

## Introduction

One of the most important choices a retail business can make is where to physically locate itself. The right location needs to balance many concerns, including cost, competitive landscape, and access to customers.

I have analyzed the coffee shops located in and around Charlotte, NC to locate areas that are underserved by current coffee shops. These underserved areas represent an opportunity to open a coffee shop because of the lack of competitors and access to customers.

## Data

Data were collected from two sources:

1. FourSquare's Places API, which provides information on points of interest in an area
2. The US Census Bureau, which provides population estimates for different geographies

The FourSquare Places API lets users search an area for establishments that meet their criteria. For example, a user can search for "Coffee Shops within 10 miles of Charlotte, NC." The actual request is packaged differently so the API can understand the request, but the request returns the necessary information, which the user then transforms into usable data.

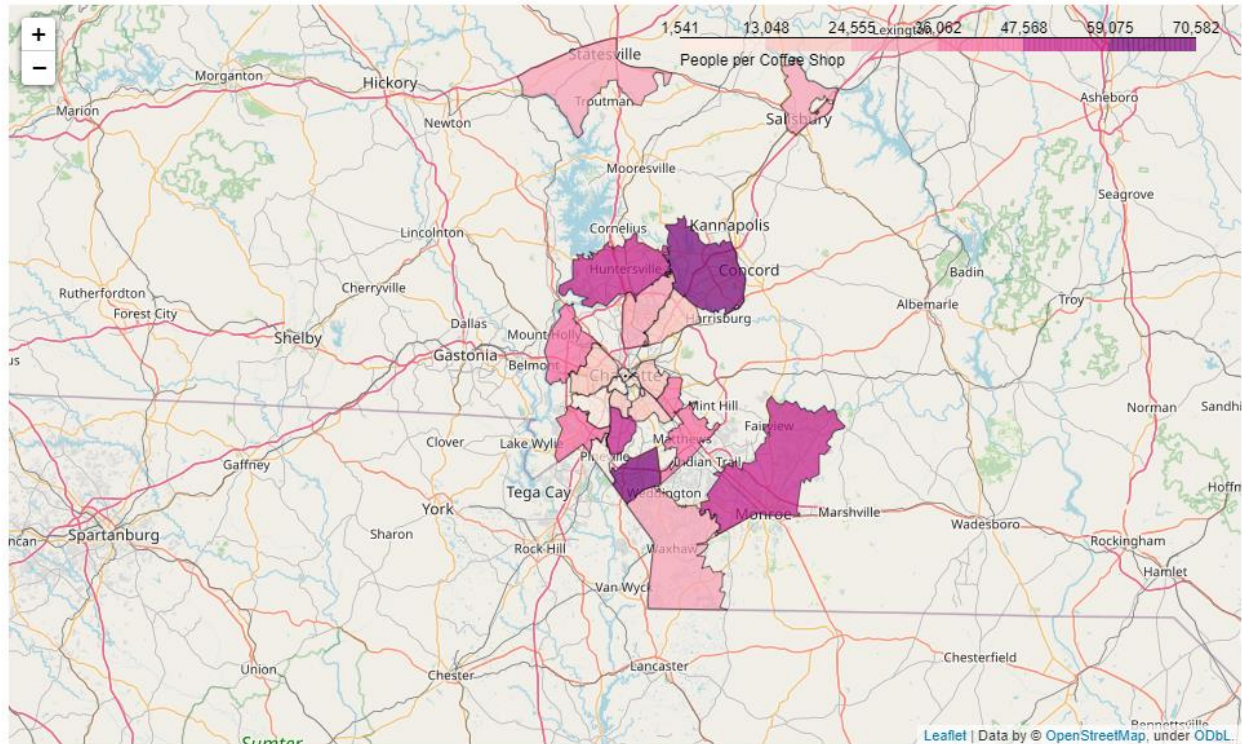
The Census Bureau, which produces data about the US population and economy, has vast troves of data. Specifically, I accessed the population of each zip code that had a coffee shop in it. Similar to FourSquare, the Census Bureau makes its data available via an API.

## Methodology

After accessing the data from FourSquare and the Census Bureau, I combined it to create a choropleth map, which shaded areas based on population per coffee shop. This map illustrates the areas that are likely to be able to support a new coffee shop.

## Results

The areas that are most likely to be able to support a coffee shop are illustrated in the map below.



## Discussion

Based on the unshaded or darkly shaded areas of the map, the best places for a coffee shop near Charlotte would be near Cornelius or Mooresville, along with the eastern part of the city.

## Conclusion

While there are many important decisions when opening a business, perhaps the most important for a physical retail establishment is **where**. Based on the current distribution of coffee shops and population in Charlotte, there is plenty of room for opportunity.