

# Mapping Gentrification Rates in Washington

Jericho Timbol

## Motivation

---

Growing up in Washington, I have been in the Bothell/Lynwood area my entire life. I have seen neighborhoods near my childhood home change. I have seen whole complexes get built in the span of a year. Most of all, I have most noticeably seen a multitude of housing properties being erected wherever there is space available. That being said, the research question about the gentrification of Seattle was a topic I was interested in and continued to read more about. In terms of gentrification, the housing ecosystem is most definitely an influential factor. Being that I have moved around a few times in the Greater Seattle Area, the rent for properties I have looked for is enough to give a working college student nightmare. In connection to gentrification, I read an article that the housing supply is a good indicator of a city's rate of gentrification. Mainly, we can observe this through the analysis of how fast high-income homebuyers move into low-income neighborhoods. The prices have been on the rise in the market so I wanted to center my theme around this entire idea. In a broader lens, I decided to make two maps centered around the total number of houses and the income of those renting in the area.

## Methodology

---

During my planning phase, I decided on a two-map format that would be beneficial to the idea I am trying to express. Due to the temporal nature of the “rate of gentrification”, I choose to make maps of both the 2010 dataset and the 2019 dataset for side-by-side comparison. After finding the dataset, I was looking to express the total housing units and some sort of income-based metric. I found the total housing units data quickly; however, I was faced with a substantial amount of income statistics. After thinking about my idea, I went ahead and choose a pretty unique statistic. It is the percentage of people spending over 35% of their gross income on rent. I choose this because renters are not often in the high-income bracket of the spectrum. Additionally, I have always heard financial advice saying that you should ideally spend 30% of your gross income on rent. Existing in the over 35% category would mean that rent is high and

may require some financial sacrifices. After choosing those two data fields, I began pondering how I wanted to represent them on the map. I wanted to focus on the Greater-Seattle area so I thought using a choropleth of the surrounding counties would be a good representation of what percentage of people are paying for expensive housing units. Lastly, to represent the total housing units, I decided to use a dot density operation to visually show the increase and change of house amounts when comparing both maps. I cleaned my data in order to easily join it to the county's shapefile. I approached this by only including the counties in Washington State. Additionally, I decided to divide the total housing units by 1000 so the dot density map would not be extremely cluttered. This would also serve as a visual indicator of the growing clutter and oversaturation of houses and people. On both maps, I found a balanced scale that would work on both maps so the color depiction and the comparison would be consistent. In the end, I put all these operations and considerations together into a two-map comparison piece to show the gentrification rate in Washington through the housing ecosystem.