

Seaside Ethnic Groups: Representation

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Introduction

The Sustainable City Year Project (SCYP) originated at the University of Oregon as a means to harness the innovation and energy of university students and faculty while supporting cities who are passionate about supporting progressive initiatives but face resource, time, and budget constraints. SCYP came to CSUMB in 2015 and has partnered with the City of Seaside for the 2017-2018 project year. The basis for our project comes from the City of Seaside's 2040 plan. Chapter 2 in the Seaside 2040 Plan, Vision and Guiding Principles, states that Seaside is a vibrant, proudly diverse, energetic and safe community with a good quality of life and economic opportunities. They state that they are striving for a community that has character, social diversity, cultural identity and that it is welcoming to all people. One of the goals is a creative city that embraces the creative culture and the creative pursuits of a diverse community by cultivating arts and talents (City of Seaside, n.d.). The 2040 plan represents a roadmap for the future of Seaside and its residents and reflects the unique local identity of the community (City of Seaside General Plan, 2017).

The City of Seaside's Economic Development Program Manager, came to our class with a list of concerns that the city wanted to address. She presented a graph showing the representation of members in their community and raised a concern about the 43% Hispanic population, who do not attend city hall meetings. Recent analysis of the census data found that from 2010 - 2016 the Hispanic population in Seaside has increased by 1% which will be referred to as the 44%.

The City of Seaside is working hard to reach the 2040 development goals, and they wish to identify and engage where this 44% is spending most of their time reach out to them. Our project is composed of two panels; the first focuses on analyzing the demographics within the City of Seaside and comparing that with representation of careers in office with authoritative decision-making influence.

The second panel focuses more on the 44% Hispanic and Latino community outreach. This will give the city an overall sense of the community and suggest how the City of Seaside can reach out to these community members. Within the community outreach panel, we focus on interacting with the 44% by immersing ourselves in places that they visit.

This project is for the City of Seaside to use and refer to so that they can understand the populations that are present when making decisions in policy or development. It is also a tool that can be used to understand where community members are gathering and what input they would like to see from the city.

Research Question

- What is the overall ethnic representation in city government, and how does this affect the community they are trying to represent?

Methods

In order to answer the city's concern of what is the overall demographic representation of Seaside, we obtained data from the American Community Survey 2009-2016 (US Census Bureau, 2017). We met with Roberta Greathouse, the Human Resources Director for the City of Seaside, and she contributed a list of the current city employees with descriptions of their jobs and ethnicities. With the data obtained from the US Census Bureau and Ms. Greathouse, we created bar graphs of the overall population in Seaside (Figure 1), as well as city employee positions to show their influence in decision making. A word cloud was also created to show the different ethnicities in Seaside based on the US Census data.

Data was graphed based on race/ethnicity using the total population for each group. Percentages were then calculated by dividing total population per ethnic group by overall population of 34,120 and then multiplying it by 100. Using the same data, we created a graph to show population change in percentages between 2000-2016 (Figure 2). Each ethnicity was split up by years (2000, 2006-2010, 2012-2016). Ethnicity was then graphed based on population during those years. To calculate population change for each group, total population per ethnic group was divided by overall population and multiplied by 100 for each set of years.

NVIVO is a statistics program that was used to import a document that had the US census data ethnic/race organized into categories. This document was used in NVIVO to create a representative frequency of ethnicities present in Seaside (Figure 3). This was done to get an overall visual representation of the census metadata. The single words of ethnicities show the importance of each word depicted in a different font size and color.

Employment data obtained from the Human Resources Department for Seaside was graphed to show the employees influence in decision making (Figure 4). Each position was grouped by temporary, part-time, or full-time position. The data was then split into categories of low and high influence. Positions that were considered to be of low-influence are considered administrative support staff, paraprofessionals, protective service workers, service maintenance, skilled craft, and technicians. Low influence was anything that did not require more than a high school diploma or certification. Positions that were considered to be of high-influence are city managers, city council members, and professionals. High influence was anything that required more than a high school diploma. Employees were then put into categories of Temporary&Low, Parttime&Low, Fulltime&Low, Temporary&High, and Fulltime&High. Percentages were then calculated by dividing number of employees per category/ethnicity by total number of employees of 232.

In addition, a graph was created to show population change in Seaside between the years 2000-2016 (Figure 5). Categories that were used for the graph were Hispanic or Latino, any race, and Non-Hispanic or Latino any race. Percentages were then calculated by dividing population of each ethnic category by total population and multiplied by 100 for each set of years. To show how much the Hispanic community has increased over the last 15 years we used the formula: (initial population- final population)/ initial population multiplied by 100.

Results

Figure 1 shows that out of the total population in Seaside of 34,120 people, the Non-Hispanic or Latino community, any race accounts for 56% out of the total population in Seaside. Hispanic or Latino, any race, accounts for 44% out of the total population in Seaside. In addition, White alone accounts for 30% out of the total population of Seaside. There were more ethnic groups than we expected, but the population is mostly made up of Hispanic or Latino, any race, Non-Hispanic or Latino any race, and White alone.

Figure 2 shows the population changes from 2000 to 2016. The Hispanic or Latino, any race community grew at a steady pace with a population of about 12,000 in 2000. In the years of 2006 to 2010 the population rose from 12,000 to 25,000. In contrast, most other racial and ethnic groups decreased during this same time period (Figure 2).

We wanted to recognize the Seaside demographics as a whole. The ethnic groups are represented in the word cloud that shows the diversity of Seaside (Figure 3). The word cloud shows the frequency of the words and are categorized according to how each participant in the US census responded.

Despite the mixed race population in Seaside during 1944, the first chamber of commerce members were all white males. We found that the dynamics of representation has shifted over time from the early establishment of members to a more diverse representation today (Figure 4). However, there are still not enough members in office to be representative of the total Latino population and make an impact on decision making. Out of 232 employees, 8% are in "high-influence" positions and identify as white. 2.43% of employees are Latino and in "high-influence" positions.

From Figure 5 we can see that there has been a 38% increase in the Latino population in the last 15 years. Again this emphasizes that the Latino community is a big part of Seaside.

We analyzed data from the American Community Survey website to get an overall understanding of the community members that reside in Seaside from 2009-2016. With this data we can identify the aspects of the community that are underrepresented in office. It is important to understand the dynamics in office because elected officials are the ones making decisions and implementing policies that will have an effect on the community in which they serve. If this representation is to continue we can expect to see an effect in the long run. If these people are not included in the city's decision-making process then their opinions in the 2040 development plan may not be recognized.

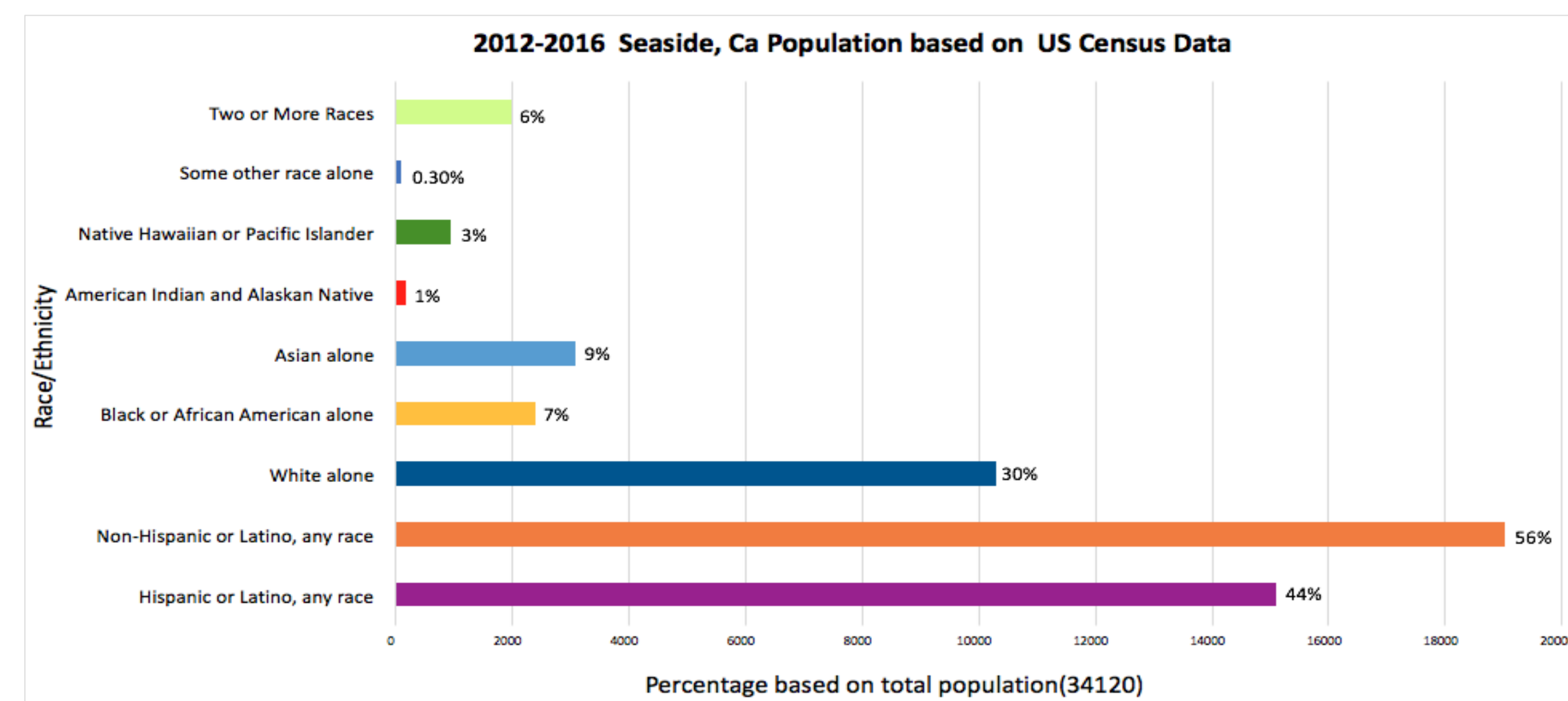


Figure 1. Population of Seaside from 2012-2016.

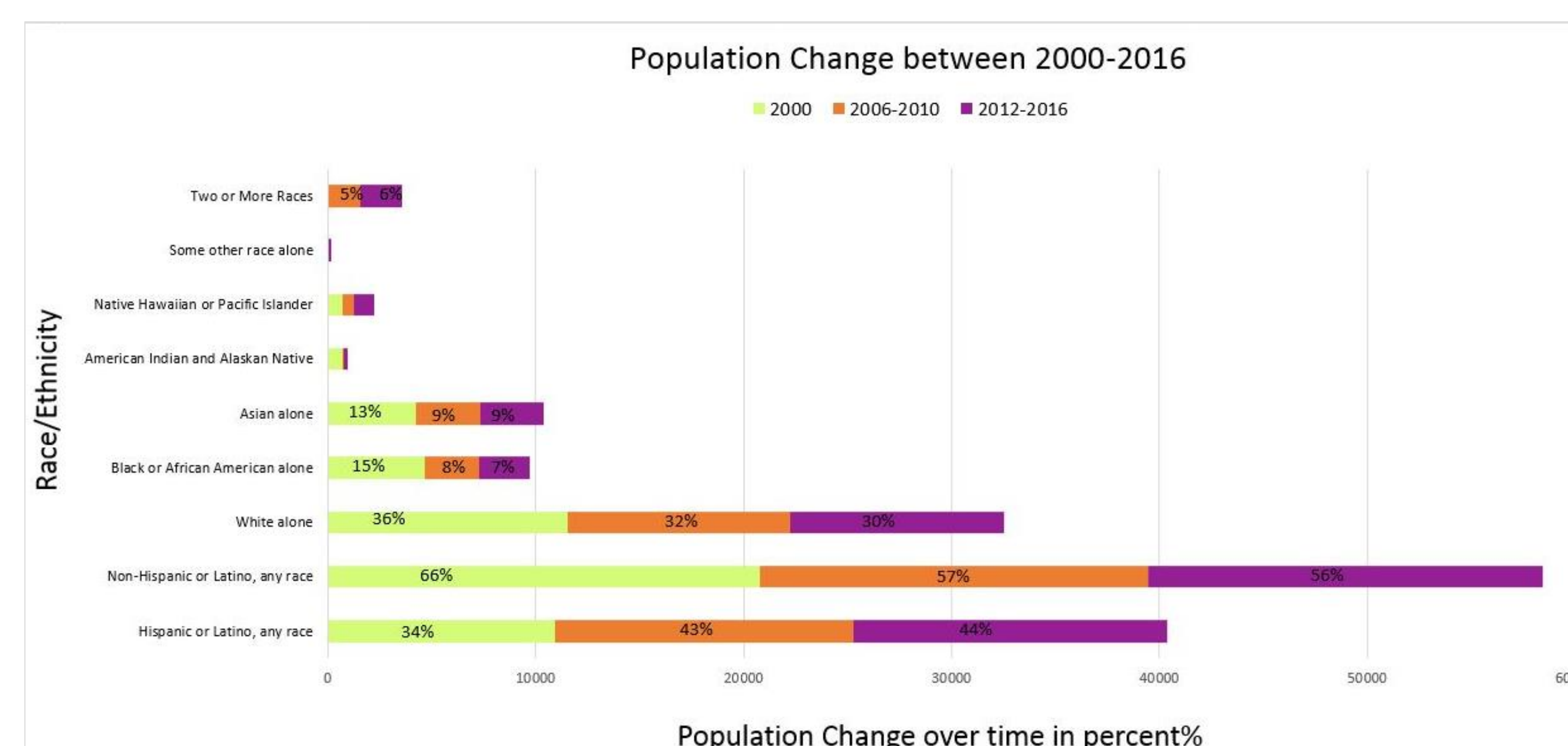


Figure 2. Population change over the course of 16 years.

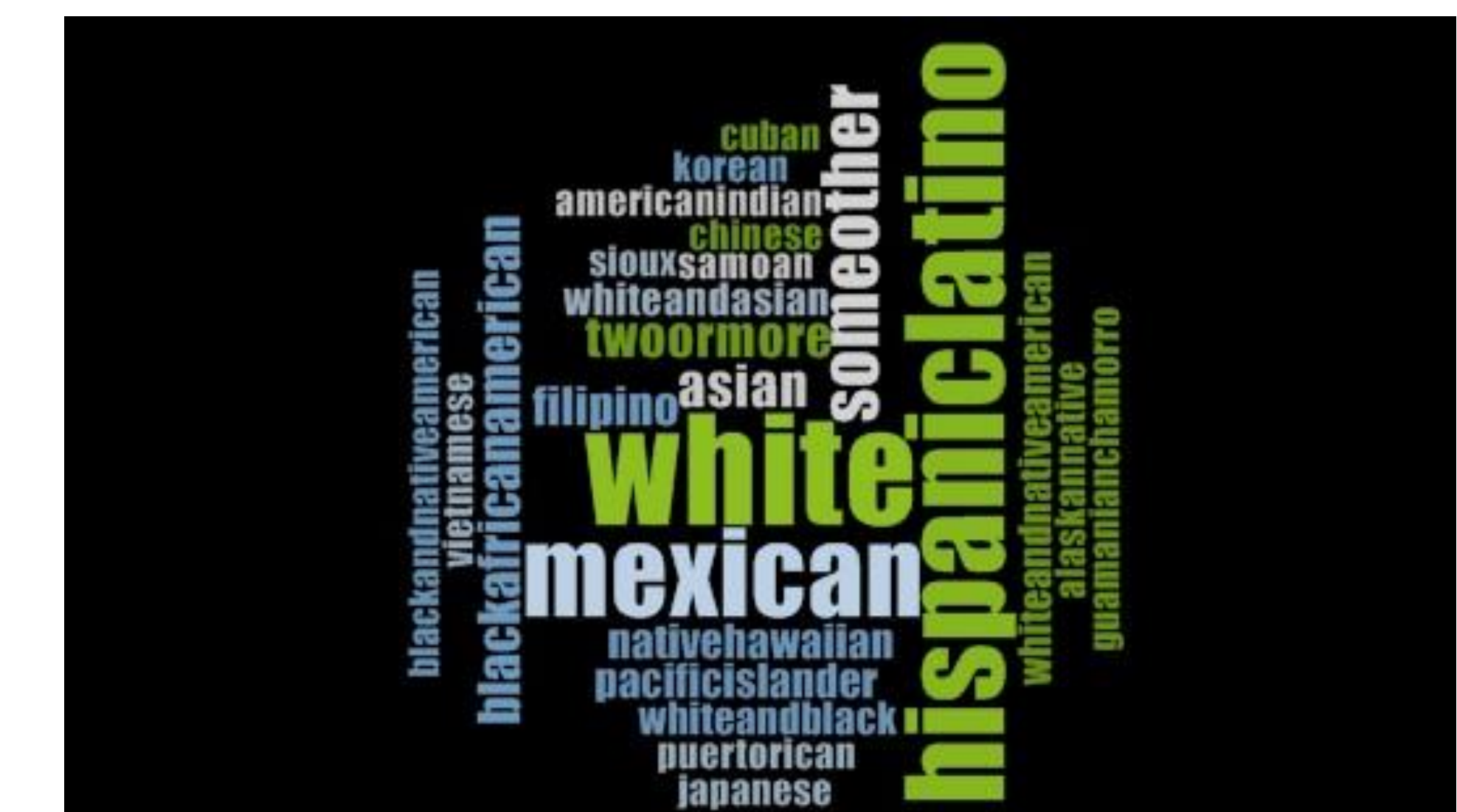


Figure 3. Word Cloud showing frequencies of most words used to describe race and ethnicities.

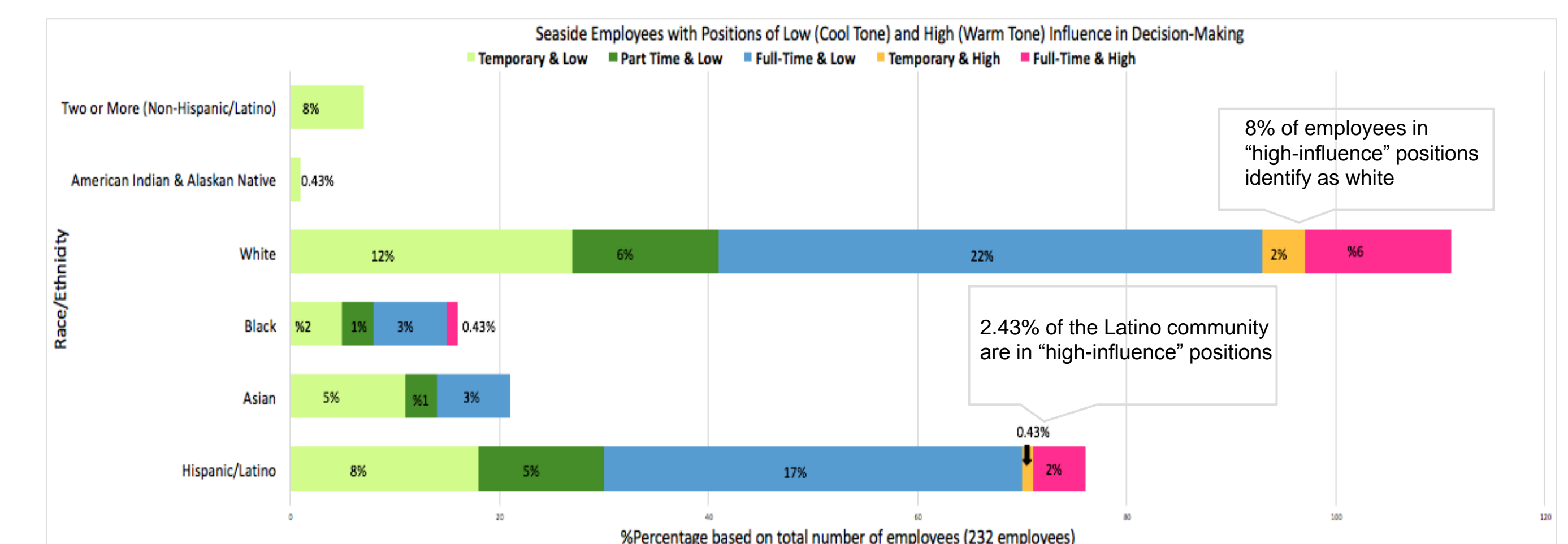


Figure 4. Seaside city employees and their influence in decision-making.

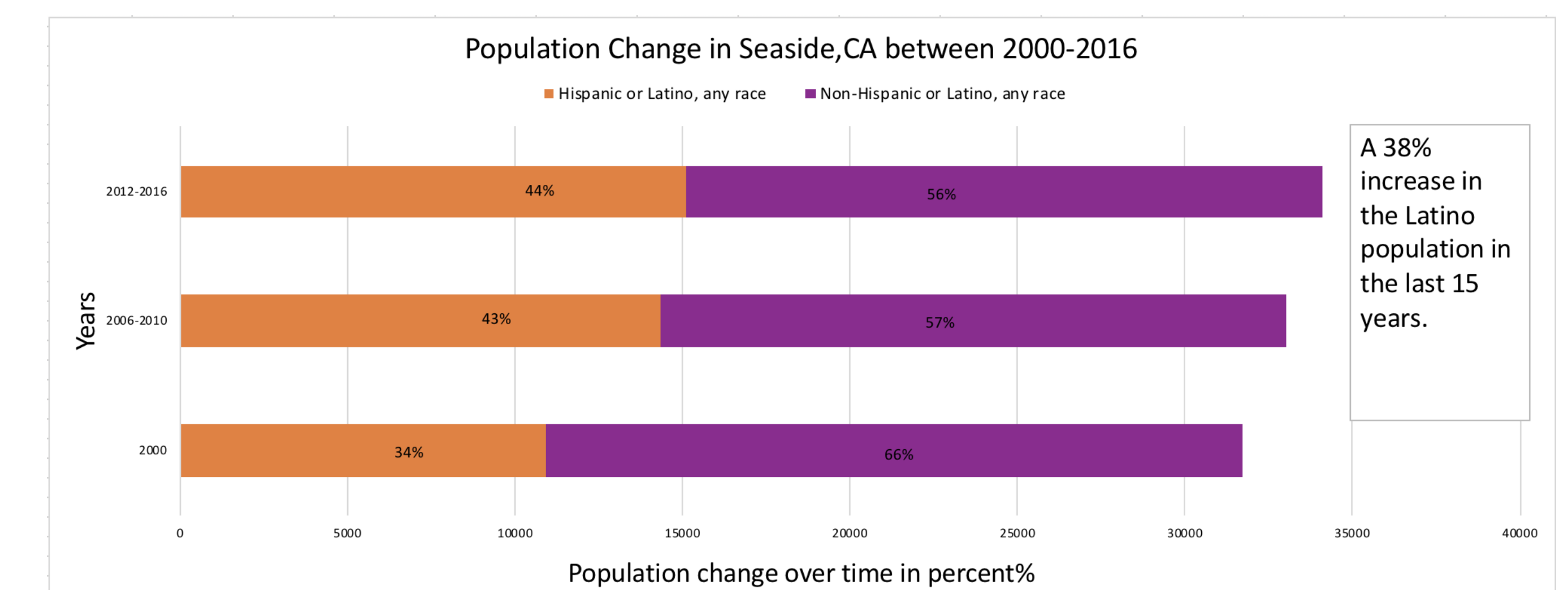


Figure 5. Population change in Seaside between Hispanic or Latino, any race and Non-Hispanic or Latino, any race.

Is Seaside Representative?

Our analysis of the question raised "What is the overall representation in city government, and how does this affect the community they are trying to represent?" We conclude that there is some ethnic representation in office but is not representative of the majority of the community.

Works Cited

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US Census Bureau. (2017, July 17). American Community Survey (ACS). Retrieved February 21, 2018, from <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/news/data-releases.html>

Outreach to Latino Community



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Why Reach Out?

According to the city's community and economic development staff, the City of Seaside does not have enough input from the Hispanic/Latino community, but they would like to know their thoughts on future changes and how the city can reach them. For our project, we wanted to find out what the Hispanic/Latino group thinks about their city and reach that 44% of the community. To do so we used an urban planner in Los Angeles, James Rojas', City as Play approach. City as Play is an approach that can be used to engage communities in the planning process in a more accessible way. This approach can be used with anyone because it requires no special expertise. City as Play can be part of public meetings, using trained facilitators. This approach can also be taken to everyday areas in order to collect ideas from those who are unlikely to ever attend a public meeting. James Rojas has used this approach by utilizing a portable table outside convenience stores (Figure 1) in immigrant neighborhoods engaging with people as they come and go (Derr et al., 2018).

Methods of Outreach

City of Play uses many abstract objects focusing on objects in a variety of shapes and bright colors (Figure 2). Having colorful round objects like hair curlers, plastic Easter eggs, and Mardi Gras beads encourages people to think outside of the box and design more creatively (Derr et al., 2018).

As a way to reach the Latino community, we went to two markets in Seaside: Santa Fe and Mi Tierra. We briefly explained to the managers what the purpose of our project was, and asked if we had their permission to set up outside of their stores for an hour. For both of the locations, we went out around 4 p.m. We chose to go out during those because the store manager we spoke with said that is when the store gets most of its customers. We set up a table and placed our objects on it. On the table we also hung two signs (Figure 3). As people were going in and out of the store we asked them for a few minutes of their time to explain the activity. We let the people know that all ideas were welcome, and the purpose of this was to quickly generate design ideas and that there is no right or wrong idea. We asked people to build their favorite place growing up regardless of where it was.

The intention of this was for people to build their favorite place and explain to us why they liked it so much. We were interested in knowing what made this place special and how it could be applied to the city of Seaside. We wanted to document peoples' creations by photographing their models (Figure 4). James Rojas explains that this is a way to get people sharing stories about what is important to them about the places where they live (Kim, 2015).



Figure 1. Set up during an event on Echo Ave using a portable table.



Figure 2. Poster 1 reads, "Cual es el futuro de Seaside? Ayuda a crear la vision aqui!" Poster 2 reads, "What is the future of Seaside? Help create the vision here!"



Figure 3. Random objects that were mainly thrifted for the activity.

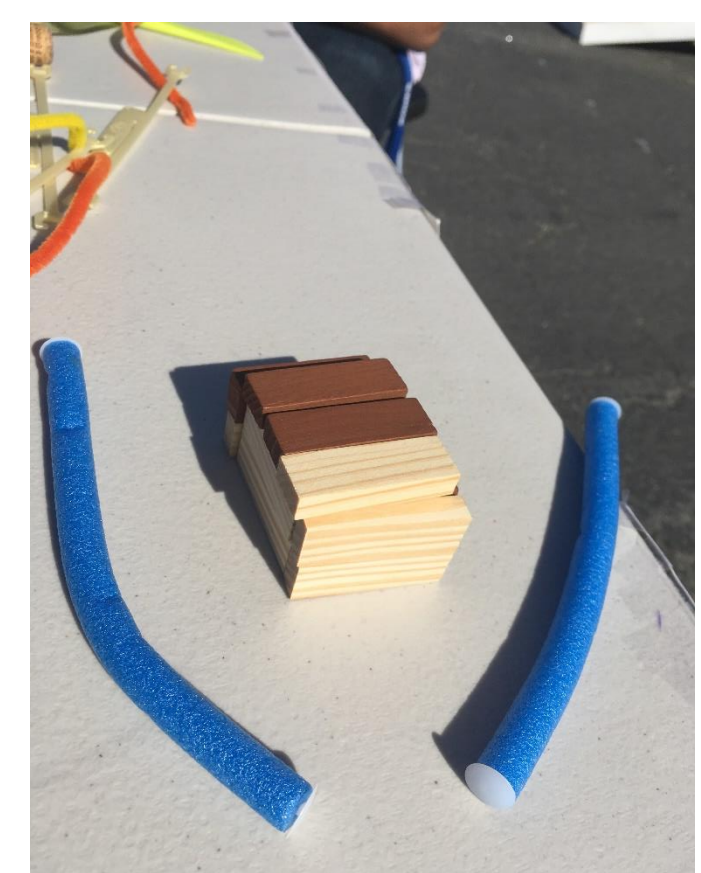


Figure 4. A kid expressed that his favorite memory was when he lived in Mexico he would get out of school and help his dad on the ranch which was in the middle of two creeks.

We found that it was difficult for people to create a model of their favorite place growing up because they could not think of how to use the objects on the spot. We realized that we would benefit more from this method if we did a series of workshops where people would know ahead of time of what they were doing.

Instead, because we were already there and speaking with people, we decided that it would be best to conduct an informal interview using open ended questions. We asked questions such as: "What do you like about Seaside?"; "What would you like to see in Seaside?"; "What do you think needs improvement?"; "How can the city of Seaside reach out to you?"; and "What word comes to mind when you think about Seaside?" In total, we interviewed 39 people.

All the data obtained from the informal interviews was kept in a notebook that was later coded in NVivo using common themes to produce a word cloud (Figure 5). A second word cloud was also created to show how the Hispanic/Latino community sees Seaside (Figure 6). We found consistencies in words that the community members used which included greater safety, more parks, more activities, better streets, more inclusion of cultures, and more displays of art. Community members felt that the city is not doing enough to reach them and they feel the city should come to where they are.

Latinos' Perceptions of Seaside



Figure 5. Word cloud created using common themes that were mentioned during informal interviews.



Figure 6. Word cloud created using words that represent Seaside.

Results

We spoke to 39 people between the two times we went out to collect data. Common themes from the conversations included:

- Safety
- Parks
- Activities
- Streets
- Inclusion and
- Art

The Hispanic/Latino community expressed that they do not feel safe in their city. They said that they do not feel comfortable going outside during the night because they are afraid of being attacked. They feel that the city needs to hire more policemen and have them near schools because of what is currently going on around the world with the school shootings. They expressed interest in sports such as soccer, basketball, and indoor soccer. They do not think the city has enough parks, and the parks they do have need maintenance and more things for the kids to play on. Also, they would like to see the streets be fixed and have bike lanes added to them. They have seen litter around the streets and empty lots with mattresses and couches, and they would like for the city to do something about it (Figure 5).

They would like to see more art. A man that we spoke to was very excited to see us do a project that incorporated art. He said that it reminded him of when he used to build things with his father in Mexico. He feels that the community lacks creativity because they are not exposed to art (Figure 5).

At the moment, the community overall does not feel included or respected by the city. A lady that we spoke with said that she has been living in Seaside for about 20 years now. She likes where she lives because she knows most of the people in her neighborhood. She said that there are a lot of Hispanics, and she feels that they all respect each other and look out for one another. When asked what the city needs to work on she said, "The city of Seaside has a lot to work on, but the first they should take care of its safety and make people feel comfortable." In addition, we asked her what she thought about city council meetings and why she does not go to them. She said that she feels that the Hispanic community does not care for city council meetings because there are no regulations that say "if you do not attend these meetings you will get fined", she said that people do not feel like they need to go. She says that it is not that they do not care about the issues, but that there isn't enough outreach for her to actually know what the city is working on. Moving forward she recommended that if the city wanted to hear their opinions they should just go out and speak to them like we did. She also mentioned that another way to reach them was through radio and TV advertisements.

Radio stations that were mentioned that would be effective for outreach were: **103.5 La Buena**, **107.9 La Campesina**, **100.7 La Preciosa**.

A More Inclusive Seaside

We recommend that the city of Seaside continue to partner with CSUMB to collect information for specific community outreach goals. There are a lot of bilingual students on campus that could make it easier to communicate with the Hispanic/Latino community. The community themselves suggested that the most effective way to reach them is to go to where they are and just talk to them about their concerns and upcoming projects. Having a set of open ended question will open up the conversation and make it easier to bring in multiple topics of concern.

Furthermore, we recommend that the city continues to have events that are inclusive to all cultures. The Latino community would like to see more food options at these events and have more entertainment so they have something to look at while they eat and walk around. We suggest that these events are advertised through radio stations or set up flyers at the grocery stores like Santa Fe and Mi Tierra where a lot of Latinos shop.

Why Inclusion Matters

In a study done by Susan Dieterlan, *Immigrant pastoral: Midwestern Landscapes and Mexican-American Neighborhoods* (Routledge Research in Landscape and Environmental Design), she explains how the landscape of a city is part of the fabric of inequality and reiterates that inclusion is important in growing cities. She says that, "at least some of the neighborhoods she looked at during her study that are the most Mexican-American are also among the cities' most modest areas (Dieterlan, 2015)." Dieterlan was referring to the private investment in housing size/conditions and to public investment in infrastructure including streets and sidewalks. She elaborates on how some of these landscape types are characterized by the concentration of Mexican-Americans into the city's most substandard neighborhoods. The landscapes are modest in housing and infrastructure, but are also vulnerable to environmental justice issues (Dieterlan, 2015).

Another way that landscape types differ from each other in a city, is by the dispersal and clustering of Mexican-American/Spanish language businesses. Susan Dieterlan says that these businesses are noticeable for their concentration of these ethnic businesses into only the most out of the way and outdated retail areas. These landscapes perpetuate inequality because it imposes injustice of an earlier age on the present and future. She gave an example where a Mexican bakery is built in a new mall, next to a Walmart. This bakery would benefit because of the location. On the other hand, the same bakery could be located in an aging corner store and we would expect to see a substantial impact on the visibility, the customers, and the profitability of the identical bakeries (Dieterlan, 2015).

Furthermore, she says that after years of investigation, the study of Mexican-American landscapes in the Midwest revolve around economics, politics, and otherness. It matters less that newcomers to the "New Communities" are Mexican immigrants and more that they are less wealthy and less educated. It may matter that in Established Communities, Mexican-Americans are still, decades after their arrival, a culture apart. It is the separation that matters more in terms of the landscapes, not the culture itself. She concludes that her findings are relevant to other ethnic or immigrant groups, if the cities in which they live in are similar to the ones she studied. In a growing city, designers and planners need to learn to see these communities and their landscapes in order to remain relevant in an increasingly diverse nation (Dieterlan, 2015).

In our outreach, we also saw deterioration near Mi Tierra and Santa Fe, and in areas of the city where Latinos are located. However, if the City of Seaside brings their community members together, it will promote the well being of the city as a whole and allow the different ethnic groups to be celebrated and feel welcome in their own community.

References

Derr, V., L. Chawla, M. Mintzer. (forthcoming, 2018). *Placemaking with Children and Youth: Participatory Practices for Planning Sustainable Communities*. New York: New Village Press.

Dieterlan, S. (2015). *Immigrant Pastoral: Midwestern Landscapes and Mexican-American Neighborhoods*. New York: Routledge Research in Landscape and Environmental Design.