



Kootenai County Comprehensive Plan / Parks & Waterways Plan

Online Survey Results Summary (Spring, 2026)

Survey Overview & Methodology

This report is based on 1920 total response records collected in the Spring of 2026: 1329 were formally submitted, and 591 were left in a partial/unsubmitted state but still contain responses to individual questions. The survey was conducted online via “Maptionnaire,” which enabled respondents to map desired locations for recreational amenities and open-space preservation. Outreach included a press release, promotion on “keepingkootenai.com”, social media, an email newsletter, flyers, direct mail in tax assessment mailings, and word-of-mouth.

Survey respondents were predominantly long-term Kootenai County residents living in unincorporated areas of the county. About two-thirds (66.4%) lived outside city limits, while 29.8% lived within a Kootenai County city; among city residents, Coeur d'Alene accounted for nearly half of responses (45.9%), followed by Post Falls (19.8%) and Hayden (18.9%). Respondents were generally well-established in the community, with 47.6% having lived in Kootenai County for more than 20 years and another 40.8% residing in the county for 5 to 20 years. Survey participation was heavily weighted toward property owners, who represented 94.3% of respondents. The survey also skewed older, with nearly two-thirds (63.6%) age 55 or older, including 38.6% age 65 and above. Most respondents lived in smaller households, particularly two-person households (56.2%), and nearly three-quarters (72.4%) reported having no dependent children living at home.

Several demographic groups, however, appear to be underrepresented. Younger adults were notably absent, with only 3.6% of respondents under age 35 and just 0.7% under age 25, while nearly two-thirds (63.6%) were age 55 or older. Additionally, renters and non-property owners were significantly underrepresented, comprising only 5.7% of respondents, and households with dependent children accounted for just 27.6% of participants.

Overall, the survey largely reflects the perspectives of established, property-owning residents, many of whom are older adults and long-term members of the Kootenai County community.

Survey Introduction & Background

Kootenai County is updating its long-range, 20-year Comprehensive Plan. As part of that effort, the County is also developing its first dedicated Parks, Waterways, Recreation, Open Space & Trails Plan, as a part of this effort a survey was hosted on Maptionnaire.

The survey asked residents what they value most about the County, what they would change, how they feel about the pace and management of growth, their views on housing and transportation needs, their use of and barriers to County parks and trails, and some basic demographic information. The sections below summarize the results question by question.



What Residents Value and What They'd Change

Table 1 - Question 1: What do you like best about Kootenai County?

Theme	# Of Responses	%
Natural Beauty / Open Space	590	36.6%
Lakes And Water Access	297	18.4%
Small-Town / Community Feel	281	17.4%
Parks, Trails, And Recreation	232	14.4%
Political / Social Values	77	4.8%
Current Pace Of Growth	76	4.7%
Safety / Low Crime	57	3.5%

Rank	Word	Count	% of Responses (1,614)
1	Beauty	200	12.40%
2	Lakes	183	11.30%
3	Natural	137	8.50%
4	Small	127	7.90%
5	Open	126	7.80%
6	Rural	119	7.40%
7	Town	115	7.10%
8	People	114	7.10%
9	Access	113	7.00%
10	Outdoor	106	6.60%
11	Nature	103	6.40%
12	Beautiful	101	6.30%
13	Feel	101	6.30%
14	Mountains	99	6.10%
15	Recreation	82	5.10%
16	Lake	79	4.90%
17	Parks	70	4.30%
18	Trees	66	4.10%
19	Spaces	65	4.00%
20	Space	60	3.70%

Representative comments:



“The mountains, lakes and surrounding areas.”

“Natural spaces for recreation (forests, lake)”

“The community of conservative neighbors.”

“Beautiful, clean and healthy forests and waters.”

“Open prairie over aquifer; lakes; nature”

Table 2 - Question 2: What would you change or improve?

Theme	# of Responses	%
Slow or limit growth/development	745	46.0%
Traffic and road congestion	239	14.8%
Preserve small-town feel	108	6.7%
Lake / waterway access or quality	99	6.1%
Reduce taxes / regulation	97	6.0%
Protect natural beauty/open space	89	5.5%
Parks and trails	88	5.4%
Infrastructure and services	83	5.1%
Housing affordability	43	2.7%

Representative comments:

“Severely limit new house development!”

“Stop tearing down trees and building everywhere.”

“Traffic on I-95. Put in Red Light cameras.”

“Decrease land and home development allowance.”

“Less cars, better bike-ped infrastructure”

Growth, Land Use & Priorities

Before asking the questions below, the survey gave respondents some context on the County's growth trajectory: Kootenai County has grown steadily over the past 50 years, with an especially fast increase between 2010 and 2020, and currently adopted regional forecasts project roughly 148,042 additional residents by 2045. Meeting that growth is estimated to require approximately 48,993 additional housing units county-wide by 2045.

Table 3 - Question 3: Importance of expanding access to parks, waterways, recreation, open space, and trails

Response	# of Responses	%
Very Important	1088	61.2%
Somewhat Important	446	25.1%
Not Important	223	12.5%
No Opinion	20	1.1%



Table 4 - Question 4: Areas experiencing the most strain from population growth

Response	# of Responses	%
Transportation	1030	56.9%
Farmland or Open Space	990	54.7%
Housing	750	41.5%
Water Quality/Supply	647	35.8%
Public Safety or Emergency Services	396	21.9%
Healthcare Services	373	20.6%
Parks and recreation	292	16.1%
Schools	288	15.9%
Other	104	5.7%

Table 5 - Question 5: Top County priorities for planning and addressing growth

Response	# of Responses	%
Preserving Working Lands (Agriculture, Timber, Ranch Land)	1106	61.4%
Protecting Water Quality and Quantity	944	52.4%
Protecting Wildlife Habitat	683	37.9%
Improving Transportation and Mobility	647	35.9%
Maintaining/Enhancing Recreational Opportunities	501	27.8%
Supporting Housing Affordability/Attainability	399	22.2%
Supporting Economic Prosperity and Living Wages	358	19.9%
Emergency Response and Preparedness	318	17.7%
Other	100	5.6%

Table 6 - Question 6: Importance of new development paying its fair share of infrastructure/service costs

Response	# of Responses	%
Very Important	1559	87.0%
Somewhat Important	177	9.9%
Not Important	34	1.9%
No Opinion	21	1.2%

Housing

Table 7 - Question 7: Have you or someone you know experienced challenges finding housing that meets your needs?

Response	# of Responses	%
Yes	1037	58.2%
No	418	23.5%
Somewhat	281	15.8%
Not sure	46	2.6%



Table 8 - Question 8: Primary housing challenges experienced

Response	# of Responses	%
Cost/affordability	1333	88.2%
Limited availability	545	36.1%
Lack of ownership options	309	20.5%
Income or credit requirements	291	19.3%
Housing quality/condition	278	18.4%
Location of available housing	255	16.9%
Lack of rental options	198	13.1%
Other	119	7.9%

Table 9 - Housing types most needed within cities

Response	# of Responses	%
Single-family homes	1183	70.7%
Workforce/affordable housing	630	37.7%
Senior/assisted living housing	398	23.8%
Townhomes	309	18.5%
Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)	257	15.4%
Mixed Use with Multi-family above Commercial	217	13.0%
Duplexes/Triplexes	207	12.4%
Apartments (multi-family)	181	10.8%
Other	114	6.8%
Other (please specify)	51	3.0%

Table 10 - Housing types most appropriate for unincorporated rural areas

Response	# of Responses	%
Single-family homes on large lots – (5.0 to 9.9 Acres)	1022	59.6%
Farmsteads/agricultural housing – (10.0 Acres or Greater)	951	55.4%
Small-lot single-family homes – (2.0 to 4.9 Acres)	839	48.9%
Rural cluster developments – (homes are “clustered” together in one area, the remaining land is kept as open space, farmland, or natural habitat.)	606	35.3%
Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)	257	15.0%
Manufactured/modular homes	108	6.3%
Other	61	3.6%
Apartments (multi-family)	47	2.7%
Duplexes/Triplexes	31	1.8%
Other (please describe)	24	1.4%

Transportation

Table 11 - Question 11: Transportation improvements that should be prioritized

Response	# of Responses	%
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Road maintenance	1230	71.1%
Additional road capacity	1022	59.0%
New road connections	583	33.7%
Multi-use walking/biking pathways	506	29.2%
Public transit options	400	23.1%
Bike lanes	252	14.6%
Other	113	6.5%

Economy

Table 12 - Question 12: “Kootenai County offers a range of economic activities supporting jobs across a broad range of sectors”

Response	# of Responses	%
Neutral	790	46.0%
Agree	365	21.3%
Disagree	337	19.6%
Strongly disagree	174	10.1%
Strongly Agree	50	2.9%

Table 13 - Question 13: Economic sectors the County should support or grow

Response	# of Responses	%
Small business/entrepreneurship	1153	67.9%
Agriculture	881	51.9%
Manufacturing	665	39.2%
Health & Life Sciences	562	33.1%
Technology	520	30.6%
Tourism	300	17.7%
Retail/commercial	200	11.8%
Other	65	3.8%

Parks, Recreation & Trails

Table 14 - Question 14 (top mentions): County parks or facilities visited most often

Response	# of Responses	%
Farragut State Park	252	18.2%
Centennial Trail	157	11.3%
Tubbs Hill	140	10.1%
Canfield Trailhead/Mountain	79	5.7%
Honeysuckle Beach	78	5.6%
Mineral Ridge	75	5.4%
Bayview	70	5.1%
Twin Lakes	67	4.8%
English Point	67	4.8%
Hayden Lake	63	4.5%



Table 15 - Full List of Places Mentioned

Question 14: Which County Parks or Facilities Do You Visit Most Often?

Full tally of every named park or facility mentioned in the responses to Question 14. Spelling variants and misspellings of the same place (e.g., "Farragut," "Fargut," "Farraget State Park") were combined into a single row. A response could name more than one place, so mentions total more than the number of respondents.

Rank	County Park / Facility	Mentions	% of Respondents (1,385)
1	Farragut State Park	269	19.4%
2	Centennial Trail	204	14.7%
3	Tubbs Hill	186	13.4%
4	McEuen Park	101	7.3%
5	Lake Coeur d'Alene (general)	86	6.2%
6	Higgins Point	85	6.1%
7	Hayden Lake	83	6.0%
8	Honeysuckle Beach	78	5.6%
9	Canfield (Trailhead/Mountain)	77	5.6%
10	Mineral Ridge	75	5.4%
11	Twin Lakes	72	5.2%
12	Bayview	69	5.0%
13	English Point	66	4.8%
14	Hauser Lake	64	4.6%
15	Q'emiln Park	59	4.3%
16	Fernan Lake / Fernan area	55	4.0%
17	City Park / City Beach (CdA)	54	3.9%
18	Spirit Lake	49	3.5%
19	Blackwell Island	37	2.7%
20	Mica Bay	33	2.4%
21	Rathdrum Mountain	33	2.4%
22	Harrison	31	2.2%
23	Spokane / CdA River	31	2.2%
24	Atlas Park / Atlas Waterfront	26	1.9%
25	Corbin Park	25	1.8%



Rank	County Park / Facility	Mentions	% of Respondents (1,385)
26	Carlin Bay	24	1.7%
27	Riverstone	23	1.7%
28	National Forest (general/unspecified)	20	1.4%
29	Sun Up Bay	18	1.3%
30	North Idaho College (NIC) Beach	18	1.3%
31	Rockford Bay	16	1.2%
32	Downtown Coeur d'Alene / Downtown parks	15	1.1%
33	Greensferry Park	15	1.1%
34	Prairie Trail	14	1.0%
35	Beauty Bay	13	0.9%
36	Falls Park (Post Falls)	12	0.9%
37	Windy Bay	11	0.8%
38	Sportsman Park/Access	11	0.8%
39	Black Bay	11	0.8%
40	Pend Oreille Lake	11	0.8%
41	Fort Sherman	11	0.8%
42	Blue Creek Bay	10	0.7%
43	Post Falls Community Forest	9	0.6%
44	Heyburn State Park	8	0.6%
45	Goulds Landing	8	0.6%
46	Bunco Road / Trail System	8	0.6%
47	Sanders Beach	8	0.6%
48	Cherry Hill	8	0.6%
49	Round Lake (State Park)	7	0.5%
50	Post Falls (general)	7	0.5%
51	Maiden Rock	7	0.5%
52	Mowry Park	7	0.5%
53	Rose Lake	6	0.4%
54	Cougar Bay	5	0.4%
55	Shadduck Park	5	0.4%
56	Kidd Island Bay	5	0.4%
57	Mill River	5	0.4%
58	Fairgrounds	5	0.4%

Rank	County Park / Facility	Mentions	% of Respondents (1,385)
59	Lofts Bay	5	0.4%
60	Independence Point	4	0.3%
61	Killarney Lake	4	0.3%
62	Harlow Point	4	0.3%
63	Black Lake	4	0.3%
64	Bells Bay	4	0.3%
65	Priest Lake	4	0.3%
66	Kiwanis Park	4	0.3%
67	Chain Lakes	4	0.3%
68	Medimont	3	0.2%
69	Neachen Bay	3	0.2%
70	River Walk / Riverfront	3	0.2%
71	Booth(e) Park	3	0.2%
72	Sandpoint (outside county)	3	0.2%
73	Dike Road	3	0.2%
74	Wolf Lodge Bay / Wolf Creek	3	0.2%
75	Cougar Gulch Park	3	0.2%
76	Springview Park	3	0.2%
77	Silver Beach / Silverbeach Marina	2	0.1%
78	4th St Boat Launch	2	0.1%
79	Chatcolet Lake	2	0.1%
80	Post Falls Public Hiking Areas	2	0.1%
81	CdA Wharf / Marina	2	0.1%
82	Black Rock	2	0.1%
83	Bonner County parks (outside county)	2	0.1%
84	Croffoot Park	2	0.1%
85	Finucane Park	2	0.1%
86	Ramsey Park	2	0.1%
87	Avondale Lake area	2	0.1%
88	Ponderay (outside county)	2	0.1%
89	Memorial Field/Park	2	0.1%
90	Northshire	2	0.1%
91	Shared Harvest Garden	2	0.1%

Rank	County Park / Facility	Mentions	% of Respondents (1,385)
92	Beck Park	2	0.1%
93	Turner Bay	2	0.1%
94	Fuller's Landing	2	0.1%
95	Chilco	1	0.1%
96	CdA Airport	1	0.1%
97	CdA Library	1	0.1%
98	Bumblebee	1	0.1%
99	Harbor Island	1	0.1%
100	Bernard Park	1	0.1%
101	Plummer Library	1	0.1%
102	Stub(blefield) Meyer	1	0.1%
103	Syringa	1	0.1%
104	Faith Walk Park	1	0.1%
105	Plummer Point	1	0.1%
106	Woodbridge Park	1	0.1%
	<i>Generic / non-specific mentions ("trails," "boat launches," "none," "parks," etc. — not tied to one named site)</i>	254	18.3%

Notes

- Named places: 106 distinct parks/facilities identified, totaling 2,421 mentions.
- Generic / non-specific responses (not attributable to one named site): 254 mentions, shown as a separate row above.
- Approximately 538 additional short text fragments (roughly 1-count each) could not be confidently matched to a specific park or a generic category. These were mostly full complaint sentences, off-topic comments, or phrases that weren't tied to a specific place. (e.g., "boat access on Hayden Lake, north end" partially matched but surrounding sentence fragments did not).
- A small number of mentioned places (Sandpoint, Bonner County parks, Ponderay) are technically outside Kootenai County but were mentioned by respondents and are retained here for completeness.

Table 16 - Question 15: Frequency of visiting a Kootenai County park or facility

Response	# of Responses	%
Weekly	568	34.0%
Monthly	485	29.0%
Yearly (But only in the warmer months)	211	12.6%
I don't utilize Kootenai County's park system	187	11.2%
Yearly	134	8.0%
Daily	88	5.3%



Table 17 - Question 16: Barriers preventing use of county parks or recreation facilities

Response	# of Responses	%
Overcrowding	795	48.7%
Lack of parking	537	32.9%
No barriers	508	31.1%
Distance	209	12.8%
Limited Facilities	201	12.3%
Cost	123	7.5%
Other	113	6.9%
Facilities do not meet my specific needs	104	6.4%
Accessibility	86	5.3%
Safety concerns	81	5.0%

Table 18 - Question 17: Trail/pathway types the County should prioritize

Response	# of Responses	%
Hiking trails	1193	74.8%
Multi-use pathways	918	57.6%
Motorized trails(ATV, off-road) and Off-Road Vehicle Parks (ORV Parks)	429	26.9%
Mountain bike trails	326	20.4%
Snowshoe/cross-country ski trails	303	19.0%
Equestrian trails	211	13.2%
Snowmobile Trails	118	7.4%

Table 19 - Question 18: Importance of regional trail connectivity (e.g., linking cities, parks, and neighborhoods, such as the Centennial Trail)

Response	# of Responses	%
Somewhat Important	651	39.1%
Very Important	528	31.7%
Not Important	394	23.7%
No Opinion	90	5.4%

Additional Open-Ended Comments

Table 20 - Question 29: Additional comments about the County's future growth, services, or priorities

Theme	# of Responses	%
Pace/management of growth	552	53.3%
Traffic and roads	202	19.5%
Preserve small-town character	198	19.1%
Natural beauty / open space	160	15.5%
Infrastructure and services	154	14.9%
Parks and trails	140	13.5%
Housing affordability	124	12.0%



Taxes and regulation	103	10.0%
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Representative comments:

“Too much growth, no infrastructure. No stuck in traffic or construction.”

“Kootenai County will never be like it was in the 70s and 80s due to growth. Please do more to regulate and hopefully slow down growth.”

“New homes bring revenues with them yet we all pay more due to growth. Double tax is wrong.”

“We need to be pro-active in meeting growth demands. Primarily roadways and parking/accessibility to the high demand areas.”

“Our purpose is to make life good for our current residents, not to make realtors and developers rich.”

Table 21 - Question 30: Additional comments about parks, recreation, waterways, trails, and open space

Theme	# of Responses	%
Parks and recreation facilities	279	35.5%
Lakes and waterway access	195	24.8%
Growth affecting parks/rec system	185	23.5%
Natural beauty / open space	138	17.6%
Small-town character	115	14.6%
Traffic near parks/trails	55	7.0%

Representative comments:

“This place is a gem and Kootenai county does a great job overall in maintaining and allowing access to what it has. Pretty good for the very fast growth.”

“We need more public access to CDA Lake for swimming, parking access.”

“It would be nice to make more improvements on the Centennial Trail.”

“Feel overall the county has quite a bit of open space, recreation, and waterways and trails; out-of-state users should help subsidize costs imposed on locals.”

“We have to be vigilant about the water quality of Coeur d'Alene.”

Interactive Map Layers

In addition to the written questionnaire, the survey included an interactive map where respondents could drop pins or draw lines to flag specific locations for different amenity types (e.g., “place a pin where a new playground is needed”). The table below summarizes how many map entries were recorded for each layer, and by how many distinct respondents.



Table 22 - Mapping Survey Responses

Map layer	Pins/lines placed	Unique respondents
Conservation area (Open space)	1714	349
Lack Convient Access- 19. Plea	965	594
Bathroom	263	166
Unpaved Nature Pathway	258	170
Bouy	256	74
Playground	239	175
Trailhead	236	147
Dock	222	114
Court Sport (Basketball-volleyb	202	153
Paved Pathway	173	102
Boat Launch	164	127
Recreational Vehicle Park	154	96
Shelter	121	71
Other	115	43
Boat Pump out	47	44

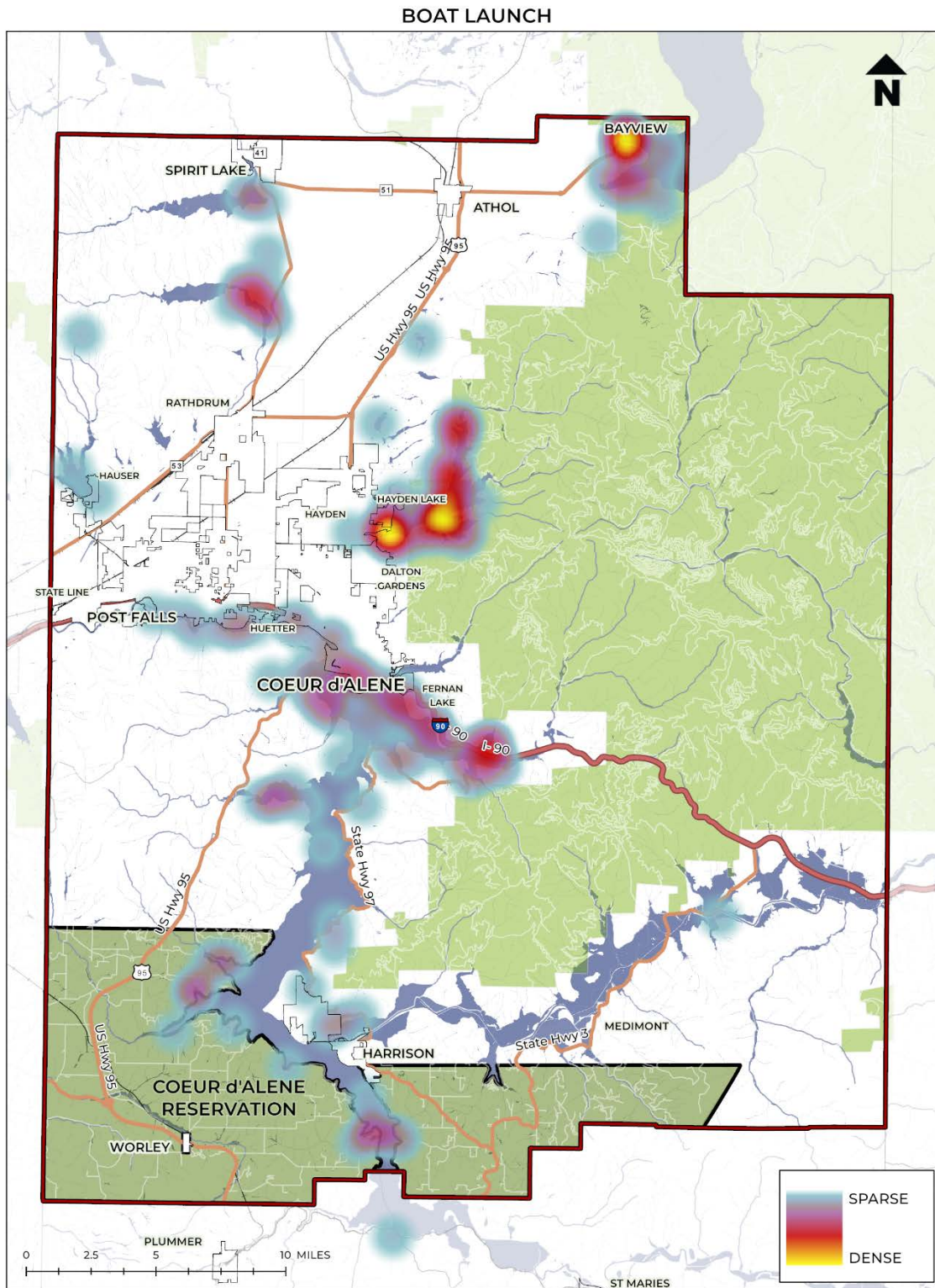


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Map Figures

Figure 1 - Boat Launch - Maptionnaire Points

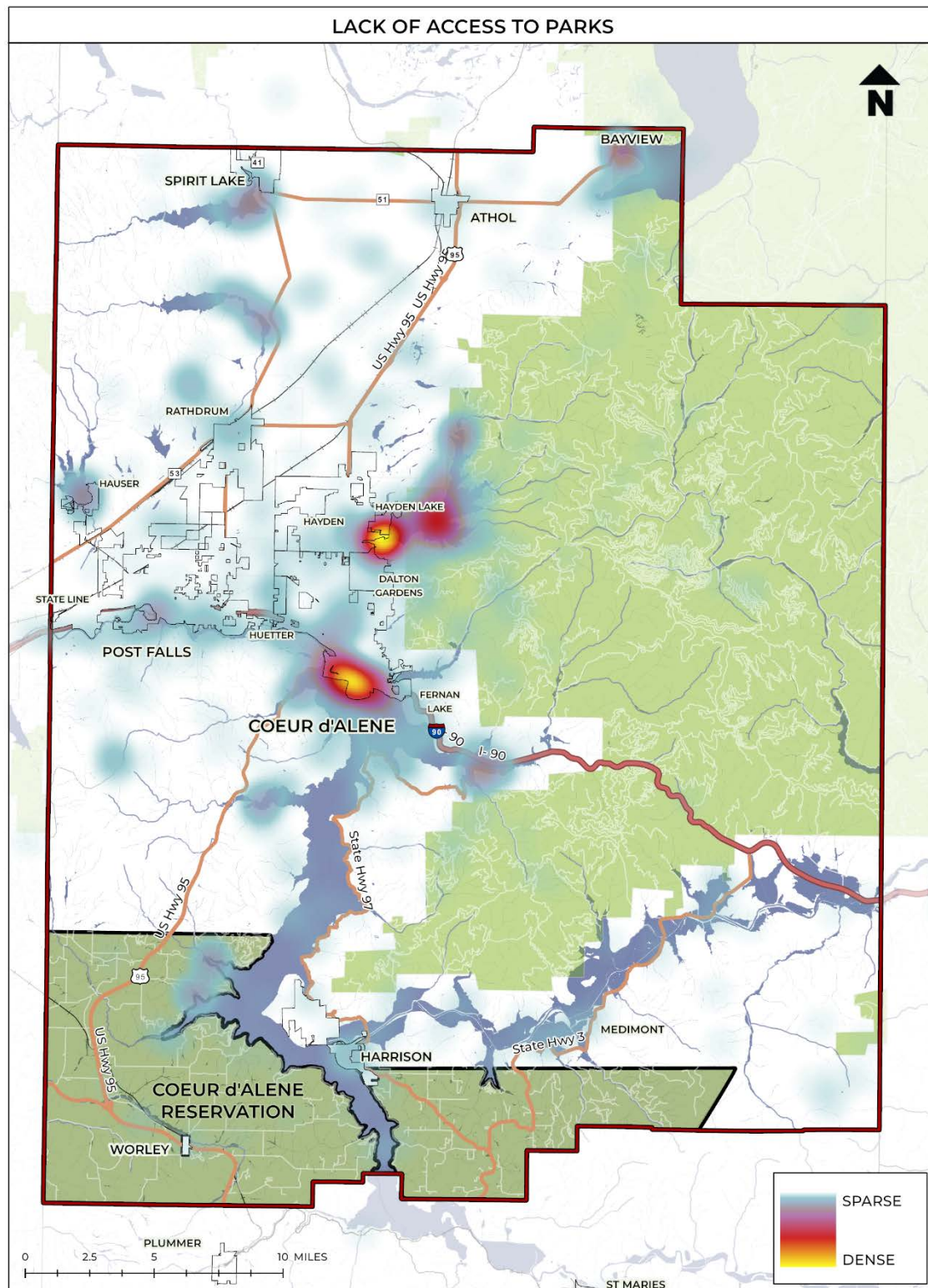




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Figure 2 - Lack of Access to Parks - Maptionnaire Points

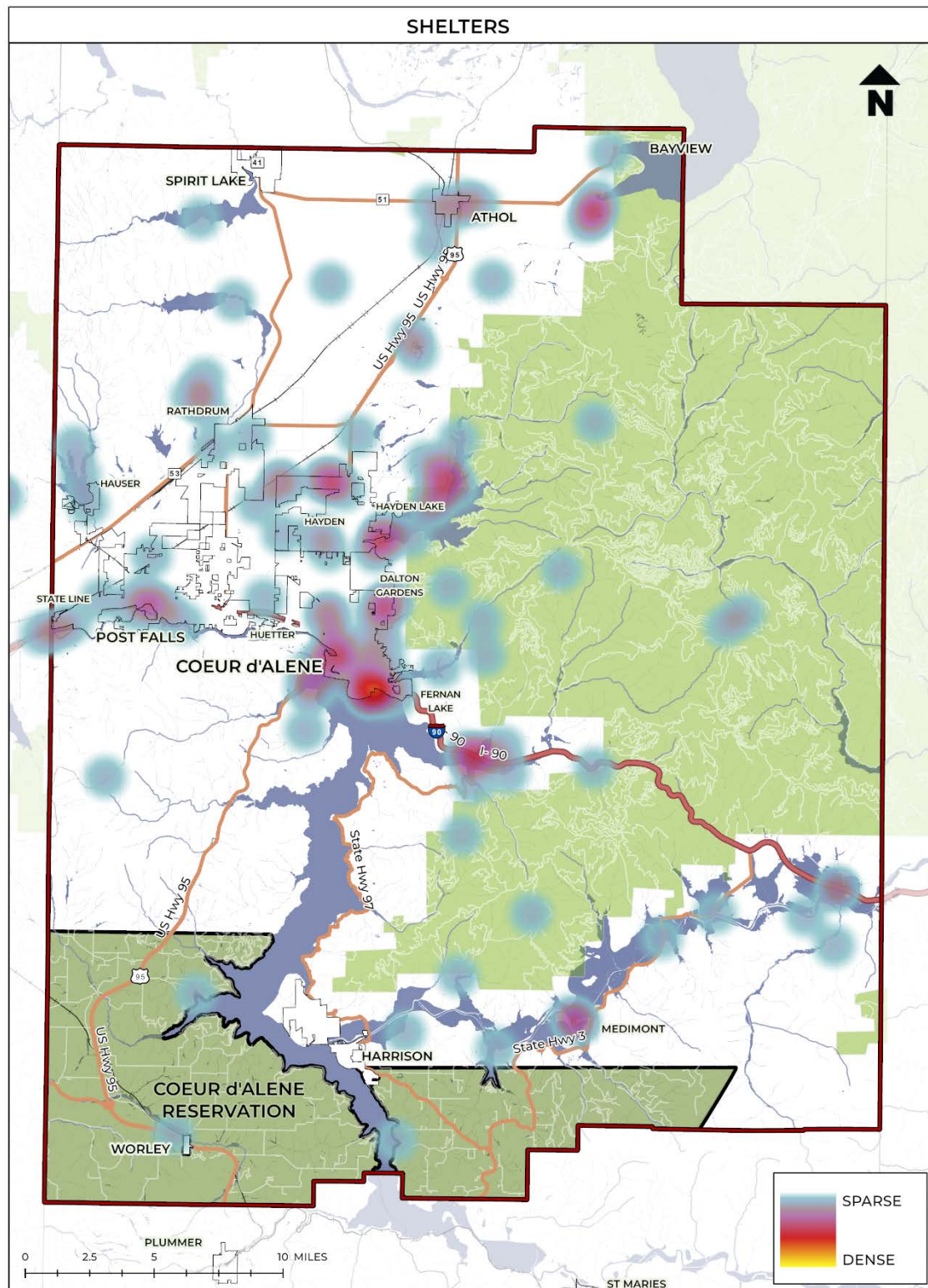




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Figure 3 - Shelters - Maptionnaire Points





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Figure 4 - Open Space- Maptionnaire Points

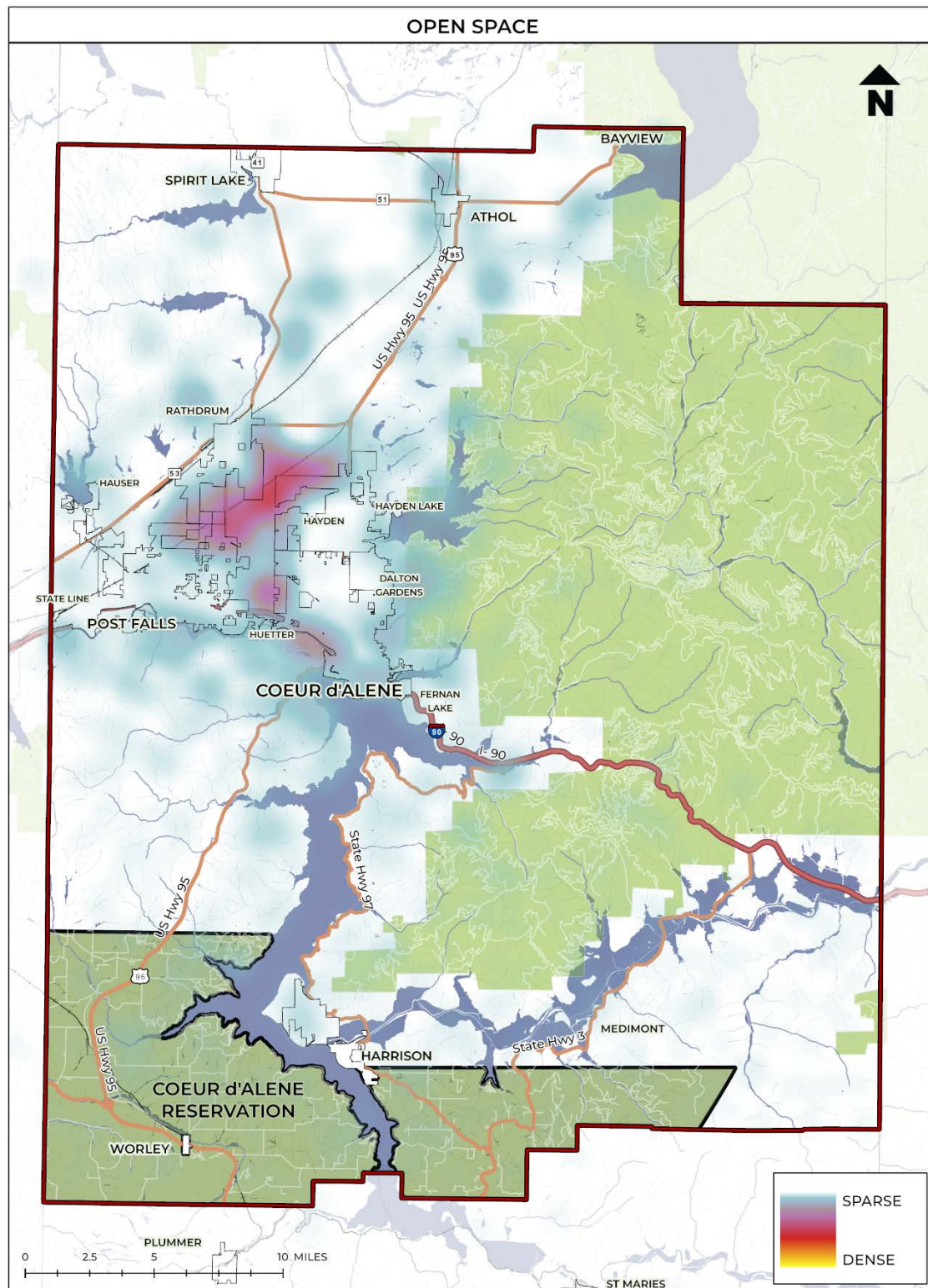


Figure 5 - Sport Courts - Maptionnaire Points

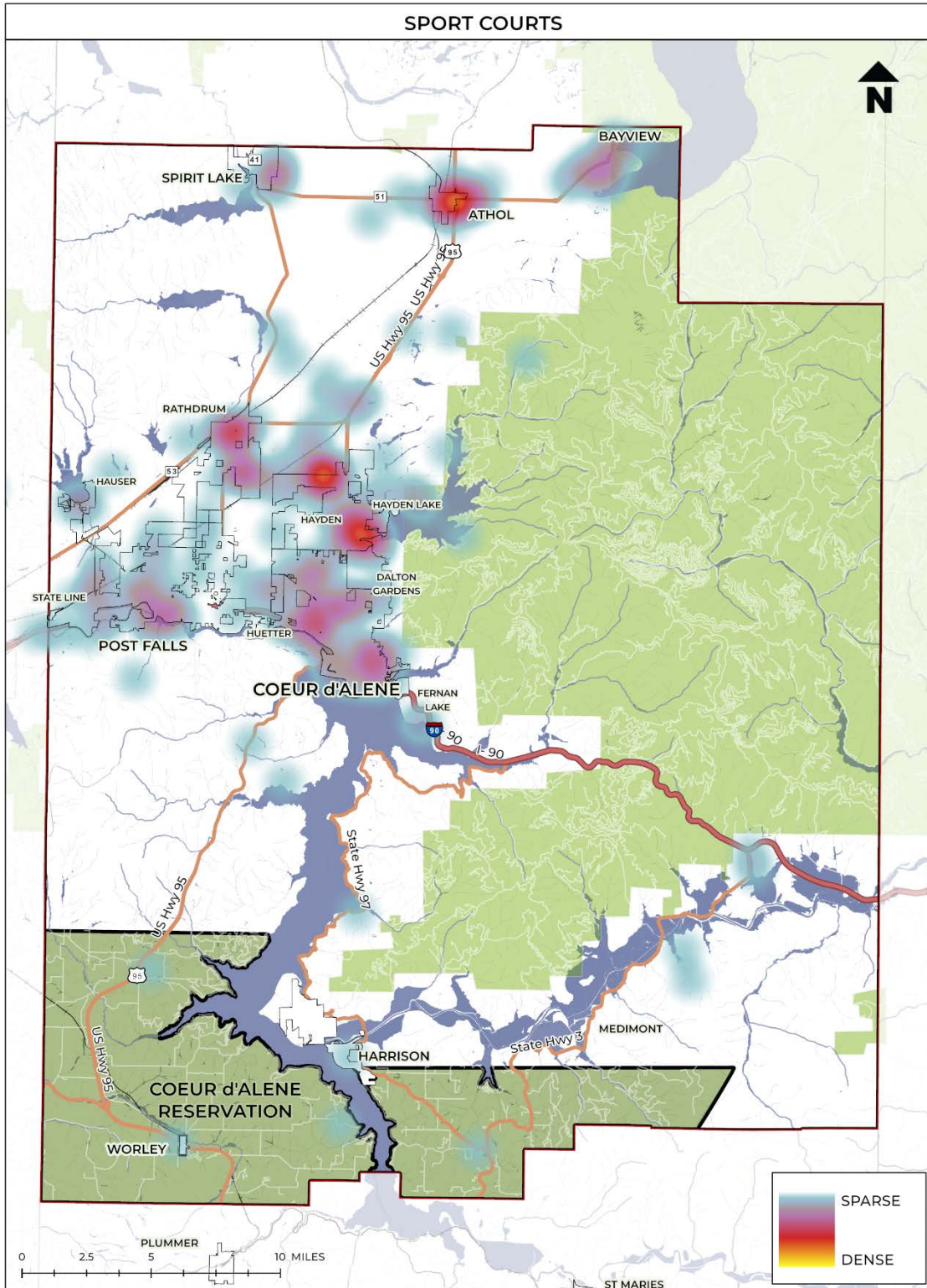


Figure 6 - Unpaved Trails - Maptionnaire Points

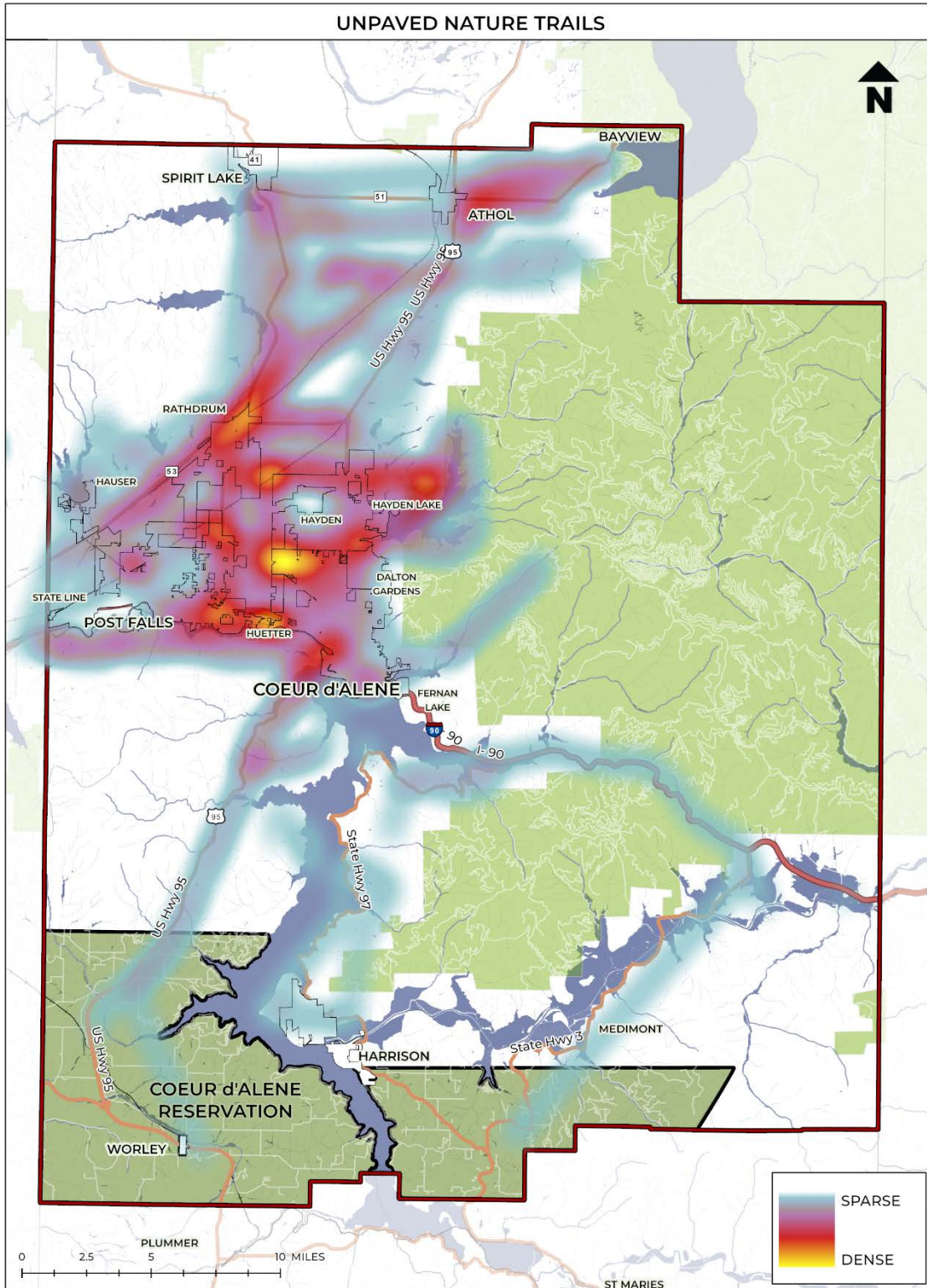


Figure 7 - Paved Trails - Maptionnaire Points

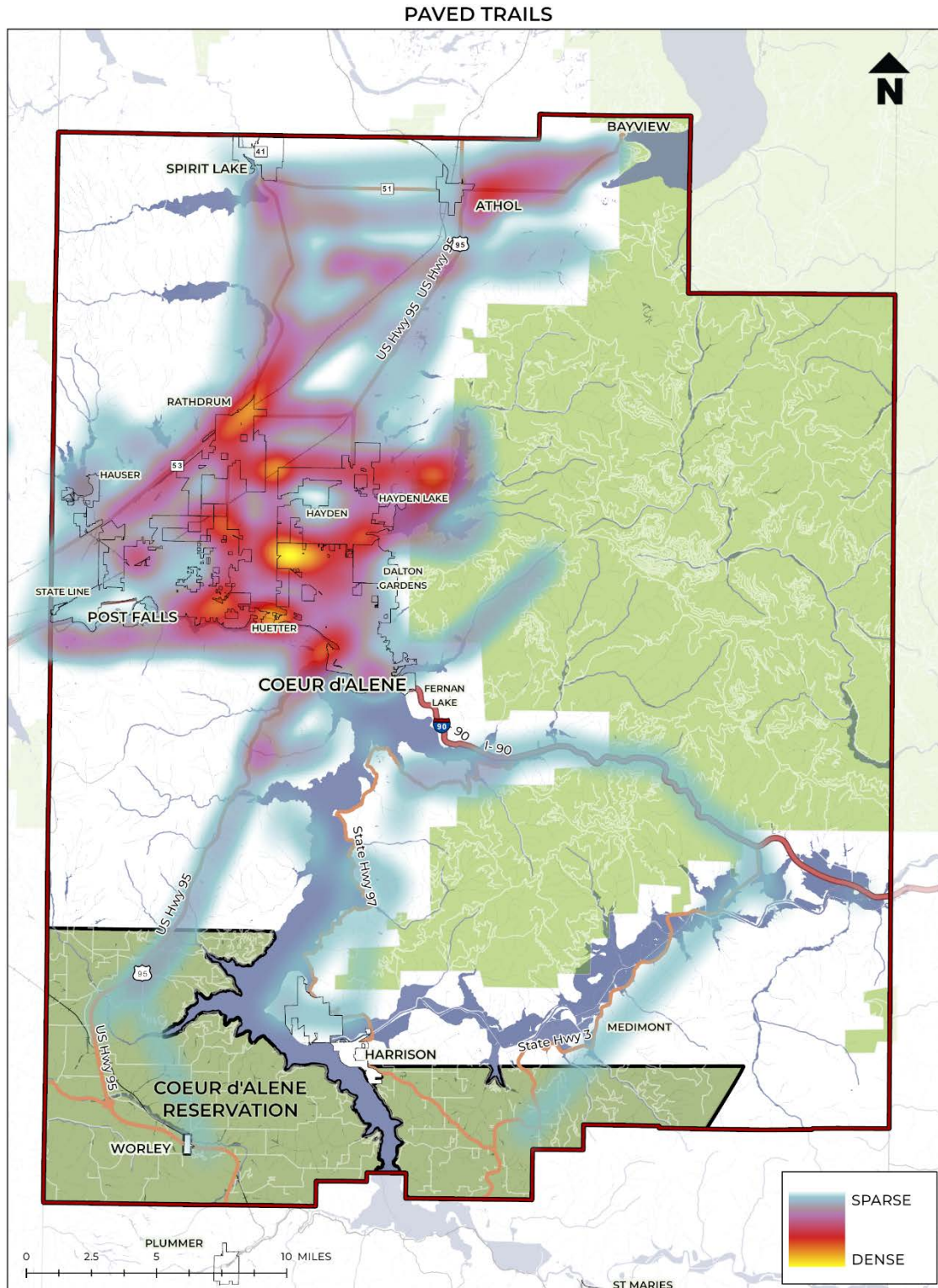
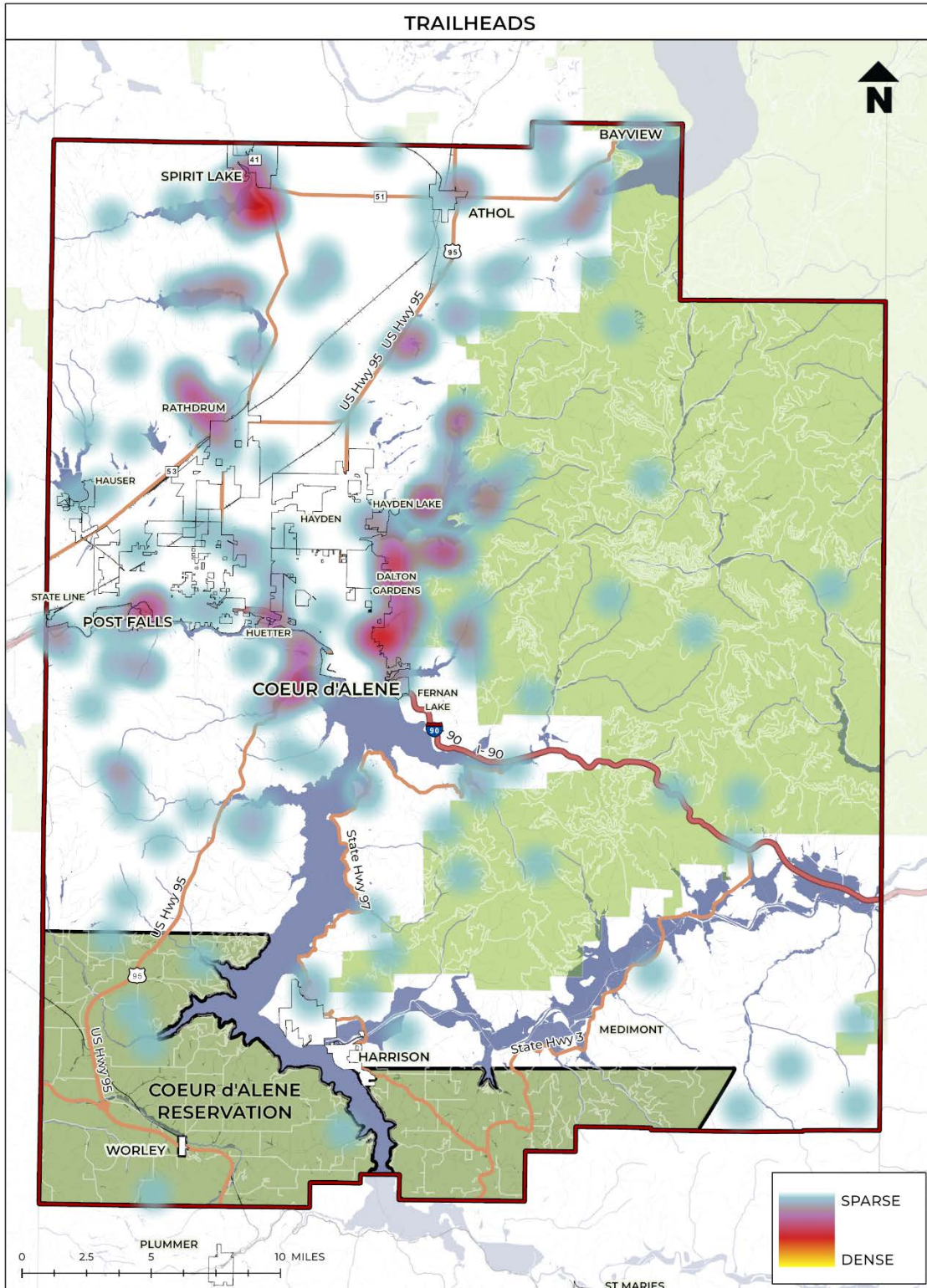


Figure 8 - Trailheads - Maptionnaire Points

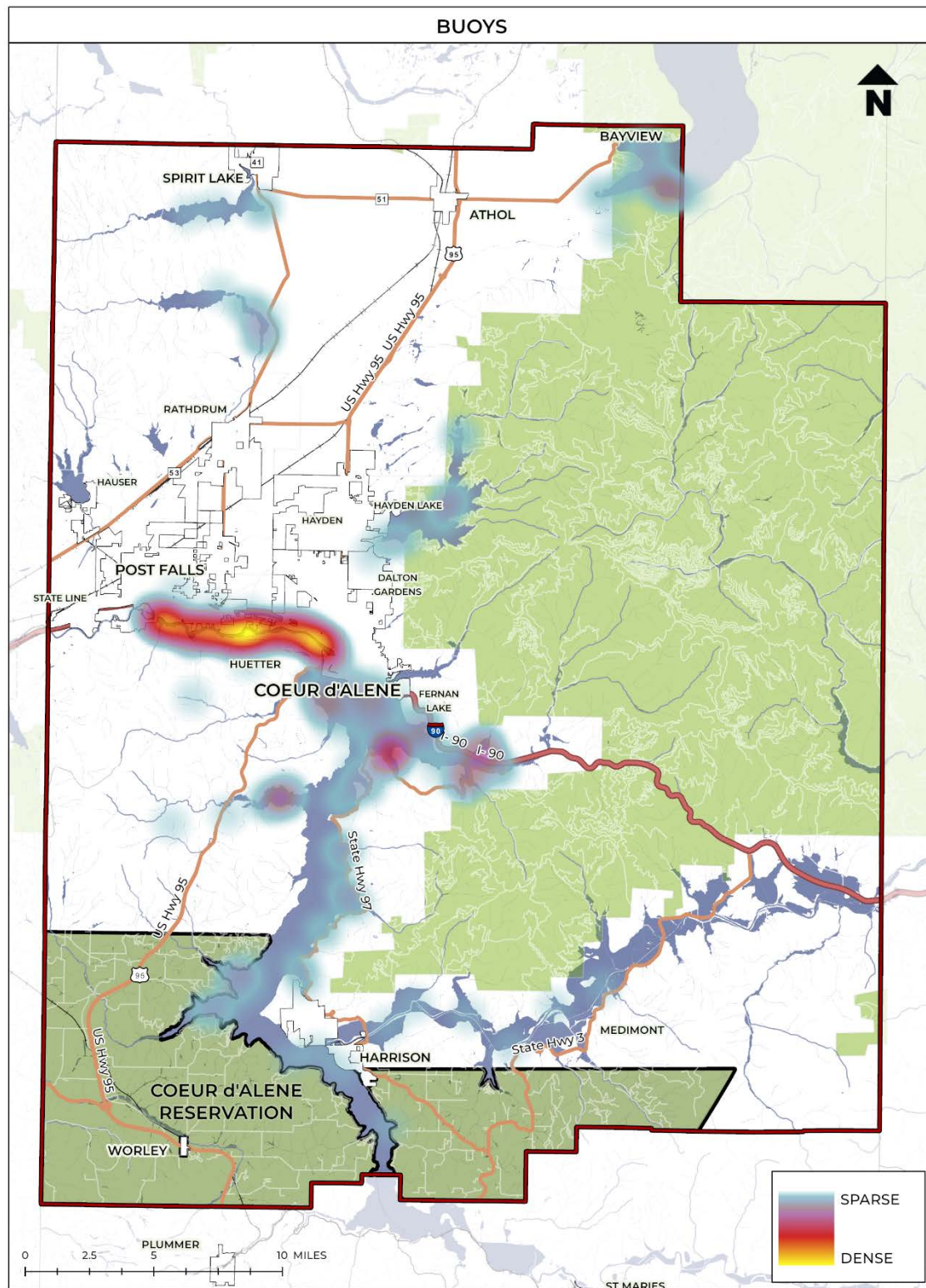




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Figure 9 - Shelters- Maptionnaire Points

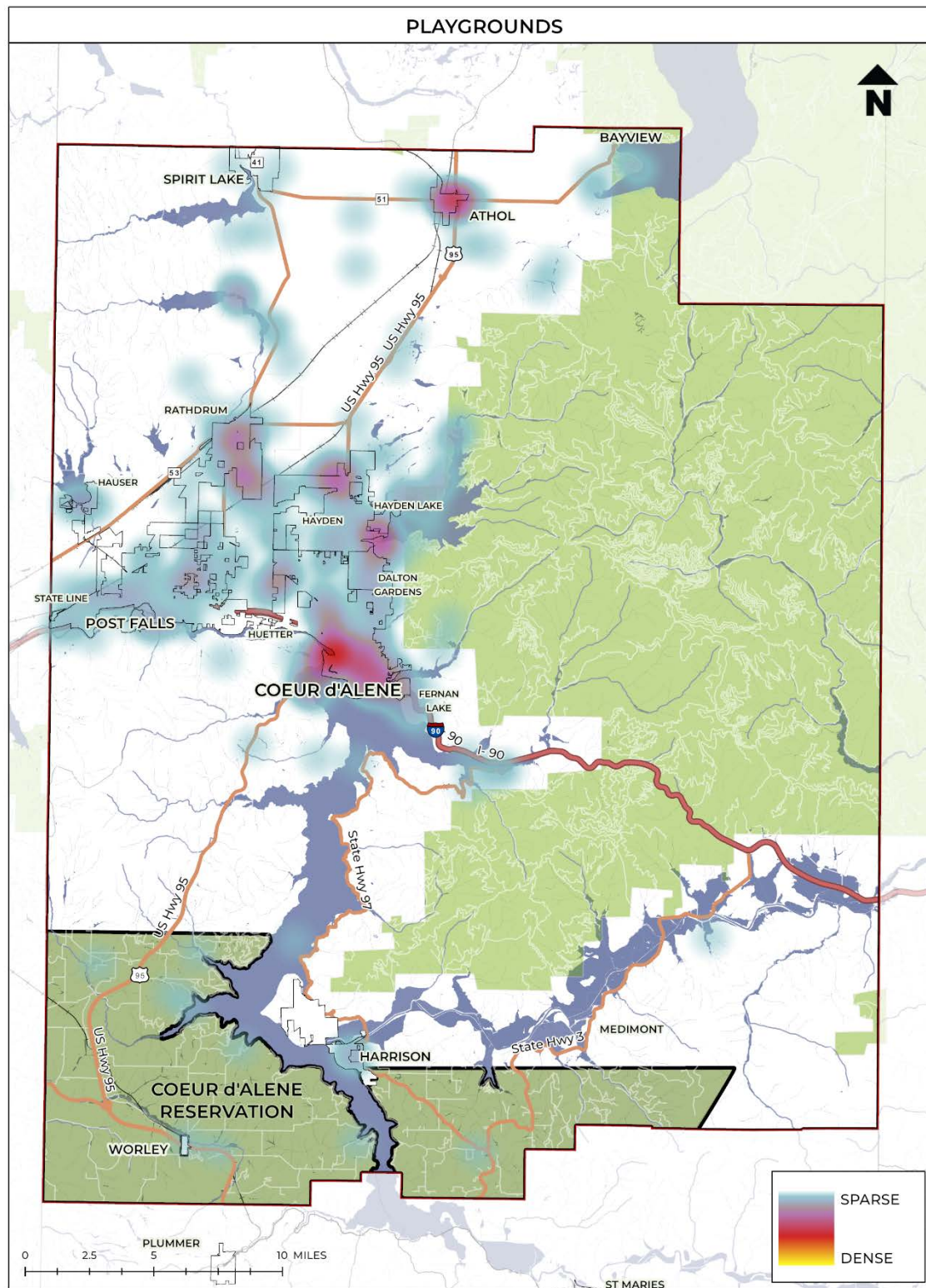




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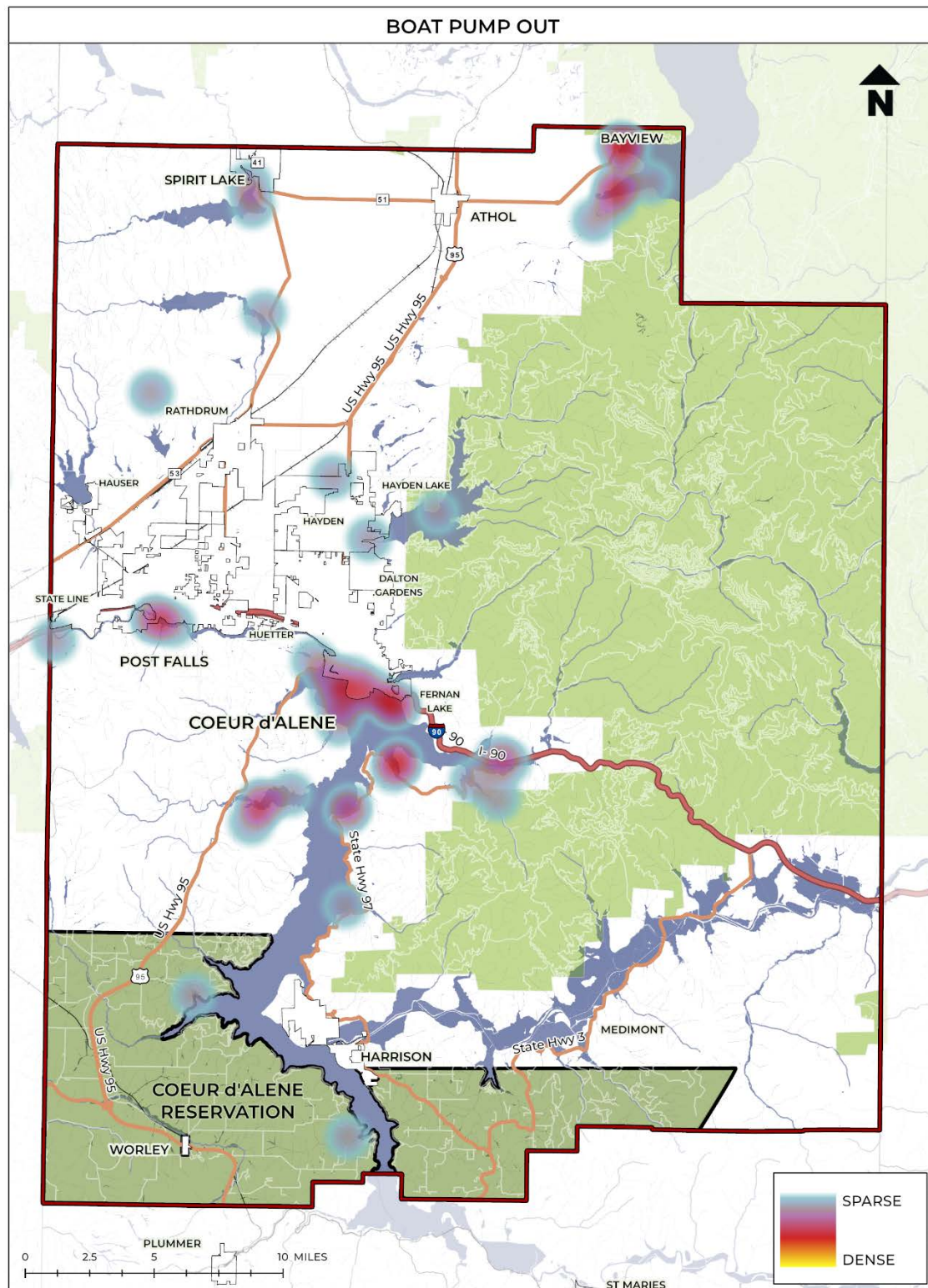
Figure 10 – Playgrounds -Maptionnaire Points





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Figure 11 - Boat Pump Out - Maptionnaire Points





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Figure 12 - Bathrooms - Maptionnaire Points

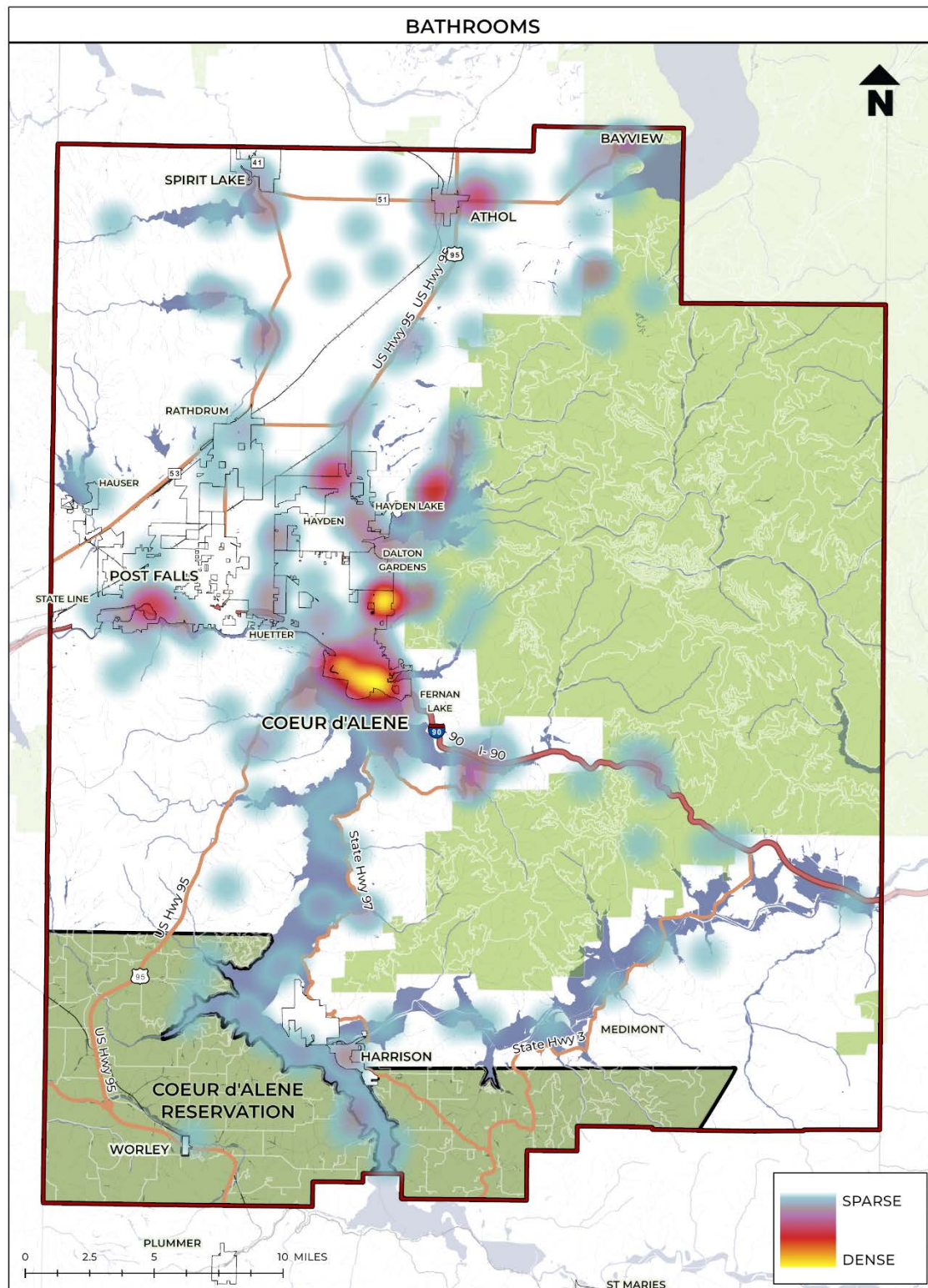




Table 23 - “Other” layer: open-text amenity requests

Most common requests	# of Responses	%
"No wake zone" signage requests	10	
Swimming area requests	6	
Small floating dock requests	5	
ORV park requests	3	
Splash pad requests	2	
Dog park requests	2	
Snowmobile shelter requests	2	

The most frequent request by far was for additional or better “No Wake Zone” signage on the County's lakes, followed by requests for swimming areas, small floating docks, and an ORV (off-road vehicle) park.

Respondent Demographics

Table 24 - Where Residents Live

Response	# of Responses	%
I live within Kootenai County outside of city limits	1010	66.4%
I live in a city within Kootenai County	453	29.8%
I live outside of Idaho	44	2.9%
I live outside of Kootenai County but in Idaho	14	0.9%

Table 25- City of residence (if living within a city)

Response	# of Responses	%
Coeur d'Alene	204	45.9%
Post Falls	88	19.8%
Hayden	84	18.9%
Rathdrum	21	4.7%
Dalton Gardens	14	3.2%
Hayden Lake	9	2.0%
Hauser	8	1.8%
Spirit Lake	8	1.8%
Harrison	4	0.9%
Fernan Lake Village	2	0.5%
Worley	2	0.5%



Table 26 -Years lived in Kootenai County

Response	# of Responses	%
20+ years	723	47.6%
5-10 years	314	20.7%
10-20 years	306	20.1%
Less than 5 years	134	8.8%
Not applicable	43	2.8%

Table 27 - Property ownership in Kootenai County

Response	# of Responses	%
Yes	1431	94.3%
No	86	5.7%

Table 28 - Age

Response	# of Responses	%
65+	586	38.6%
55-64	379	25.0%
45-54	250	16.5%
35-44	169	11.1%
Prefer not to answer	80	5.3%
25-34	45	3.0%
18-24	9	0.6%
Under 18	1	0.1%

Table 29- Household size

Response	# of Responses	%
2	852	56.2%
3	188	12.4%
4	185	12.2%
5+	161	10.6%
1	130	8.6%

Table 30 - Dependent children in household

Response	# of Responses	%
No	1087	72.4%
Yes	414	27.6%



Conclusion

The survey results reflect the perspectives of established, property-owning residents, many of whom are older adults and long-term members of the Kootenai County community.

In open-ended responses, most often cited was natural beauty, lakes, and small-town character as what they value, and slower or better-managed growth as what they'd change. This matched the closed-ended results: large majorities rated access to parks, waterways, and open space as important, and identified transportation, farmland/open space, and housing as the areas under the most strain from growth.

Housing and transportation were the two most concrete practical concerns. Many respondents reported personal or secondhand experience with housing challenges, cost being the most common issue, and transportation improvements ranked as a top priority alongside growth management. On parks and recreation, the conservation/open space map layer received far more engagement than any other amenity type, and Farragut State Park, the Centennial Trail, and Tubbs Hill were the most frequently named destinations, indicating where current use and demand are concentrated.