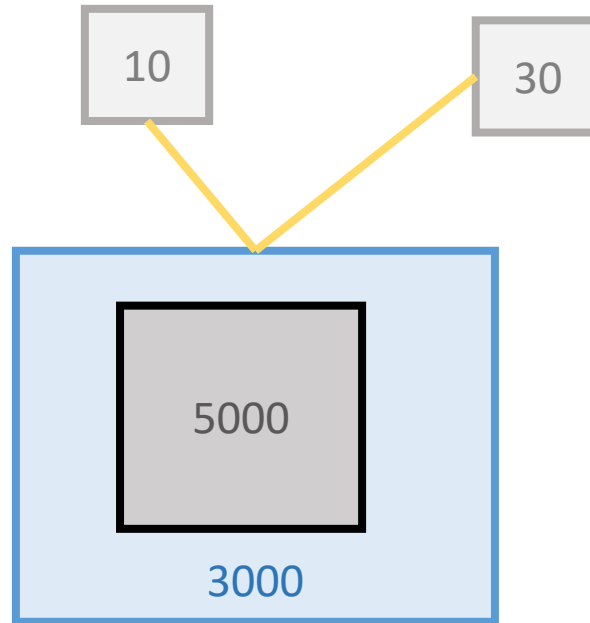
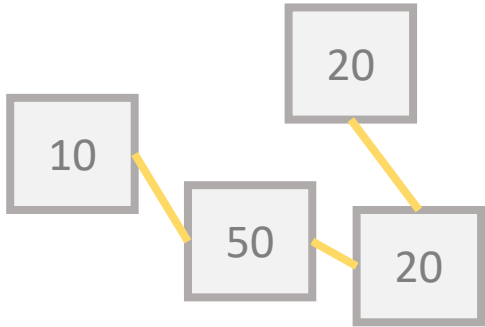
Primary Cores



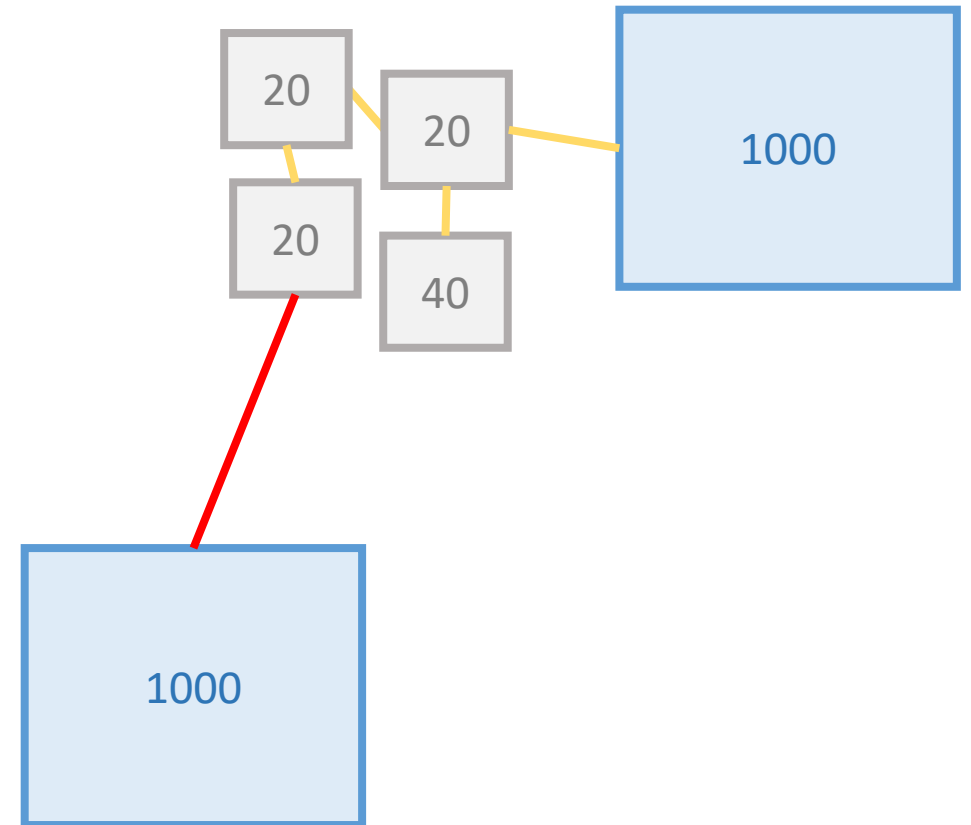
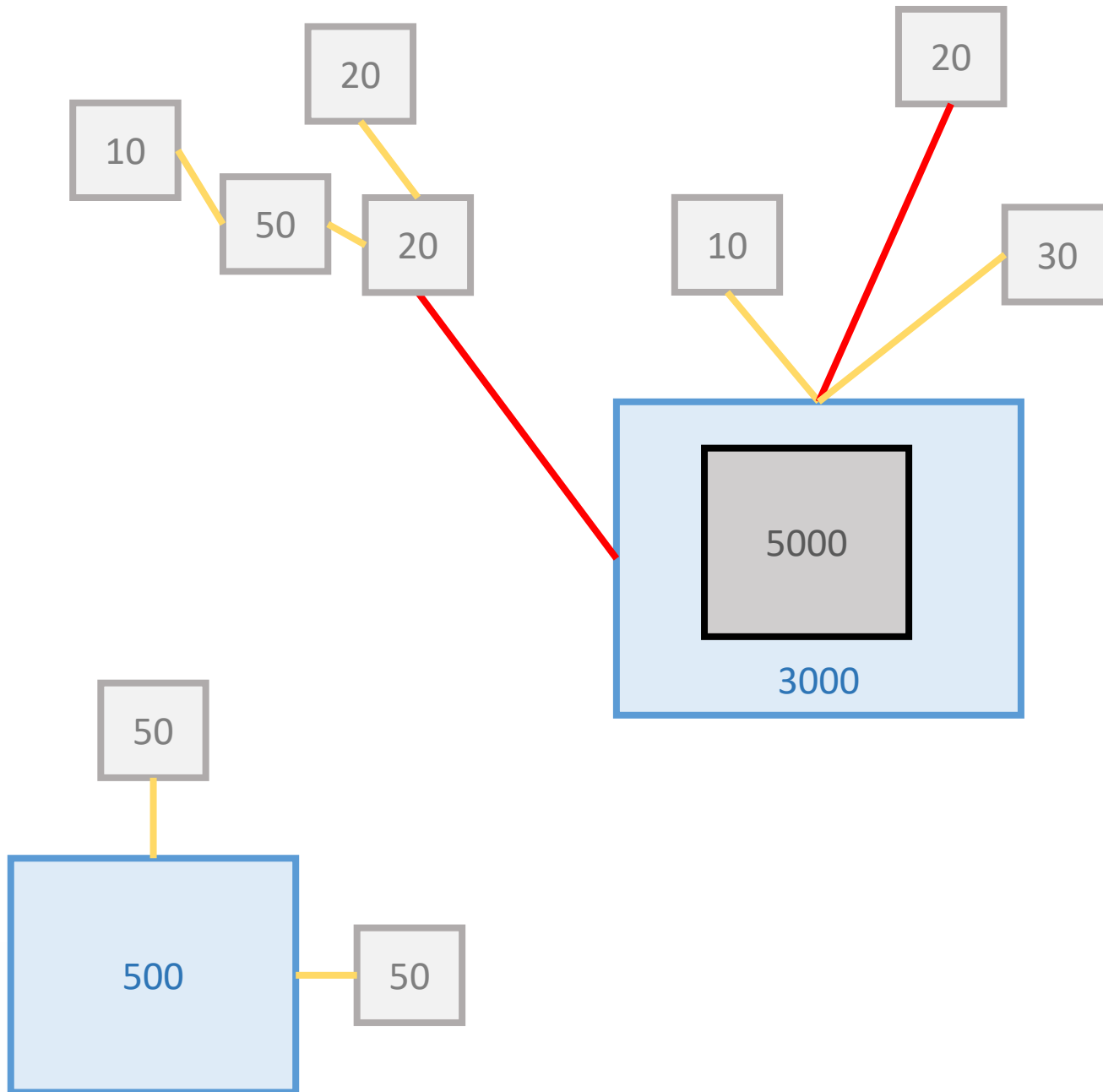
Secondary Cores



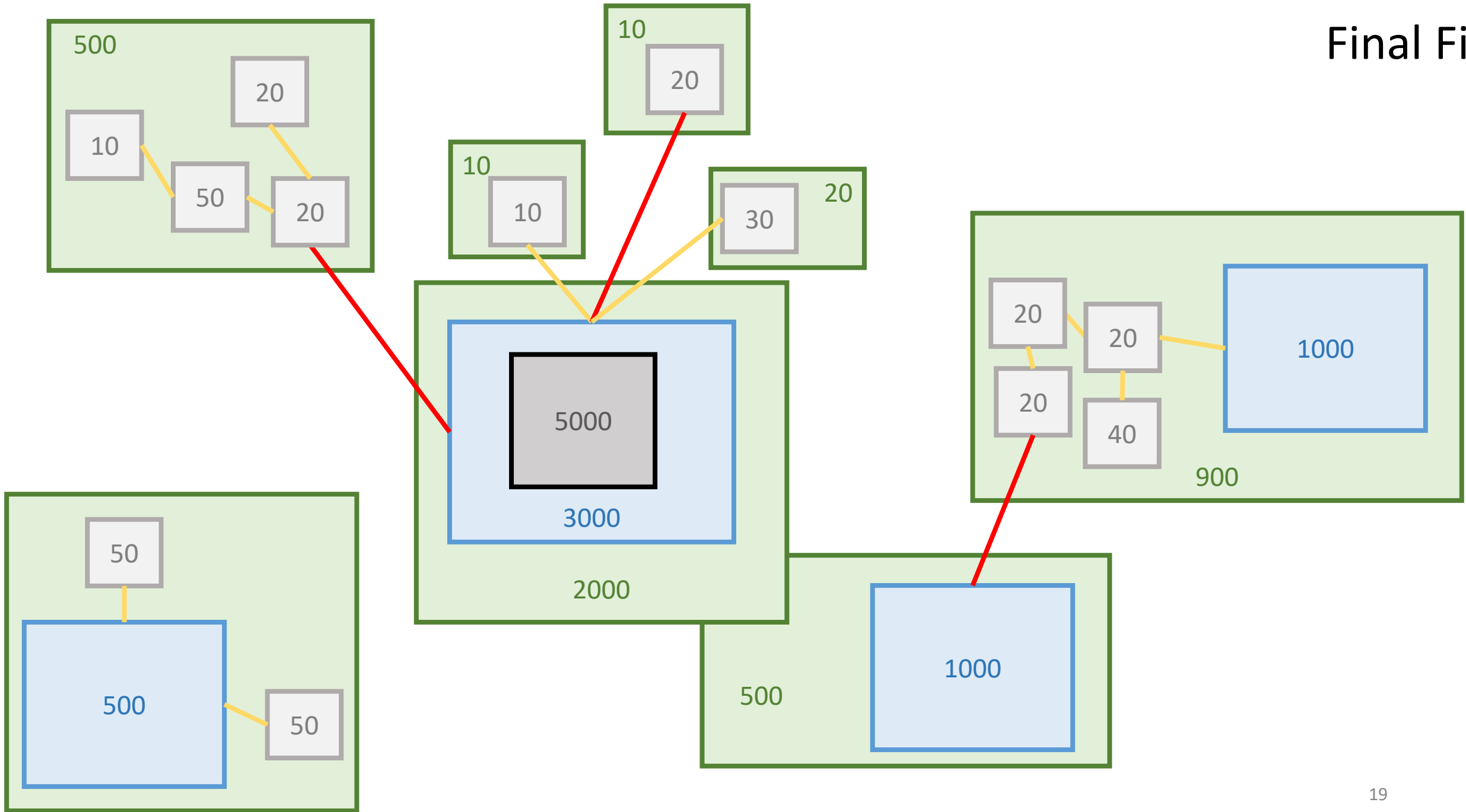
Hop Cores and Connections



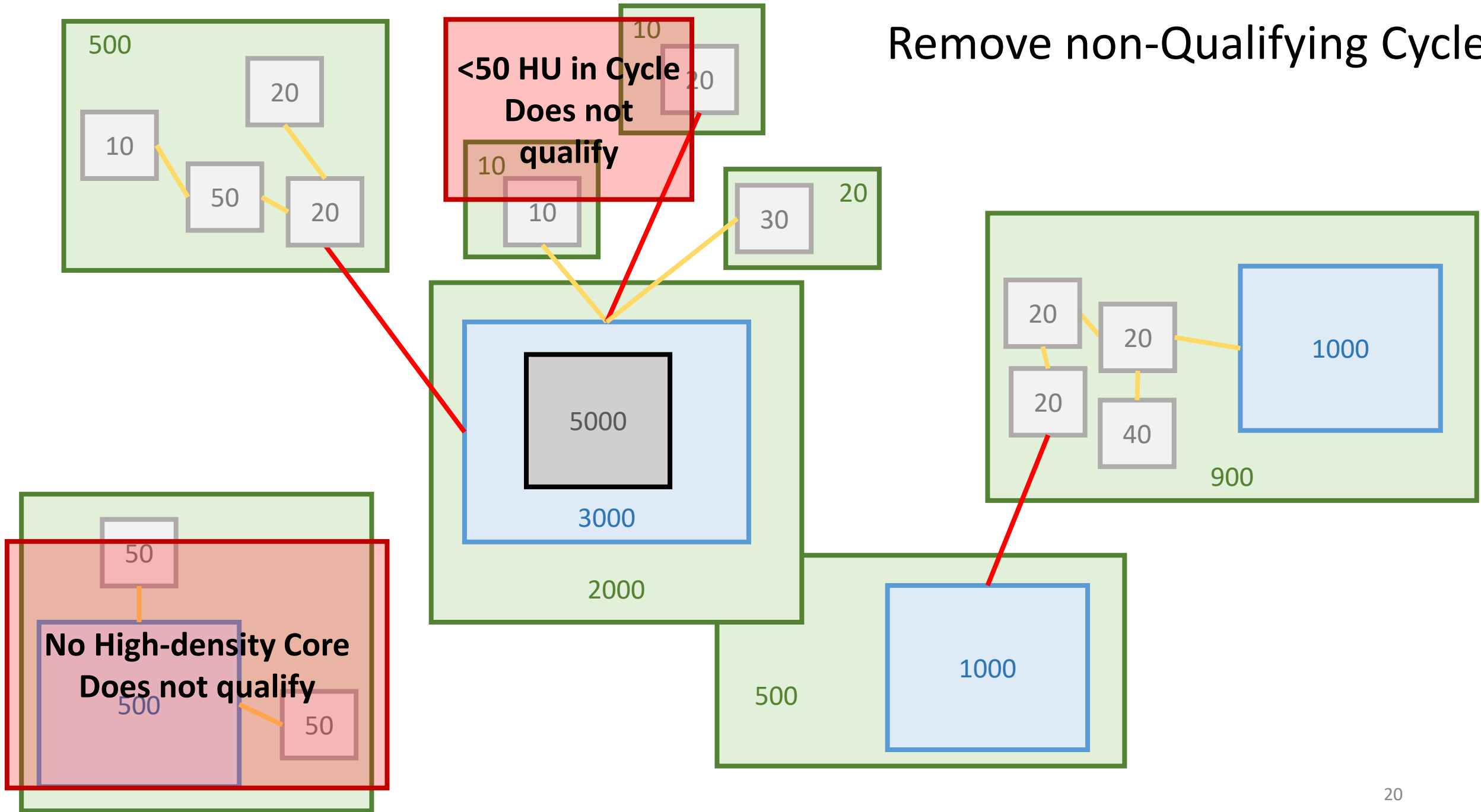
Jump Cores and Connections



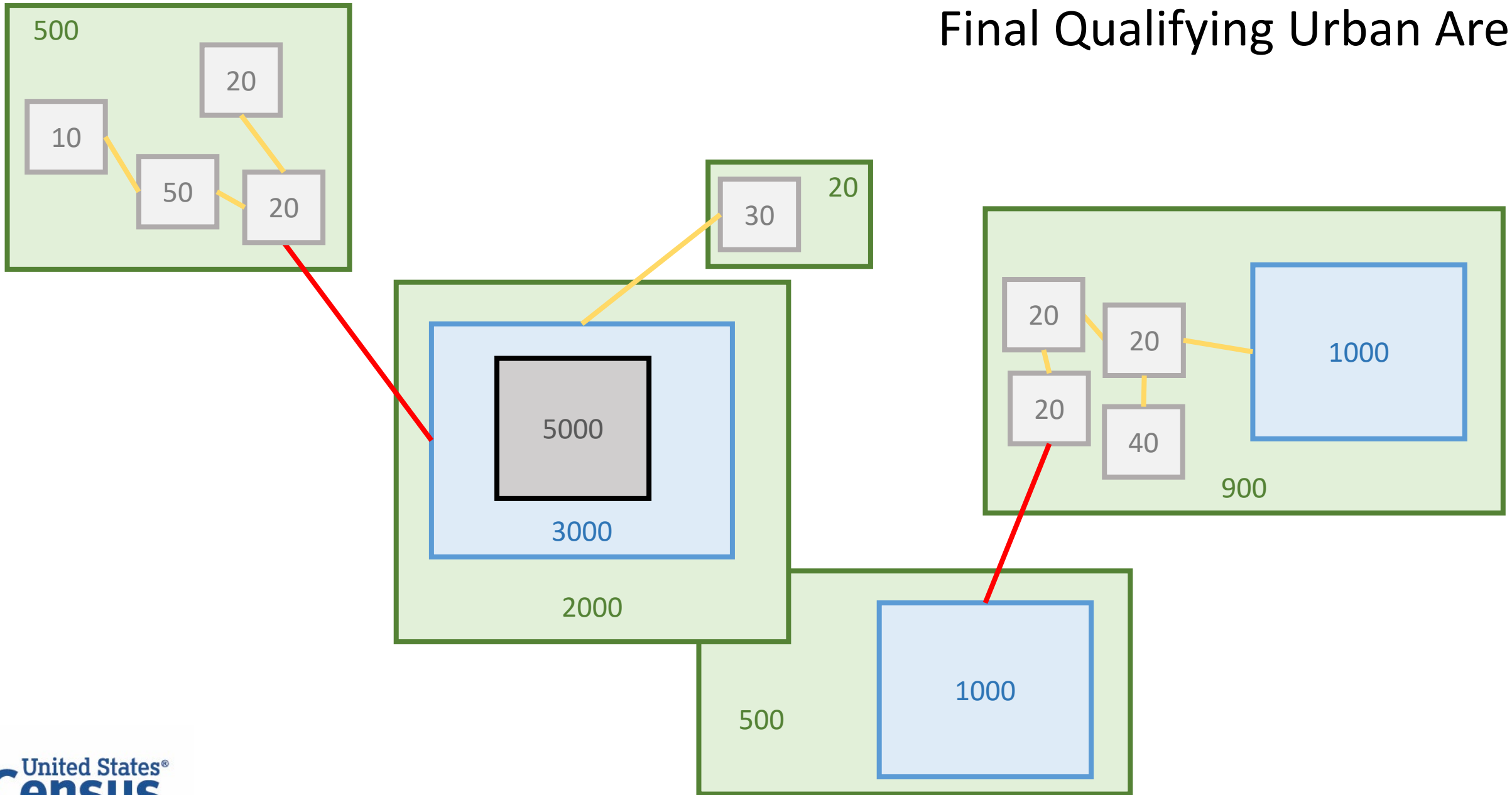
Final Fill



Remove non-Qualifying Cycles



Final Qualifying Urban Area



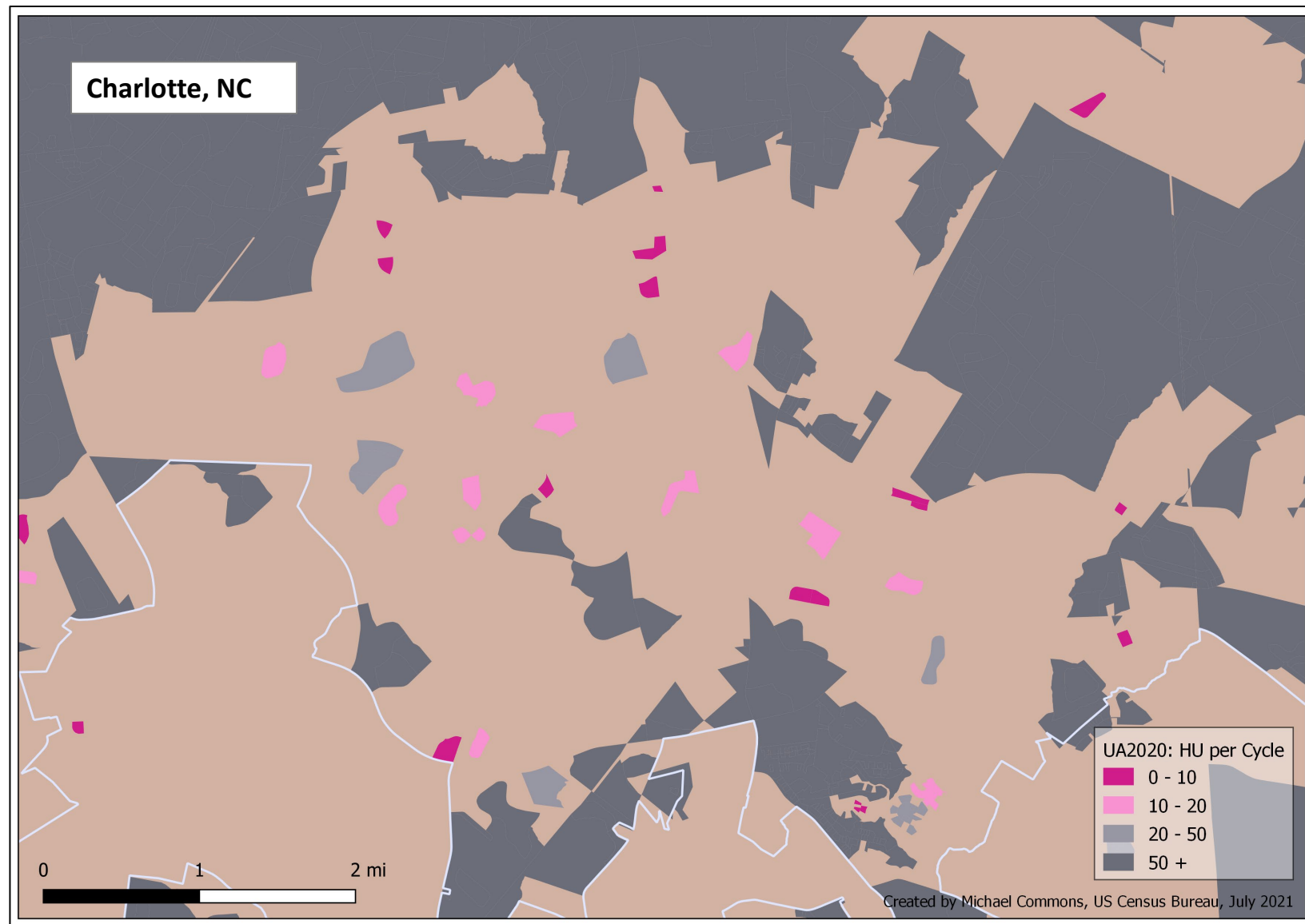
Parameterized Urban Area Criteria

Criteria	2010 Final	2020 FRN-Proposed	2020 Testing
Minimum Threshold for UA Qualification	2,500 persons	10,000 persons OR 4,000 HU	5,000 persons OR 2,000 HU
Minimum Threshold for Block Qualification*	1,000 PPSM and 500 PPSM	385 HPSM	1275 HPSM, 425 HPSM, 200 HPSM
Minimum Threshold for Core to be Hopped from	1,000 persons	385 HU	500 HU
Minimum Threshold for Core to be Jumped from	1,500 persons	577 HU	500 HU
Maximum Jump Distance	2.5 Miles	1.5 Miles	1.5 Miles
Hop and Jump "Corridors"	Included	Not included	Not included
Minimum Threshold for Final Cycle Inclusion	n/a	1 HU	50 HU

* Impervious surface qualification is consistent for all criteria

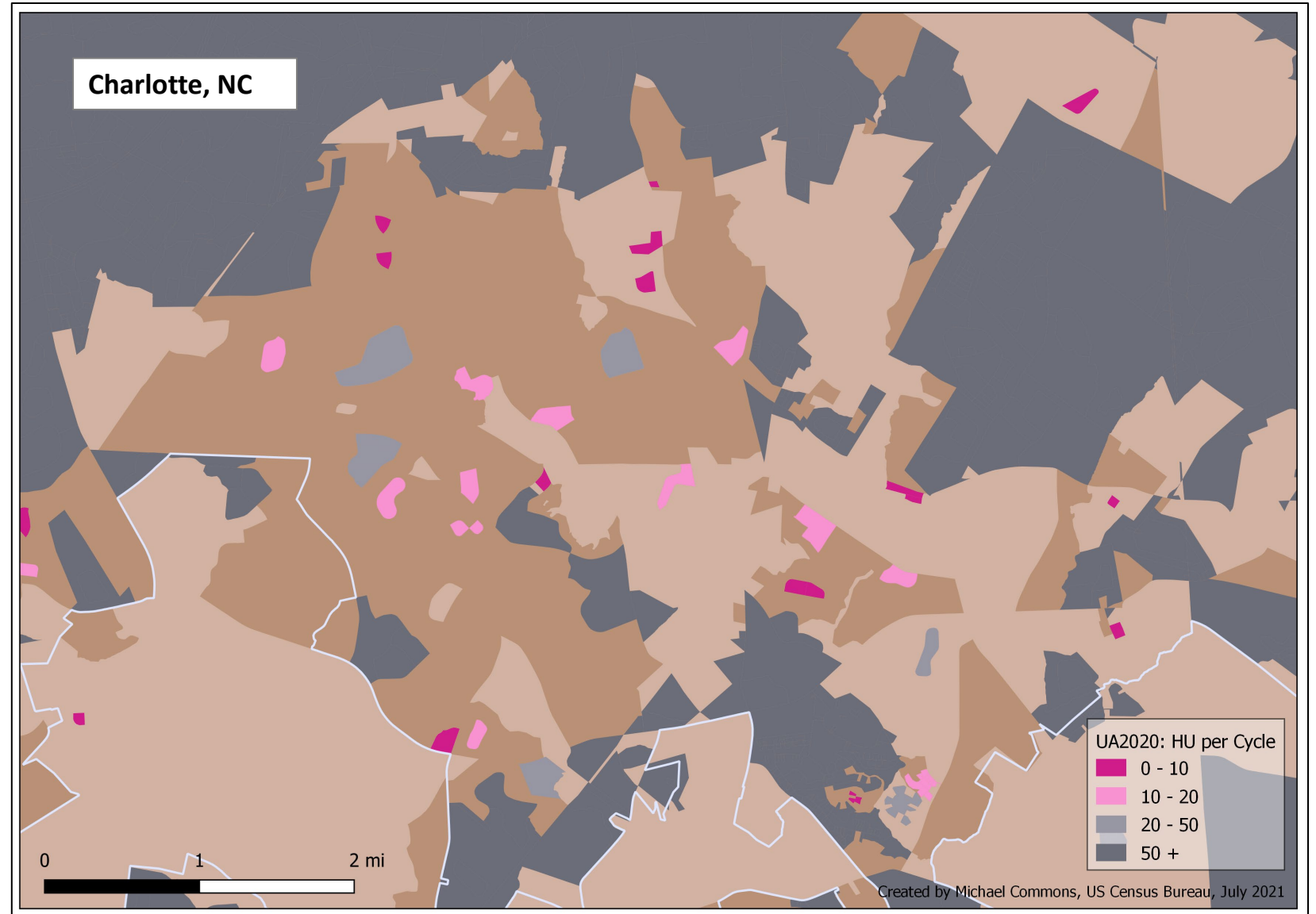
Possible Criteria Changes

- Minimum Urban Area Qualification
 - 5,000 Persons or 2,000 Housing Units
- High Density Cores
 - 1,275 HPSM (0.5 acres per HU)
 - 500 Persons
- Secondary Cores
 - 425 HPSM (3 acres per HU)
- Final Fill
 - 200 HPSM (3 acres per HU)
- Minimum Cycle Size
 - 50 Housing Units



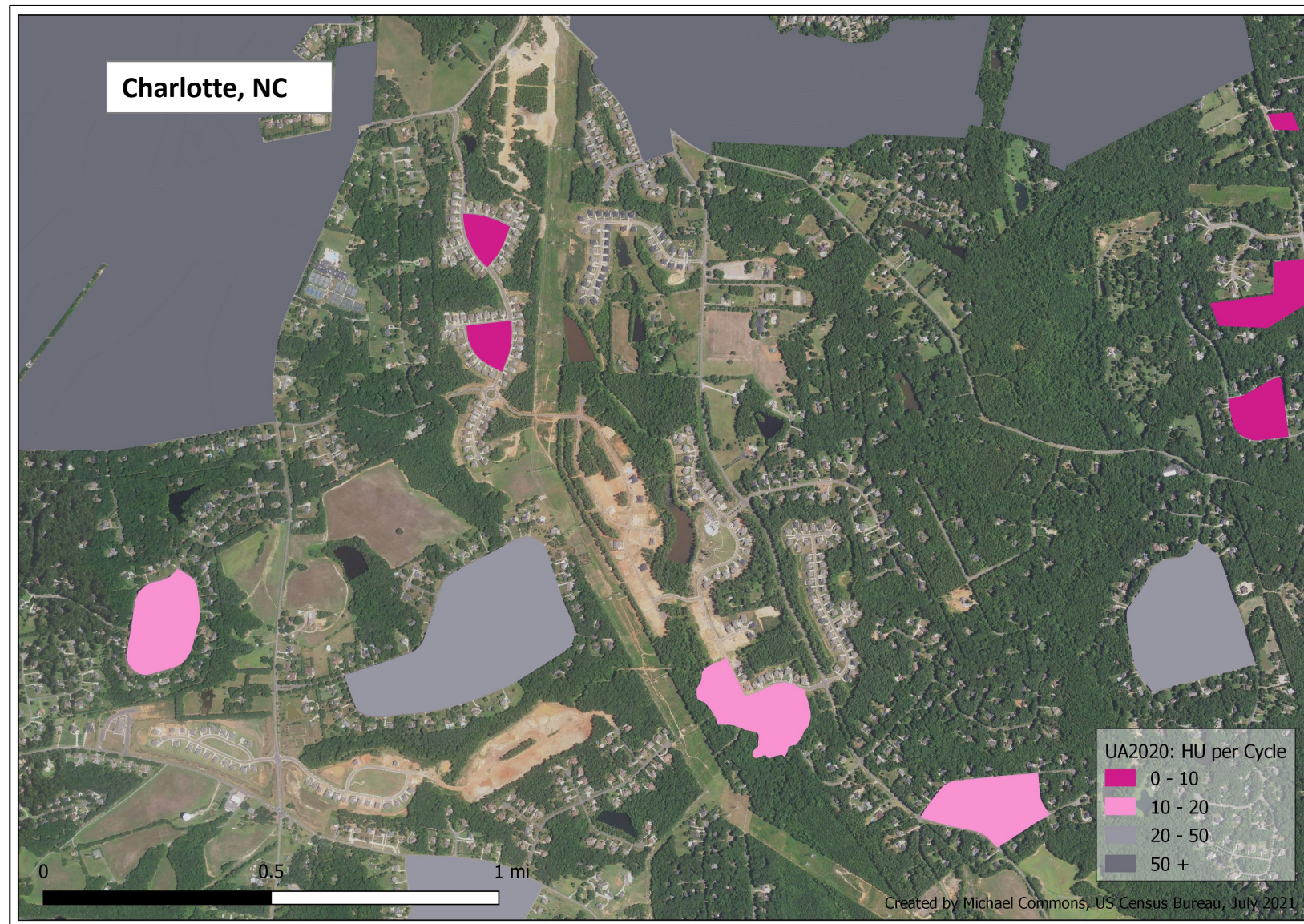
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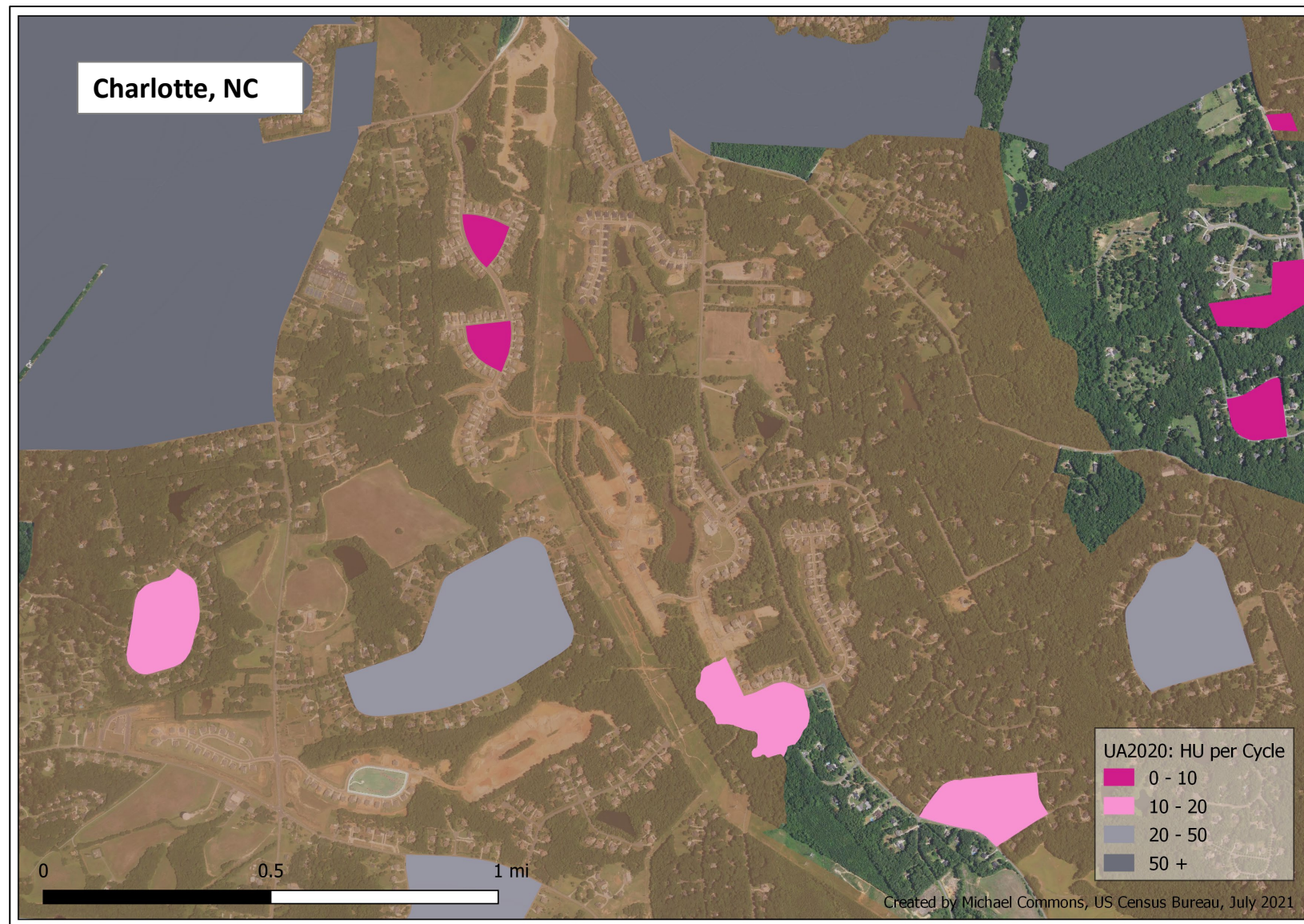
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Schedule

Spring 2021	Publish Proposed Urban/Rural Criteria in the Federal Register Notice
Summer 2021	Review comments on Proposed Urban/Rural Criteria published in the Federal Register Notice
Winter 2021-2	Publish Final Urban/Rural Criteria in the Federal Register Notice
Summer 2022	Publish Federal Register Notice announcing qualifying Urban Areas

Contact Us

Send questions and comments to us at
geo.urban@census.gov

Proposed Criteria Federal Register Notice:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/02/19/2021-03412/urban-areas-for-the-2020-census-proposed-criteria>

**Census Bureau Urban and Rural page with link to
*2020 Proposed Urban Area Criteria Viewer:***

<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/geography/guidance/geo-areas/urban-rural.html>