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The relationship between small businesses and gentrification

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The Characteristics of Small Businesses in the Binghamton Area and the Relation with Gentrification

PRESENTER:
Abigail Gifeisman

BACKGROUND:

In the past six years, the downtown Binghamton area and the streets leading to the area have undergone certain redesigns, such as making the area more “kid friendly”, as mentioned in the linked development plan.

There has been a significant influx of new businesses in this area. Many are more recreational, such as businesses that Google Maps advertises as “Hip Breweries”.

METHODS

Interviews and informal conversations were conducted with business owners.

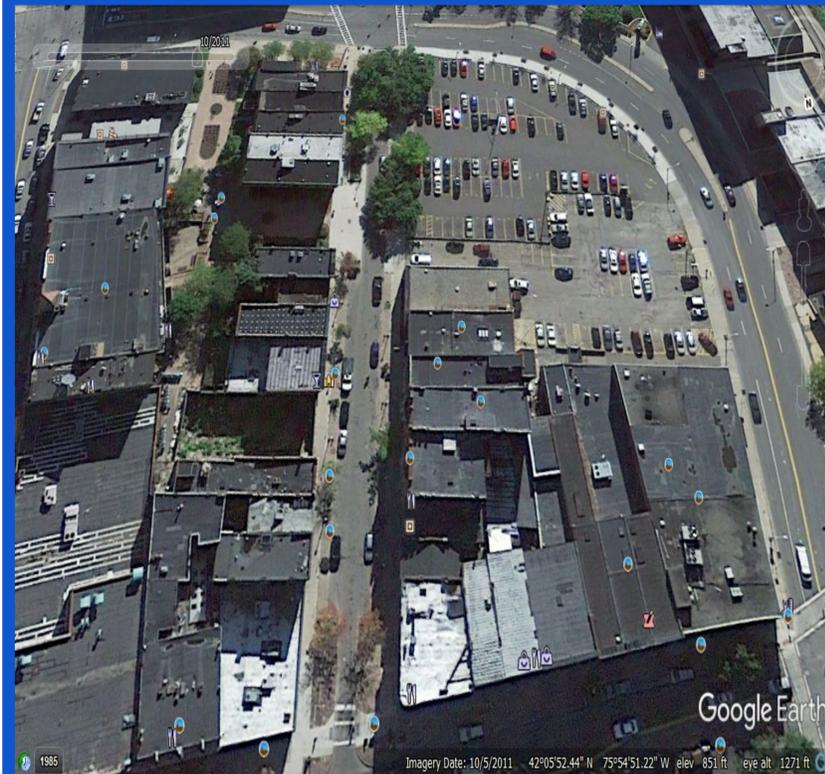
Surveys were conducted on streets and in participating businesses. Street surveys were broader in an attempt to reach more of the community. They focused more on the community as a whole and how individuals felt about the changes.

Surveys are still in progress.

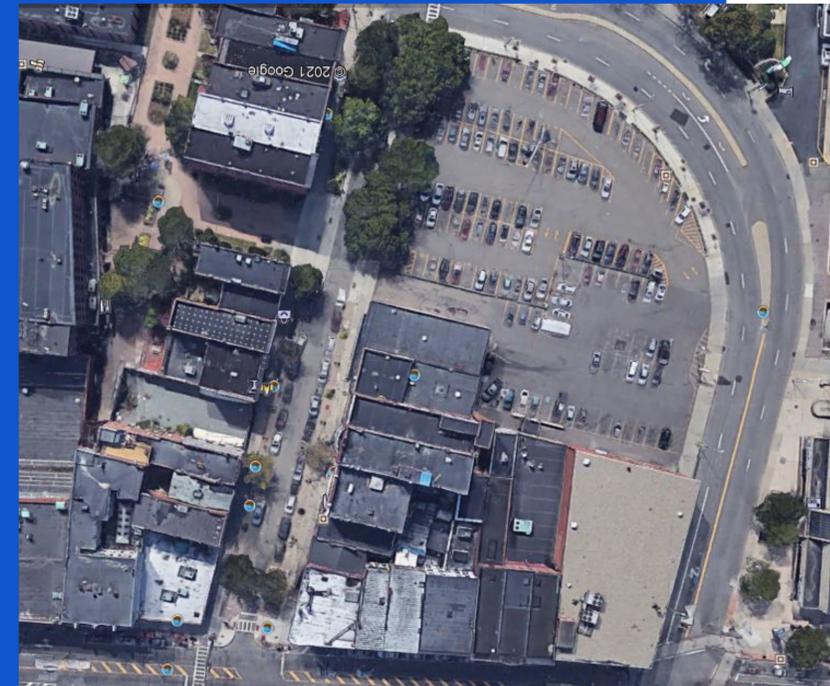
RESULTS

- Middle class White business owners are more willing to give interviews
- Some business owners are more open towards development, others are against it. Those against development either have been from a minority community or have lived in areas such as Brooklyn and have witnessed gentrification first hand.

Can Small Businesses be contributors of Gentrification?



2011 Washington Street Ariel View



2020 Washington Street Ariel View.



The 2014 Development Plans for Binghamton. Focuses mainly on environmental development but does mention its plans to “revitalise” the city.

The Above pictured is a comparison between 2011 and 2020. 2011 had a charity building along with the Salvation Army and had less entertainment like restaurants and cafes. Now it hosts businesses such as Craft and Strange Brews. A business owner says that rent has gone up on that street. There are some changes that aren't shown in the 2020 map, such as the parking lot being currently worked on.

Gentrification

Gentrification is the process by which lower class populations are displaced as the community makes room for economically better-off individuals.

Gentrification affects lower class communities at a higher rate due to inability to keep up with the higher price of living.

Limitations

Several business owners did not speak English and did not feel comfortable agreeing to an interview, even with a translator.

Many people have not been outside due to weather and Covid, which makes it hard to conduct street surveys.

Due to white business owners being more willing to interview, this causes a slight bias in the data.