

BACKGROUND

- Providing food to pets is a source of stress and a reason for animal surrender for low-income pet owners¹
- Ellie's Pet Pantry at HARP distributes pet food and supplies to owners in need
- Ellie's is community-supported and stocked by individual and corporate donors
- Its goal is to keep pets in homes and out of the shelter
- Serves 250-300 families/month, and gives out more than 75,000lbs of food/year

OBJECTIVES

- Some patrons have not used the pantry in over a year (lapsed patrons)
- We organized available data to develop preliminary insights as to the characteristics of lapsed patrons
- These preliminary insights will form the basis of more in-depth comparative analysis between current and lapsed patrons and development of a survey for lapsed patrons

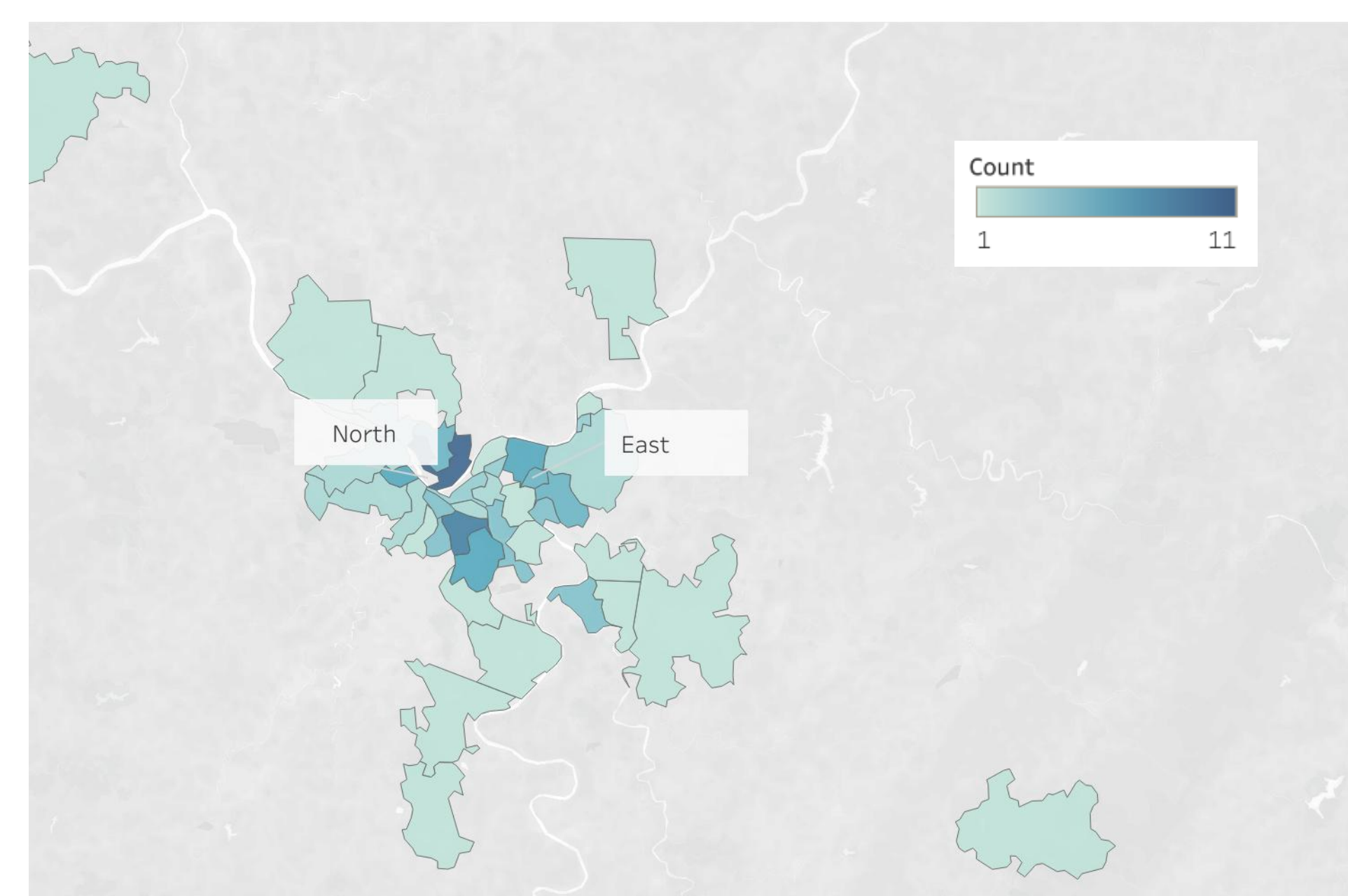
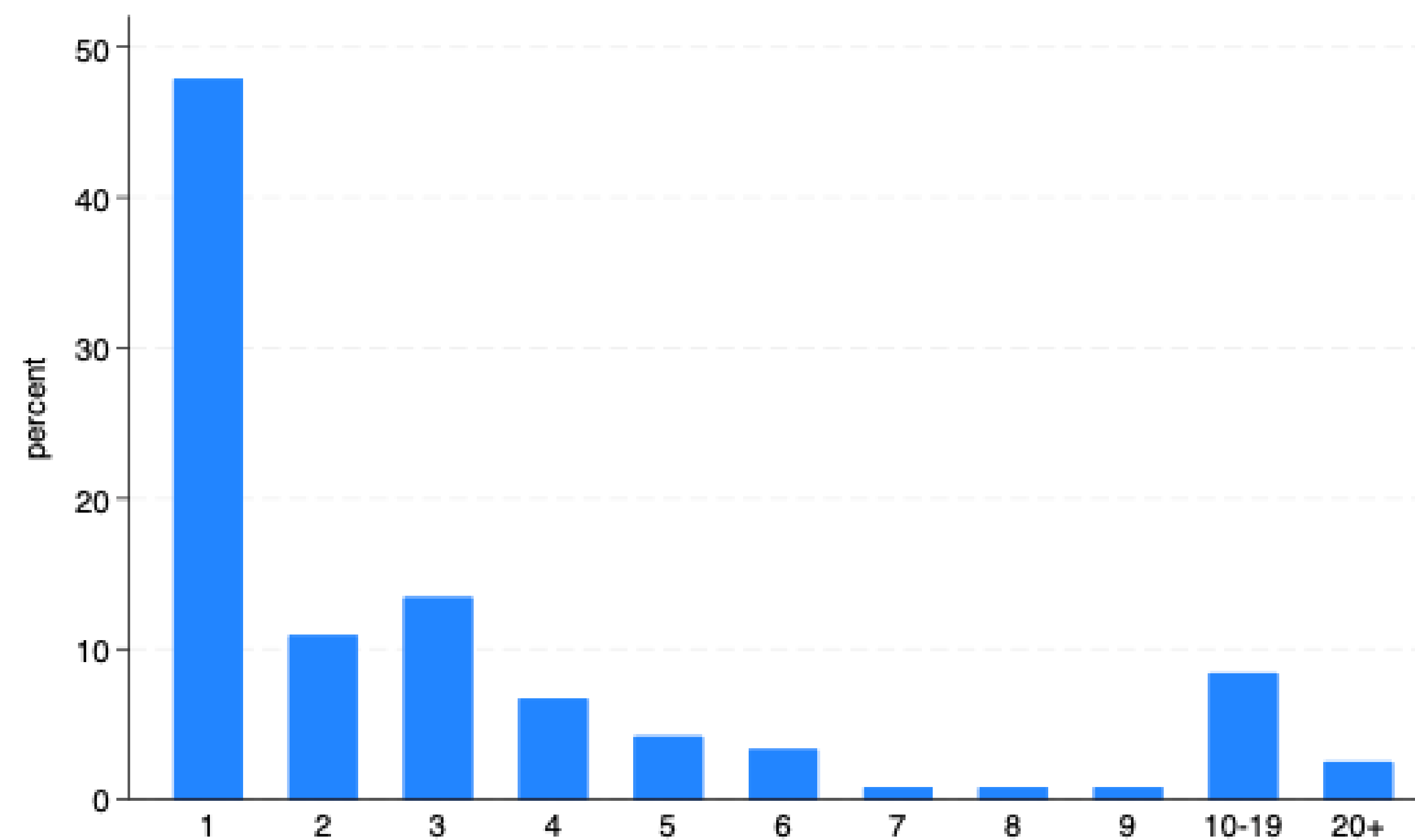
METHODS

- Calculated descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation coefficient (*r*) to examine the correlation between time on the program and number of dogs/cats
- Used Tableau to create Zip code maps for current and lapsed patrons

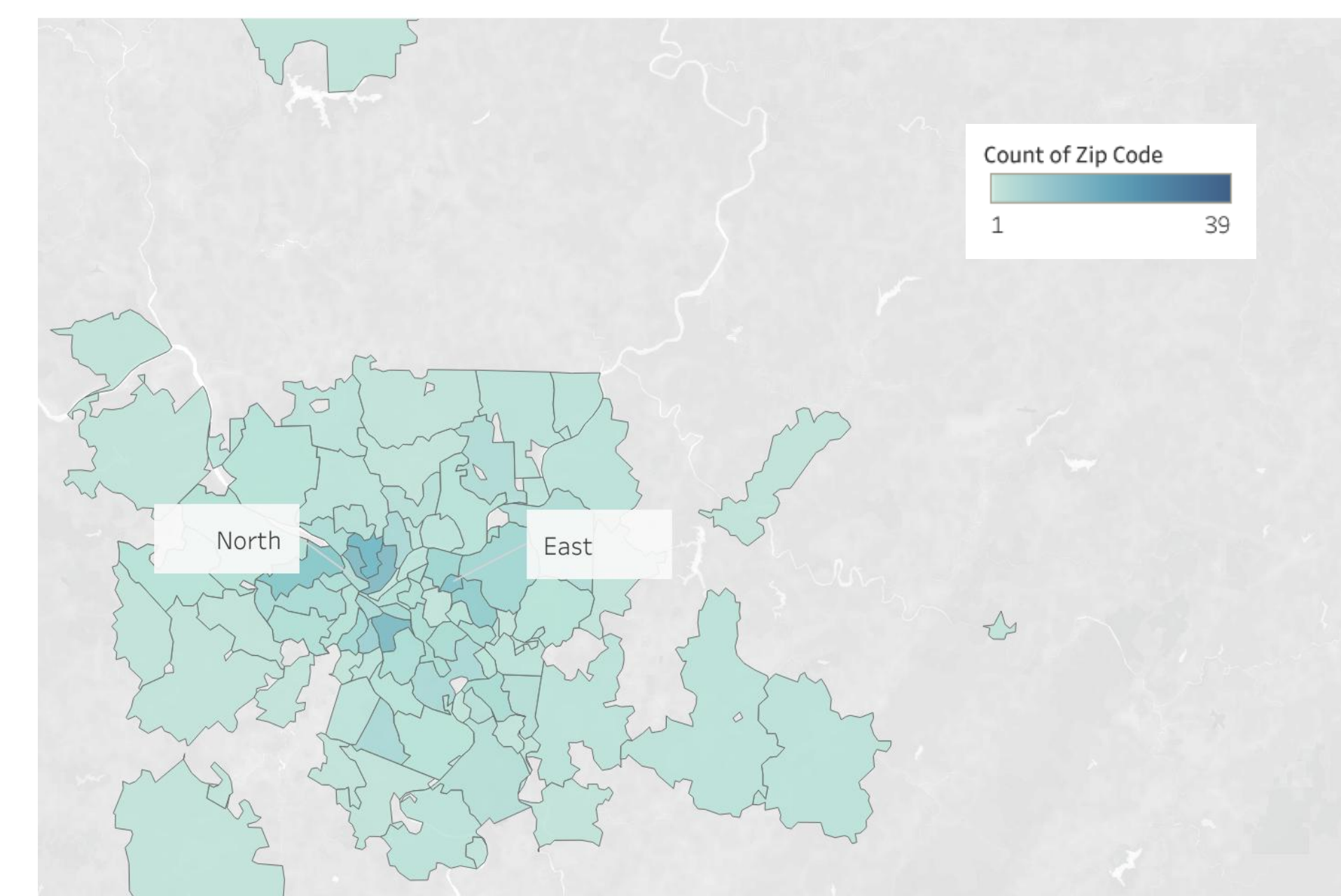
RESULTS

- 76 (64%) of lapsed patrons were from North
- 33 (58%) of one-time patrons were from North
- Number of dogs was slightly negatively correlated with number of visits ($r=-0.06$, $p=0.49$)
- Number of cats was slightly positively correlated with number of visits ($r=-0.1$, $p=0.30$)

Almost 50% of patrons who have not picked up food in over a year previously used the pantry only once.



Lapsed Patrons



Current Patrons

RESULTS

- Zip codes for both locations were similar to current client list
- Total dogs/cats owned ranged from 1-12, most (66%) had 1-2 dogs/cats
- 23 (20%) owned both cats and dogs

DISCUSSION

- Lapsed users were less likely to have both dogs and cats compared to current users
- Location does not appear to be a driver of being a lapsed patron
- Trends in pet ownership suggest further investigation into role of spay/neuter in program participation

LIMITATIONS

- Data quality (e.g. older data is not always reliable, some pickups may not be represented)
- The project has a larger potential data set. Not all data could be processed during the internship

IMPLICATIONS

- Future qualitative research can investigate reasons why most lapsed patrons only used the pantry 1-3 times
- Possible questions for study: Did the pantry help them through a hard time and they no longer need support? Did they not want to meet the requirement of spay/neuter?

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- PHUSP program faculty and staff
- HARP staff and Ellie's volunteers

REFERENCES

- Rauktis, M. E. et al. (2020). Food security challenges and health opportunities of companion animal ownership for low-income adults. *Journal of Evidence Based Social Work*.