

Special Topics

Choctaw County Disaster Resiliency Assessment

The purpose of this section is to assess at the county level key components of disaster resiliency. Housing location and quality as well as planning activities can help reduce impacts from disaster events and allow for faster recovery. Disasters can include tornadoes, extreme weather, high winds, as well as man-made events. These events may largely be inevitable, but the ability to reduce damage and casualties as well recovery can be improved with good planning

C.0 Comprehensive Plans & Hazard Mitigation Plans

There are 7 key cities within Choctaw County (Hugo, Fort Towson, Boswell, Soper, Grant, Swink, Sawyer).

Comprehensive plans are the guiding documents for cities of various sizes to address key aspects of their community from land use, transportation, environment, housing, and economic development.

No comprehensive plan for the City of Hugo or Choctaw County was found.

The other key plan for a city to manage, mitigate and plan for recovery related to disasters is a **Hazard Mitigation Plan** (or Emergency Management Plan). Often low density counties, the Hazard Mitigation Plan is done at the county level, though some cities may augment the county plan with a city plan.

The county does have an identified emergency management director however no Hazard Mitigation Plan was found for Choctaw County. No website was found for the City of Hugo or Choctaw to obtain general information.

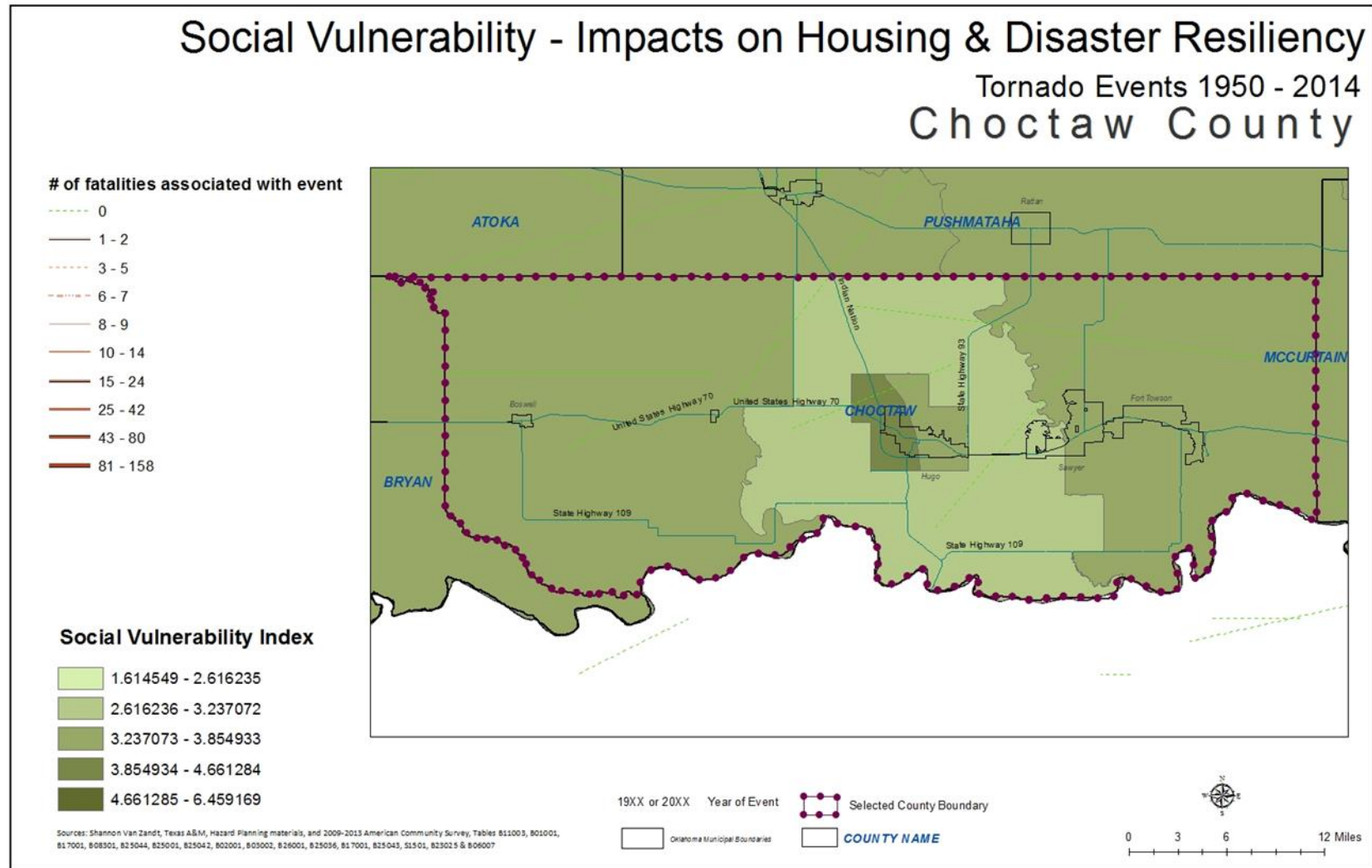
C.2.1.1. Historical Data on Natural Disasters and Other Hazards

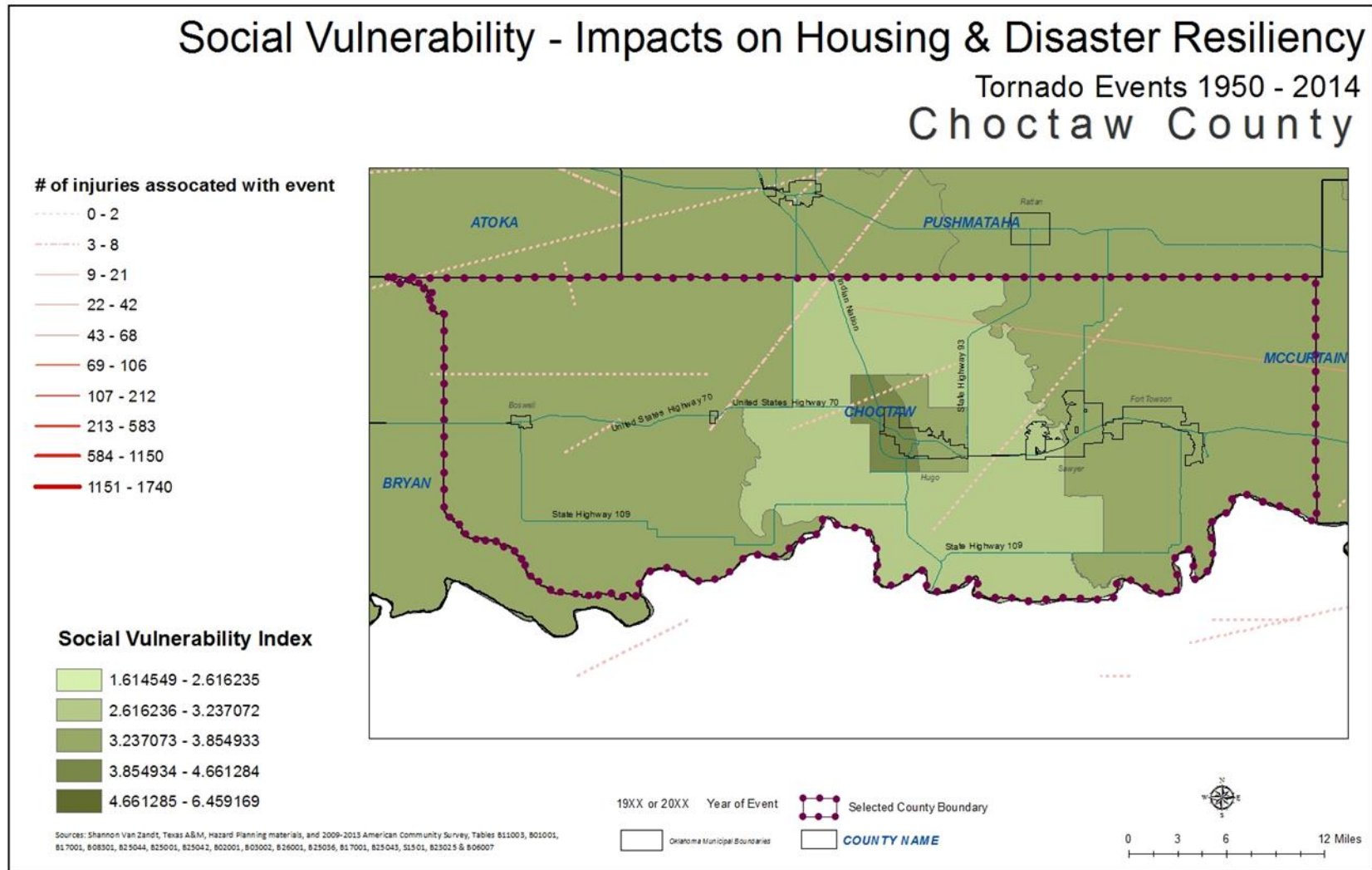
Data on historical damages and casualties is typically collected as part of a **Hazard Mitigation Plan** preparation to determine the appropriate planning measures and actions to take before and after an event.

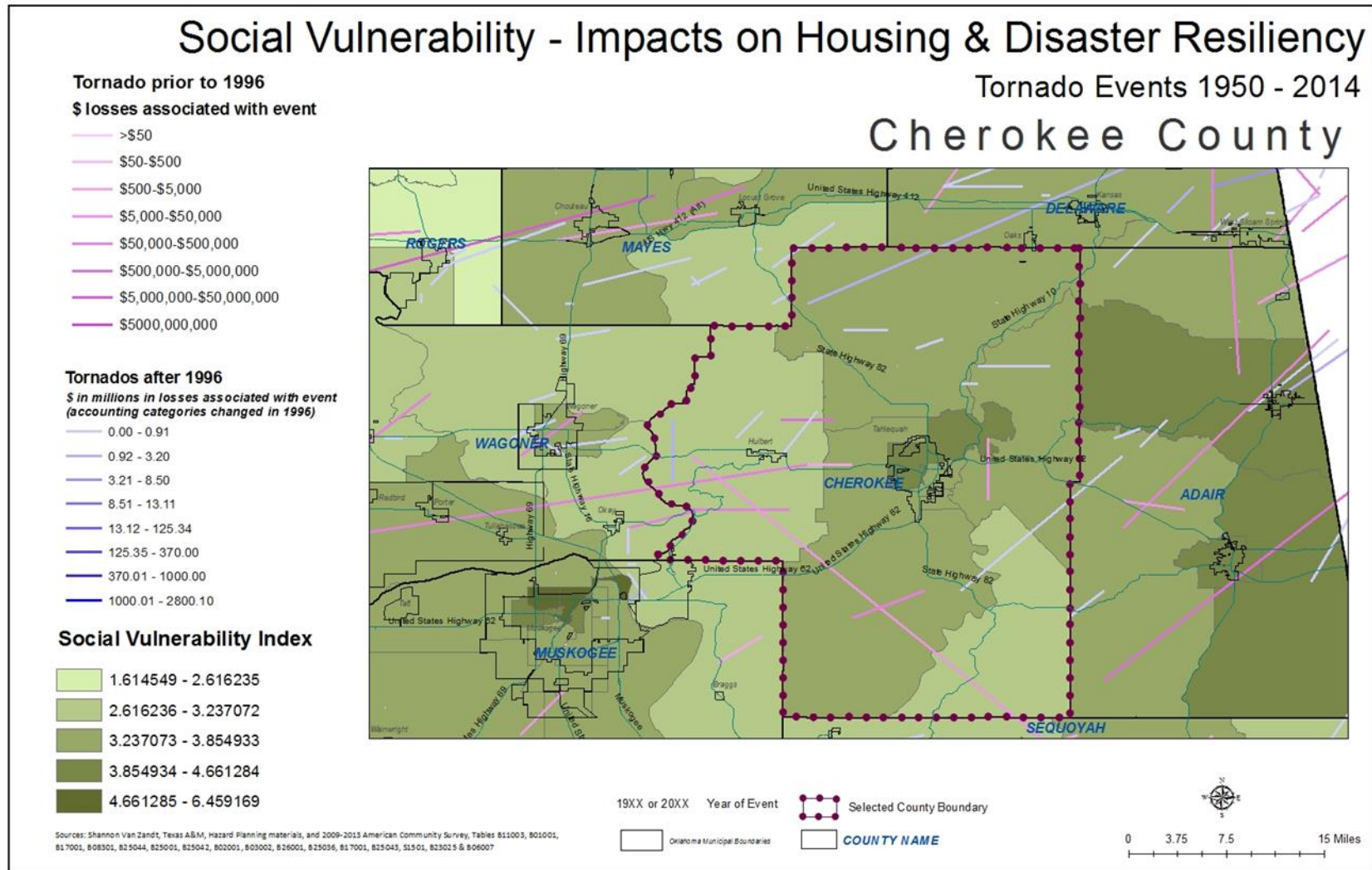
Flooding, based on FEMA FIRM maps, does not show floodplain areas in the county. The National Flood Hazard Layer (Official) is not available for this area. Flash flooding is a concern for all parts of the state after heavy precipitation.

NOAA data shows the following historic data on disaster events for the county:

Historic data on tornados between 1950-2014 there are 22 tornados documented. There were 45 injuries that occurred connected to these tornados, with 29 of those injuries happening in the 1982 tornado. There were 0 fatalities connected to tornadoes during this time period. Property losses between 1950-1996 ranged from \$1,172,500.00 to \$11,725,000.00. (The accounting methods used for losses changed in 1996.) The losses estimated between 1996-2014 was \$0.







C.2.1.2; C.2.1.6; C.2.1.7; C.2.1.8 Shelters from Disaster Event

No information regarding public or private storm shelters was found.

C.2.1.3 Public Policy and Governance to Build Disaster Resiliency

No information regarding public policy and governance was found. This information is typically include in Comprehensive Plans, Hazard Mitigation Plans, or other public documents. None of this information was found for Choctaw County.

C.2.1.4 Local Emergency Response Agency Structure

The structure for response and to address any perceived vulnerabilities in the county should be included in the Hazard Mitigation Plan. No HMP was acquired for Choctaw County. However according to state resources, the county and the City of Hugo are listed to have emergency managers. See <https://www.ok.gov/publicsafetybroadband/documents/EmergencyManagementCounty.pdf>

C.2.1.5 Threat & Hazard Warning Systems

No hazard warning systems were found for Choctaw County or the City of Hugo.

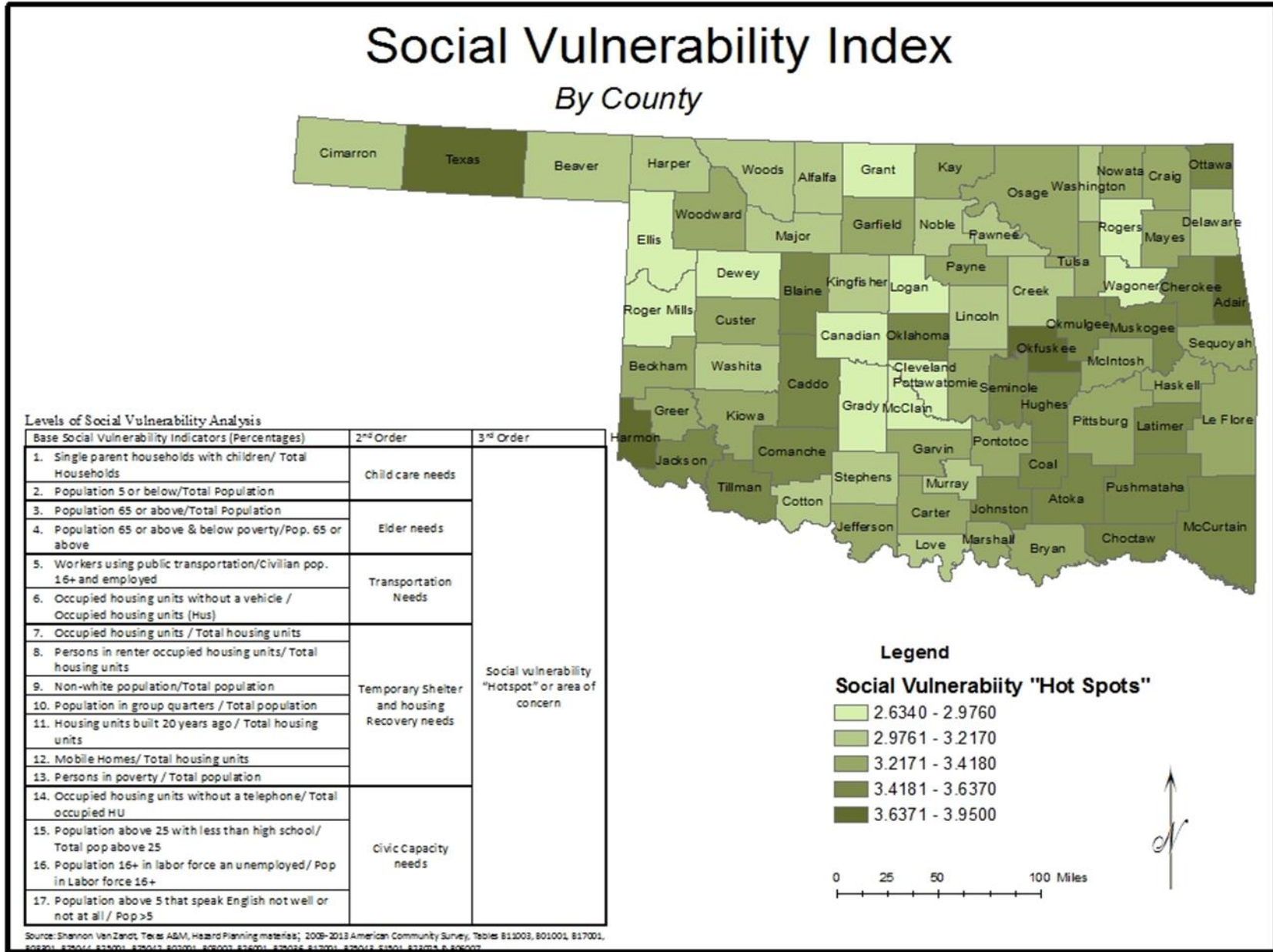
Social Vulnerability

Based on the research work done by the Texas A&M University Hazard Reduction and Recovery Center, an added component is being included in this section. Social vulnerability can place households at a further disadvantage during and after a disaster. This analysis is assessing for the county the levels of social vulnerability based on demographic indicators to highlight ‘hotspots’ or counties that have higher social vulnerability. That combined with Hazard Mitigation Plans – or lack thereof – can highlight places where additional work is needed to reduce impacts on households.

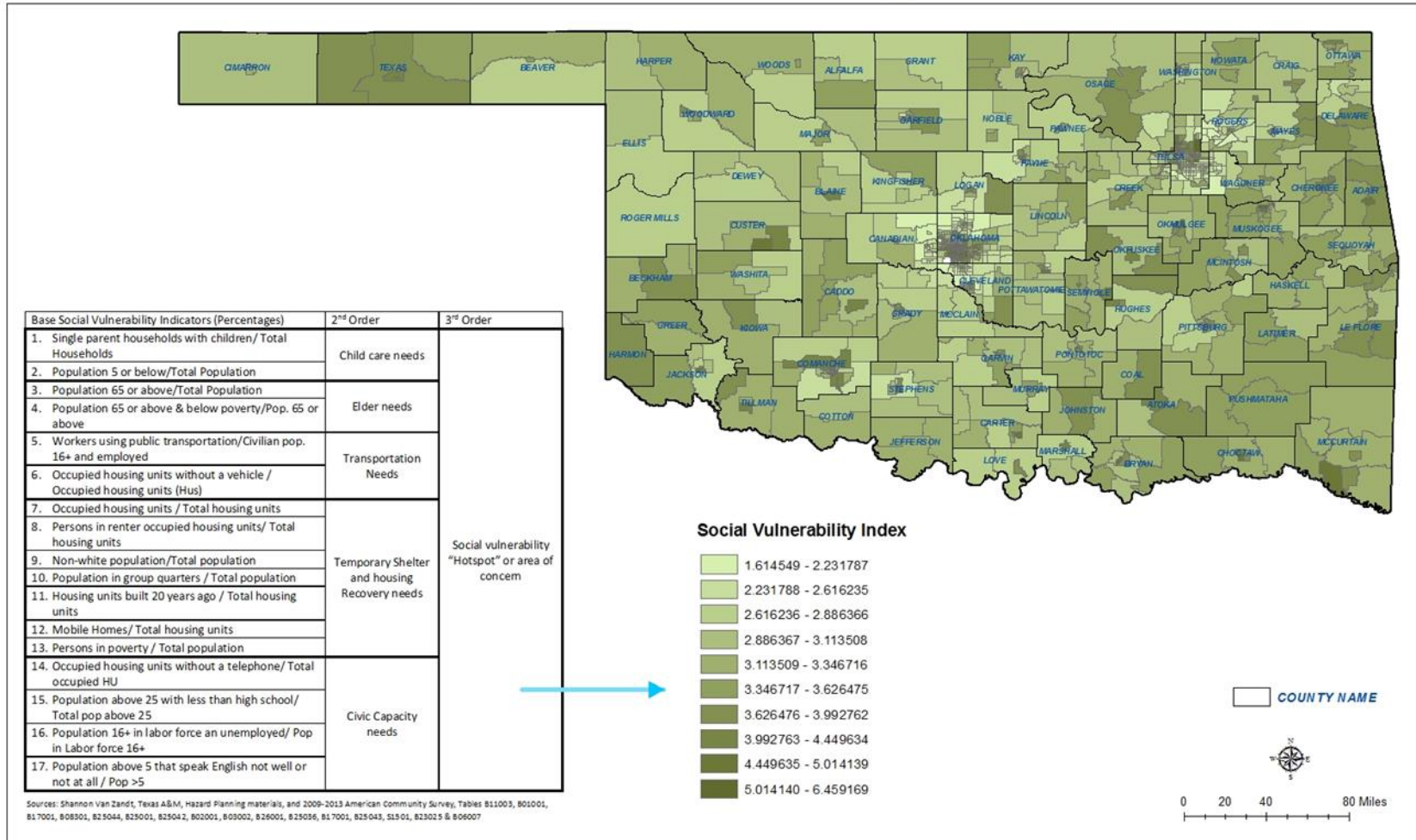
Social Vulnerability Analysis - Choctaw County		
Base Social Vulnerability Indicators (%)	2nd Order	3rd Order
1.) Single Parent Households	15.14%	3.599 Social Vulnerability 'Hotspot' or Area of Concern
2.) Population Under 5	6.80%	
3.) Population 65 or Above	18.50%	
4.) Population 65 or Above & Below Poverty Rate	16.75%	
5.) Workers Using Public Transportation	0.81%	
6.) Occupied Housing Units w/o Vehicle	8.56%	
7.) Housing Unit Occupancy Rate	80.44%	
8.) Rental Occupancy Rate	26.43%	
9.) Non-White Population	36.88%	
10.) Population in Group Quarters	1.28%	
11.) Housing Units Built Prior to 1990	68.43%	
12.) Mobile Homes, RVs, Vans, etc.	17.45%	
13.) Poverty Rate	27.08%	
14.) Housing Units Lacking Telephones	3.76%	
15.) Age 25+ With Less Than High School Diploma	19.50%	
16.) Unemployment Rate	11.27%	
17.) Age 5+ Which Cannot Speak English Well or Not At All	0.86%	

Sources: Shannon Van Zandt, Texas A&M, Hazard Planning materials, and 2009-2013 American Community Survey, Tables B11003, B01001, B17001, B08301, B25044, B25001, B25042, B02001, B03002, B26001, B25036, B17001, B25043, S1501, B23025 & B06007

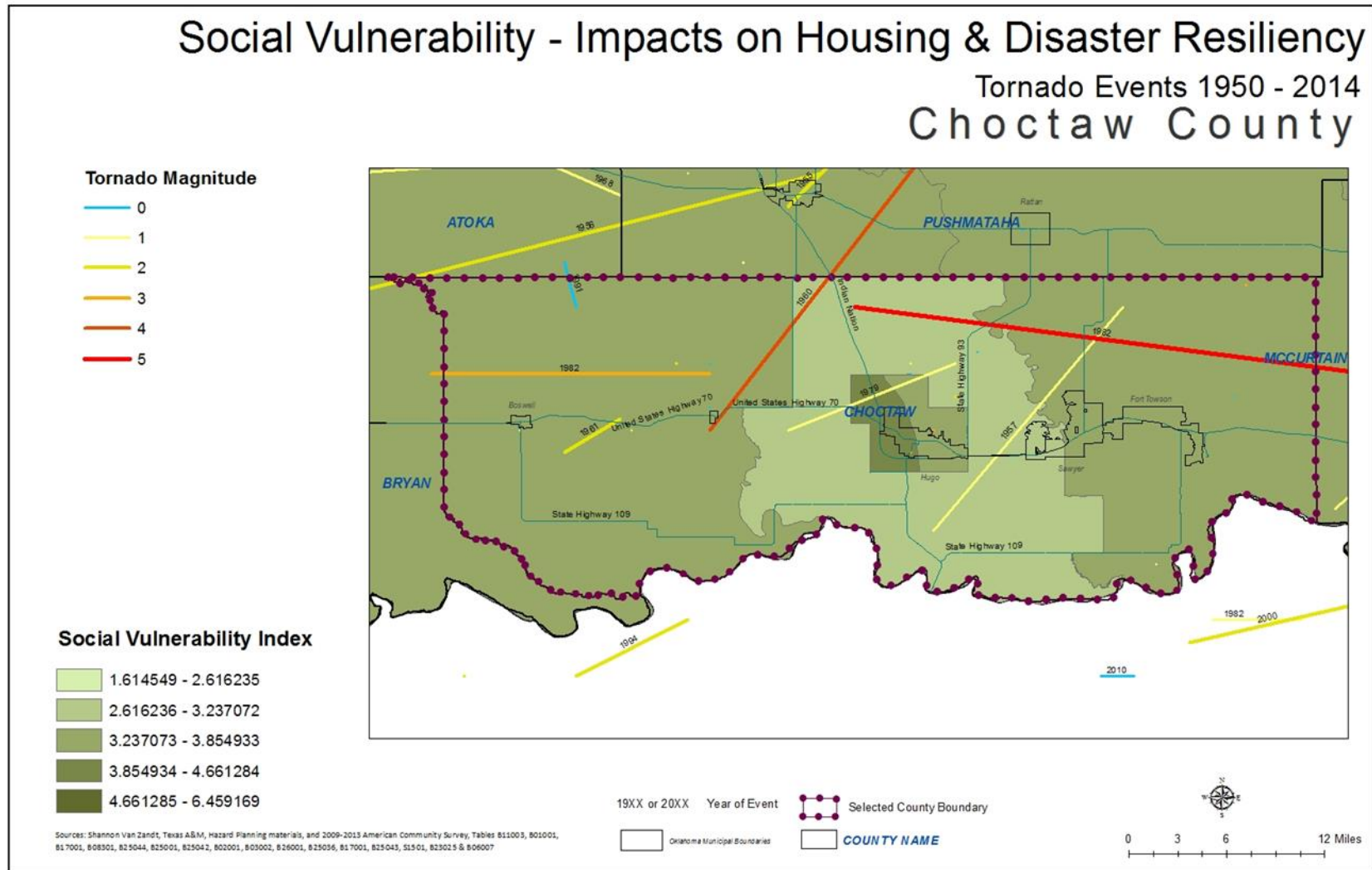




Social Vulnerability - Impacts on Housing & Disaster Resiliency



Sources: Shannon Van Zandt, Texas A&M, Hazard Planning materials, and 2009-2013 American Community Survey, Tables B11003, B01001, B17001, B08301, B25044, B25001, B25042, B02001, B03002, B26001, B25036, B17001, B25043, S1501, B23025 & B06007



Social vulnerability combined with the devastating impacts of a natural or man-made disaster can compound a household's ability to recover and in fact can place those individuals at an even greater gap or disadvantage prior to the event (Shannon Van Zandt, Texas A&M, Hazard Planning materials).

This county has an elevated score per this index for social vulnerability when comparing as a county to other counties in the state. Looking at the census tract level, the Hugo area and tracts on the east and western edges of the county have particularly higher scores for social vulnerability. People in these areas may have additional difficulties during a hazard event due to transportation and family needs. Additionally recovery for socially vulnerable populations can be slow and may require additional outside assistance.

Recommendations for this county:

- Update the HMP for Choctaw County, the county should pursue funding/grants for the development of an HMP and have the plan approved by the state and FEMA. The county should also continually maintain and update the HMP.
- Special efforts should be given to strengthen building codes related to tornadoes and natural disasters; such as the suggestion of using "hurricane clips" in new residential development.
- Choctaw County should pursue funding/grants for public storm shelters.
- Planning for shelters from disaster events for multifamily, HUD and LIHTC units, in addition to all housing in the community should be incorporated with any effort to increase housing.