



Unequal Ground: Redlining's Lasting Effects on our Environment

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Project Motivation & Goals

IMAGINE if the neighborhood you live in determined the air you breathe, the water you drink and the green spaces around you...

In the same way a tree's growth is shaped by the soil its planted in, communities thrive or struggle based on the resources they're given.

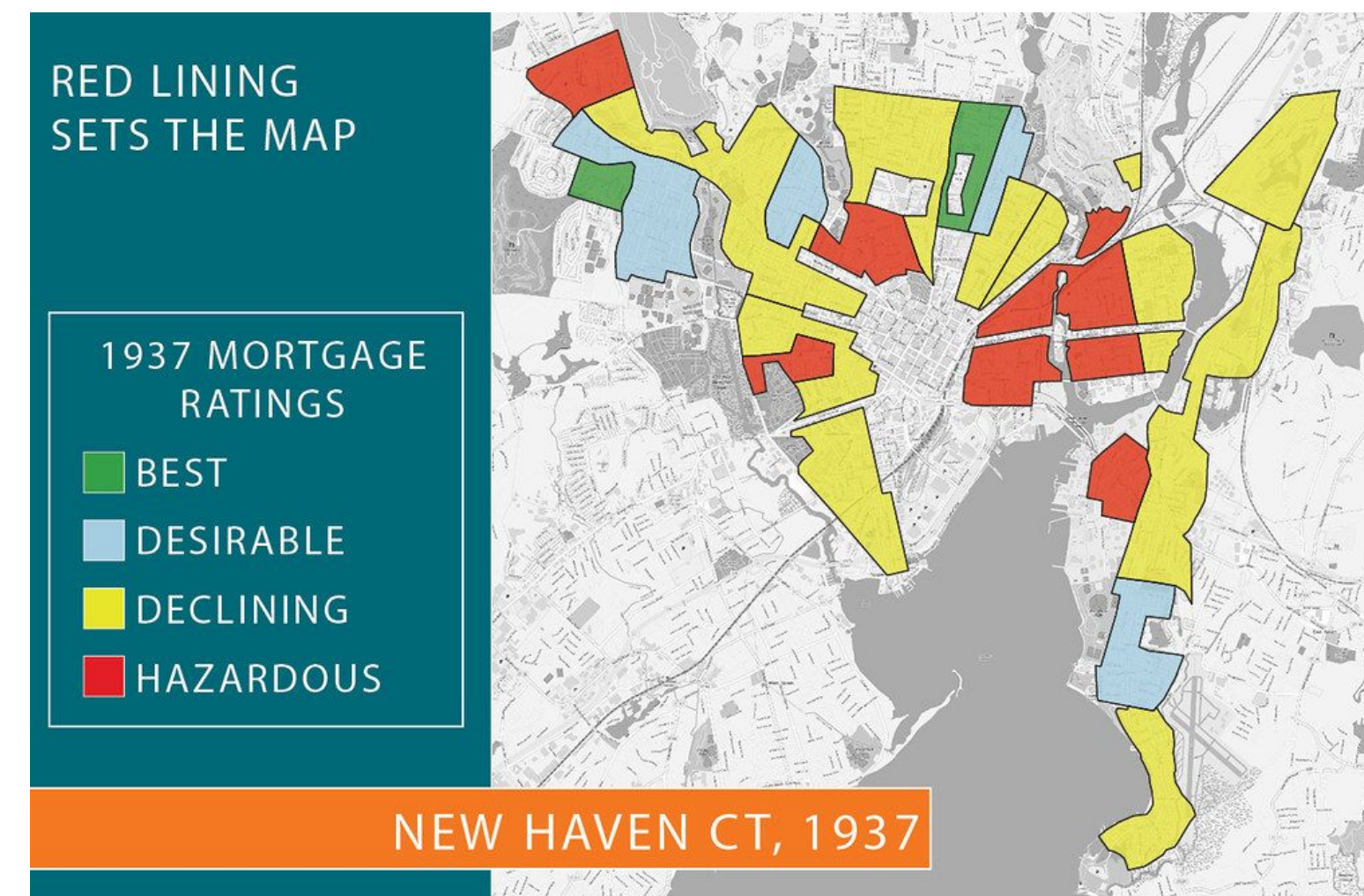
Redlining, a discriminatory practice that began in the 1930s, denied mortgages and financial services to Black and Brown neighborhoods, stripping them of the nourishment needed to grow (Data Haven, 2018). Though no longer in affect, redlining's mark is still felt in the shaping of not only communities, but also the environment around them. For example, some communities have fewer trees, more pollution, and higher temperatures due to a lack of investment in green space (Data Haven, 2018).

Just as neglect has harmed these communities, investment can work to help them. I am invested in this work because the effects of redlining linger in my community, New Haven. Despite this, we have the power to discuss, redesign, and reconstruct these ideals and our communities.

Change starts with awareness, but continues with action, **caring for my community** and the quality of our atmosphere is my first step in taking action.

Project Goal: Raise awareness about and engage New Haven community members in the topic of redlining and its impact on the environment.

New Haven Redlining & Urban Heat Islands



New Haven Redlining Grades



New Haven Land Cover

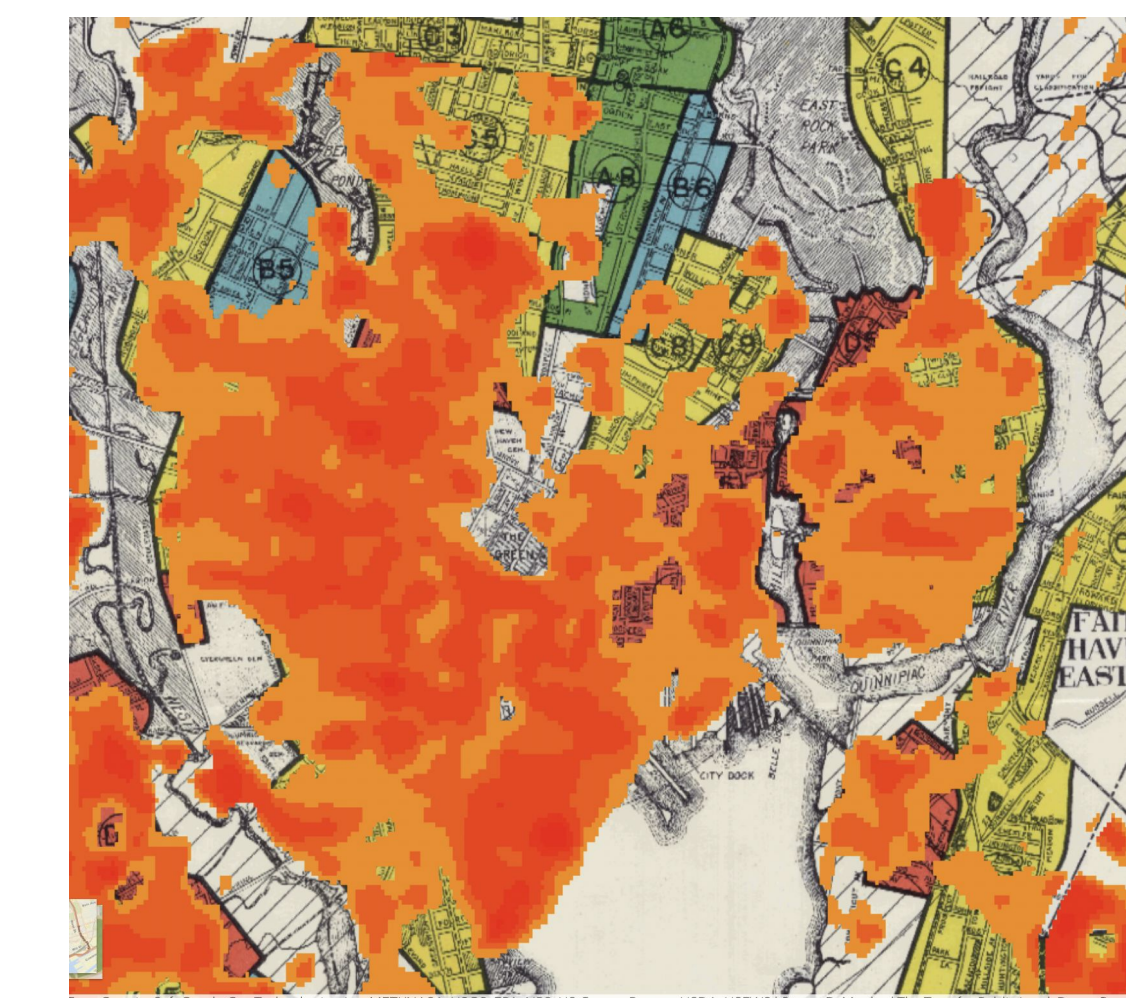


New Haven Land Cover and Redlining Grades



My community partner Chris Schweitzer, used his knowledge of New Haven and the current climate and environmental justice issues we face to guide my research and workshop development.

Lastly, two maps showing the formerly redlined areas and their significant heat levels (image to left) tying into the health risk (image to right) that coexist with the sudden heat surges.² Cities warn residents to take precautions with excessive heat.²



New Haven Redlining Grades and Heat lands



New Haven Redlining Grades and Health Sensitivity

Workshop & Community Impact

Date: Friday 5-6pm on April 11, 2025

Venue: Dixwell Q-House Community Center in the Hill Neighborhood of New Haven, CT

Students: 7 middle school aged students

Activities:

- Presented history of redlining and present day impacts on environment and health in New Haven (see Fig 1 & New Haven Redlining & Urban Heat Islands section)
- Creative drawing activity to reimage their dream neighborhood (see Fig 2)
- Growing tree activity: sticky notes on what they learned (see Fig 2)

Learner Outcomes:

- Redlining environmental impacts
- Housing grading systems
- What redlining was and is

Fig 1. Screenshot of three workshop slides as examples of content covered.



Fig 2. Participating middle school children creating their dream neighborhoods and reflecting on what they learned.

Redesigning Our Communities

- Young people care about their communities and notice discrepancies between the resources allocated to their New Haven community compared to other areas of New Haven. Engaging students with lived environments in educational spaces can help to encourage real world applications in their learning.
- In the closing activity, students noted that they learned about redlining injustices and environmental impacts while still viewing their communities as an asset which can continue to be a frame for future topics.
- When students had the opportunity to reimagine their own neighborhoods, they decided it was essential to incorporate healthy food, higher education, composting systems, hospitals, and public green spaces.

I would like to continue organizing workshops and events were students can present their ideas, like improving their neighborhoods. Providing a platform for young people to express their visions and gather feedback from community members and local leaders is a way to continue uplifting marginalized voices.

Acknowledgements and References

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- Data Haven (2018) CT Data Story: Housing segregation in Greater New Haven. <https://uconn-nrca.maps.arcgis.com/apps/insight/basic/index.html?appid=6d1890f7a9ab4a7ca1b6f0ad641b6255>
- Joas (2019) Cities Warn Residents to Take Precautions With Excessive Heat. NBC Connecticut. <https://www.nbcconnecticut.com/news/local/cities-warn-residents-to-take-precautions-with-excessive-heat/125511/>
- Uconn's stipends and funds for art supplies