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## **Racial and Spatial Theories in Merced**

By Edmundo Zaragoza

The purpose for this paper is to understand the role spatial theory and race theory play in shaping a city. Most importantly, the way racial and class politics in Merced has played in protecting white-culture. The question boils down to the “whyness” of a development plan. Why build structures at the core, northern parks and pavements; and leave structural foundations in the South in shambles. By looking at Merced’s General Plans, newspaper reports, and secondary sources of white politics and spatial theory; I compose a narrative in illuminating the spatial injustices this city has hidden in plain sight. There is a light at the end of the tunnel—thankfully. That is, *Measure T*, a complete construction of districts in Merced city. In doing this action, the hope is, to remodel the City Council’s unbalanced power structure of Northern residents; and input members of the Southern district in power. Ultimately, I end with a puzzling remark: as first generation inner city-students and most importantly guest of this city—have we overlooked the deteriorating conditions of our neighbors? By trapping ourselves inside a bubble, have we lost all sense of moral direction? We as UC students are the new driving force that can make a lasting impact and change in the way this city is created. We just need to wake up from this dream and realize that not everything is sunshine and daisies.