

Changing Demographics in Chicago

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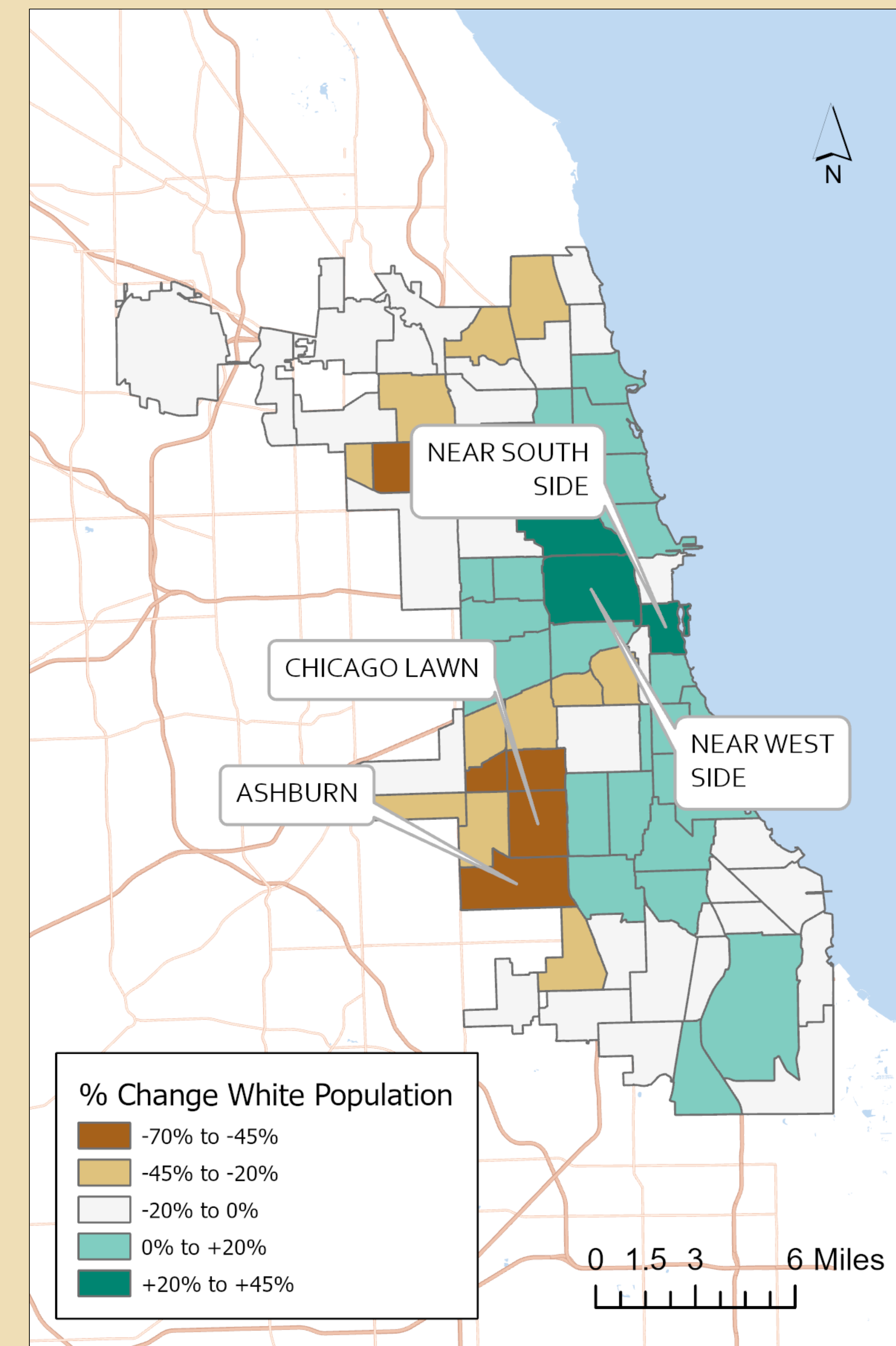
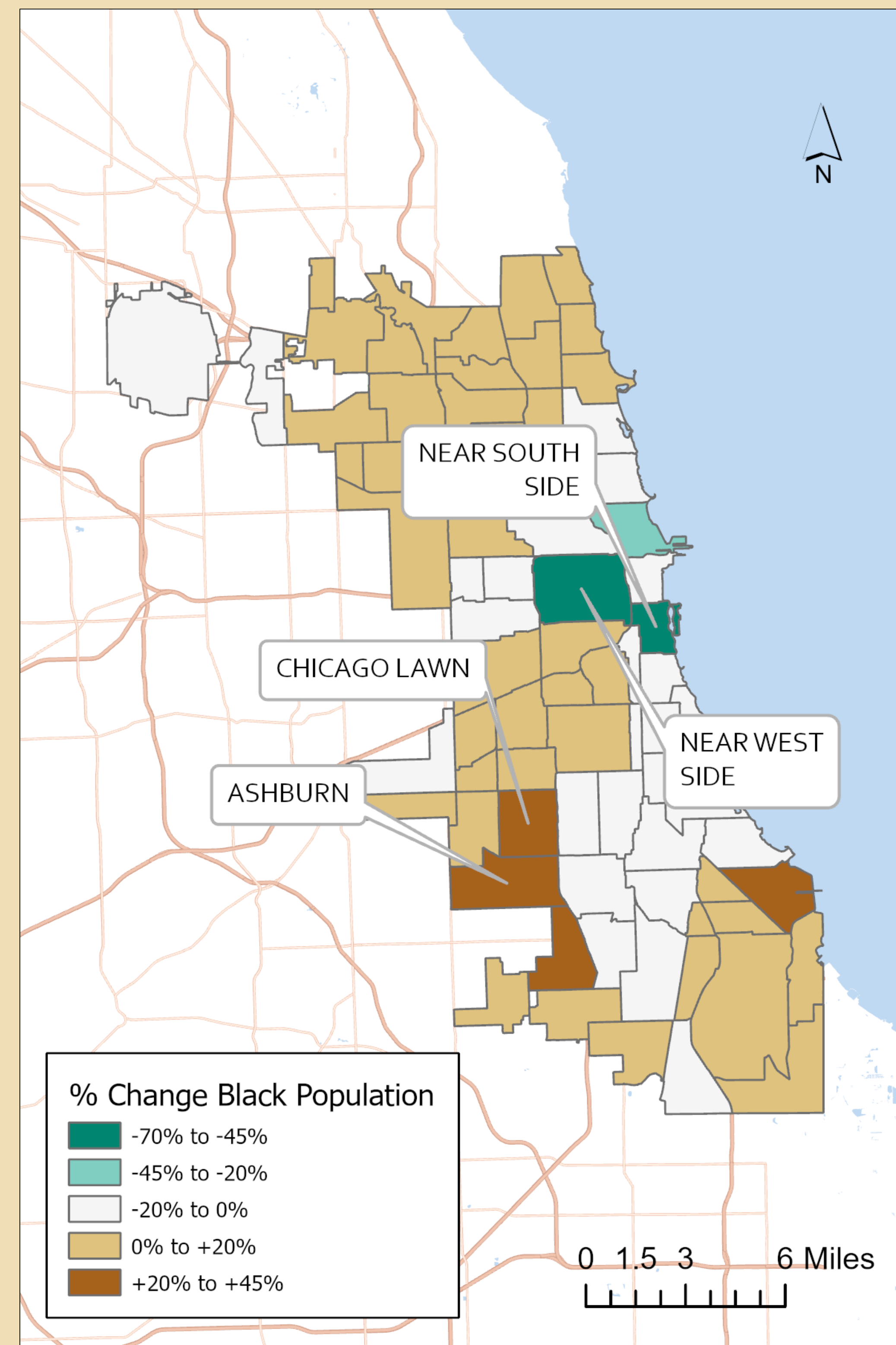
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Background

- Ethnic and racial demographics in Chicago have changed greatly over the years. Suburbanization, “white flight,” and gentrification are a few of the factors that have contributed to the ongoing transformation within Chicago’s 77 Community Areas.
- For this project, I have chosen to analyze the change within these areas from 1980 to 2017 for the white population and the Black population and then briefly profile the neighborhoods demonstrating the most change.

Methods

- After acquiring 1980 and 2017 ethnic demographics data by census tract from IPUMS NHGIS, and converting both to centroids, the two datasets were joined to Chicago Community Areas.
- Then, the percent change for each community area demographic was calculated by taking the 1980 ethnic demographic population divided by the total 1980 community area population, all subtracted from the 2017 ethnic demographic population divided by the 2017 total community area population, and all multiplied by 100.
- $100 * [(2017 \text{ racial demographic pop} / 2017 \text{ total pop}) - (1980 \text{ racial demographic pop} / 1980 \text{ total pop})]$
- The community areas with the greatest percent change in a racial demographic from 1980 to 2017 were profiled and hypotheses were made about why the changes might have occurred.



Community Area Profiles

Near South Side

- Black population shrank from 6,819 in 1980 to 5,755 in 2017.
- White population grew substantially from 248 to 11,453 in those same years.
- In 1980, most of the community were Black residents that had been forced there due to decades of housing discrimination.
- In the 90’s and 00’s, large luxury residential buildings came, changing the demographics and increasing the total population.
- Dip in Black population would suggest some gentrification, but more analysis is needed.

Near West Side

- From 1980 to 2017, the Black population shrank from 42,810 to 18,454.
- The white population grew from 9,350 to 30,260.
- The Near West Side is a large area and likely has not changed in the same way in its entirety.
- Demographic changes could be connected to the gentrification surrounding the more recent construction of areas around UIC and the United Center.

Chicago Lawn

- In 1980 the Black and white populations were 4,782 and 38,660, respectively.
- In 2017, the Black and white populations were 23,946 and 11,610, respectively.
- This area is more commonly known as Marquette Park which has a long history of racial tensions.
- It was first an area that many white people fled to from places like Englewood in the 40s and 50s but since then many of those same people have gone further south and west.
- In some ways, the area has experienced a delayed “white flight,” although more research should be done.

Ashburn

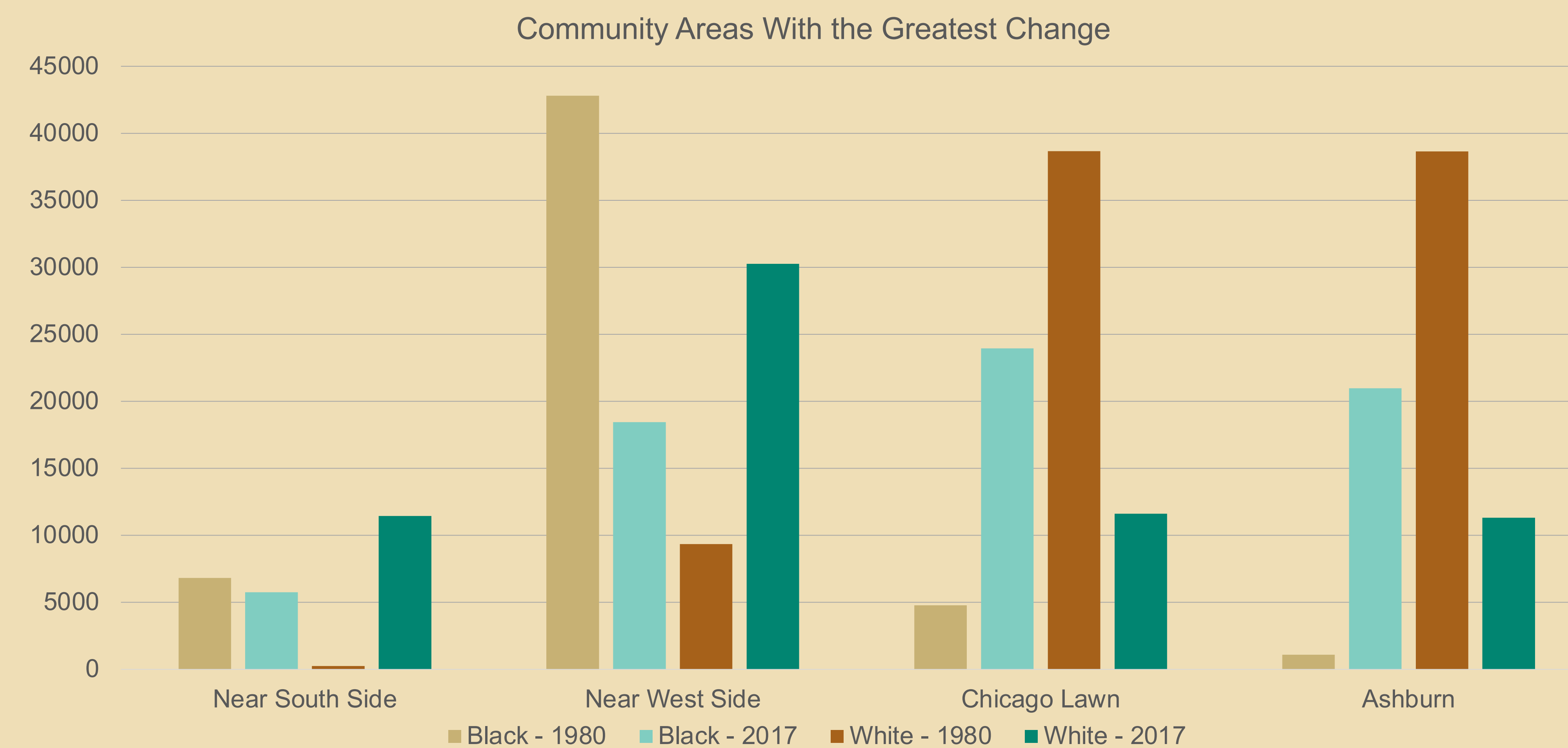
- From 1980 to 2017, the white population of Ashburn shrank from 38,651 to 11,314.
- The Black population grew from 1,084 to 20,967.
- Currently, the neighborhood is about 10.1% white, 39.3% Hispanic or Latino and 47.5% Black.
- Black communities did not begin moving into the neighborhood until the 1980s and since then the white population has continued to decline.

Findings

- Greatest change in Black population: Near South Side (-69.78%), Near West Side (-45.35%), Chicago Lawn (+34.84%), Ashburn (+45.2%)
- Greatest change in white population: Ashburn (-69.65%), Chicago Lawn, (-61.15%), Near West Side (+31.81%), Near South Side, (+45.06%)

Conclusions

The decrease in Black population and increase in white population in the Near South Side and Near West Side is most likely due to gentrification, as well as general population increase in the case of the Near South Side. The growth in the Black population and decline in the white population in Chicago Lawn and Ashburn are likely due to delayed “white flight” and suburbanization.



Sources: McClendon, D. (2004). Near South Side. McMahon, E. M. (2004). Chicago Lawn. Pauillac, M. (2004). Near West Side. Meyer, S. (2004). Ashburn. IPUMS NHGIS. 5-Year American Community Survey 2014-2018