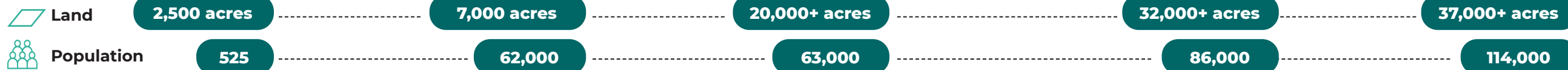
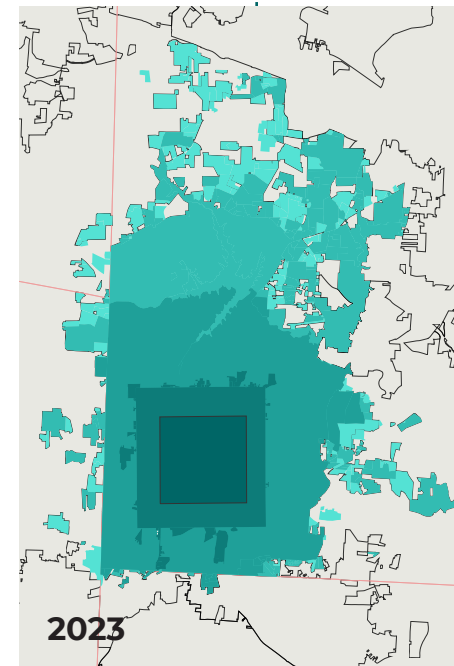
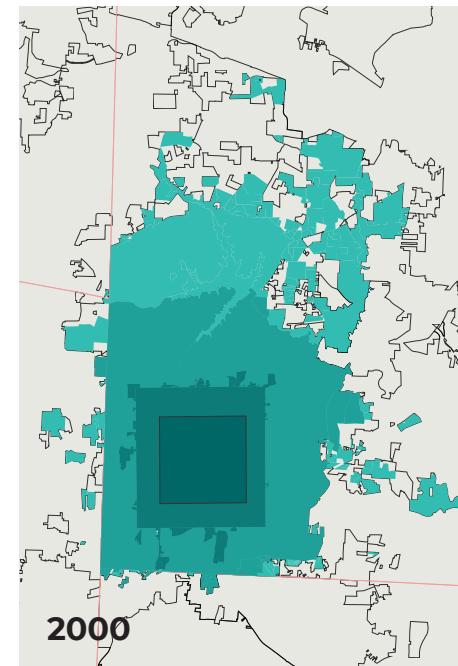
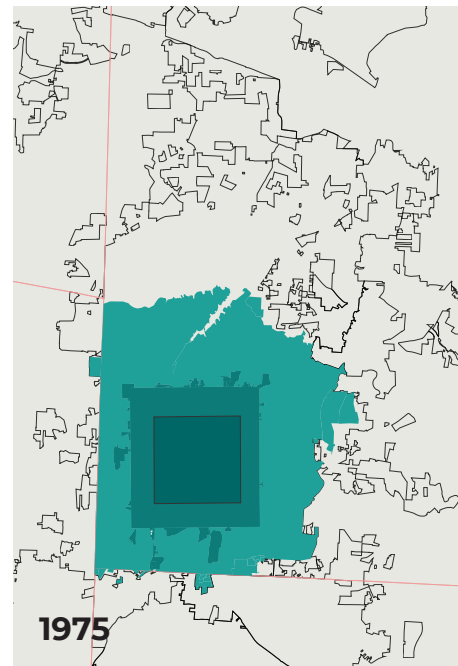
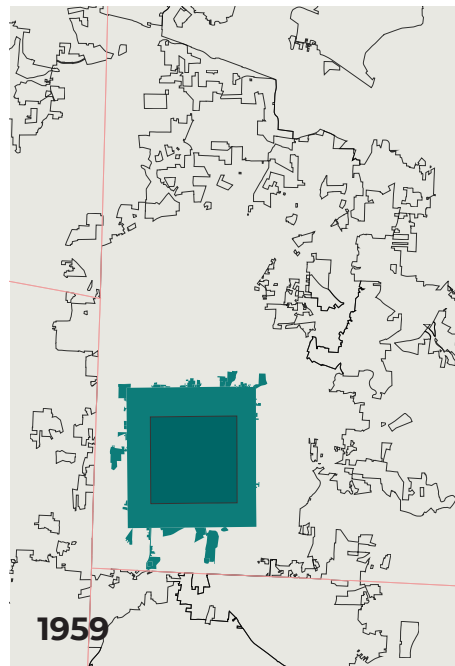
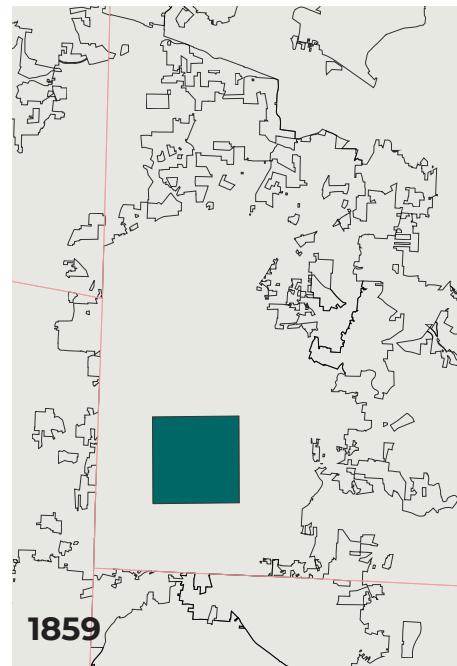


# HOW DID WE GET HERE?



Source: Urban Footprint and thePoint GIS

The City of High Point was chartered in 1859 and the total area of the city's boundary was two miles by two miles – a box containing approximately 2,500 acres. The development pattern that emerged as the city grew was largely dictated by transportation which was horse and buggy for some and walking for others. Orderly **growth centered around the commercial core, early main street or downtown, and radiated outward in a grid pattern.**

In 1959, a century later, the city's population was 62,000 and the **area of the city had more than doubled to almost 7,000 acres.** The growth framework remained consistent – roughly equidistant **growth outward in all directions and effectively safeguarded the downtown core as the geographic center of the community, equally accessible to all.**

The city's population density at this time was **almost nine persons per acre.**

By 1975, the city's population had only grown by 1,000 people (1.5%) to 63,000, yet the **land area of the city had increased by almost 300%** to more than 20,000 acres. Despite the rapid expansion of the city's land area, the pattern of growth remained relatively consistent in terms of distance from the city's downtown core – **the city grew proportionally outward in all directions.**

As a result of this new development pattern, the population density fell from almost nine persons per acre to **just over three persons per acre.**

After 1975, the **pattern of growth via annexations was indiscriminate** and, from this point forward, more than **90% of all outward expansion was directed to the north.**

As a result of this development pattern, the city boundary for High Point is very ill-defined in the northern section of the city - to the extent that islands of city and/or county are intermingled.

**The 2011 reform legislation made annexations subject to a referendum making voluntary annexations difficult.** Although the city has shied away from involuntary annexations in recent decades, the expansion of the city's boundary is now even more challenging.

Today, the city incorporates more than 37,000 acres and, with 114,000 residents, the population density is right at **three persons per acre.**

## What it means for the city?

**After a half century of this pattern of growth, the negative impacts on quality of life are undeniable.**

This pattern of growth has, over the past 50 years, slowly created an auto-dependent community that now feels very disconnected from the north to the south and from the east to the west. Residents who live north of Oak Hollow Lake are more likely to visit downtown Greensboro than downtown High Point, it's an easy trip via Wendover Avenue. Suburban corridors with big box or chain commercial development have become the new normal. Outside of the downtown, there is a lack of walkable commercial or mixed-use district. With new development, and economic energy, disproportionately located in the northern areas of the city, block after block in the city's southern areas have slowly waned as demand and supply have followed easy greenfield development to the north.