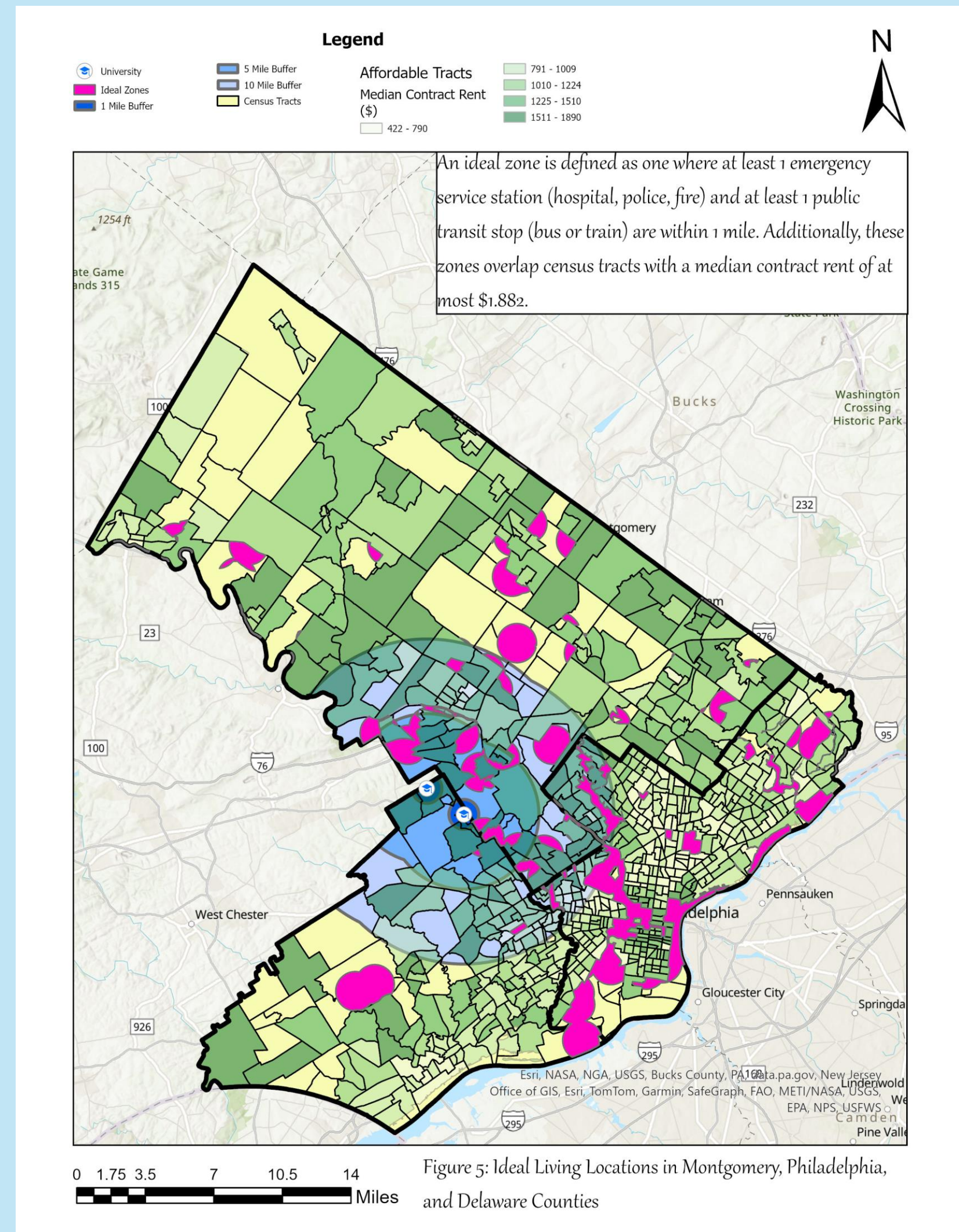
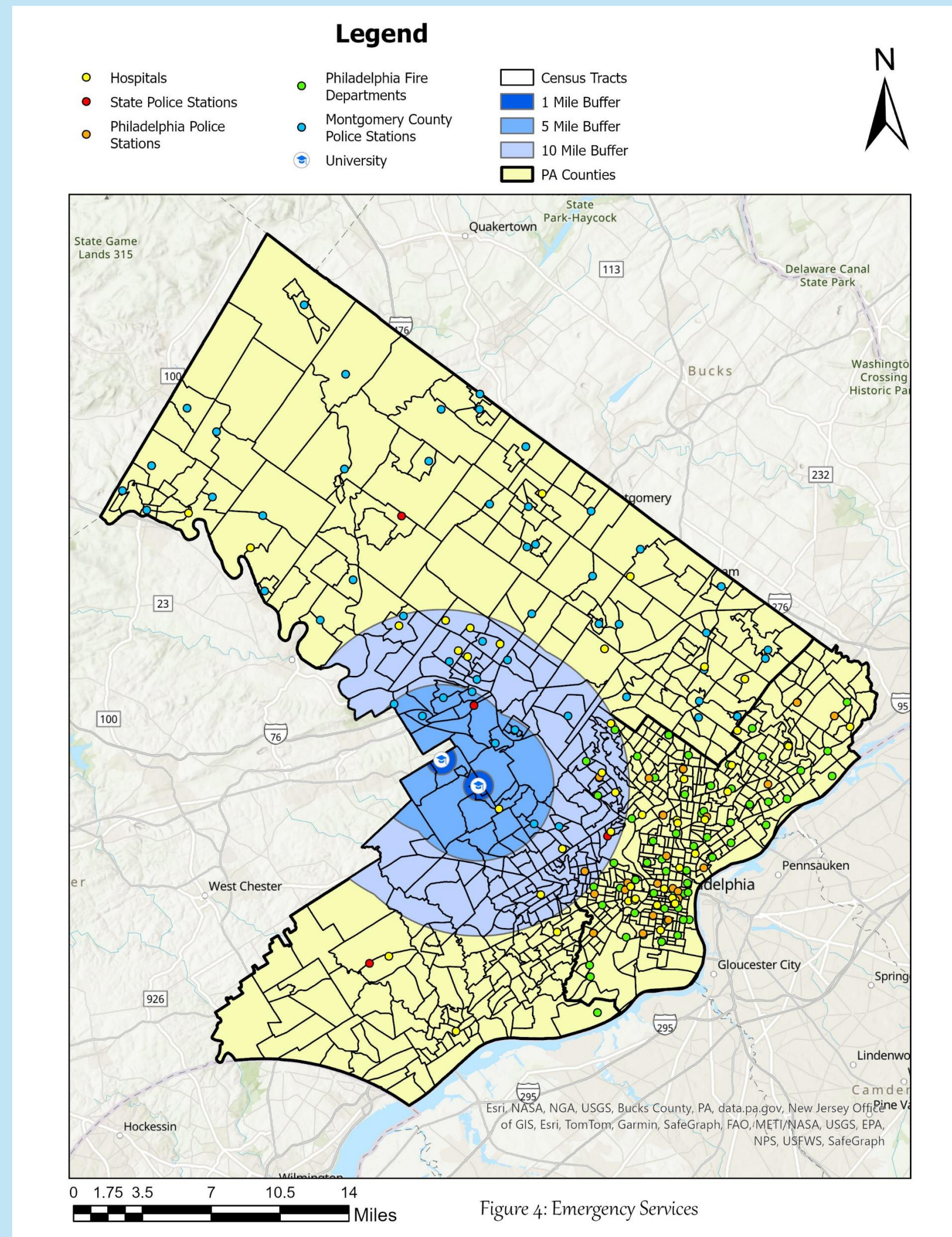
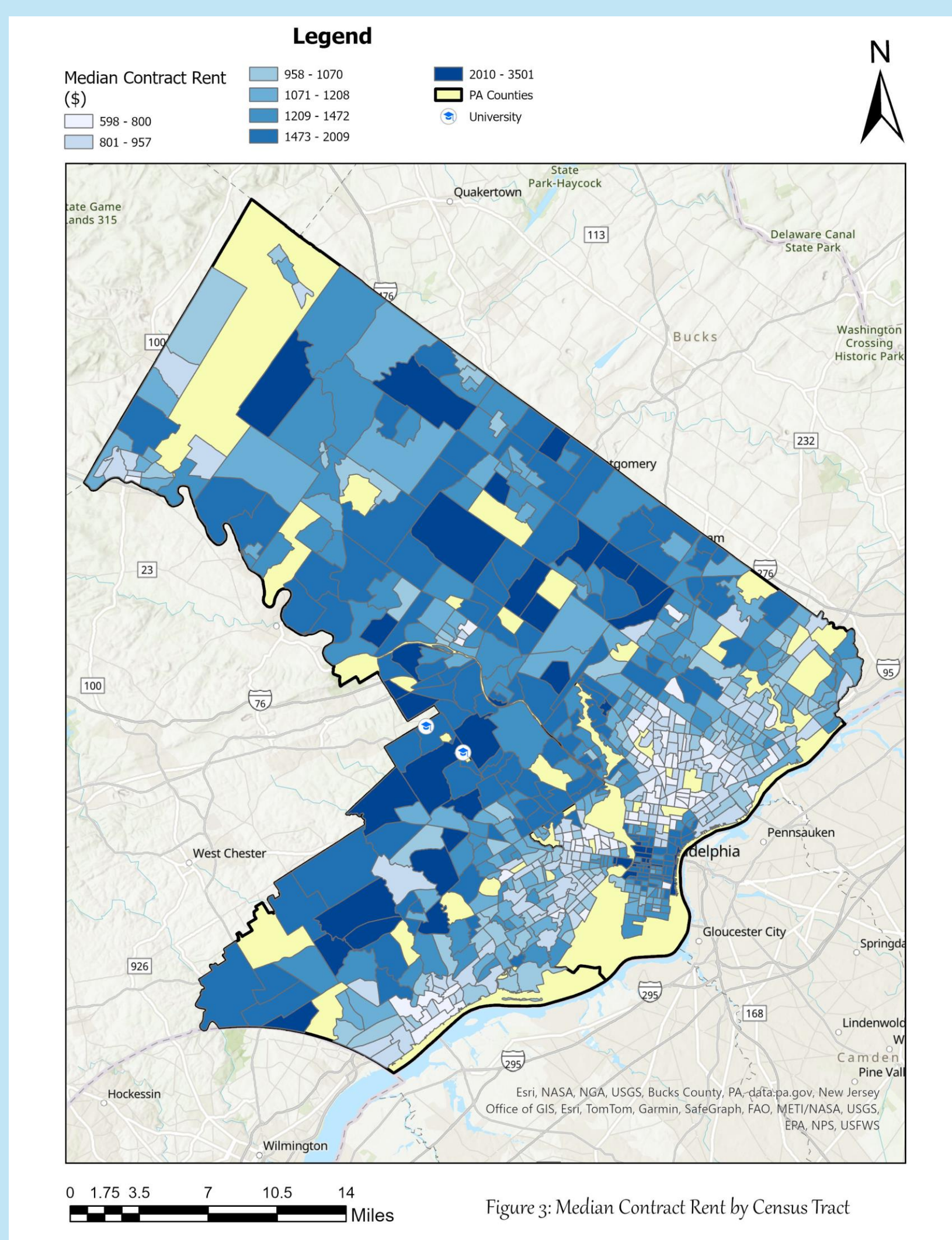
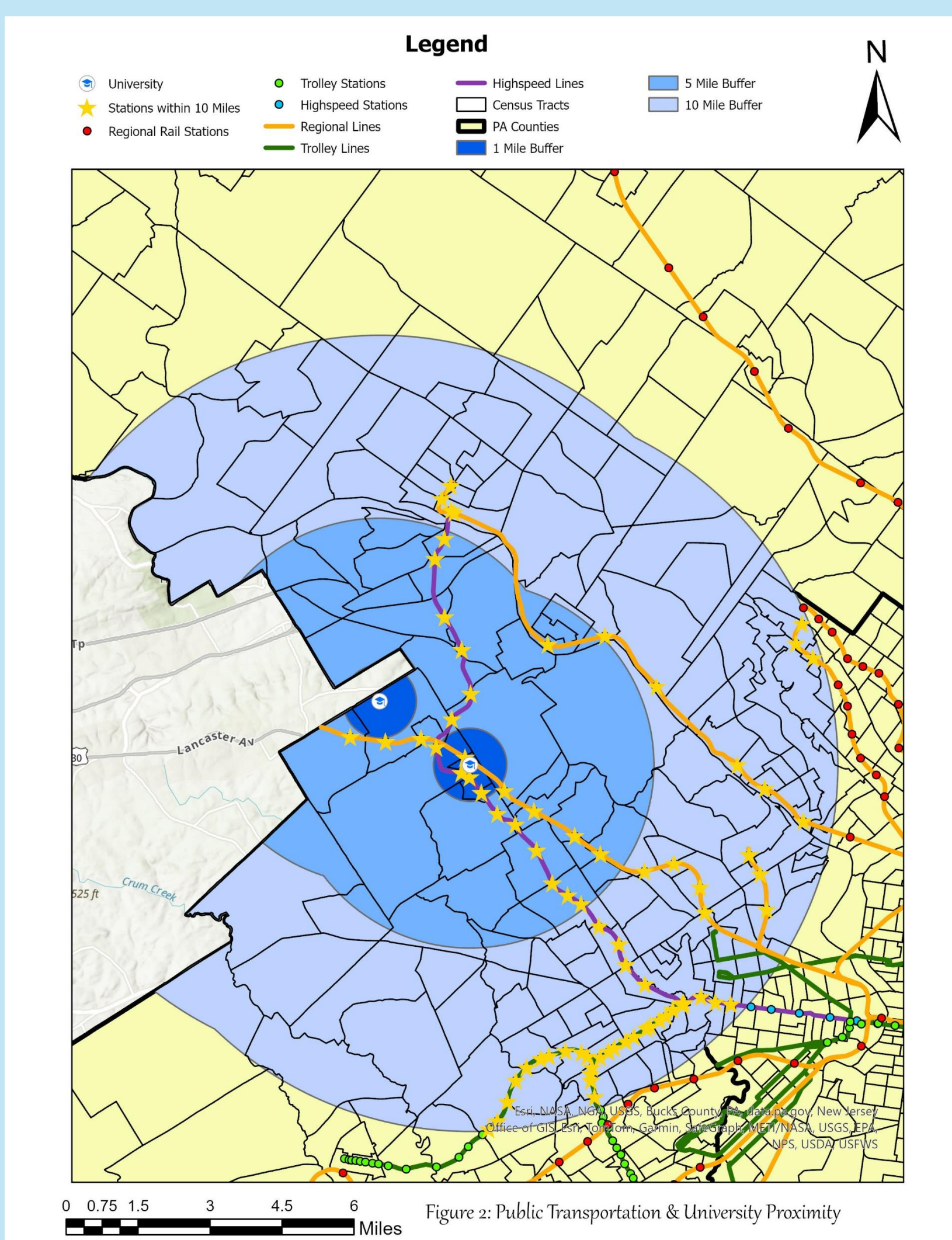
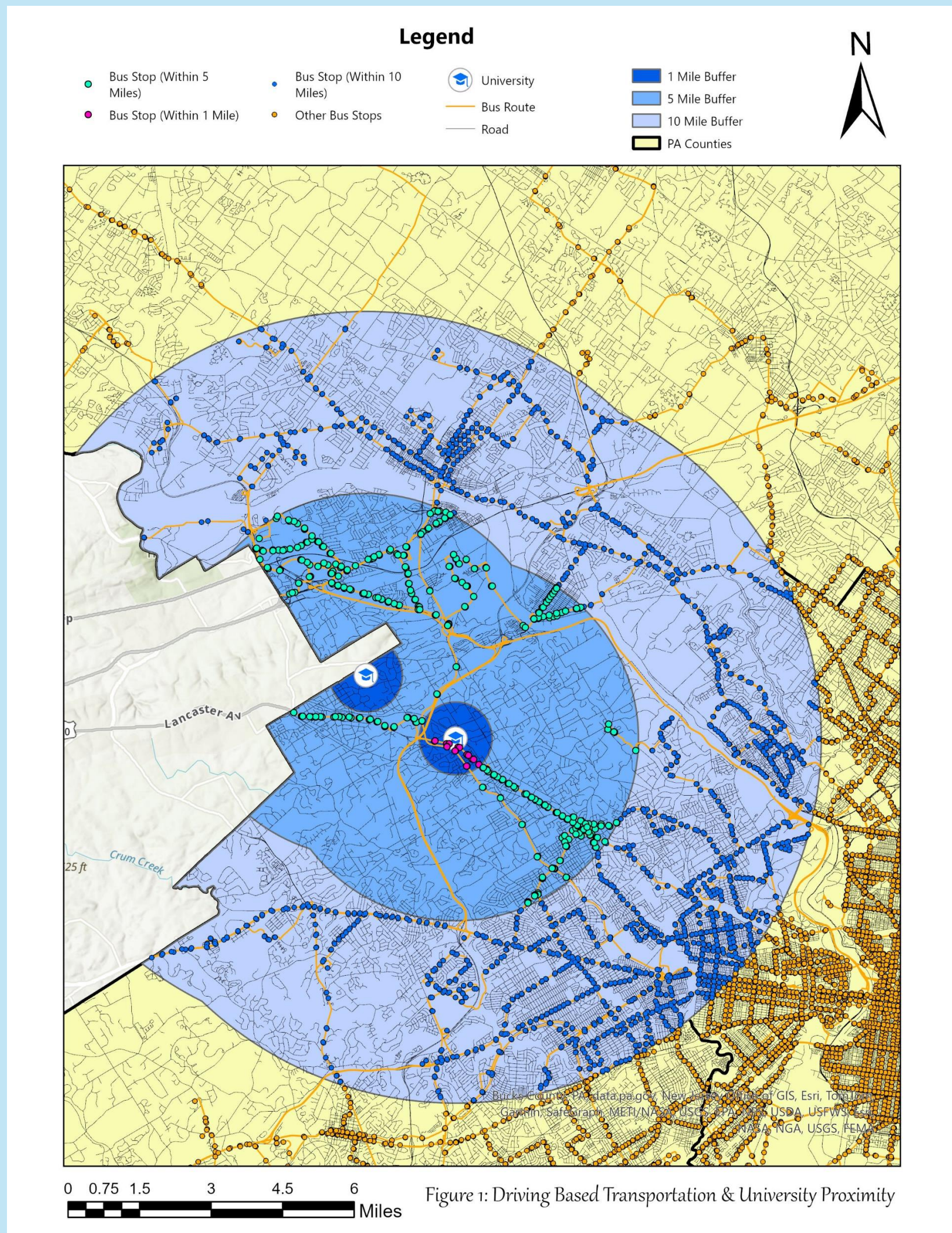




Ideal Off-Campus Housing Options for Seniors & Graduate Students

Following the Acquisition of Cabrini University

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Introduction

Perhaps under their own volition, perhaps not - an overwhelming majority of Villanova graduate students and undergraduate seniors find themselves year after year in search of off-campus housing. While many students seek on-campus residency, some recognize its value diminishing as expenses continually reflect a rising U.S. cost-of-living and are motivated to find nearby alternatives (Peters et al.). A multitude of factors augment the complexity in searching for rentals - affordability, proximity, accessibility, etc. Notably, students who feel institutional support in their living situation enjoy higher graduation rates and elevated academic success (Sackett et al.). Further, the strength of a University's community and operation is directly impacted by its relationships with the surrounding region's residents (Kumer). It's mutually beneficial for the university/student to intentionally locate student friendly housing options.

The aim of this analysis is to locate ideal off-campus areas for students to live in by prioritizing distance to campus, affordability, access to essential resources, and accessibility to public transit. These characteristics recognize the financial burden off-campus housing often imposes - while concurrently maximizing convenience and community engagement for the typical student managing a plethora of on-campus involvements and academic rigor. With the pending acquisition of Cabrini University by the end of the 2023-2024 academic year, a new region of off-campus possibilities can now be compared to the rest of this region.

Spatial Question: With particular emphasis on graduate students and seniors, does the acquisition of Cabrini University present students with meaningful off-campus housing options?

Methods

Coordinate System: NAD 1983 (2011) StatePlane Pennsylvania South FIPS3702 (US Feet)

- ❖ PreProcessing
 - ❖ Downloaded all points data from online sources
 - ❖ Found other sources via Living Atlas
 - ❖ Changed Symbology
 - ❖ Set up Geodatabase
 - ❖ Batch Projected into PCS
- ❖ Methods
 - ❖ Created 3 Buffer Zones around Villanova and Cabrini University
 - ❖ Clipped all data points into within county lines
 - ❖ For Maps 1, 2, & 4
 - ❖ Selected by Location for points within Villanova's Buffers to highlight distinctly
 - ❖ For Map 5
 - ❖ Buffered around each and every point
 - ❖ Merged like points (emergency services and transportation)
 - ❖ Erased areas that didn't overlap
 - ❖ Selected and exported census tracts under \$1,882 for median contract rent
 - ❖ Overlaid the previous points with those census tracts
 - ❖ Dissolved the final result to make one shape

Results & Discussion

- ❖ Interestingly, no ideal living regions were located within 1 mile of Cabrini's campus but several were identified to the north within 5 miles (Figure 5)
- ❖ Notably I was unable to obtain emergency services data for Delaware County
- ❖ While the study highlights tracts based on their affordability, this only considers the general stipend a graduate student would possess (\$19,440 per year for 20 hrs. of weekly work)
- ❖ Seniors and Graduate Students without stipends would have to have other sources of income
- ❖ This study strictly considered rent and groceries as expenditures
- ❖ The Philadelphia Metro area tends to be more affordable and easily traversable via public transit but furthest from campus (Figures 1, 2, & 3)
- ❖ It's also clearly a well covered area by emergency services (Figure 4)

Conclusion

Overall, as per the discussion section, there's a decent amount of housing options that seem appealing for students working through their off campus search. The ideal housing covers 59.48 square miles of land, however most of that is beyond 10 miles of Villanova campus or Cabrini University's campus. These ideal living areas however are all in relatively affordable census tracts, have access to a public transit stop within walking distance (1 mile), and are within 1 mile of some sort of emergency service station.

Further analysis would be beneficial to pinpoint the best locations for off-campus housing. Some immediate suggestions for next steps include: finding current listings that are Villanova approved, finding locations of grocery stores and other helpful areas (malls, barbershops, etc.), and applying demographic data to understand the makeup of each census tract (particularly age & race). Long term analysis would require University officials to make decisions surrounding the direction and integration of Cabrini's campus respective to our present operations. What will be done with the 800+ beds within already built residential buildings there? Renovations? Tear them down? Does the university move any other populations to Cabrini or take this as an opportunity to expand the undergraduate population? So many questions linger that would impact what people and resources are present in that area and if that makes more attractive options both on campus and off campus for the oldest Villanova students. It is highly important in any sense though for the university to be involved in assisting students in finding housing, as per Sackett et al. ("Universities should support students beyond just the housing itself, including with food assistance and basic essentials to living").

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