



# The Federal Land Footprint in Southern Nevada

Prepared by: Shawn J. McCoy, Ph.D.

Email: [sjmccoy5900@gmail.com](mailto:sjmccoy5900@gmail.com)

Website: <https://liedcenter.unlv.edu/>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/shawn-mccoy-29b914248/>

# About & Disclaimer

- Occupation: (Executive) Director, Lied Center for Real Estate, UNLV. Associate (tenured) Professor of Economics, Dept. of Economics, Lee Business School, UNLV.
- Disclaimer: The author (Shawn J. McCoy, Ph.D.) is presenting as an individual & not as an agent of the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) or the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.
- The economic research contained herein represents the views of the author & the author alone & does not indicate concurrence either by UNLV or NSHE. UNLV or NSHE are in no way involved in this activity or responsible for its conduct. Some of the economic research & associated conclusions are preliminary & circulated to stimulate discussion & critical comment.
- ©2025 Shawn J. McCoy, Ph.D. All rights reserved. This presentation may be circulated in its entirety, but no part of this presentation may be reproduced without prior written permission of the author.

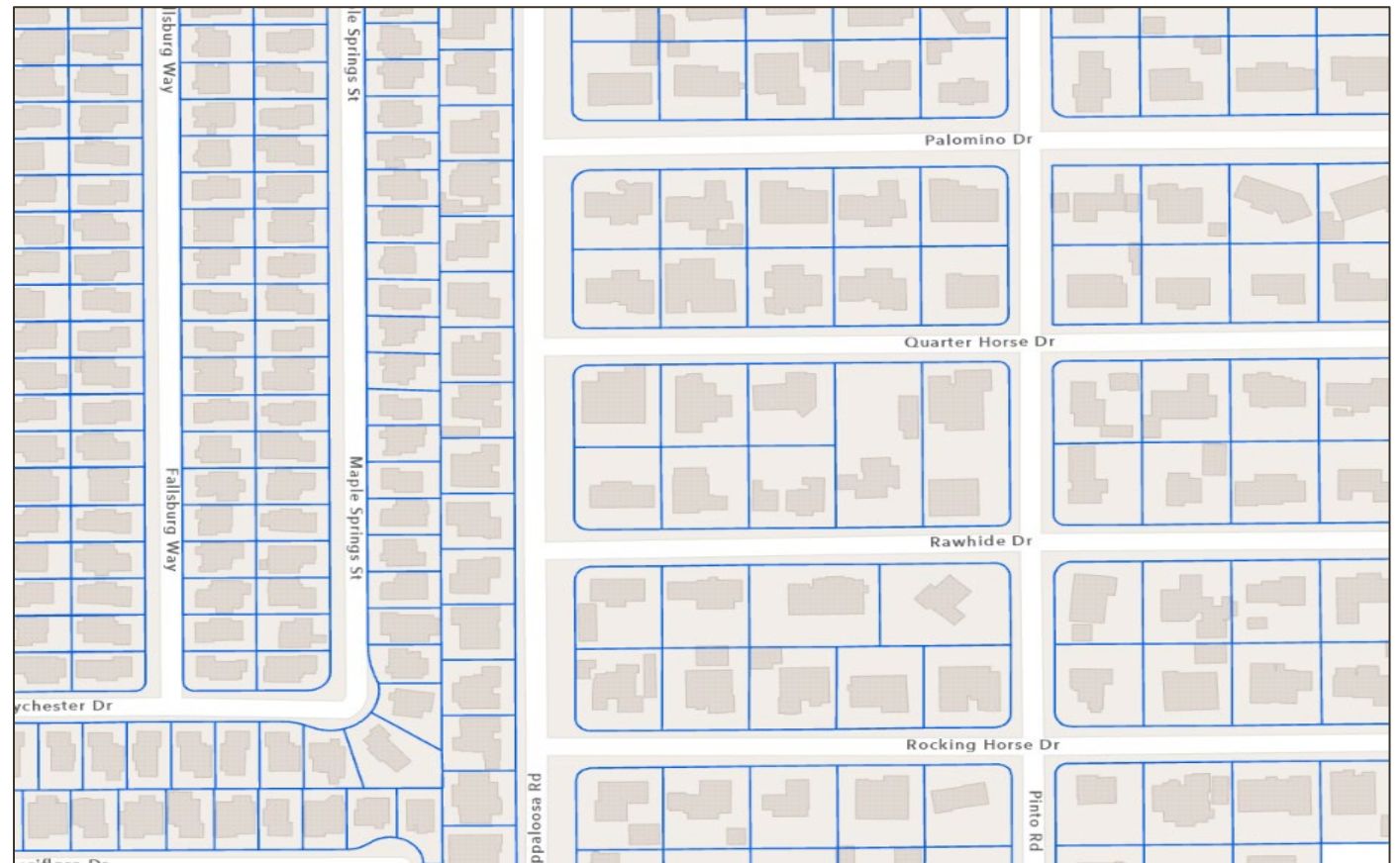
# Objectives

1. Inventory of Federal land in Southern Nevada
  - All land in Clark County, NV
  - All vacant land in Clark County, NV (“CC”)
2. Vacant (potentially) developable land
3. Land-use patterns 1990-present
4. 10-year projections & outlook

# The Data

- Universe of parcel boundaries in Clark County, NV (Clark County Assessor)
- Federal land ownership status (BLM, SMA)
- Topographical data (U.S. Geological Survey, Clark County Comprehensive Planning)
- Parcel characteristics (Clark County Assessor Data Files)
- Major streets & highways (Clark County Comprehensive Planning Dept.)

Sample of Clark County, NV Parcels<sup>1</sup>



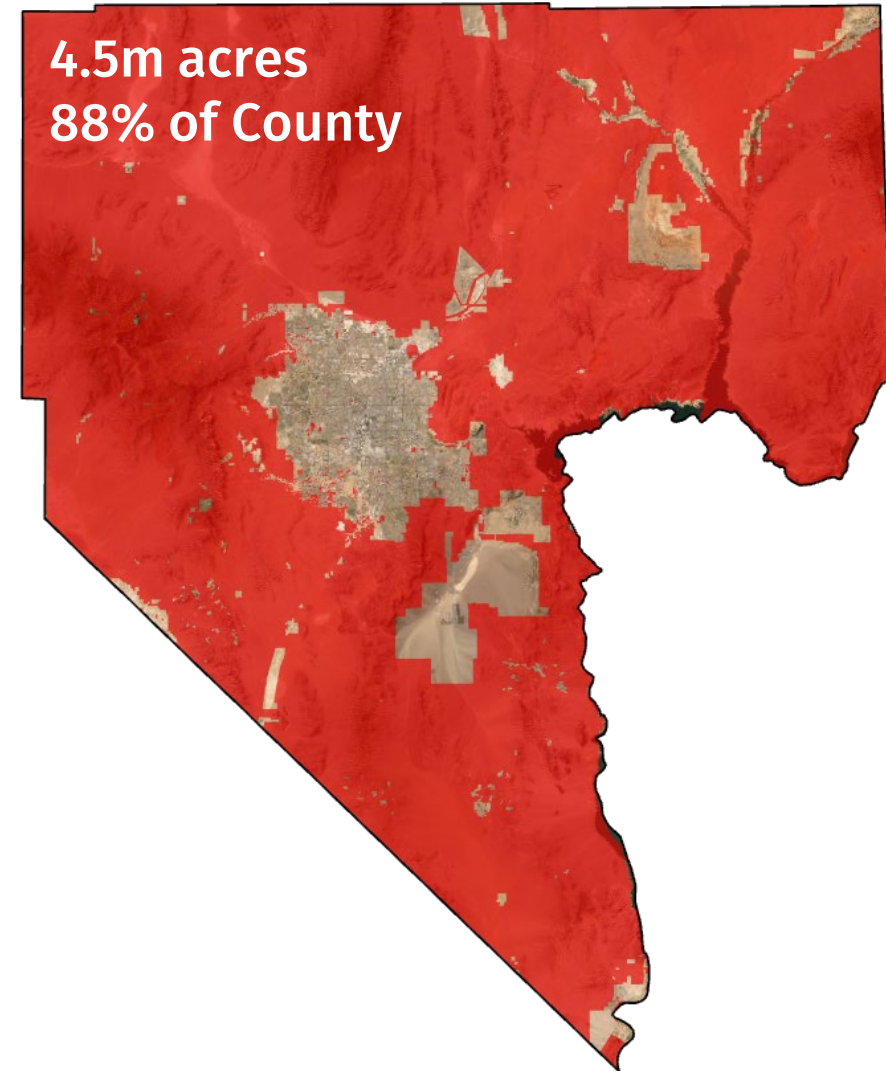
<sup>1</sup>McCoy (2025). Data acquired from Clark County Assessor.



# Federal Land Ownership

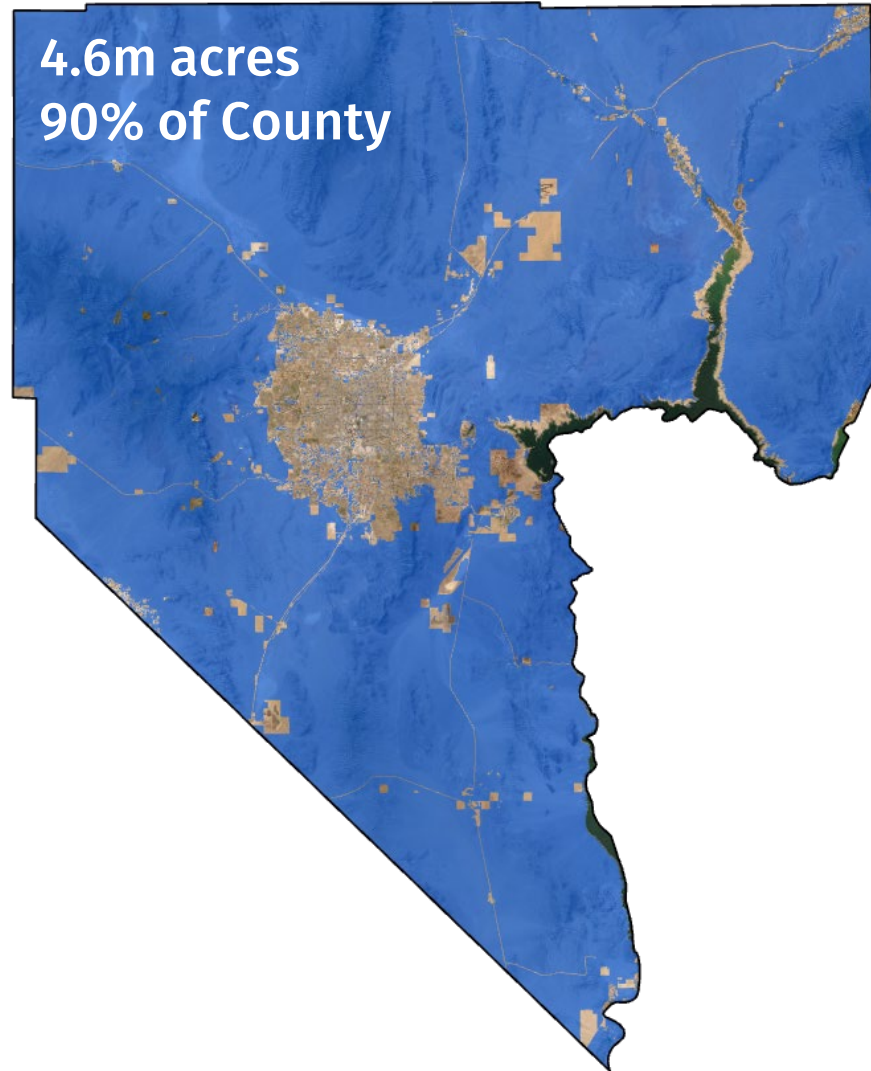
- 5.1m acres comprise Clark County<sup>2</sup>
- 4.5m acres (88%) is administered by the Federal Government<sup>3</sup>
  - ✓ BLM: 51%
  - ✓ National Park Service: 11%
  - ✓ US Fish & Wildlife: 10%
- Research questions
  1. How much land in Clark County is vacant?
  2. What proportion of vacant land does the Federal Government control?

Federally Controlled Land<sup>1</sup> (red)

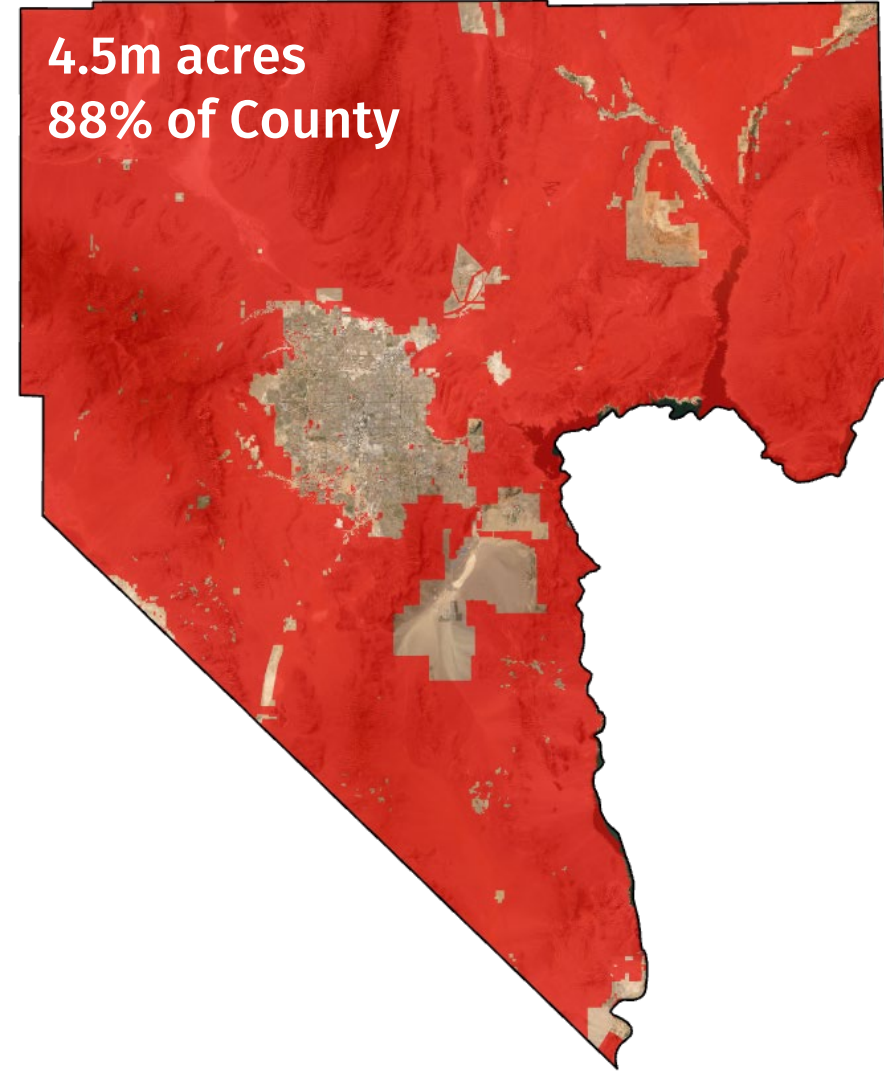


# Vacant land in Clark County, NV

Vacant Land<sup>1</sup> (blue)



Federally Controlled Land<sup>2</sup> (red)

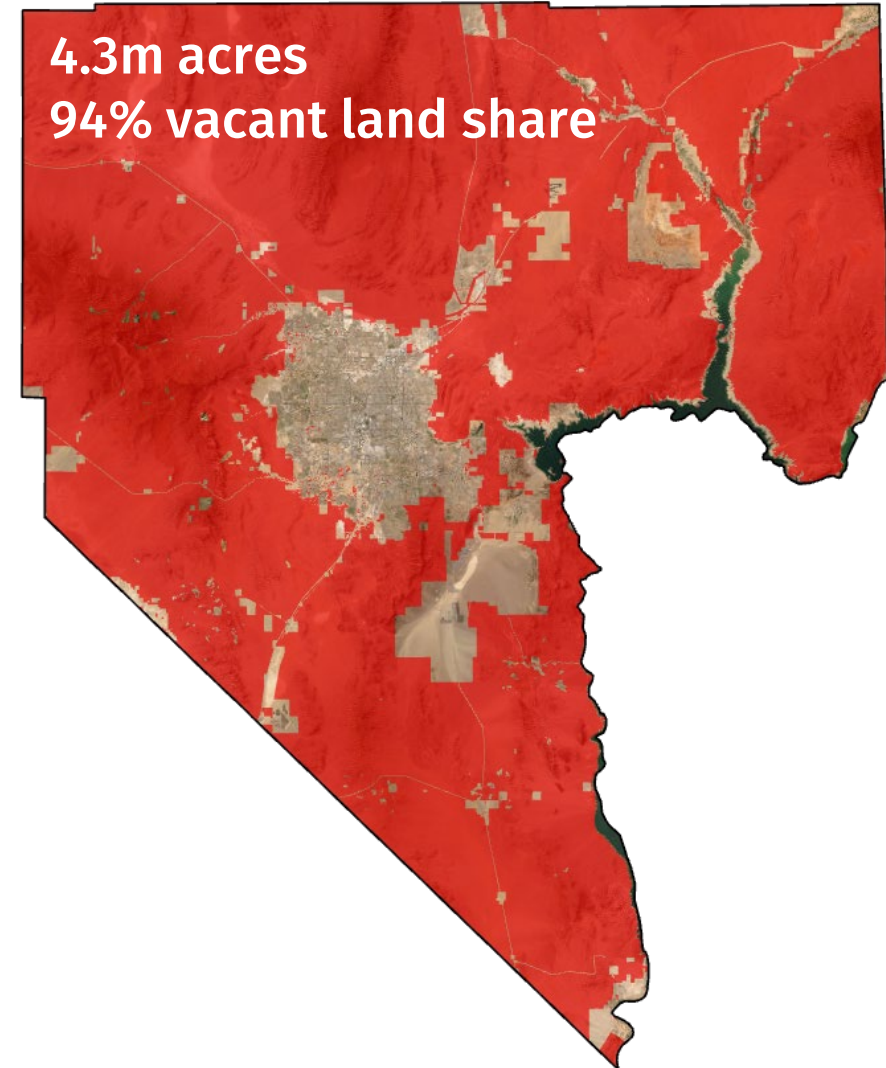


<sup>1,2</sup>McCoy (2025). Data acquired from Clark County, Assessor, BLM.

# Vacant Federally Controlled Land

- Methodology
  1. Overlay Federally controlled land with vacant parcel map
  2. Geometric intersection in ArcGIS
  3. Compute the vacant land share
- Vacant Federal land statistics<sup>2</sup>
  - ✓ 4.3m acres of vacant Federal land in CC
  - ✓ 94% of vacant land in Clark County, NV is Federally controlled
- Research question
  1. How much of this land is developable?

Federally Controlled Vacant Land<sup>1</sup> (red)





# Development Factor #1: SNPLMA (1998)

- Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (1998)<sup>2</sup>
- Research Questions
  1. How small is the disposal boundary
    - ✓ 6.3% of Clark County, NV's land mass<sup>3</sup>
  2. What share of Clark County's urban development is contained within the disposal boundary?
    - Requires an analysis of developed parcels

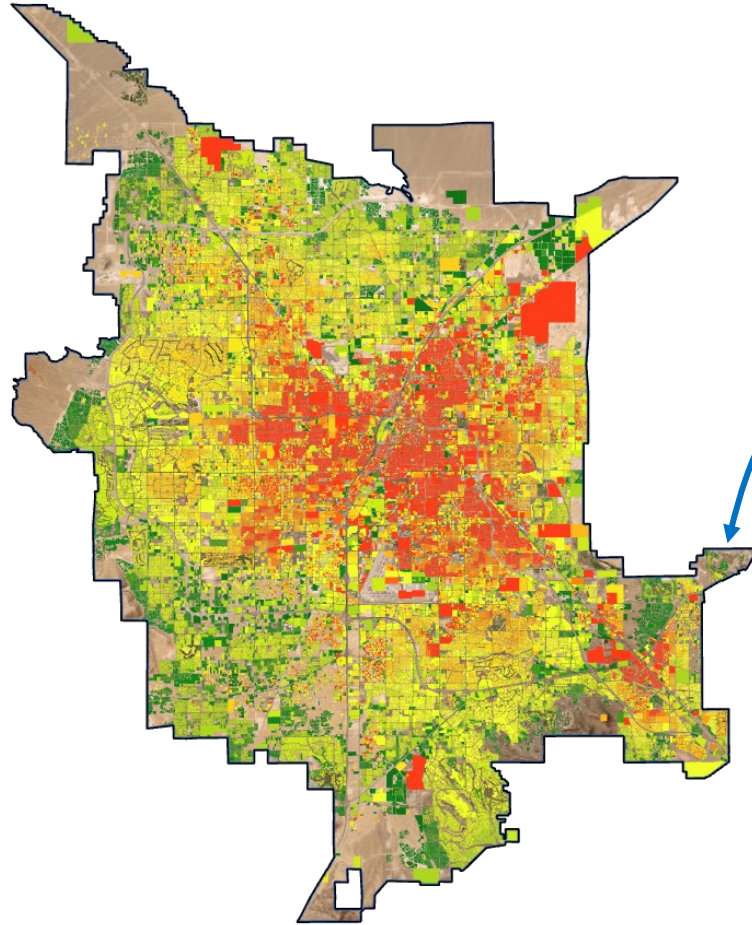
SNPLMA Valley Disposal Boundary<sup>1</sup> (green)



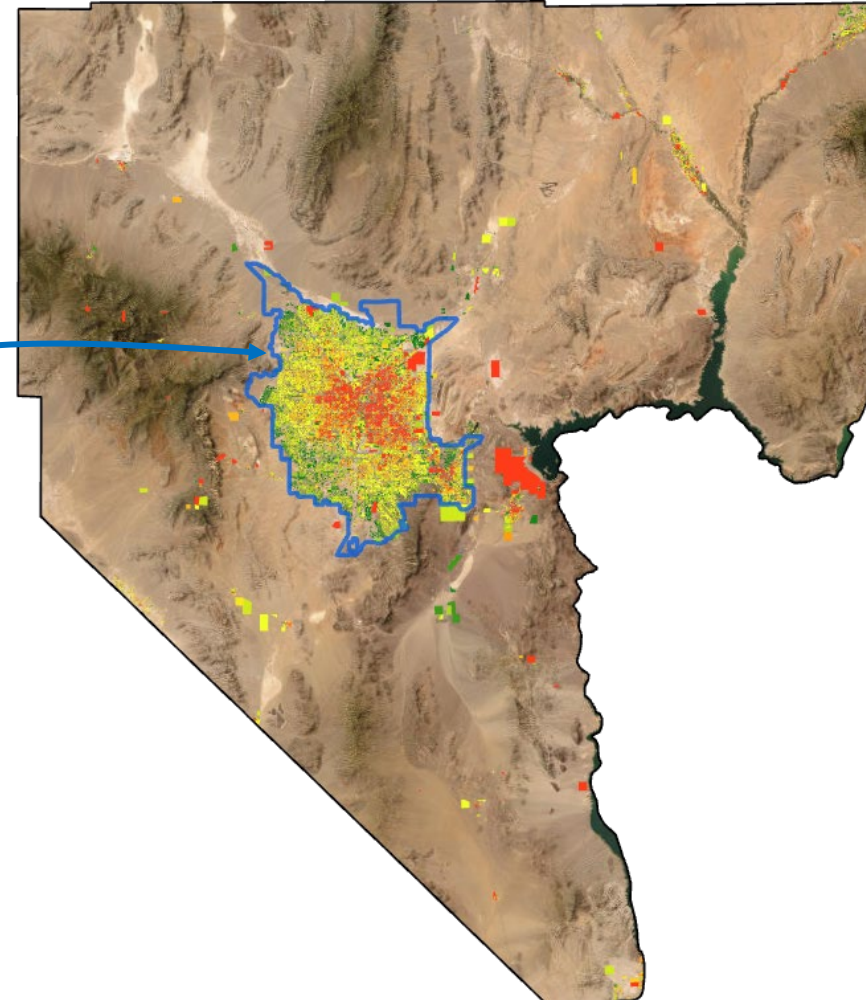


# The Data: Developed Parcels

Developed Parcels (Disposal Boundary)<sup>1</sup>



Developed Parcels (Clark County, NV)<sup>2</sup>

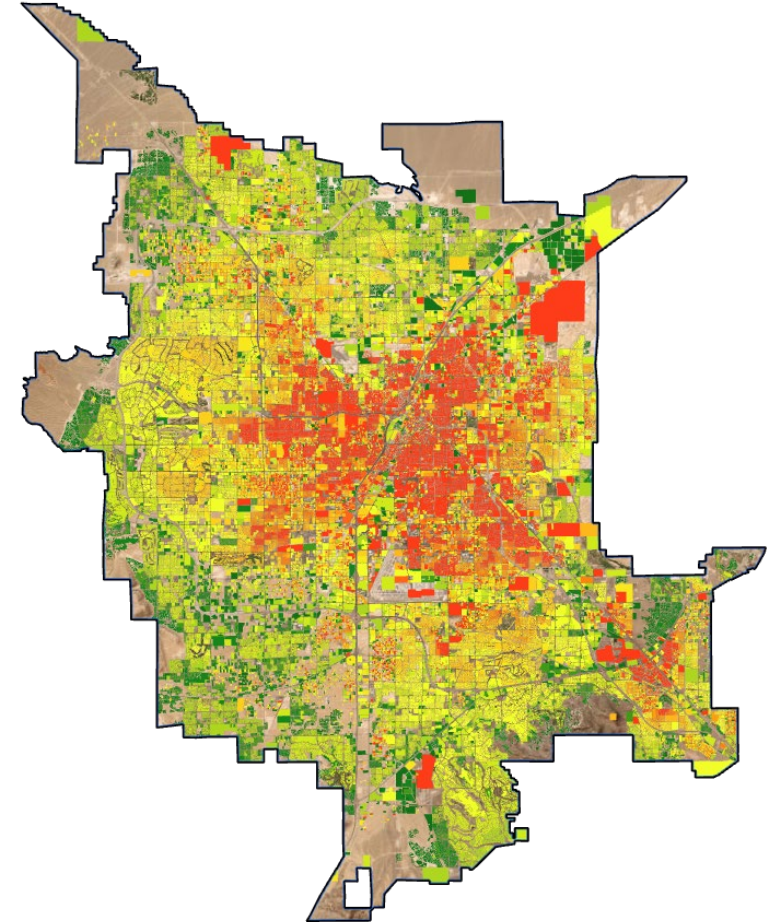


<sup>1,2</sup>McCoy (2025). Data acquired from Clark County, Assessor.

# Developed Parcels: Findings

1. 96% of all single-family & multi-family residential units in Clark County, NV exist within the disposal boundary<sup>2</sup>
2. +50-year-old buildings<sup>3</sup>
  - ✓ 10.74% of the market
  - ✓ Number of +50-year-old properties doubles in 13 years
3. Implications for the viability of infill development on a large scale

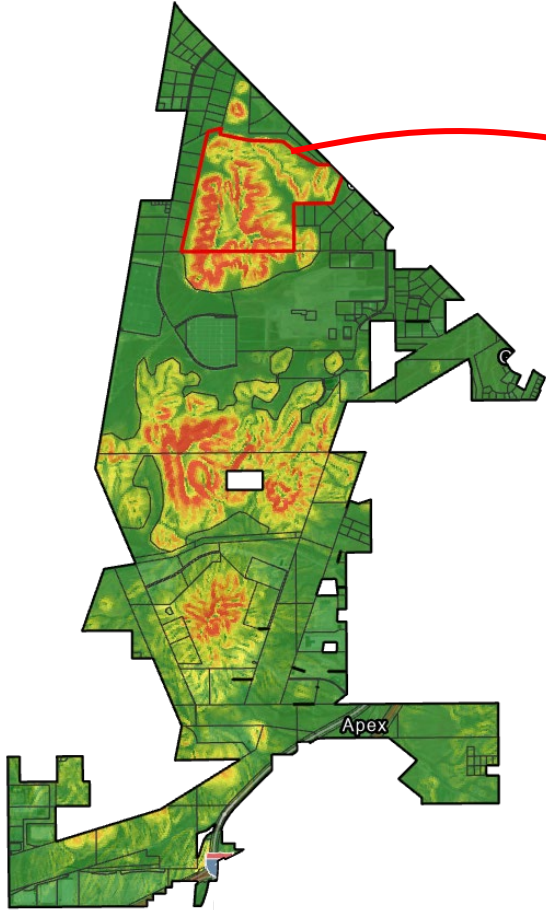
Developed Parcels (Disposal Boundary)<sup>1</sup>



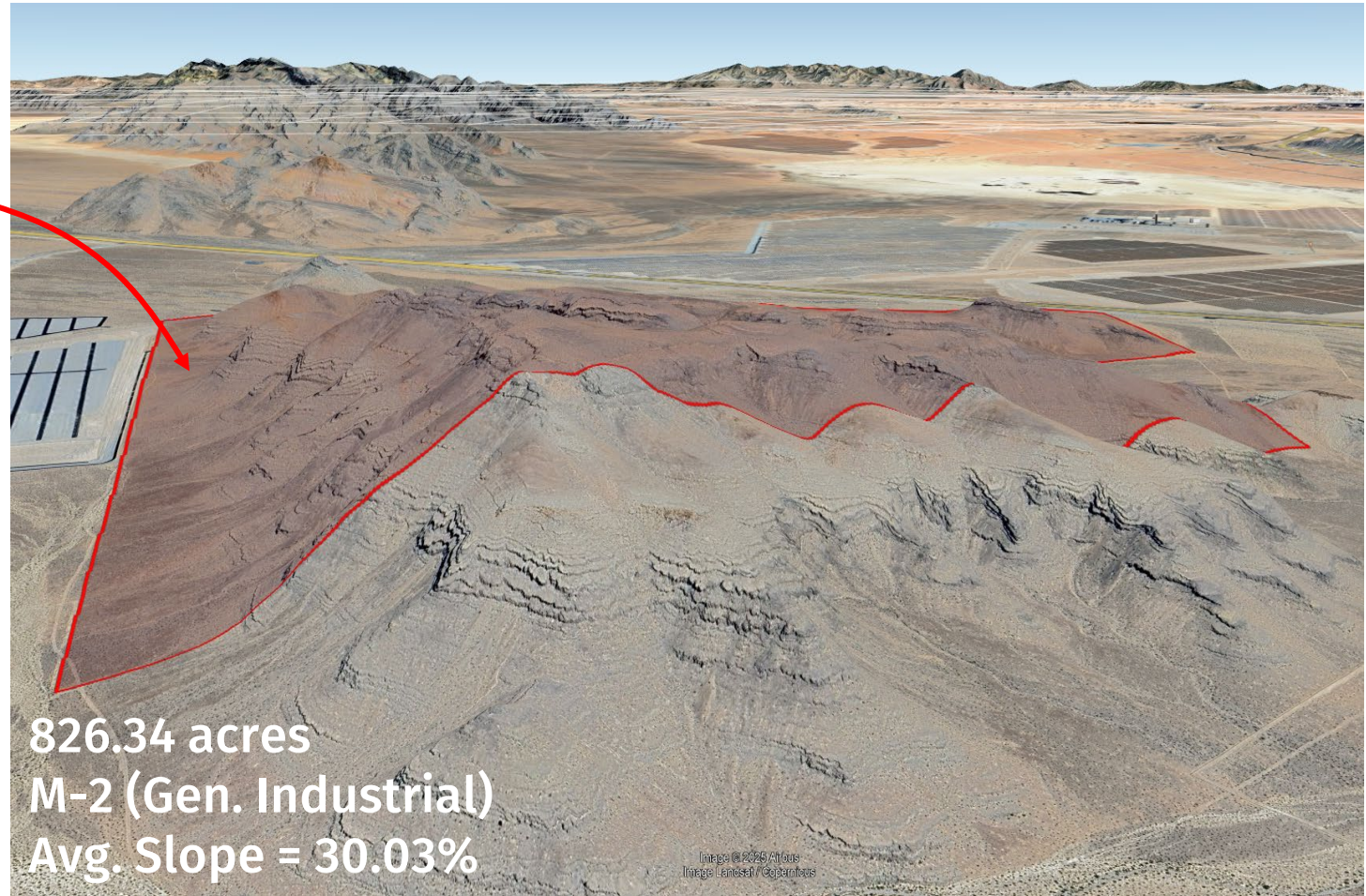


# Development Factor #2: Parcel Slope

Apex (NLV)<sup>1</sup>



APN: 10304010022<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup>McCoy (2025). Slope data obtained from USGSS. <sup>2</sup>Parcel boundary obtained from the Clark County, Assessor, map produced in Google Earth Pro Desktop.

# Previous Studies–Vacant Land

- **Core Development Factors**

1. Slope
2. Ownership
  - ✓ Federal, municipal, private
3. Access
  - ✓ Roads, highways
4. Zoning & parcel size

- **Relevant Research**

- ✓ RCG Economics Employment Land Studies (Vacant Developable Land)
- ✓ RTC Underutilized Lands Study (Vacant Land)
- ✓ Lied Center for Real Estate (Absorption)



# RCG Economics: All Clark County, NV<sup>1</sup>

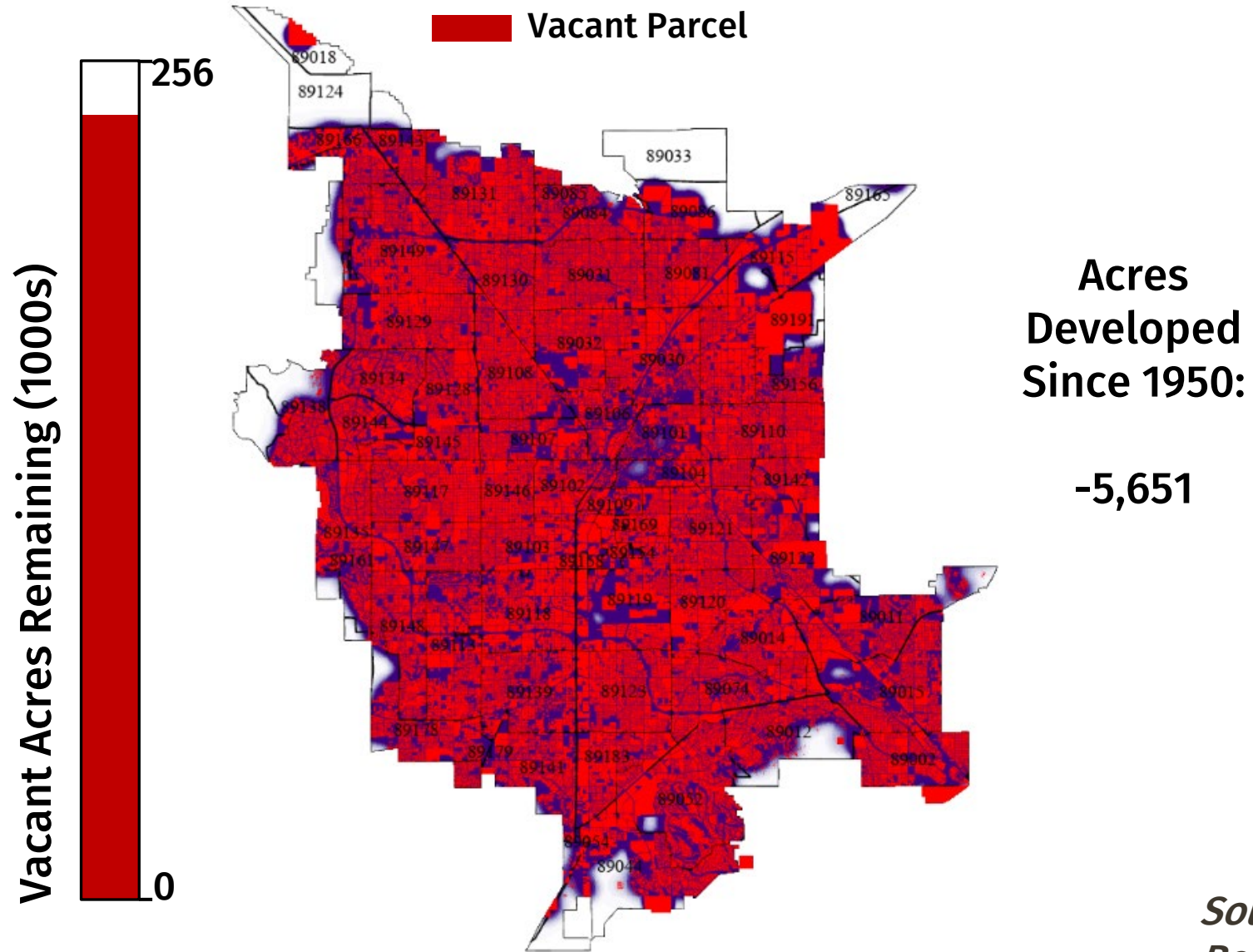
		Least Restrictive				Most Restrictive	
Category	Parcel Filter Description	1	2	3	4	5	6
Topography	Average Slope of Parcel	<12%	<12%	<7%	<7%	<7%	<7%
Access	Nearest Distance to Freeway	<10 miles	<5 miles	<5 miles	<5 miles	<5 miles	<5 miles
Access	Nearest Distance to Major Street	<5 miles	<2.5 miles	<3/4 mile	<3/4 mile	<3/4 mile	<3/4 mile
Ownership	Includes Federally Owned Parcels w/in BLM Disposal Boundary	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Ownership	Includes Municipally Owned Parcels	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Infrastructure Proxy	Nearest Distance to Developed Parcel	No Restriction	No Restriction	No Restriction	No Restriction	No Restriction	<1/4 mile
Total Vacant Acres		90,053	74,978	45,001	27,364	23,149	22,300



Replicate & visualize  
from 1960 to 2024

<sup>1</sup>Source: data available at <https://housing.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/housingnewnv.gov/Content/Programs/HDB/AB213.pdf>

# Vacant Land: Clark County, NV 1960



*Source: Belt, McCoy & Restrepo (2025, mimeo)*

**Vacant Acres Remaining (1000s)**

256

0

**Vacant Parcel**

**Acres Developed Since 1960:**

**-22,775**

**-22,775**

*Source: Belt, McCoy & Restrepo (2025, mimeo)*

**Vacant Acres Remaining (1000s)**

256

0

**Vacant Parcel**

**Acres Developed Since 1970:**

**-21,808**

**-21,808**

*Source: Belt, McCoy & Restrepo (2025, mimeo)*



**Vacant Acres Remaining (1000s)**

**256**

**0**

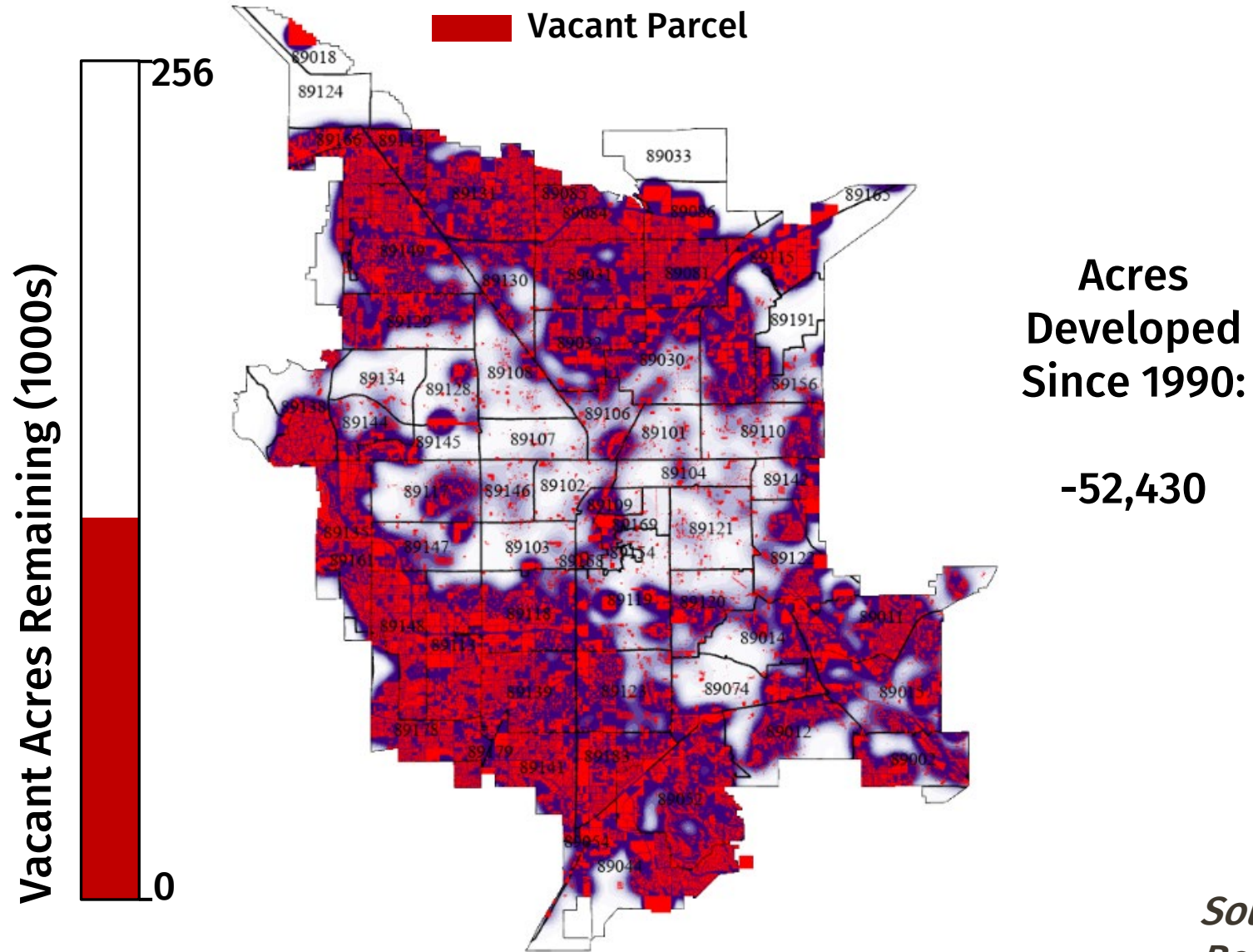
**Vacant Parcel**

**Acres Developed Since 1980: -21,808**

**-21,808**

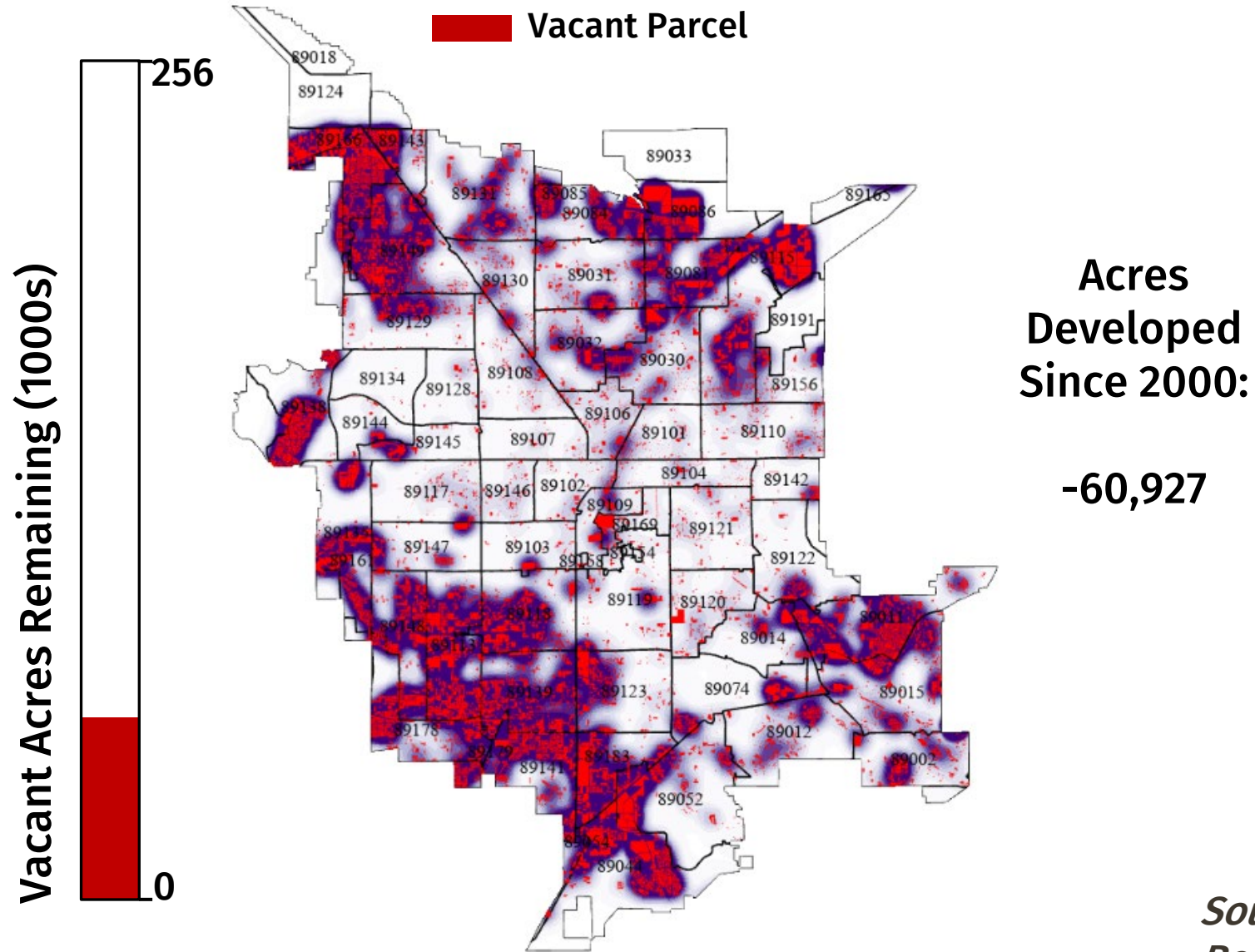
*Source: Belt, McCoy & Restrepo (2025, mimeo)*

# Vacant Land: Clark County, NV 2000



*Source: Belt, McCoy & Restrepo (2025, mimeo)*

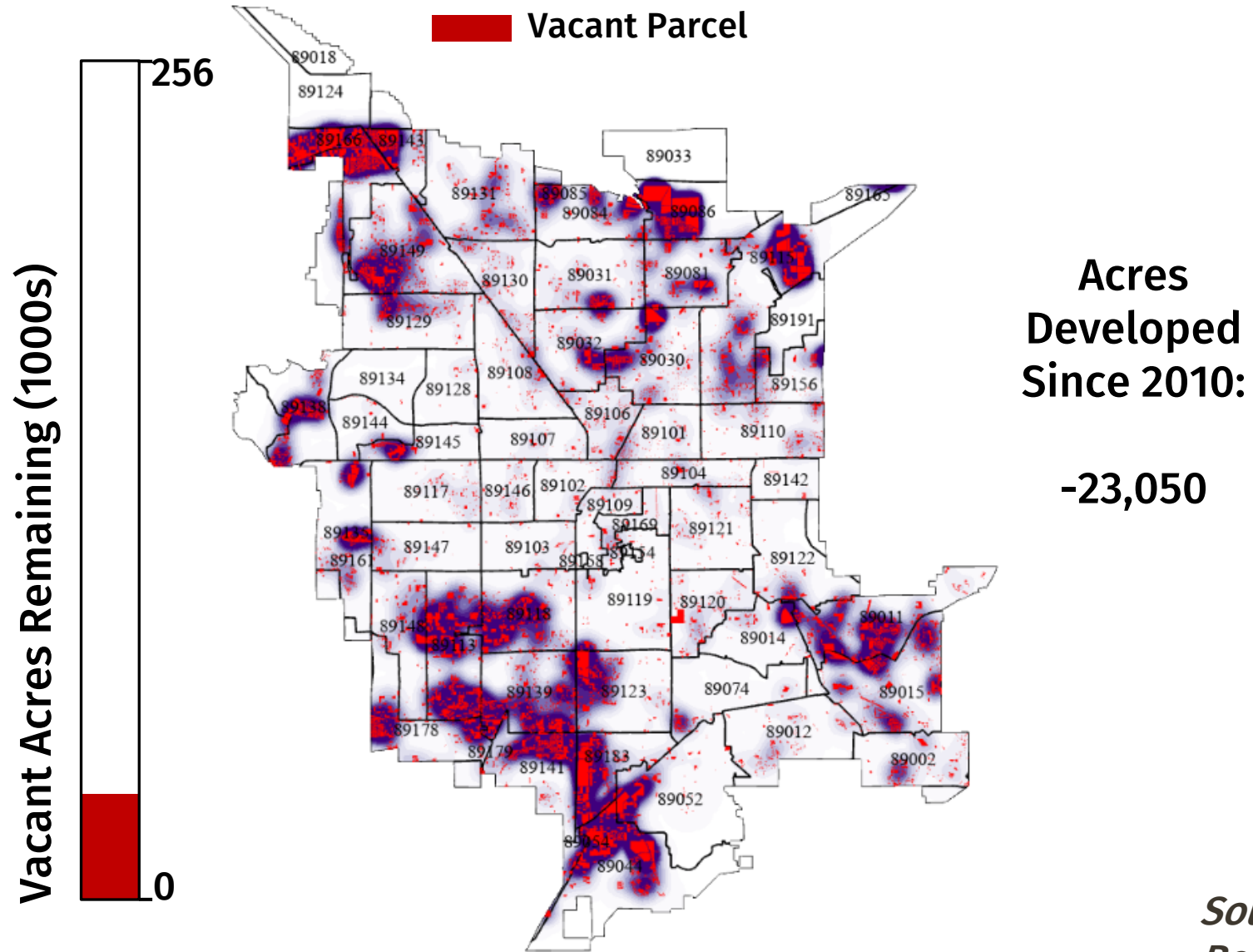
# Vacant Land: Clark County, NV 2010



*Source: Belt, McCoy & Restrepo (2025, mimeo)*



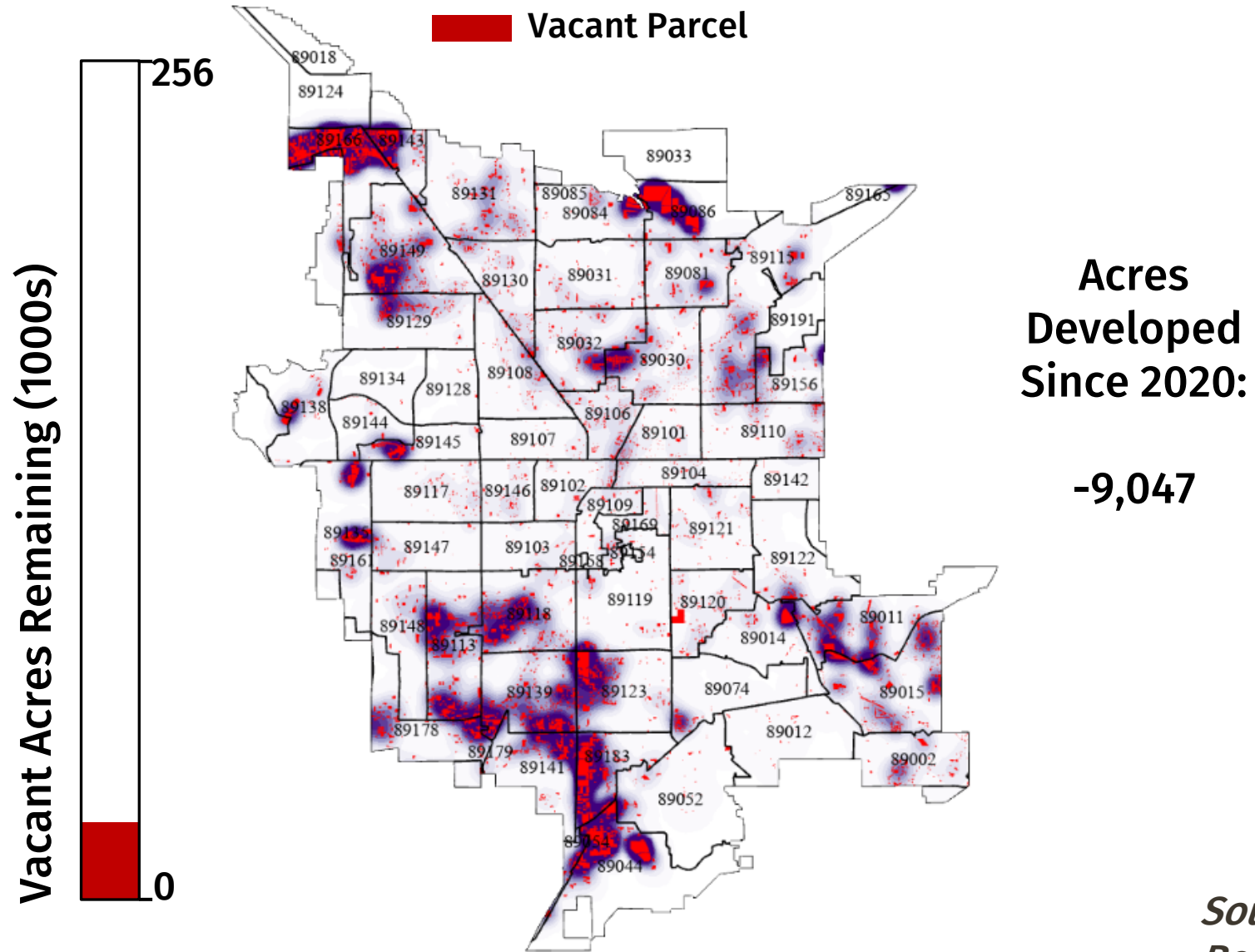
# Vacant Land: Clark County, NV 2020



*Source: Belt, McCoy & Restrepo (2025, mimeo)*



# Vacant Land: Clark County, NV 2024



*Source: Belt, McCoy & Restrepo (2025, mimeo)*

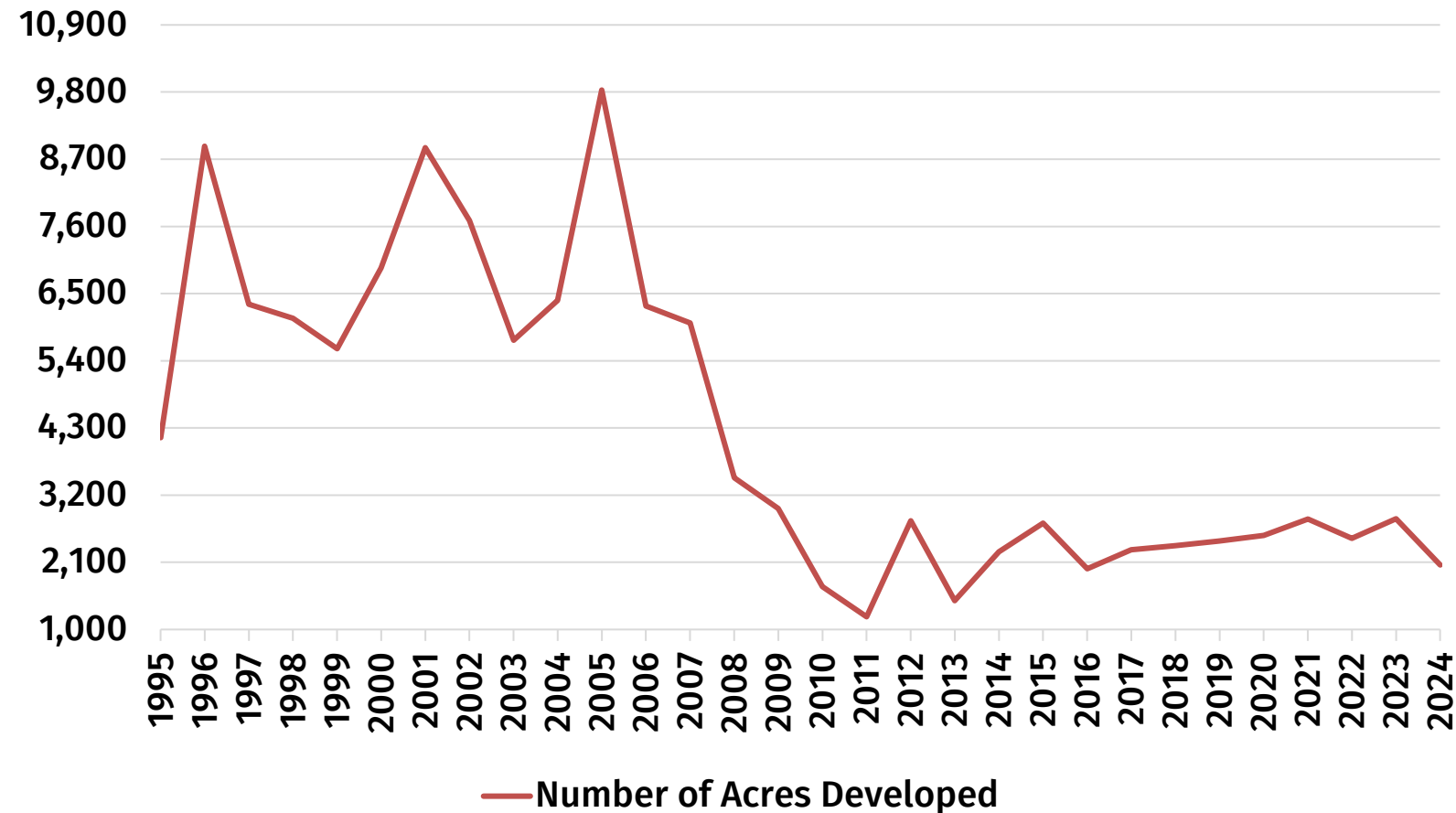
# Lied Center for Real Estate: Land Absorption<sup>1</sup>

- Pre 2003 vs. Post 2010

- ✓ 64% *decline* in land developed

- ✓ 82% *increase* in annual home price appreciation

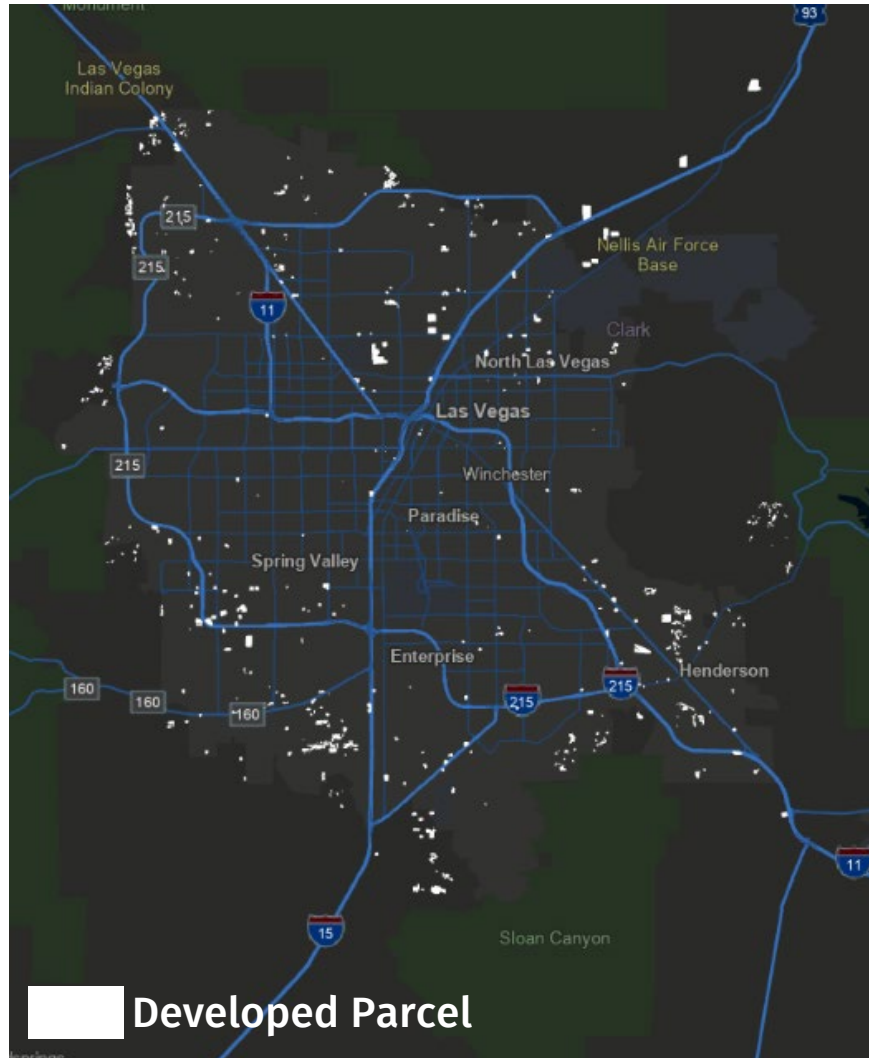
Figure 4: Developed Land Acreage



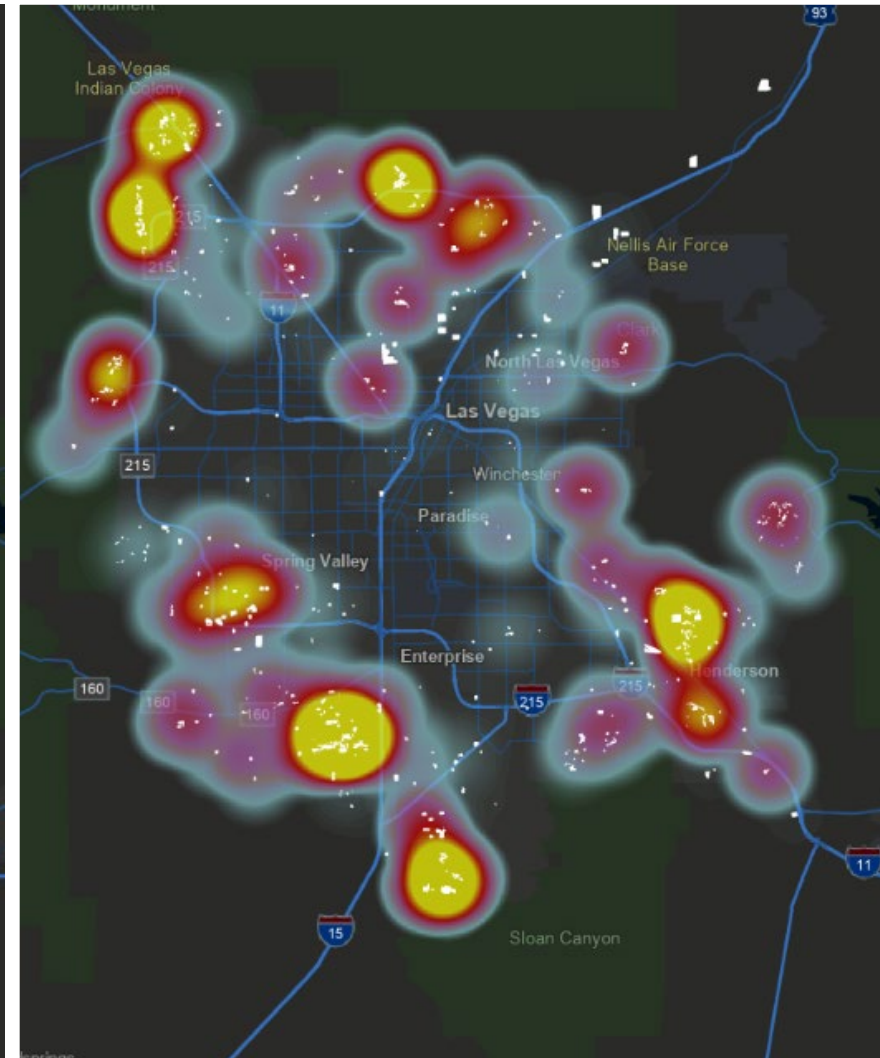
<sup>1</sup>Source: [https://liedcenter.unlv.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/The-Lied-Research-Report\\_Volume-2-Issue-3.pdf](https://liedcenter.unlv.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/The-Lied-Research-Report_Volume-2-Issue-3.pdf)

# Lied Center for Real Estate: Construction Activity<sup>1</sup>

## 2024 Developed Parcels



## 2024 Construction Hot-Spots

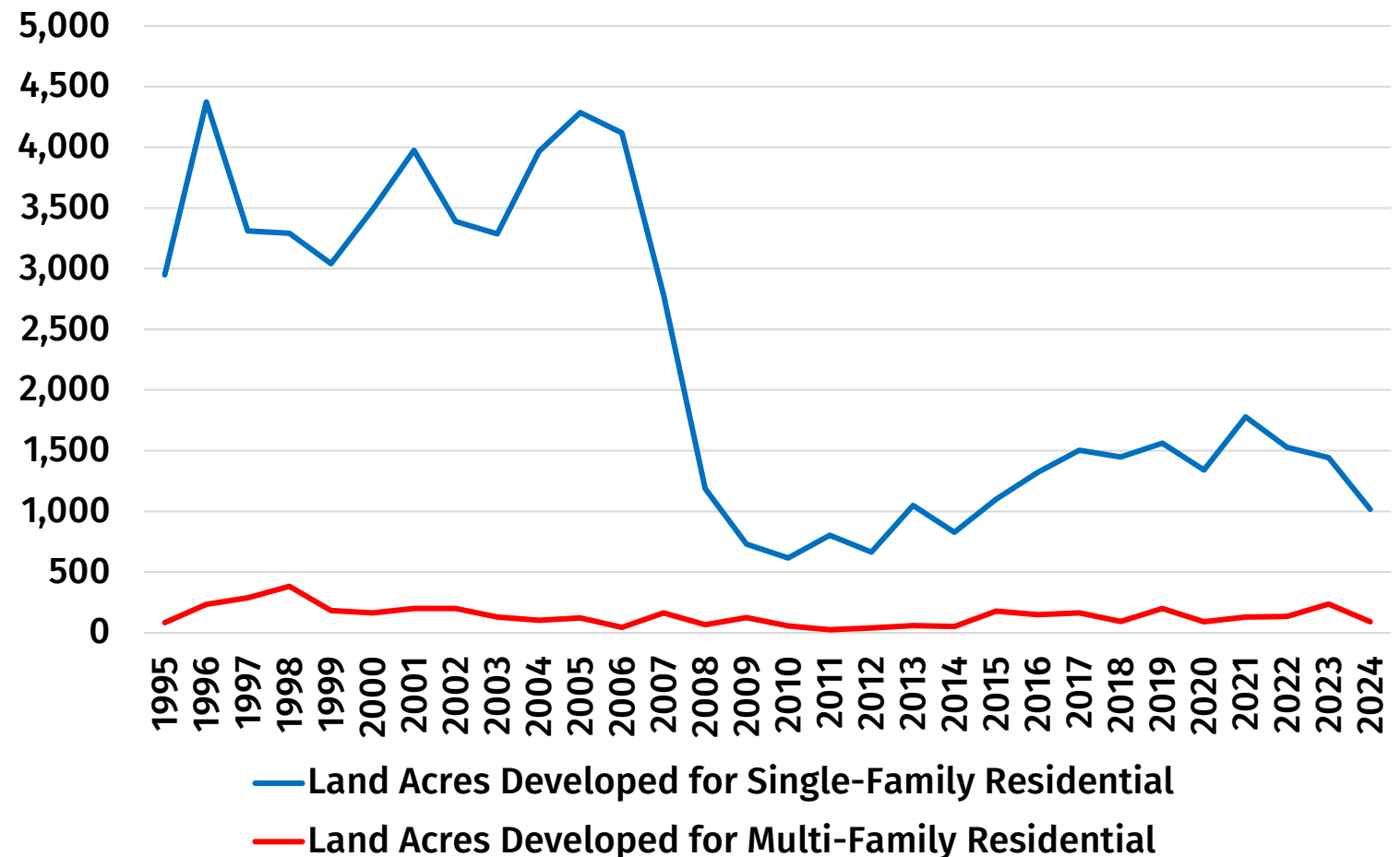


<sup>1</sup>Source: [https://liedcenter.unlv.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/The-Lied-Research-Report\\_Volume-2-Issue-3.pdf](https://liedcenter.unlv.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/The-Lied-Research-Report_Volume-2-Issue-3.pdf)

# Single-Family vs. Multi-Family Construction<sup>1</sup>

- Analysis of all vacant land developed for housing
  - ✓ Single-family constitutes 91% of acres developed to-date
  - ✓ Single-family development exceeds multi-family by 881%
  - ✓ 218% more units per acre on multi-family vs. single-family parcels

Figure 8: Single-Family vs. Multi-Family Development

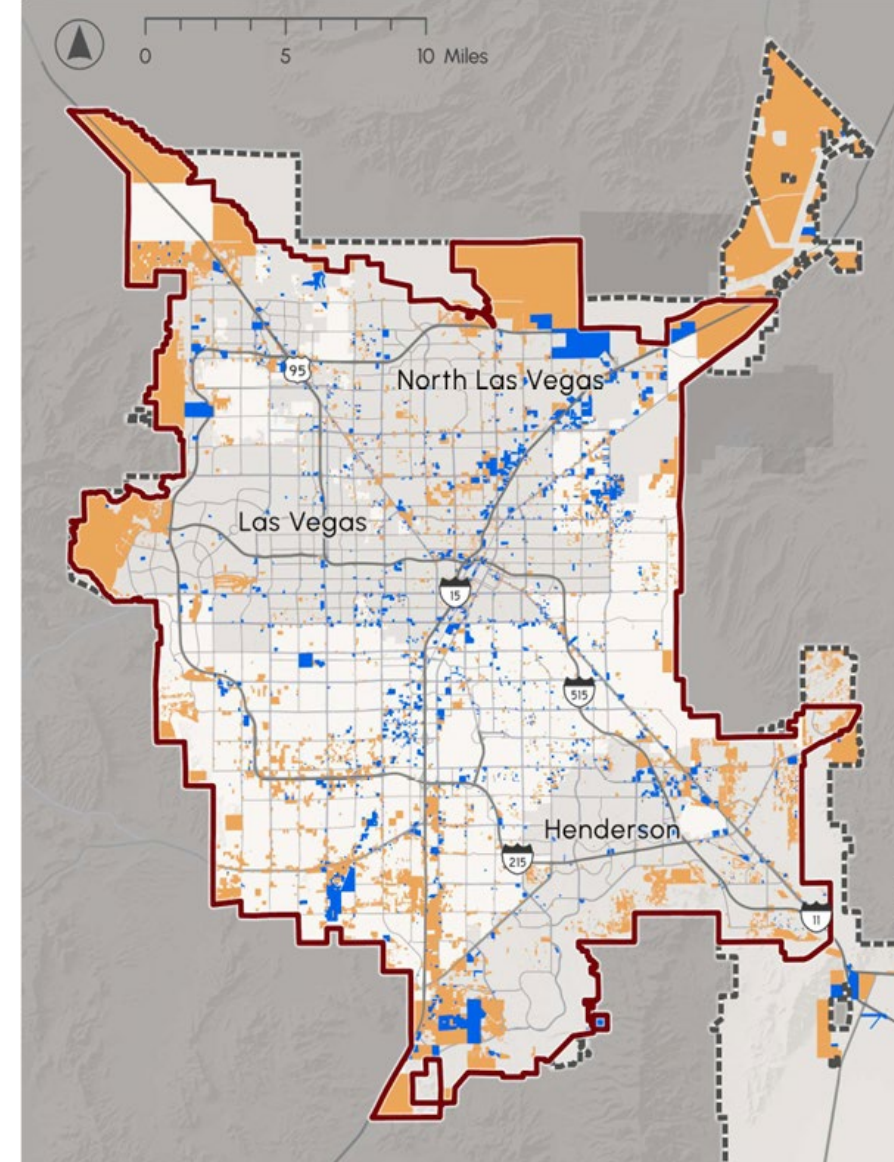


<sup>1</sup>Source: [https://liedcenter.unlv.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/The-Lied-Research-Report\\_Volume-2-Issue-3.pdf](https://liedcenter.unlv.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/The-Lied-Research-Report_Volume-2-Issue-3.pdf)



# RTC Underutilized Lands Inventory<sup>1</sup>

- Main Findings / Assumptions
  - ✓ 69,300 Vacant Acres
  - ✓ Slope <15% (Commercial)
  - ✓ Slope <25% (Residential)



<sup>1</sup>Source: <https://www.southernnevadastrong.org/resources/underutilized-lands-inventory/>

# Population Growth & The Wage-Rent Tradeoff

- Real Estate Fundamentals
  1. Adding jobs requires adding new private & public job centers
  2. Adding businesses requires additional commercial properties for lease



# Population Growth & The Wage-Rent Tradeoff

- Economic Fundamentals

1. Housing Costs: Absent residential development: population growth increases housing demand, leading to an imbalance

✓ Increases in housing demand = *upward pressure on rents*

2. Wages: Absent commercial development: population growth increases labor supply, again leading to an imbalance

✓ More people looking for work = *downward pressure on wages*

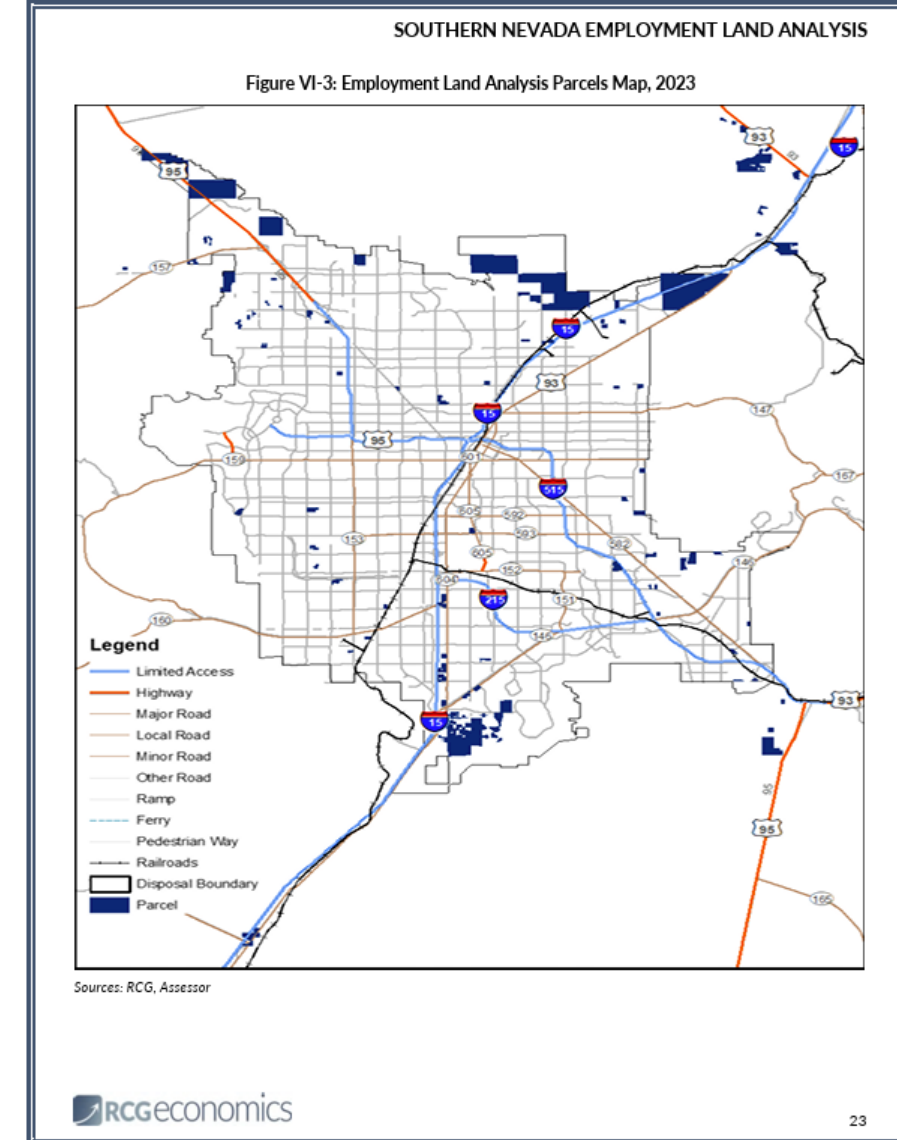
- Accommodating growth but maintaining job-housing balance requires residential & commercial real estate development

- Challenge to CRE development: parcel size



# Employment Land: RCG Economics (2023)<sup>1</sup>

- Slope assumptions for CRE
- Parcel sizes suitable for CRE
- Main Findings
  1. 2023: 16,400 acres
  2. Mid-scenario job growth targets result in a 470-acre shortage in 2030



<sup>1</sup>Source: <https://rcgecon.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/2023-5-23-GOED-So.-NV-Land-Study-Final-1.pdf>

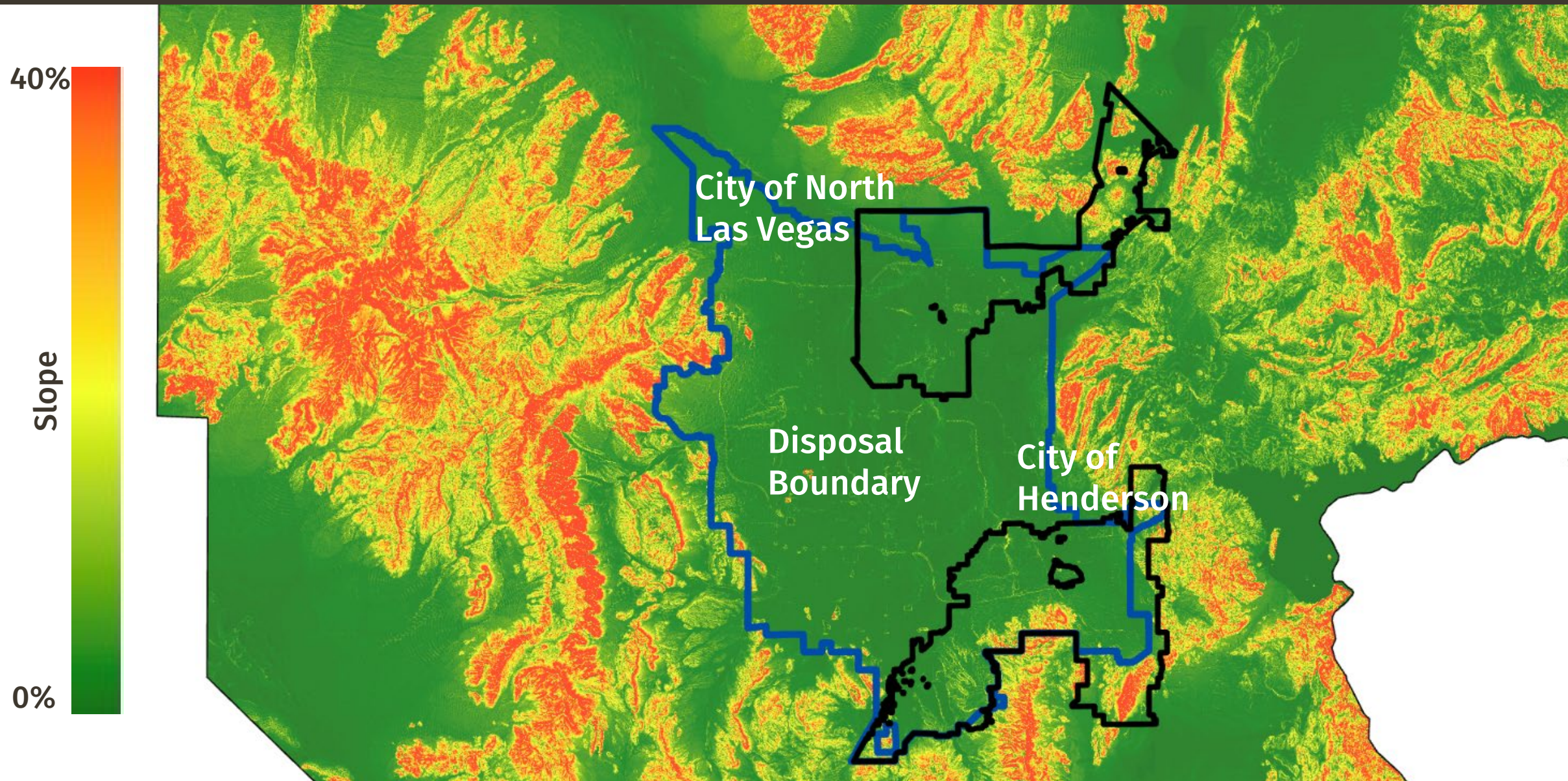
# Southern Nevada 10-year Population Projections<sup>1</sup>

- UNLV's Center for Business & Economic Research
  - ✓ +380,000 people
- Land needed for growth & resilience
  1. Housing
  2. Jobs
  3. Parks
  4. Schools
  5. Libraries
  6. Public Safety
  7. Other
- Contextualizing Population Growth
  - ✓ North Las Vegas = 294,034 people (ACS 2024)
  - ✓ City of Henderson = 350,020 people (ACS 2024)
  - Visualize jurisdictional boundaries in relation to the disposal boundary

<sup>1</sup>Source: <https://cber.unlv.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Population-Forecast-2024.pdf>



# Southern Nevada 10-year Population Projections<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup>Source: McCoy (2025), USGSS.



# Job-Housing Balance: Where We Are<sup>1</sup>

- Requirements to afford a median-priced home
  - ✓ \$119,012/year
  - ✓ \$57.22/hour (single-earner)
  - ✓ \$28.43/hour (dual-earner)
- Percent of occupations meeting these thresholds in Southern Nevada
  - ✓ 6.1% (single-earner)
  - ✓ 46.6% (dual-earner)
- Median Household Income
  - ✓ All households \$80,028/yr.
  - ✓ Existing Homeowners \$100,828/yr.
  - ✓ Existing Renters \$59,120/yr.

<sup>1</sup>Source: <https://liedcenter.unlv.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/The-Lied-Research-Report-Volume-2-Issue-5.pdf>

# Concluding Remarks & Future Research

## 1. Vacant Land

- ✓ Continued focus on land requirements interpreted through the lens of job-housing balance
- ✓ Continued push for flexible-modeling approaches (parcel filters)

## 2. Vacant Land Costs / Prices

- ✓ Estimated linkage between land supply & land price

## 3. Infill opportunities & challenges

## 4. Tethering real estate strategies to economic development strategies & goals

- ✓ Main insight: housing demand moves in conjunction with population & employment growth

## 5. Local Government

- ✓ Review current public policies, practices & management of real estate holdings

## 6. Vacant Land Costs/Prices

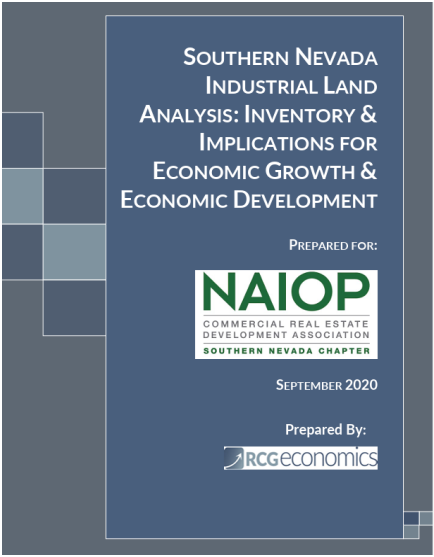
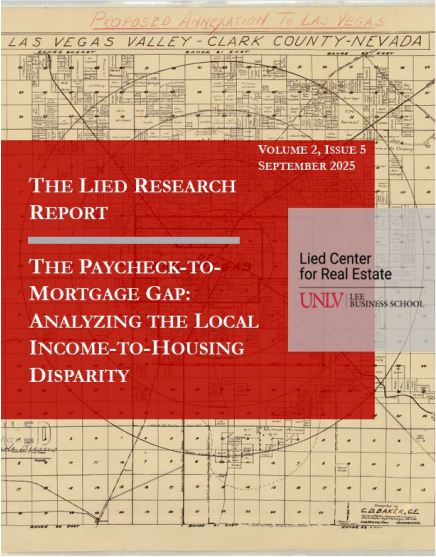
- ✓ Estimated linkage between land supply & land price
- ✓ Land price, socio-economic disparities & overall quality of life

## 7. Infill opportunities & challenges

## 8. Review of local regulations

## 9. Review of SNPLMA's relevance in 2025 & Beyond

# Previous Studies (Click to Access)



Shawn J.  
McCoy, Ph.D.

[sjmccoy5900@gmail.com](mailto:sjmccoy5900@gmail.com)

