

Green Gentrification: The Hidden Injustice of Greening Communities

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Background

- Green gentrification is when gentrification occurs with the creation of new greenspaces or increasing accessibility to it.
- The addition of greenspaces in neighborhoods increases property values, which could lead to displacement of vulnerable populations within these communities.**
- This creates a disparity in the access to greenspace, with people of lower socio-economic status to have less access.
- Often the perspectives of people being affected by green gentrification go unheard, so there is very little data on this issue.

Researchable Questions

- Is access to greenspace equal in the Seattle Area?
- What are the views of people affected by the addition of a greenspace in their neighborhood?

Internship/Methods

- In Winter 2020, my Internship with the Green Seattle Partnership and participated in a restoration project in the Cheasty greenspace.
- Researched spatial analysis done on the City of Seattle to see if there is a disparity in access to parks.
- Conducted an online survey sent to South Seattle neighborhoods to learn about the residents' attitudes towards the Cheasty greenspace mountain bike trail proposal.

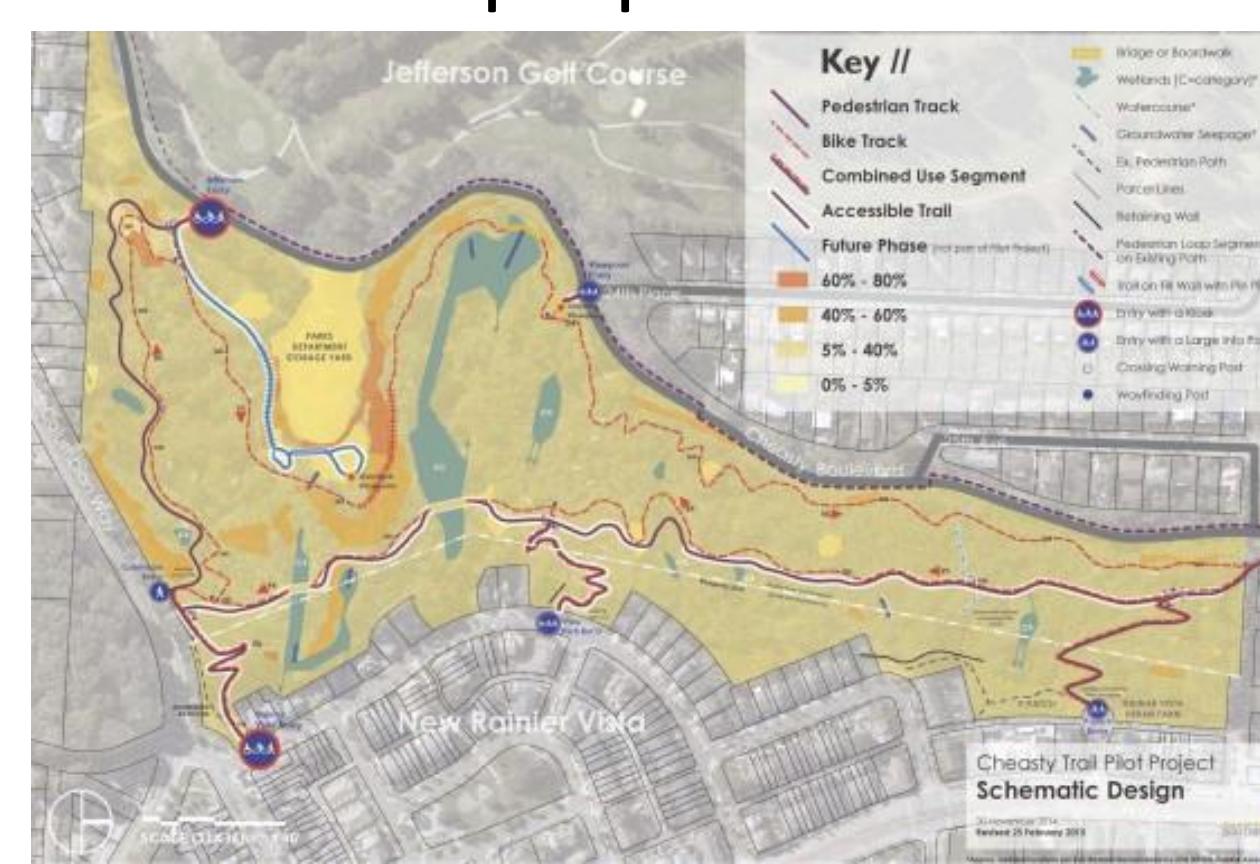
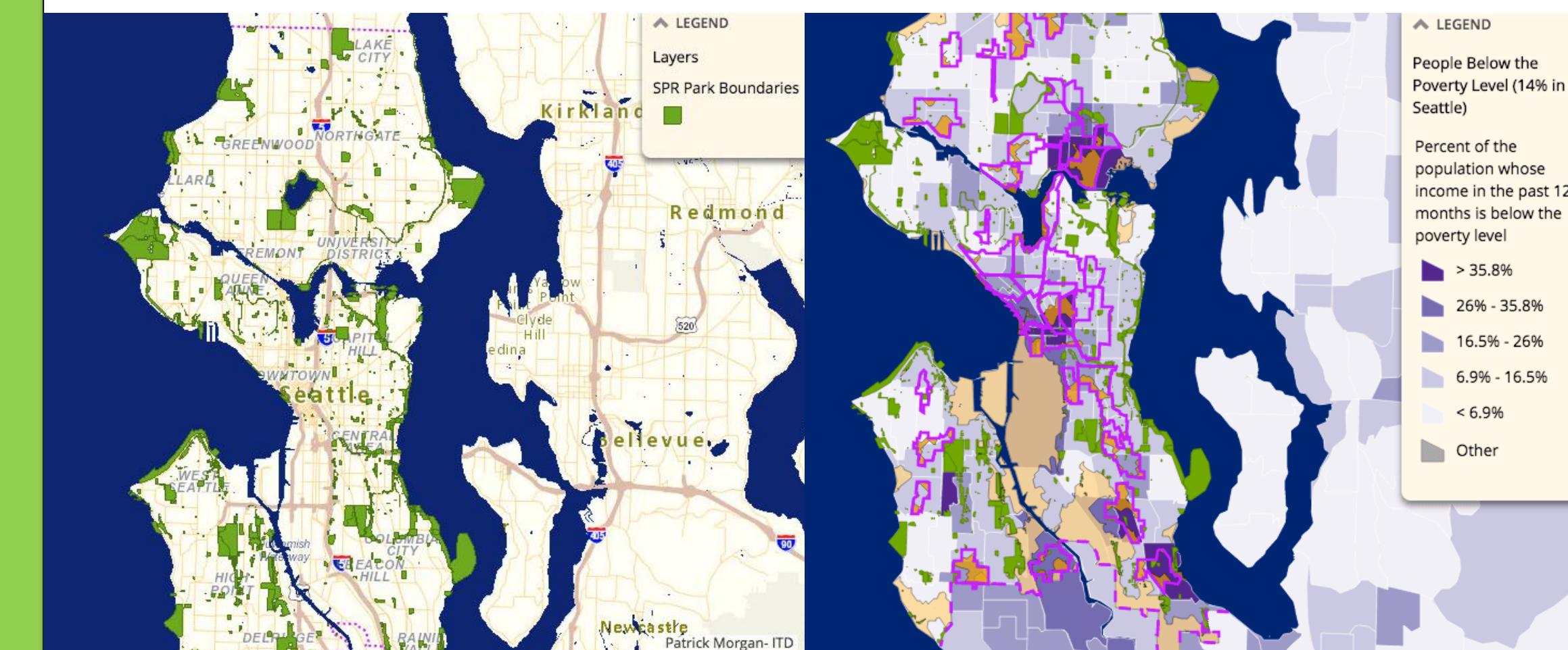


Figure 1: Diagram of the mountain bike trail

Projects like the mountain bike trail proposal in Cheasty greenspace could cause green gentrification, making it a good case study for this project.

Results

Is access to parks equal?

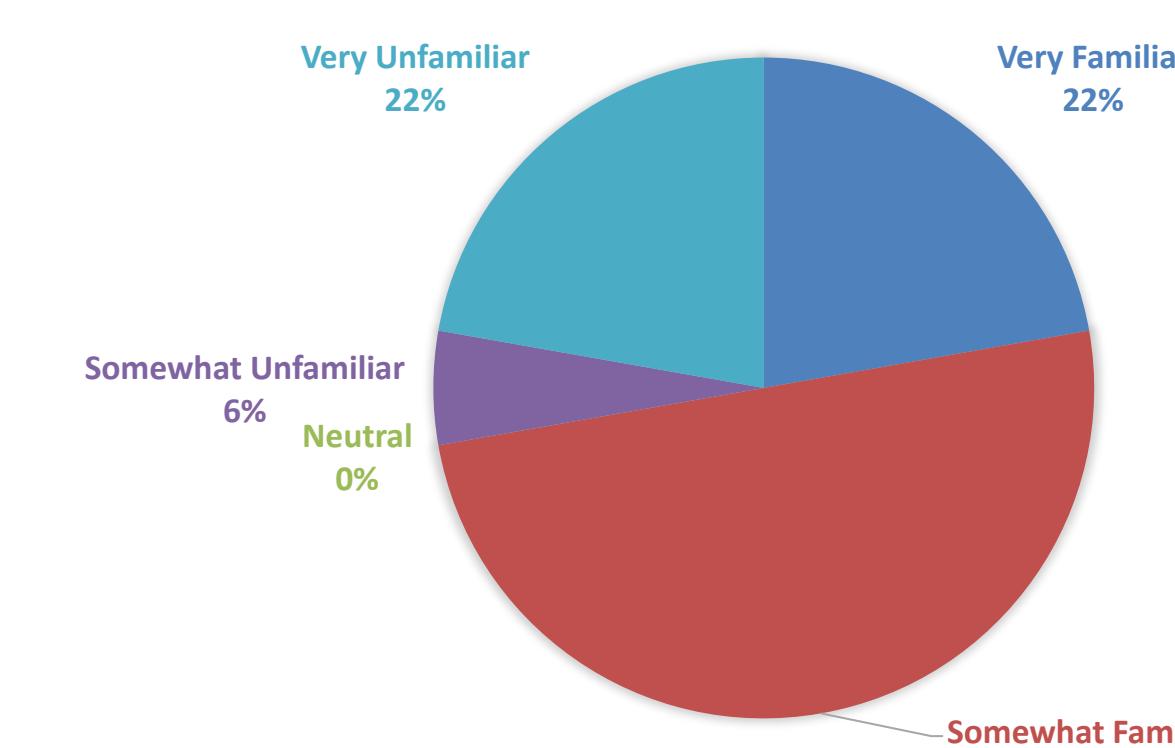


Figures 2 & 3: Spatial analyses of the City of Seattle. Fig. 2 shows park spaces in Seattle, and Fig 3. shows the percentage of residents living under the poverty line in neighborhoods of Seattle (Source: The Urbanist)

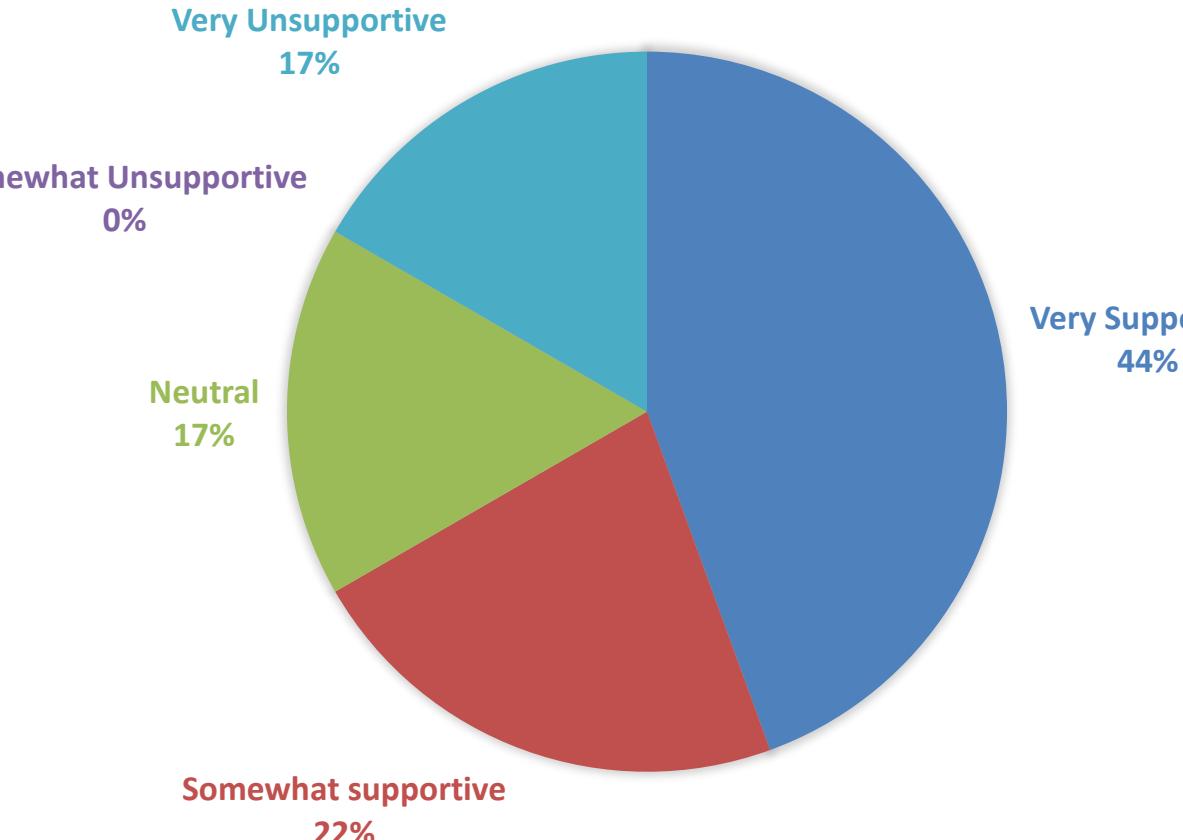
- In Seattle, there is less park access in areas with more people living under the poverty line
- Areas with less parks can potentially be developed. Including building or improving a park/greenspace.

Survey Results

HOW FAMILIAR ARE YOU WITH THE PLANNED MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL IN THE CHEASTY GREENSPACE?



HOW SUPPORTIVE ARE YOU OF THE PLANNED MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL IN THE CHEASTY GREENSPACE?



Results (Continued)

- The two graphs show that majority of the residents are both at least somewhat familiar and somewhat supportive of the mountain bike trail.
- 50% of the respondents indicated that they believe the trail will have a positive impact on property values.
- 100% of responses mentioned that greenspaces and parks are very important to neighborhoods

Significance

- There needs to be a higher awareness of the fact that improvements to greenspaces can lead to higher property values

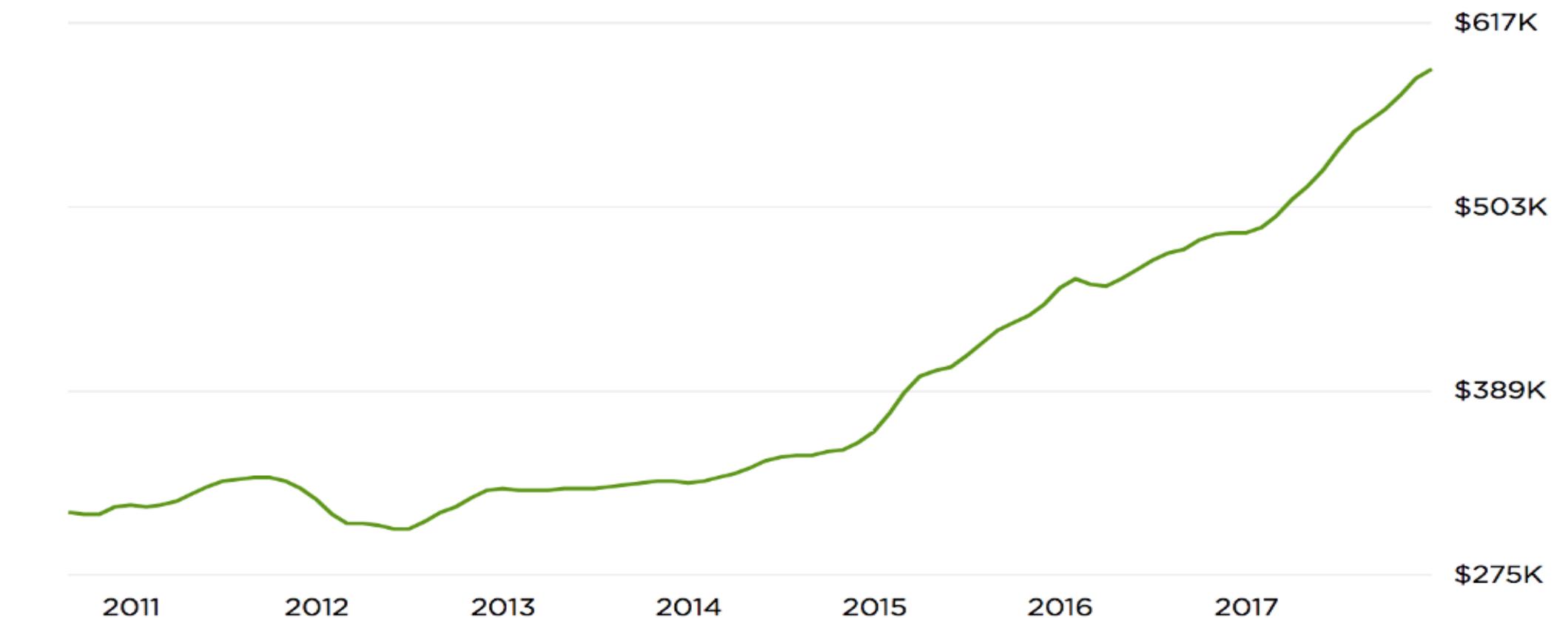


Figure 4: Graph of condo values in the Sunset Park Area in Brooklyn, NY

- Sunset Park, Brooklyn: A new waterfront park was built in 2014 and this resulted in the prices of condos to skyrocket (see Figure 4). Many people were not able to keep up with the increased rent or property tax and were forced to move out.
- Many major cities do not include environmental justice in their sustainability plans. Greening communities is important, but it should not come at the cost of displacing residents. Greenspaces should improve communities, and access should be equal for all!

Acknowledgments

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