

Rehousing Refugees:

Evaluating walkability to key amenities to determine the ideal location of a new affordable housing unit in the Greater Boston area

Introduction

Given the vast array of conflicts occurring throughout the world, there is an increasing demand for countries to take in refugees. Based on work by Beer & Foley (2003), housing has been identified as one of the most important parts of the settlement process, and furthermore, that government assistance with housing is imperative. In order for this government assistance to be most effective, targeted locations, ideal for immigrants to reside is important to consider, helping to ease some of the stress involved in this process. The goal of this project is to identify where in the greater Boston area a new affordable housing unit should be built, specifically for the purpose of helping immigrants and refugees with housing needs.

Methodology

Key amenities were identified as food markets, health centers, schools, and social services. For each amenity, a 500 meter buffer was set to depict walkability. Land use from 2005 was also used to identify key areas for a new affordable housing unit to be built. The walkability of amenities was combined with land use scores, giving each variable equal weight, to then give a cumulative total housing score.



Currently reaching:
2,066 immigrants



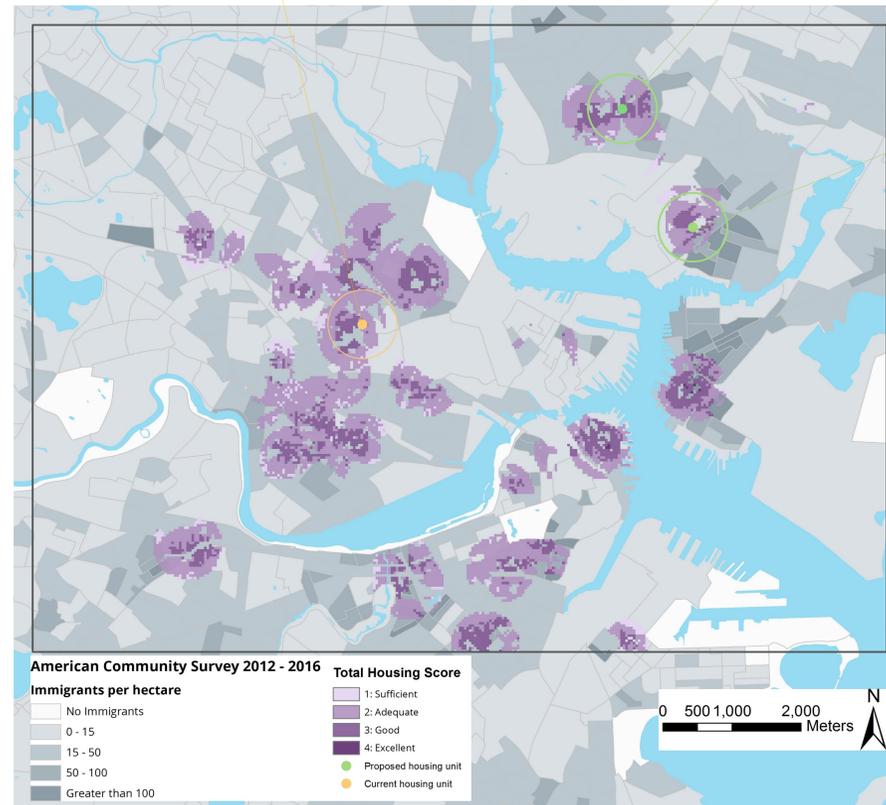
Could potentially reach:
2,422 immigrants



Could potentially reach:
2,846 immigrants

Taylor Vail

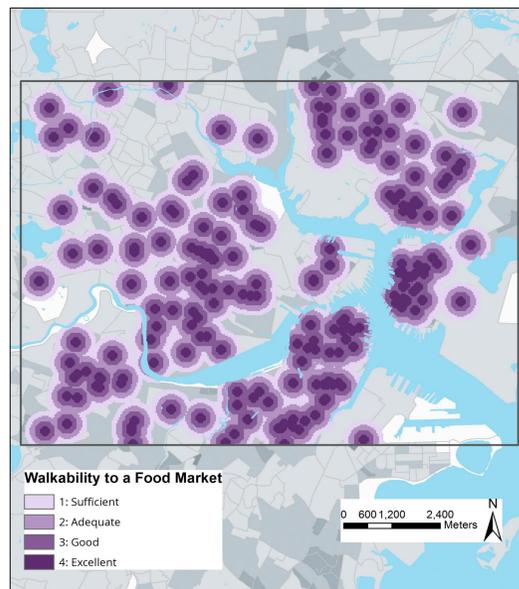
Projection:
NAD_1983_StatePlane_Massachusetts_Mainland_FIPS_2001
Class: Nutrition 0231
Date: May 7th, 2018
Citation: Beer, A., & Foley, P. (2003). *Housing need and provision for recently arrived refugees in Australia*. Melbourne: Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute.



Conclusions

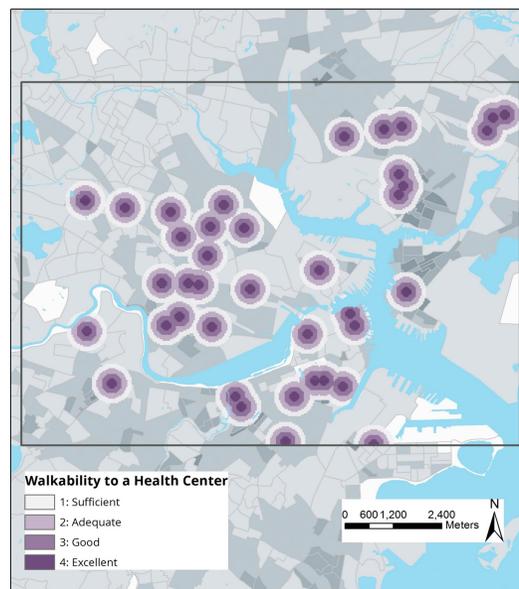
Taken together, the considerations of these amenities and different land use categories were useful when trying to determine the new location of an affordable housing unit for the refugee population. While land use data was from 2005, it was still relevant in determining potential areas for a new affordable housing unit. Future research should use parcel data to better ascertain plausible available areas for building. Furthermore, considerations surrounding cost of living in each of the proposed locations should be integrated to improve the plausibility of suggested locations.

Food Markets



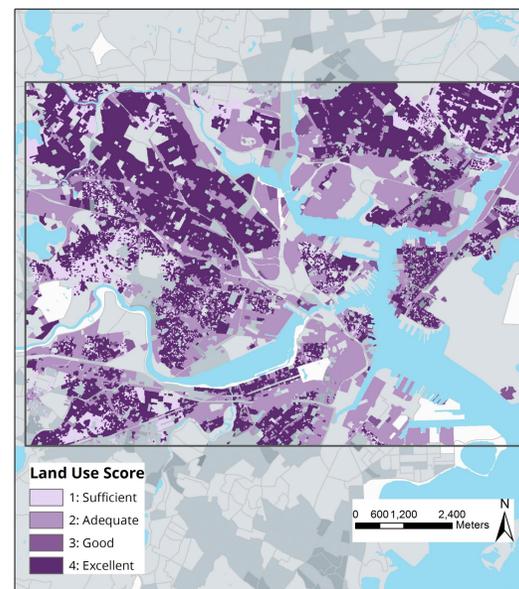
Businesses, Reference USA, 2018

Health Centers



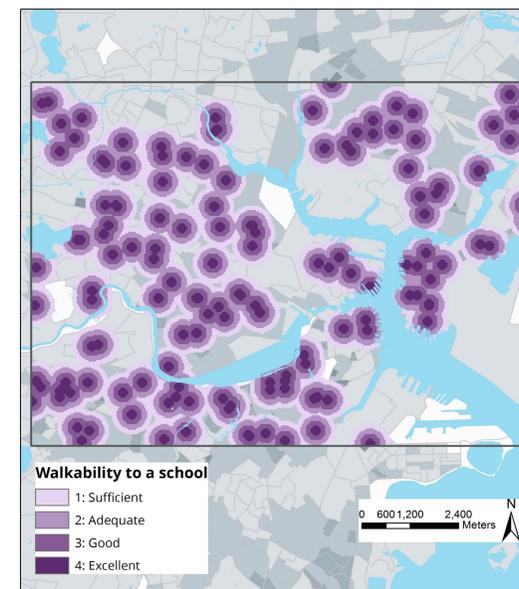
Community Health Centers, MassGIS, August 2017

Land Use



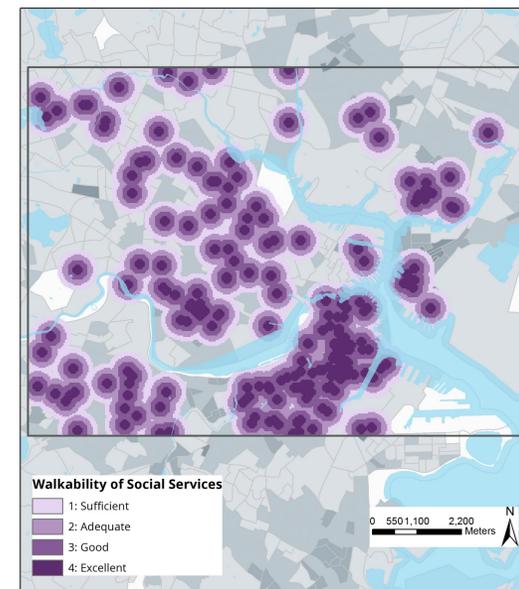
LandUse (2005), MassGIS, June 2009

School (Pre-K— 12)



Massachusetts Schools (Pre-K through High School), MassGIS, November 2015

Social Services



Businesses, Reference USA, 2018