

Access to Services In Rural Southwest Virginia: A Transportation Issue



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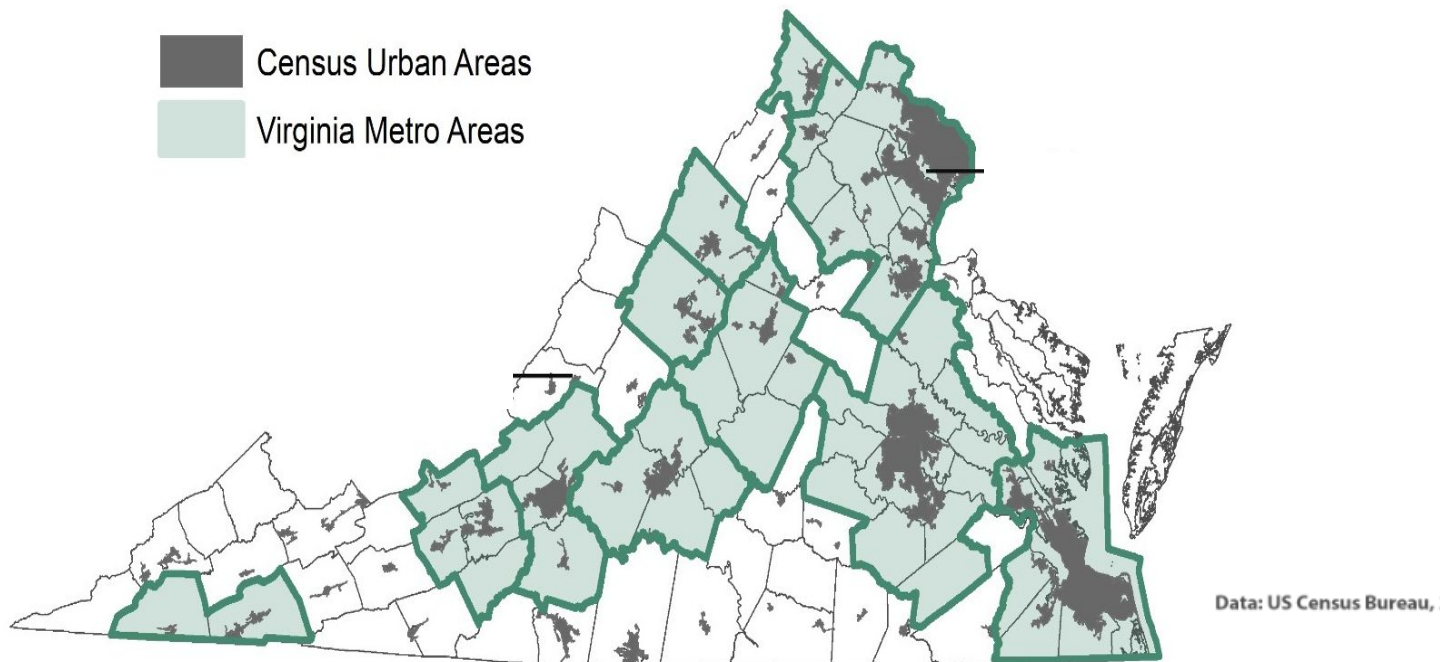
Issue: Access to Services

- Lots of services exist in Southwest Virginia
 - Medical (with limits)
 - State-provided services
- Still, services are “unavailable” unless citizens have the means to access and benefit from them
- Access is the gap which we address



Rural Virginia

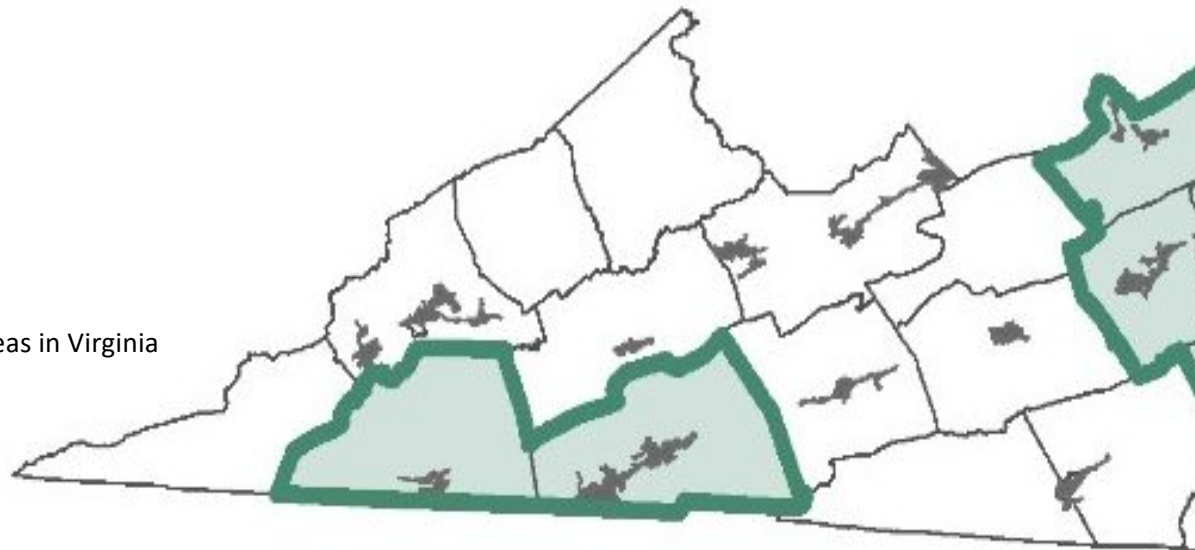
- Multiple Definitions of “Rural”
- Census Bureau: “Any place outside a town, city, or ‘urban cluster’ with more than 2,500 residents.”



Rural Southwest Virginia

- SW Virginia is Mostly Rural – population of 392,112
 - 65 residents per square mile (compared to 202 per square mile state-wide)

White Areas = Rural Areas in Virginia



Data: US Census Bureau,

Limiting Factors – Access

- Cost of Car Ownership - \$9K Annually
- Single Vehicle Homes
- No Vehicle Homes
- Financial Limitations – Insurance, Gasoline
- No License:
 - Elderly
 - Substance Abuse (Opioids / Alcohol)
 - Severe Disability



Limiting Factors – Distance & Weather

- Narrow and Winding Roads
- Tazewell to Salem – 121 Miles (2 hrs); RT gas \$18-\$36
- Clintwood to Abingdon – 60 Miles (1 hr 22 mins); RT gas \$10-\$18
- Grundy to Roanoke – 178 Miles (3 hrs); RT gas \$27-\$52
- Jonesville to Johnson City – 67 Miles (1 hr 22 mins); RT gas \$10-\$20



<https://www.distance-cities.com>

Limiting Factors-Medical Shortage

- SW Virginia has a health care workforce shortage
- Critical shortage of behavioral health providers
- Requires traveling long distances to access specialty health care



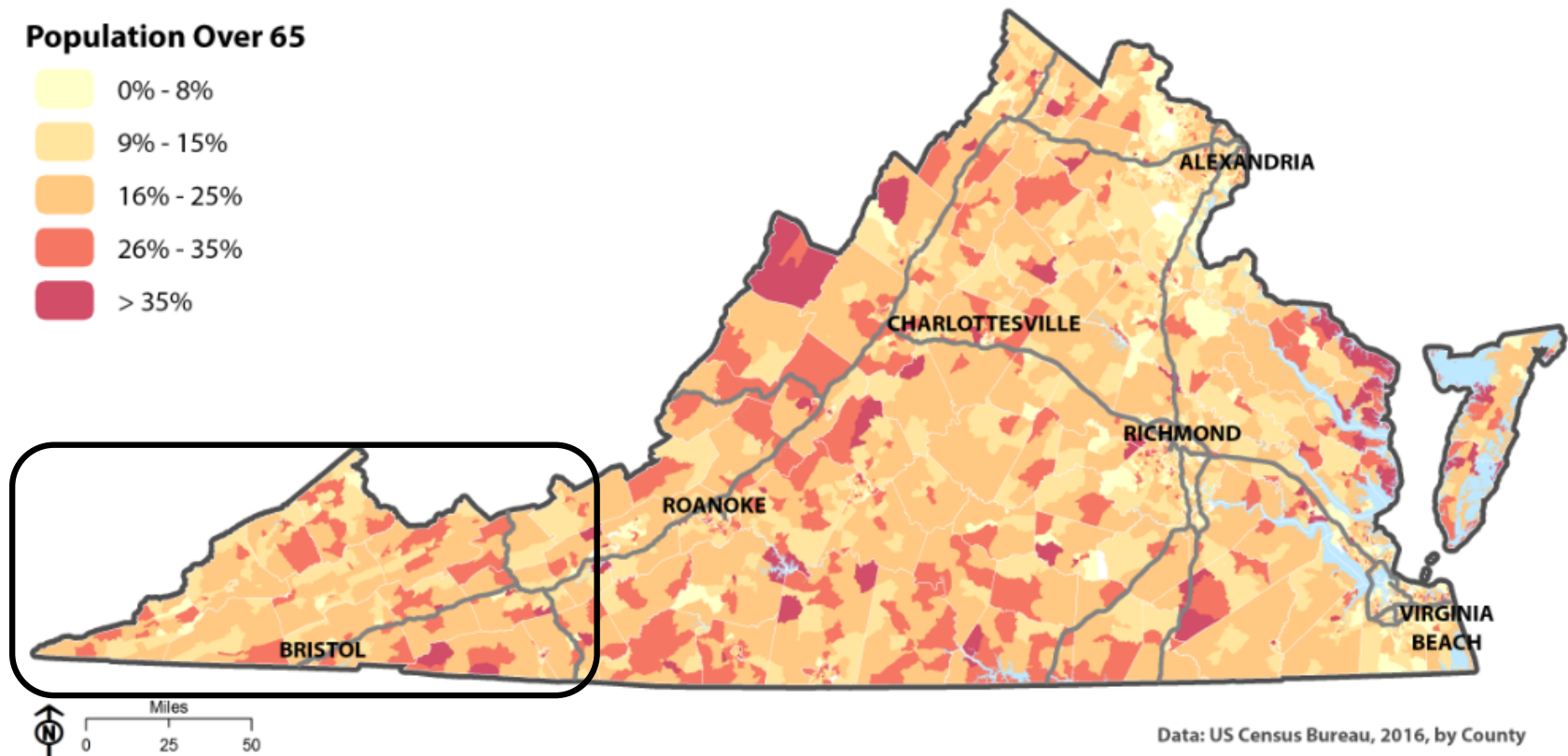
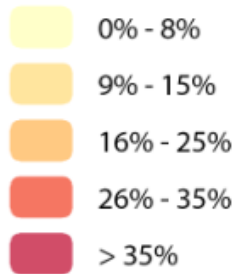
Impact On:

- The Elderly
- Disabled Citizens
- Low-Income Individuals and Families
- Veterans



Impact On: Elderly

Population Over 65

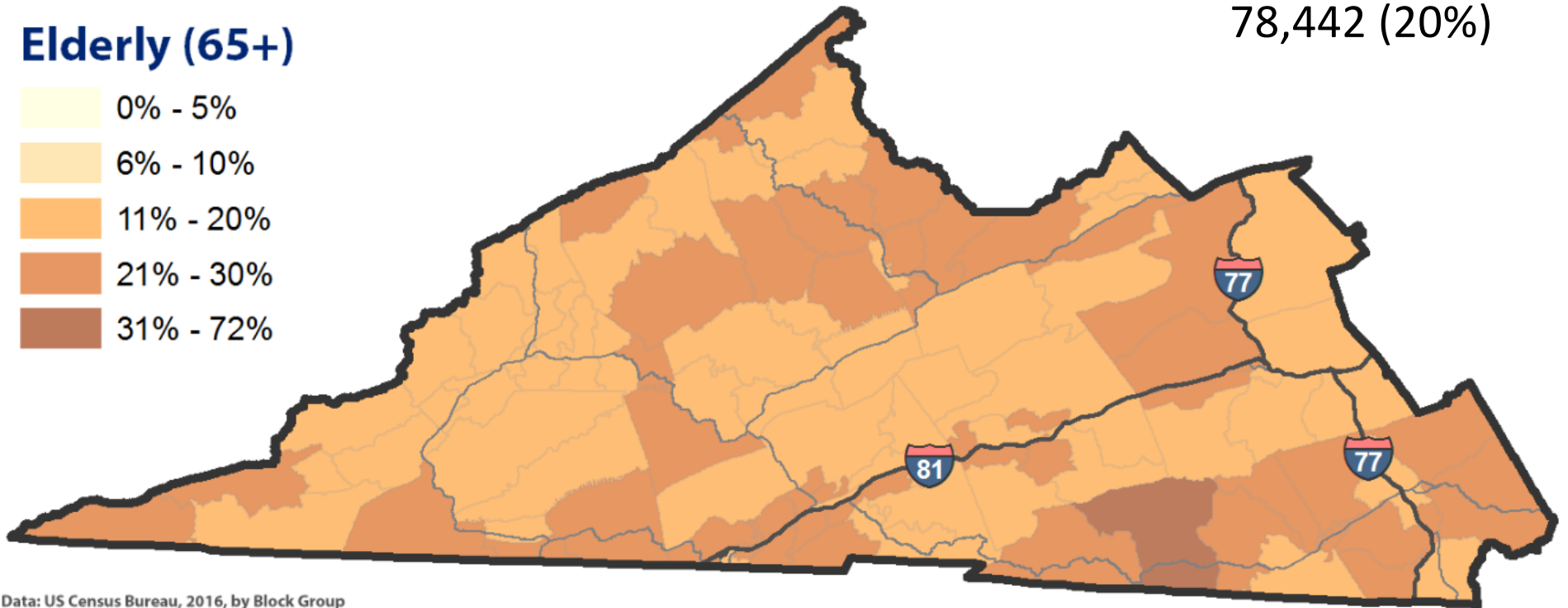
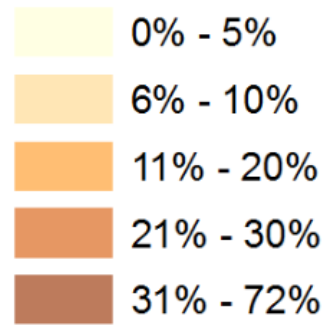


Data: US Census Bureau, 2016, by County

Impact On: Elderly

SW Virginia:
78,442 (20%)

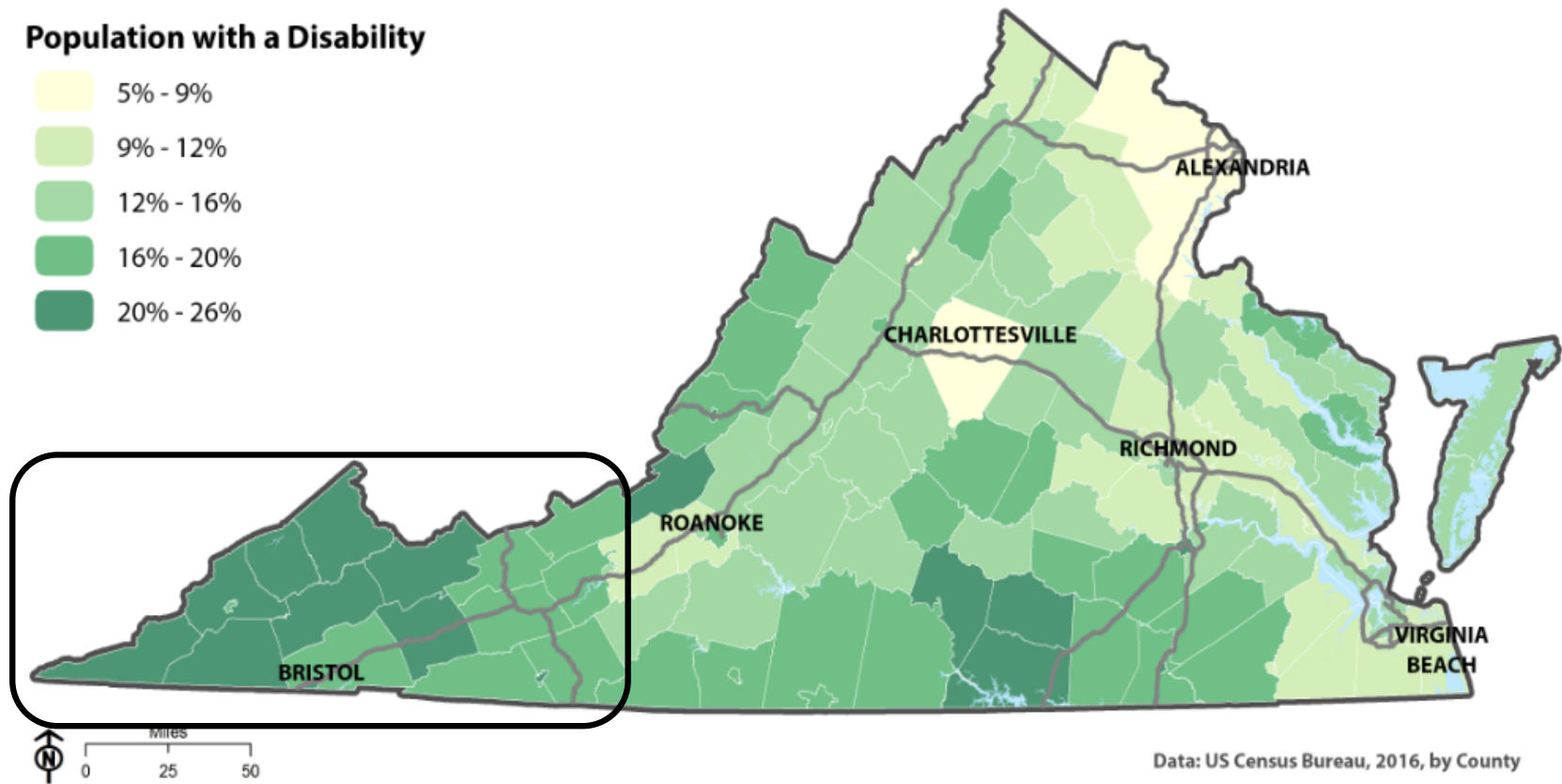
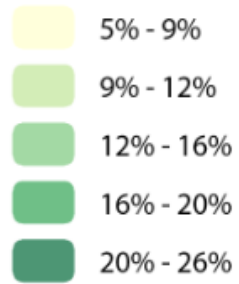
Elderly (65+)



Data: US Census Bureau, 2016, by Block Group

Impact On: Disabled

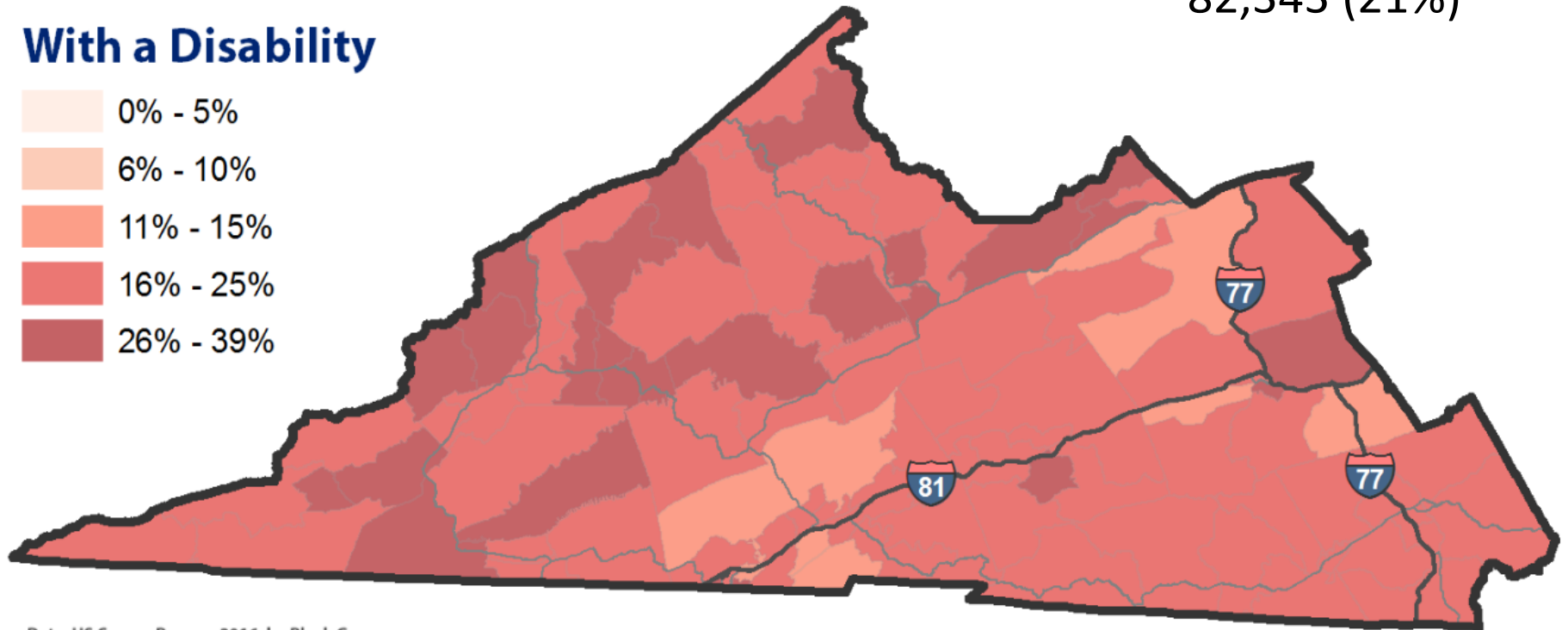
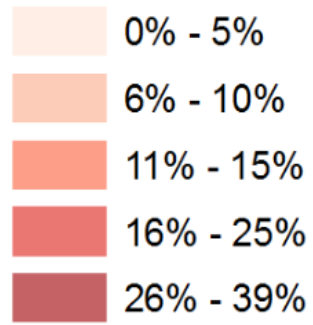
Population with a Disability



Impact On: Disabled

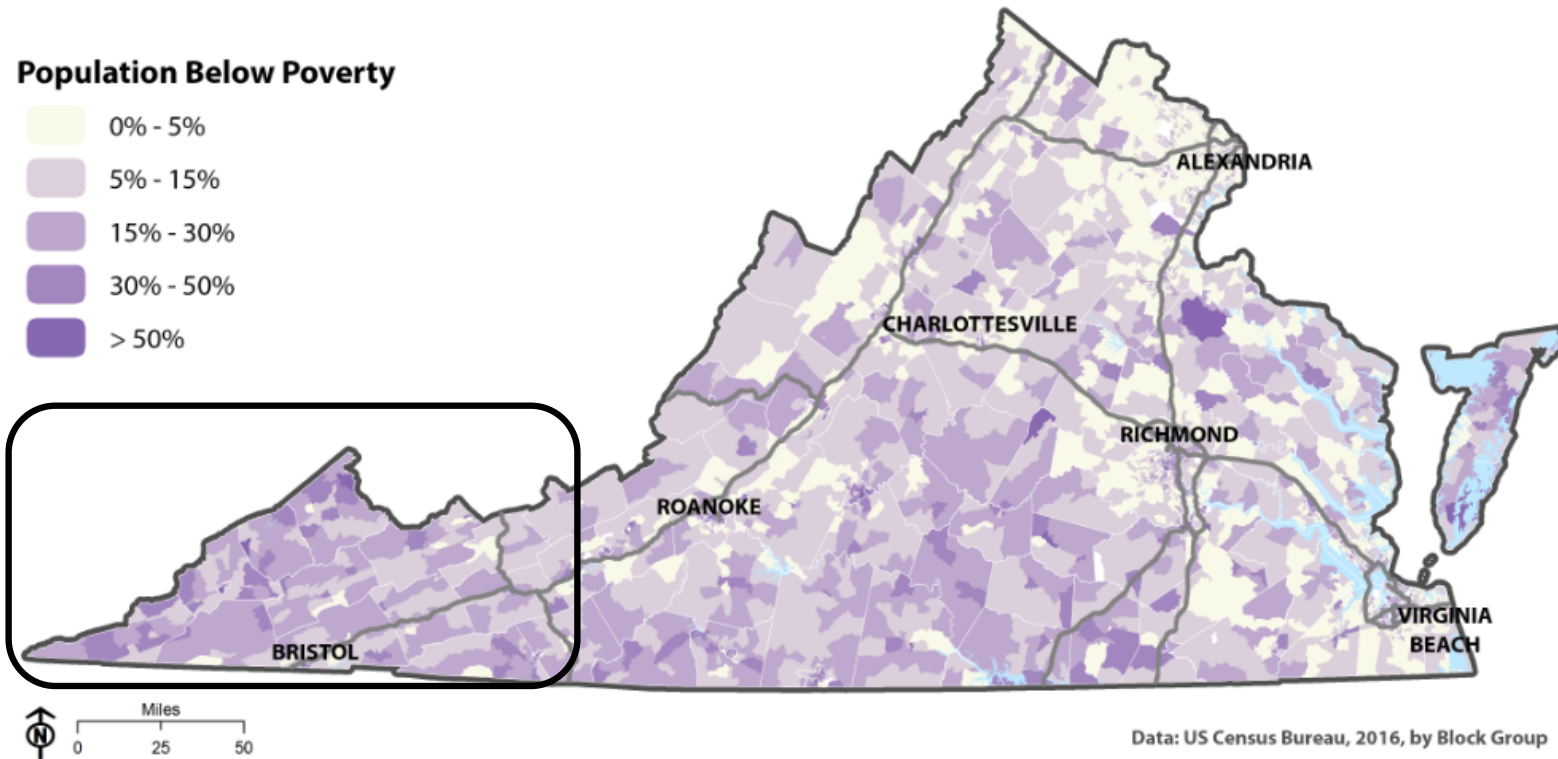
82,343 (21%)

With a Disability



Data: US Census Bureau, 2016, by Block Group

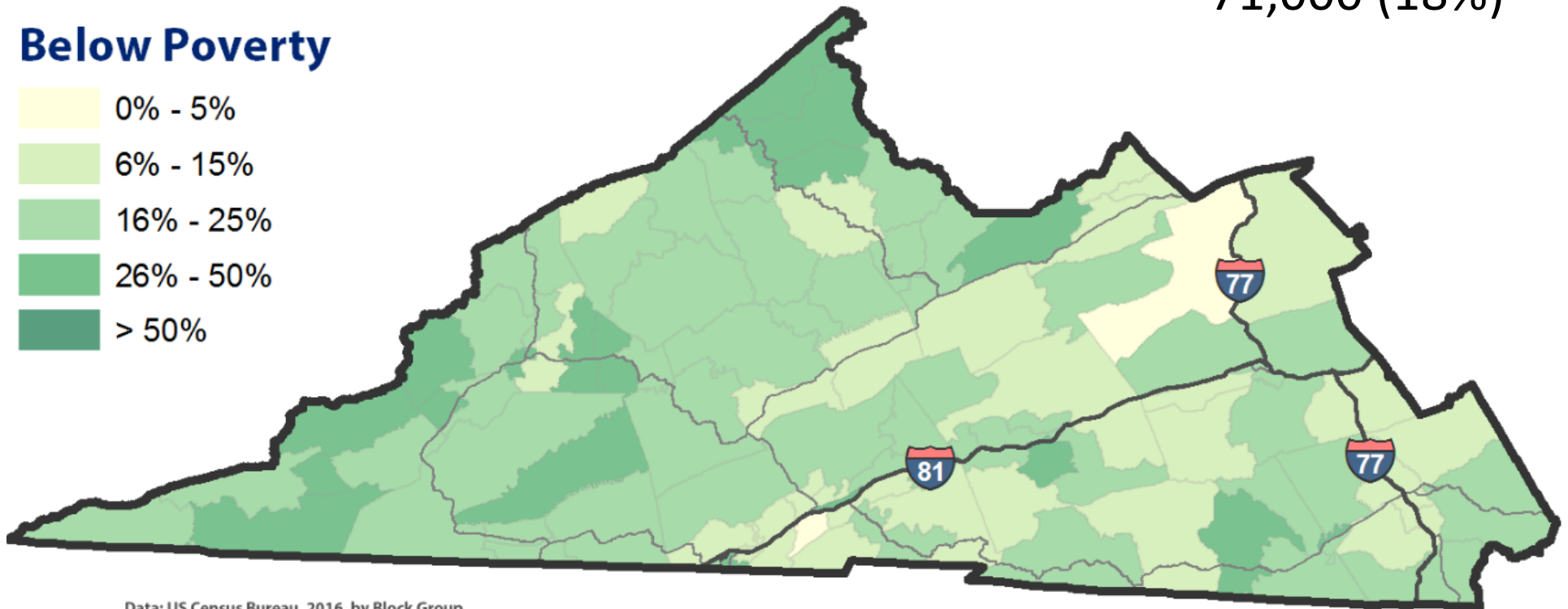
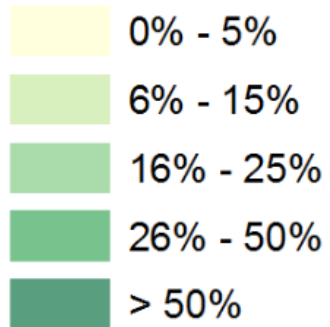
Impact On: Poverty



Impact On: Poverty

71,000 (18%)

Below Poverty

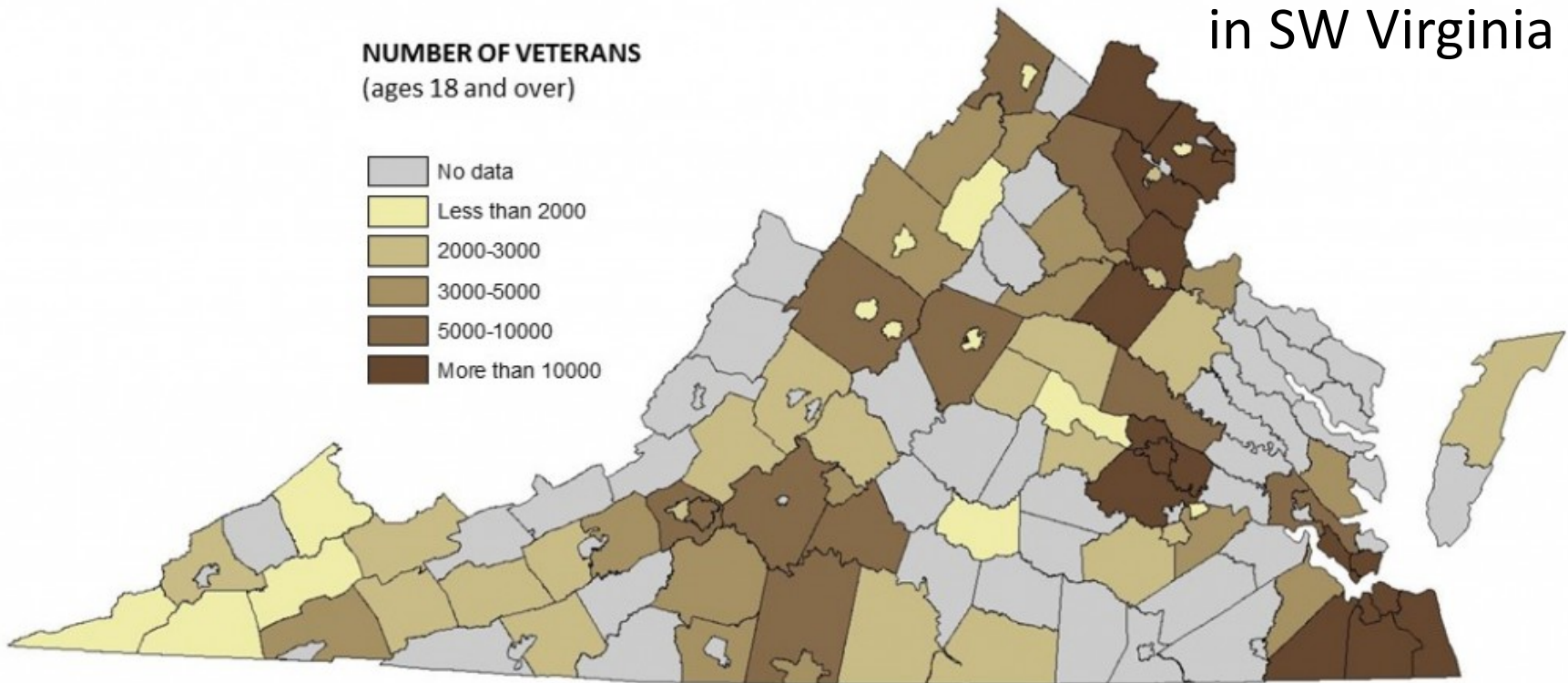
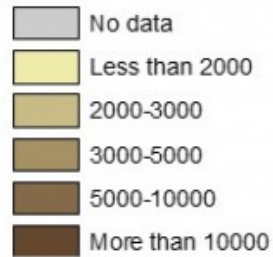


Data: US Census Bureau, 2016, by Block Group

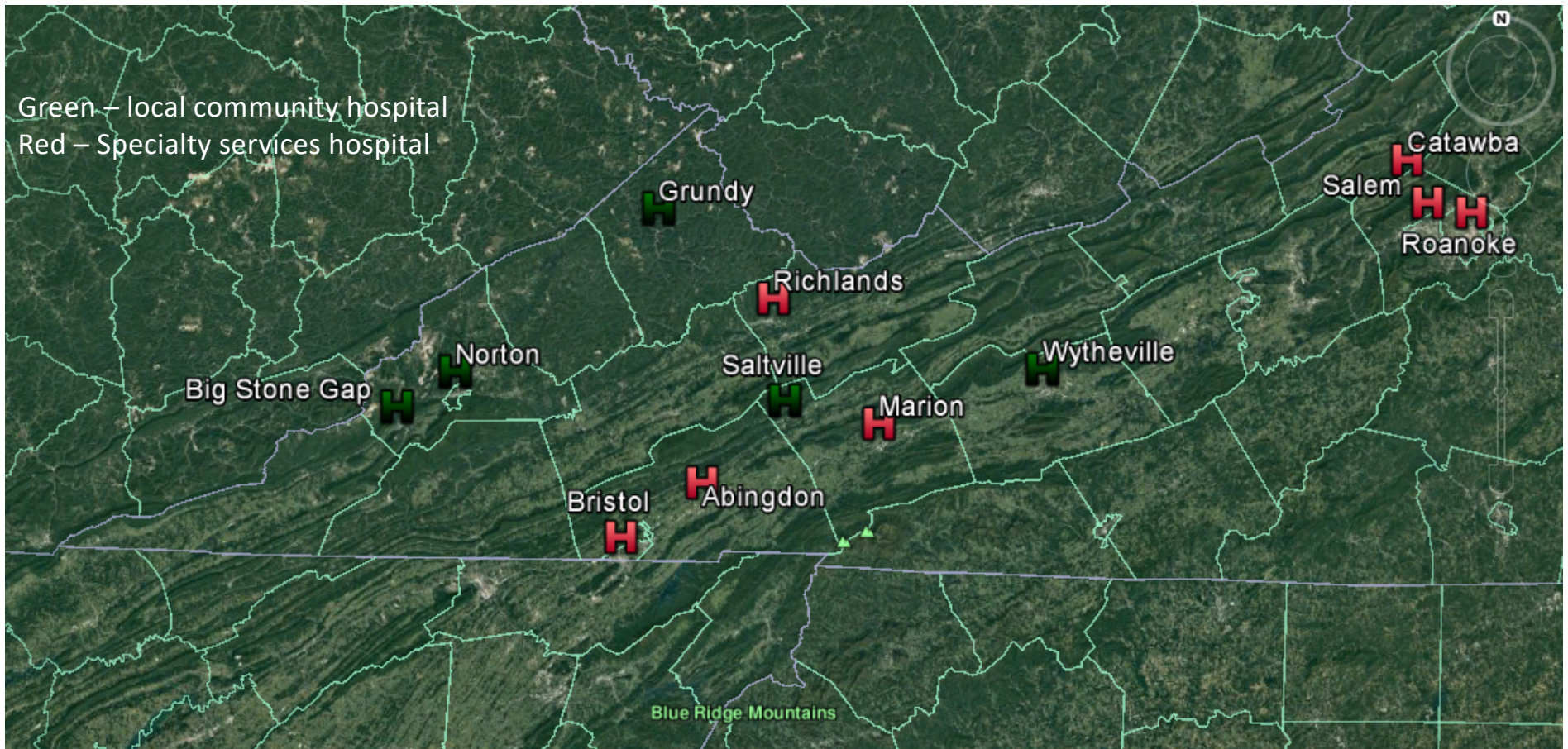
Impact On: Veterans

Approx. 25,000 (6.4%)
in SW Virginia

NUMBER OF VETERANS
(ages 18 and over)



Local Community and Specialty Care Hospital Locations in Southwest Virginia



Specialty Care Hospitals

Location	Hospital	Specialties
Roanoke	Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital	Cancer treatment, cardiology & heart surgery, diabetes & endocrinology, gastroenterology & GI surgery, geriatrics, gynecology, nephrology, neurology & neurosurgery, orthopedics, pulmonary & lung surgery, urology
Salem	Lewis-Gale Medical Center	Cancer treatment, diabetes & endocrinology, gastroenterology & GI surgery, nephrology, neurology & neurosurgery, orthopedics, urology
Abingdon	Johnston Memorial Hospital	Gastroenterology & GI surgery, geriatrics, nephrology, orthopedics, pulmonary & lung surgery
Catawba	Catawba Hospital	Psychiatry
Marion	Southwest Virginia Mental Health Institute	Psychiatry
Richlands	Clinch Valley Medical Center	Pulmonary & lung surgery, urology
Bristol	Rehabilitation Hospital of Southwest Virginia	Rehabilitation

No hospitals listed for specialty treatment of:

Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)


Long term care


Ophthalmology


Rheumatology

<https://health.usnews.com/best-hospitals/area/va/southwestern-virginia>

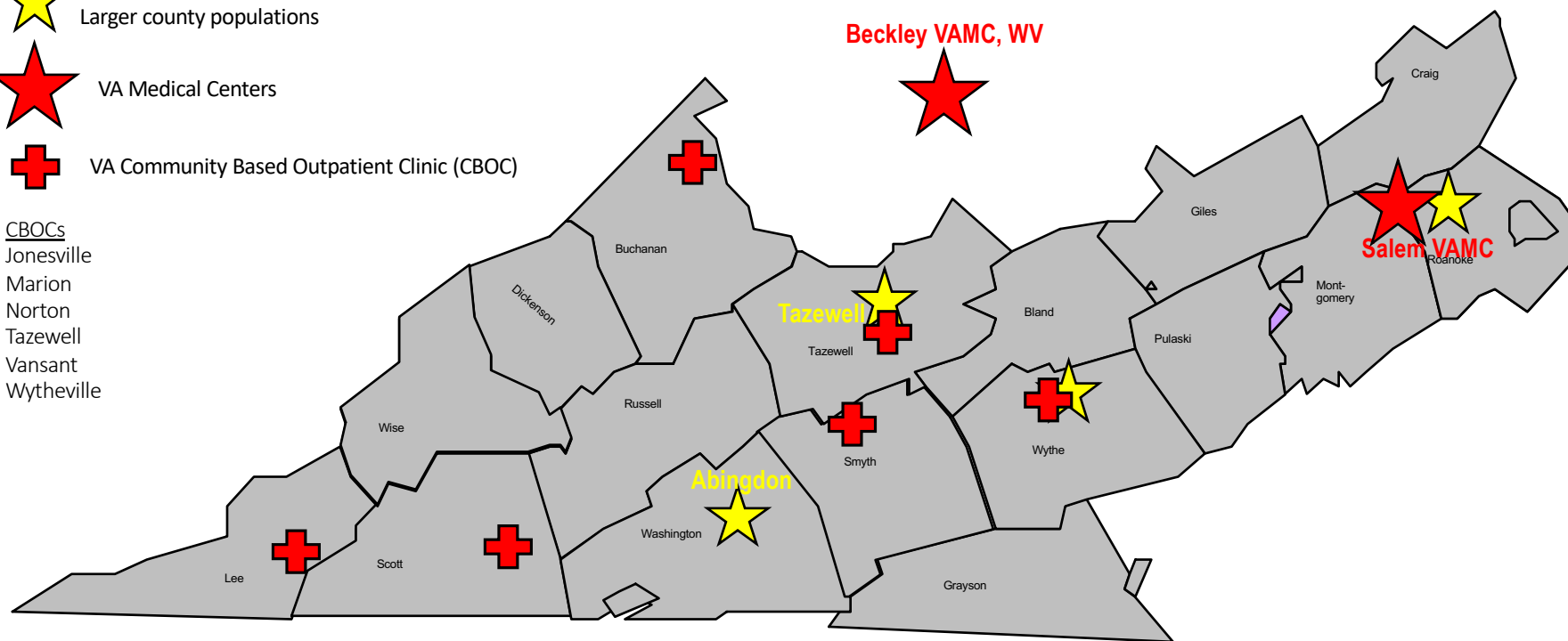
Veterans Care Facilities

 Larger county populations

 VA Medical Centers

 VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC)

CBOCs
Jonesville
Marion
Norton
Tazewell
Vansant
Wytheville



Mt Home VAMC, TN 

Current Transportation Options

- Personal Transportation
- Public Transportation – Limited in Scope
- Private Transportation – Taxis/Uber
- Community Based:
 - VA Reimbursement and Vans (Limited)
 - Medicaid Reimbursement
 - Vanpools - Churches & Community Organizations



Filling the Gap

- Incentivize community facilities to provide transportation
 - Vouchers or Tax Breaks
- Encourage local governments to expand public transportation
- Establish a partnership with private industry – Uber?
- More reliance on NGOs – Churches and VSOs
- Future Technologies – Self-drive Vehicles
- Develop alternatives to transportation
 - Telehealth Services (Broadband infrastructure improvements)
 - Grow local delivery options similar to Amazon and Uber Eats

Many Available Resources



Available Resources

- Special Thanks to :
 - Carole Pratt, Department of Health
 - Brittany Voll, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation
- DRAFT 2019 Coordinated services Mobility Plan
<http://www.drpt.virginia.gov/media/2895/draft-2019-virginia-drpt-coordinated-human-service-mobility-plan.pdf>

Recommendation

- Create a state-funded grant to organize all stakeholders – local and state – to identify and consolidate available transportation assets and develop low cost solutions to “fill the gaps.”
 - State Government: DRPT, VDH, DMAS, DARS, DVS, DBHDS
 - Local Governments
 - Medical Providers
 - Local Colleges and Universities
 - Chambers of Commerce
 - NGOs – Churches, VSOs, etc



Questions

