



 **PARCA**
ANNUAL FORUM 2026

FROM CRISIS TO COLLABORATION

*How Data, Policy, and Partnership
Saved Lives in Alabama*



The Opioid Crisis at 30: Where We've Been and Where We Are

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Some Disasters are Big, Loud & Impossible to Ignore



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Some Disasters Take Time to Fully Appreciate





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Other Disasters Happen Behind Closed Doors.



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The Late 1990s: The Beginning of a Crisis

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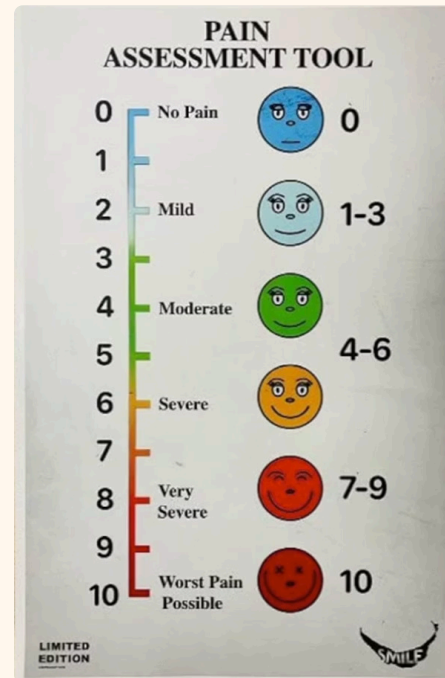
OxyCotin Approved in 1996



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Pain as the 5th Vital Sign





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Alabama: A Decade at the Epicenter

From 2012 to 2022, Alabama consistently held the unenviable distinction of having the highest opioid prescription rate in the United States, as reported by the CDC. This placed the state at the very heart of the national opioid crisis for a significant period.



Early 2000s: Growing Alarm & Policy Response

2004 — Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Legislation

Provider Education Intensifies

2006 — Data Collection Begins



Alabama Faced a Sobering Opioid Prescription Reality.

115.6

Opioid pills prescribed for every 100 Alabamians.



Alabama ranked 4th in the nation from 2006 to 2011.





By 2012, Alabama peaked with 143.8 opioid pills prescribed for every 100 residents — the highest rate in the U.S.



The Fentanyl Wave: A Crisis Within a Crisis

2013

Fentanyl Enters the Supply

Illicit synthetic opioids begin displacing prescription pills, dramatically raising lethality of each exposure.

150%

Jefferson County Increase

Fentanyl-related overdose deaths rose 150% in Jefferson County from 2018 to 2024.

30+

AL Deaths per 100K

Alabama's overdose death rate now exceeds 30 per 100,000 — aligning with and in places surpassing the national average.

Birmingham-Jefferson County Justice & Governance Partnership



JEFFERSON COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Serving Jefferson County Since 1917
ALABAMA



**Public Affairs
Research Council
of Alabama®**

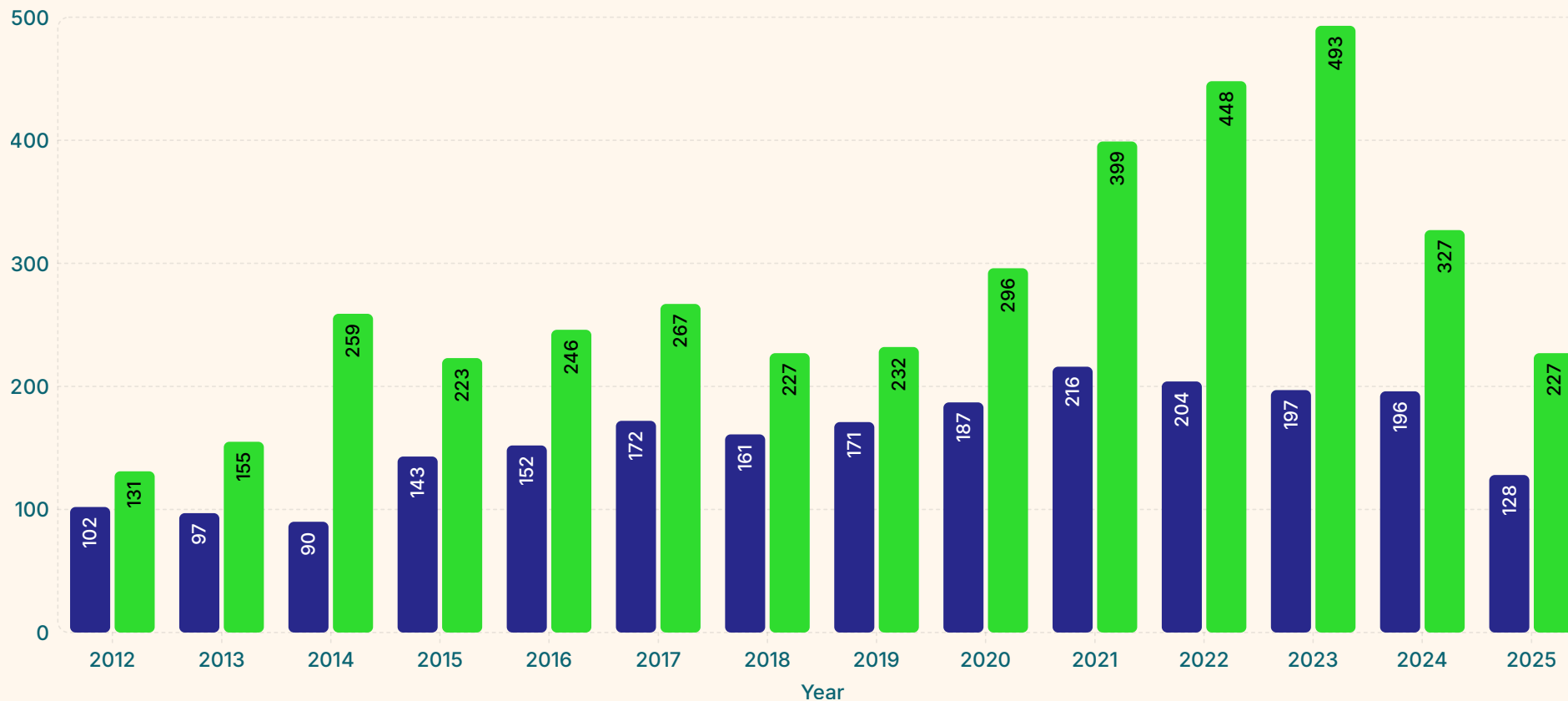
Homicide vs. Overdose Deaths, Jefferson County

2.22k 2012 – 2025

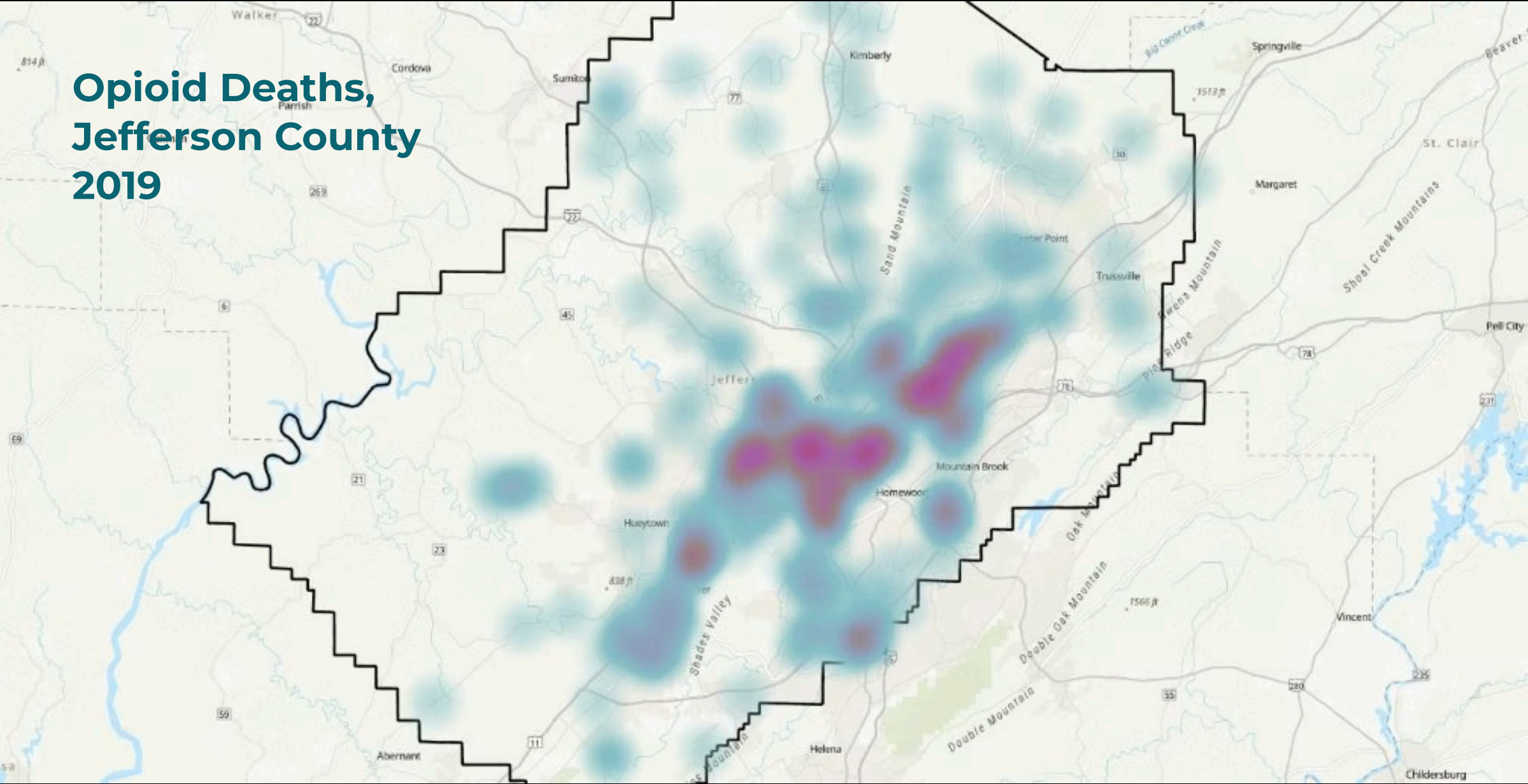
3.93k 2012 – 2025

■ Total Homicide

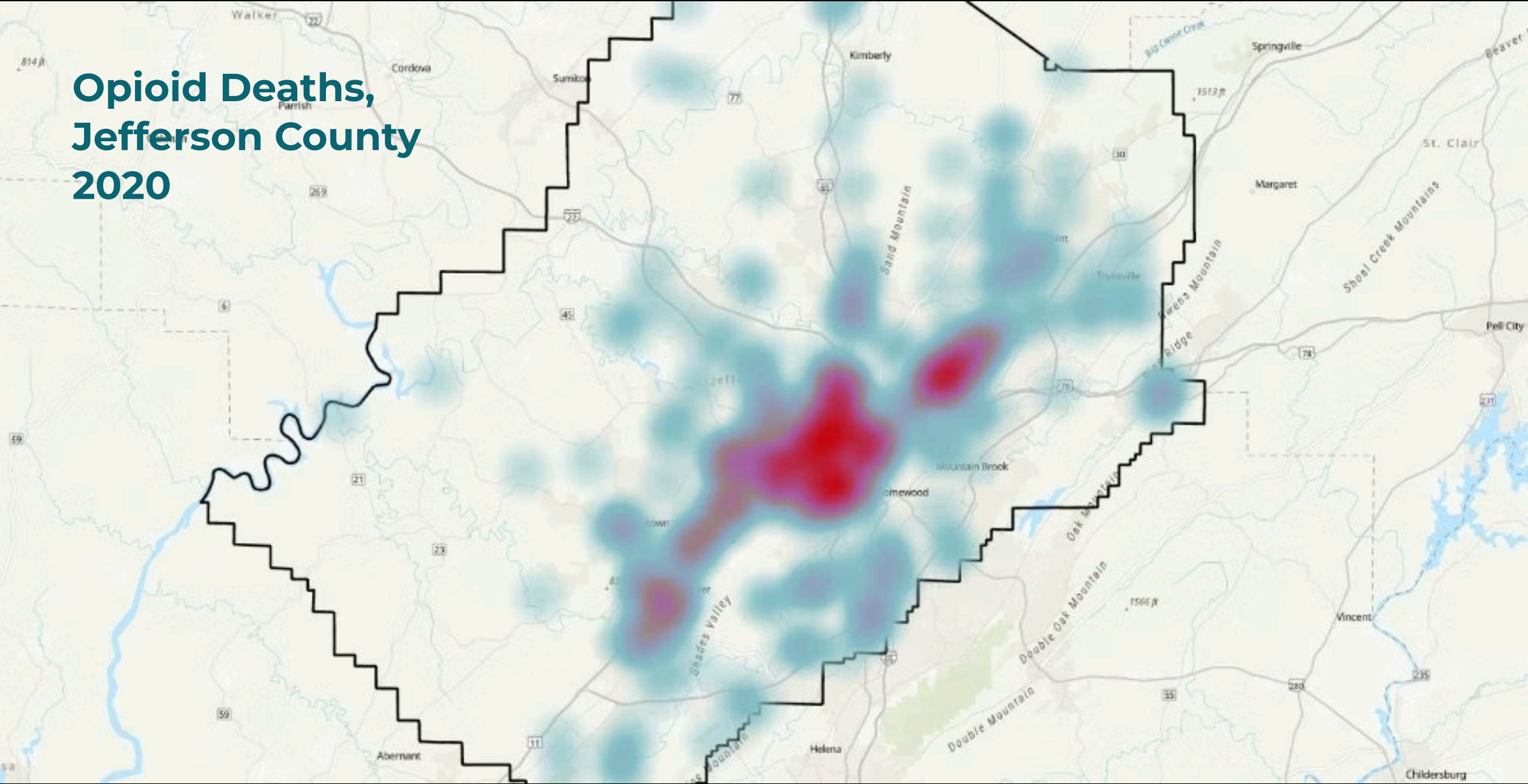
■ Total Overdoes



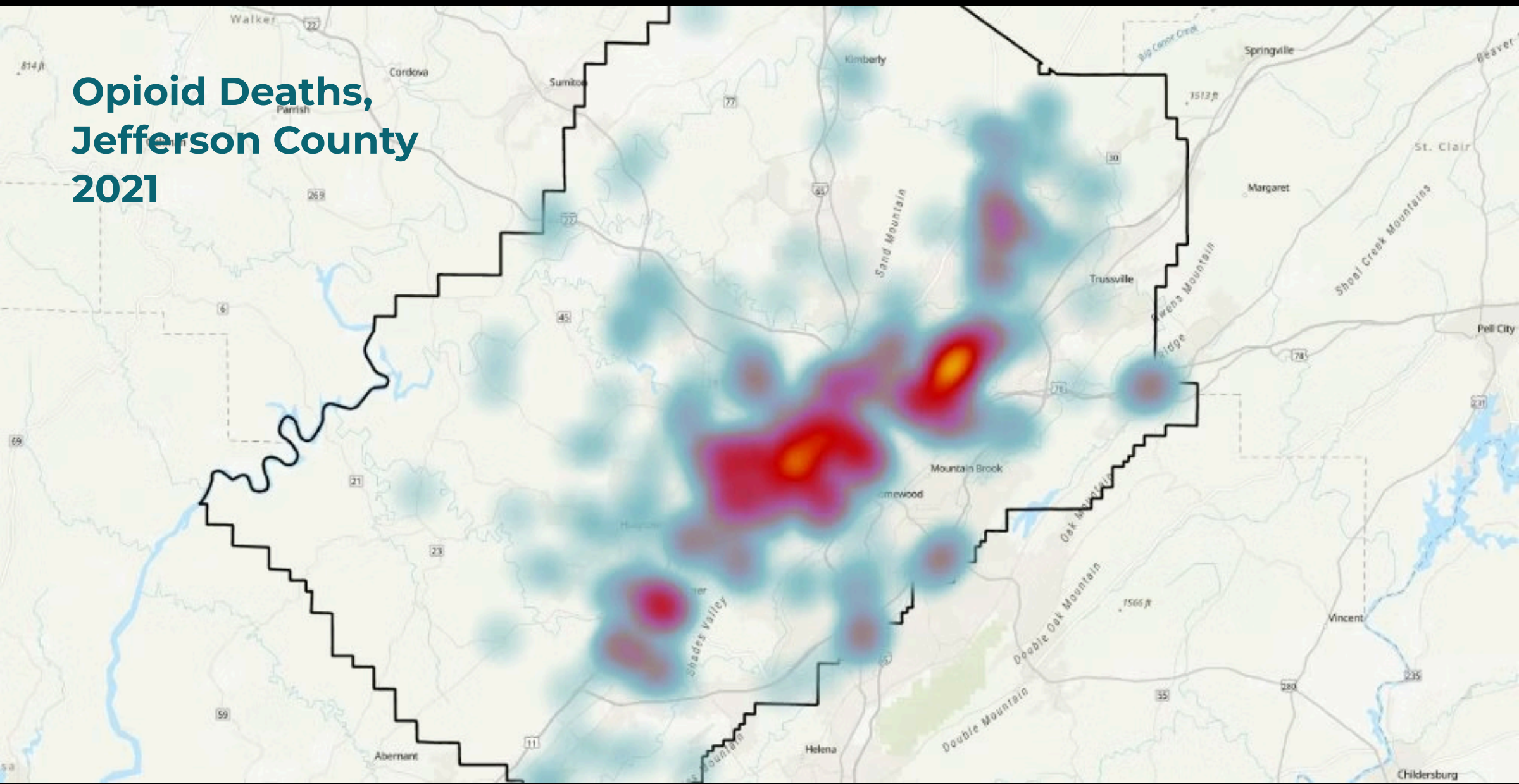
Opioid Deaths, Jefferson County 2019



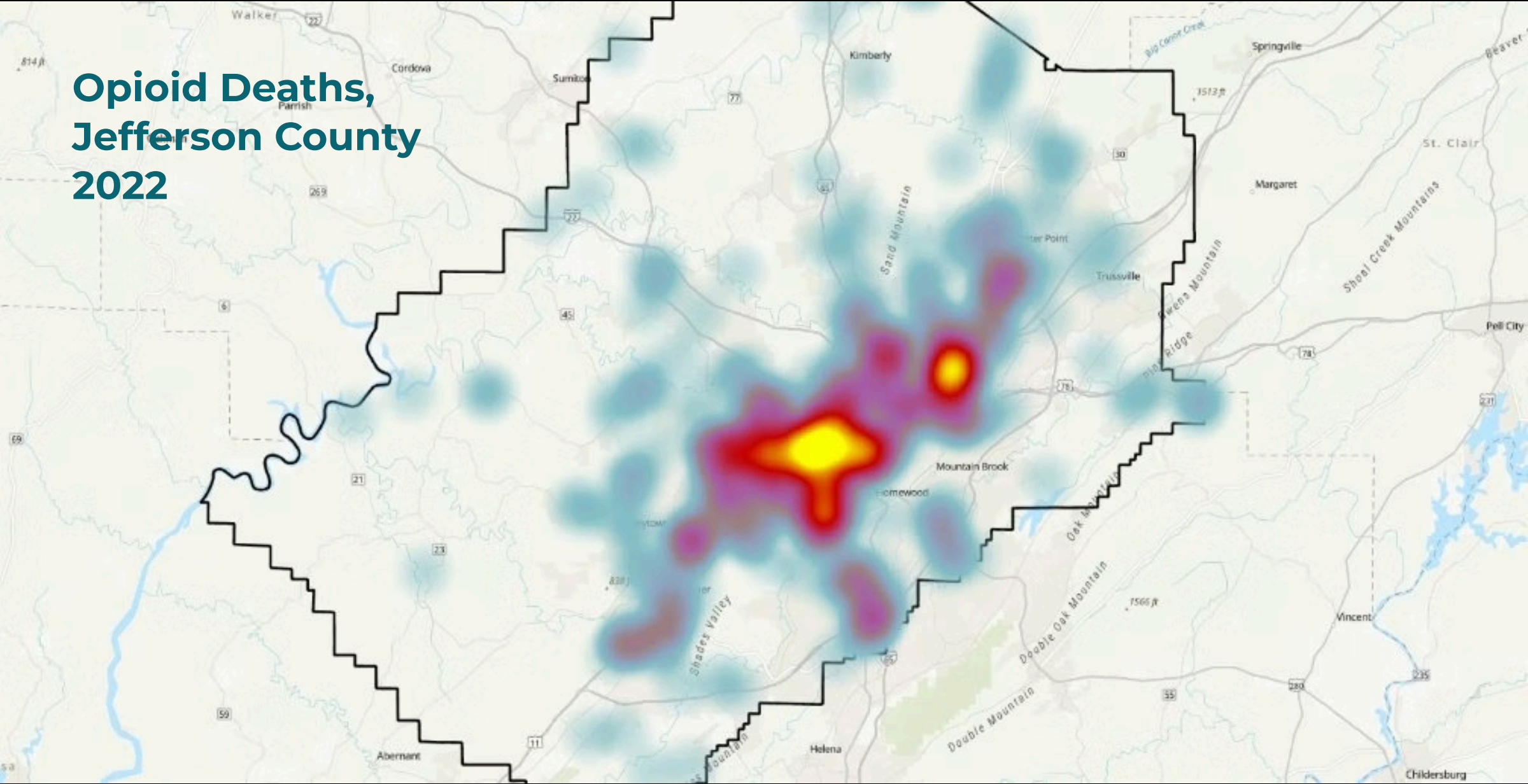
Opioid Deaths, Jefferson County 2020



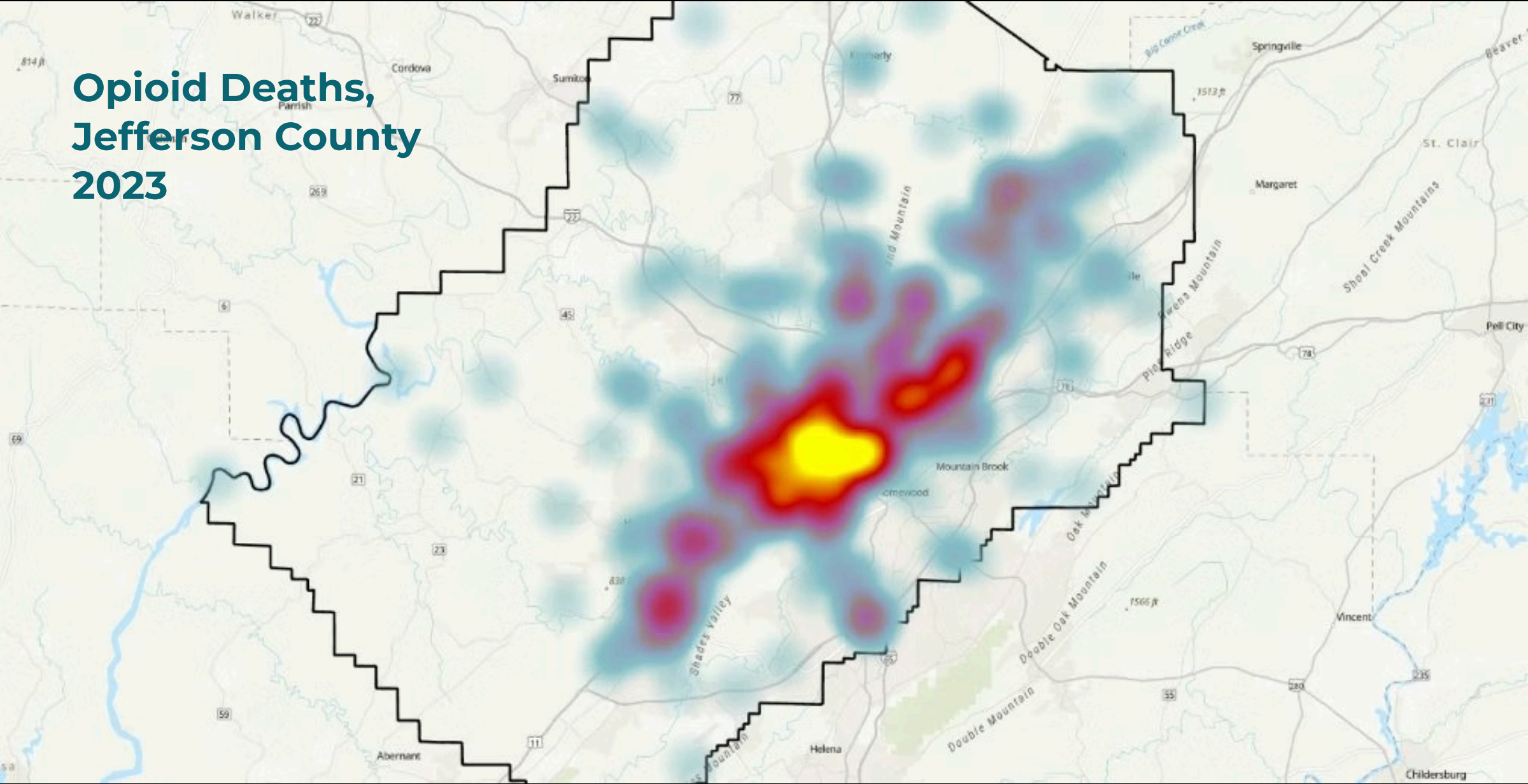
Opioid Deaths, Jefferson County 2021



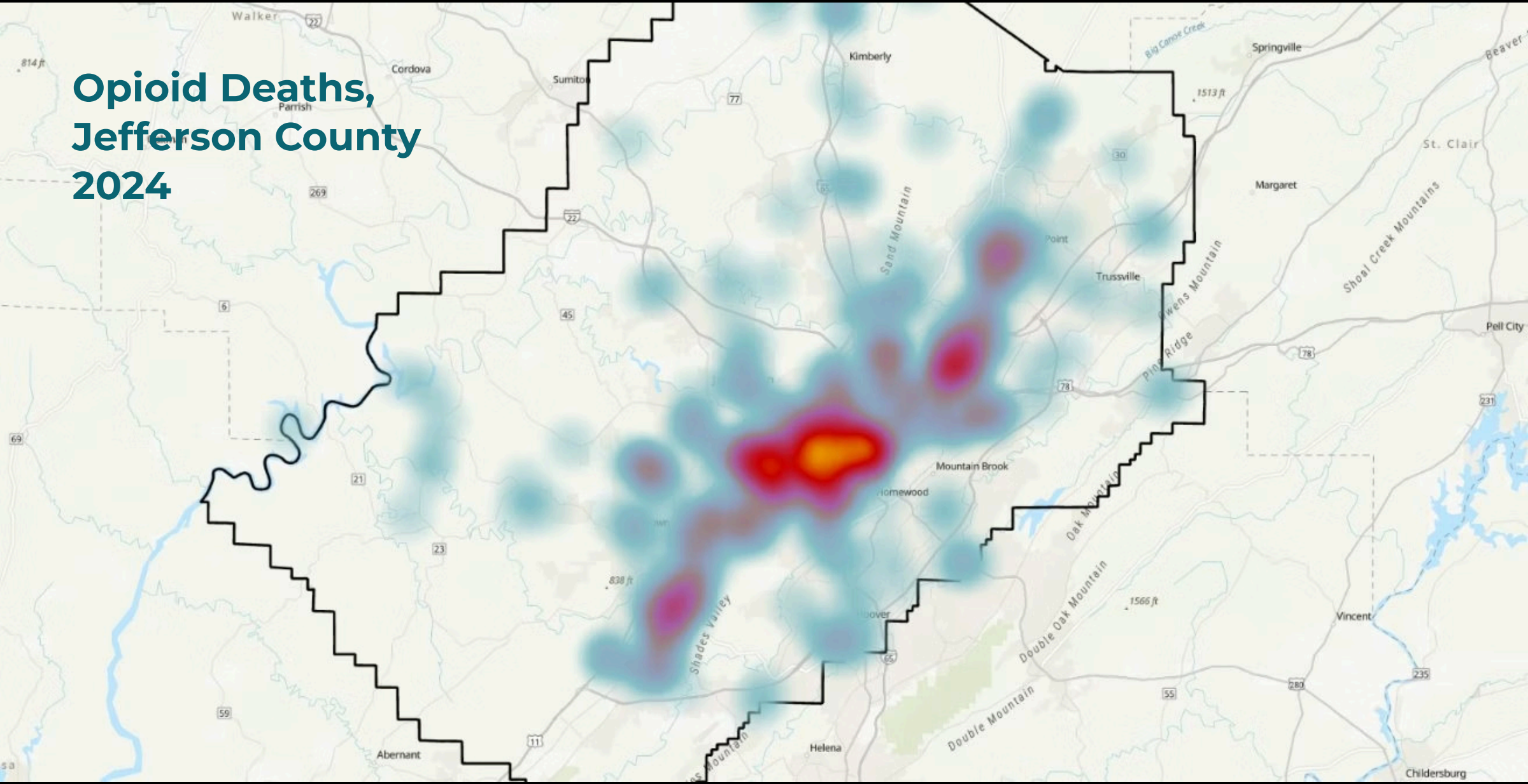
Opioid Deaths, Jefferson County 2022



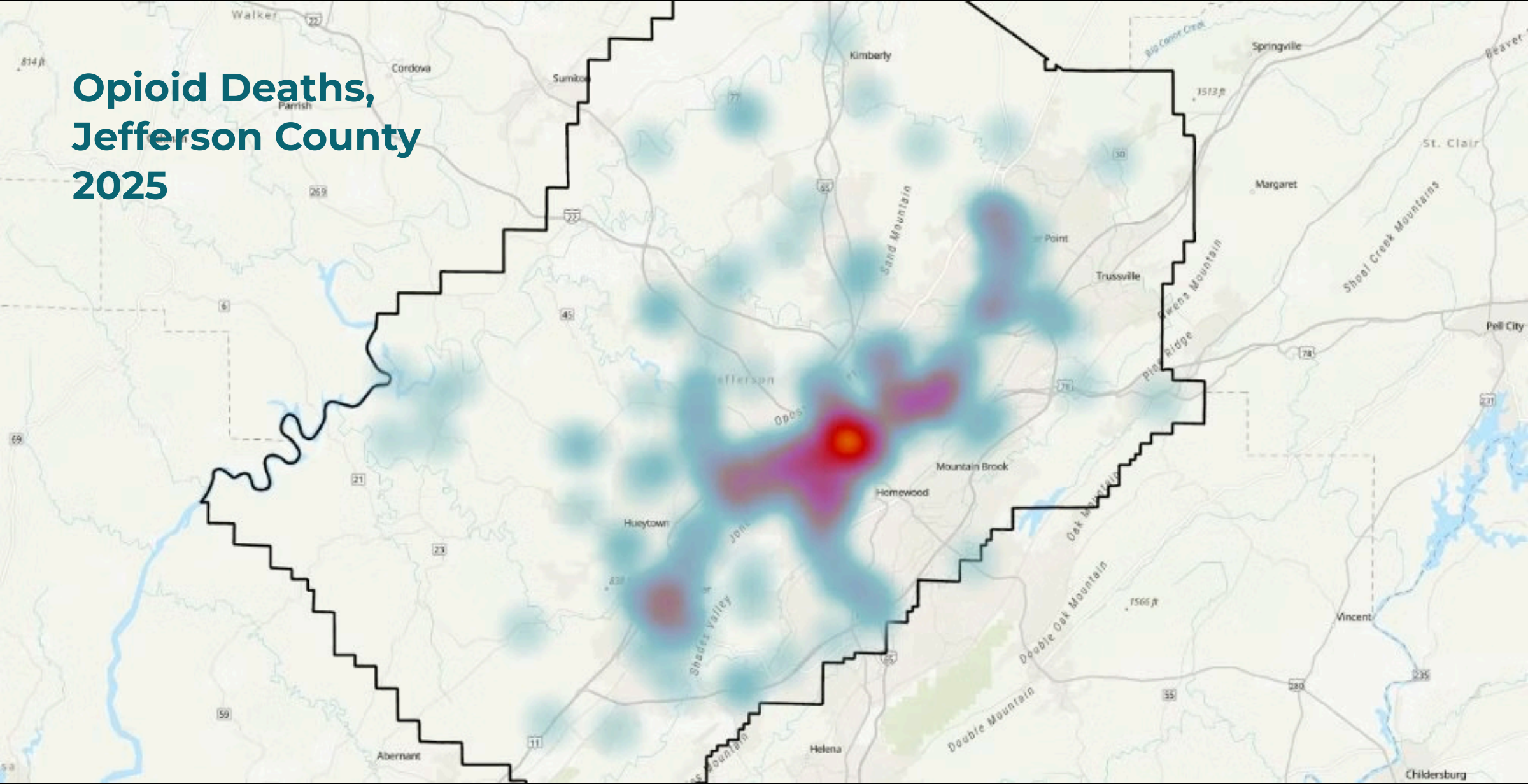
Opioid Deaths, Jefferson County 2023



Opioid Deaths, Jefferson County 2024



Opioid Deaths, Jefferson County 2025





Our Achievement

Alabama ranks in the top 10 for rate of decline in overdose deaths.

Despite its challenging history with the opioid crisis, Alabama has made remarkable strides, positioning itself among the leading states in reducing overdose fatalities.



Alabama's Quiet Achievement

In 2025, Alabama reached a significant turning point in the opioid crisis. For the first time since the epidemic began, the state's overdose rates fell below the national average.



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Today we will hear how.