Healthy Food Access in Southern Dallas
The buildingcommunityWORKSHOP is a Texas based nonprofit community design center seeking to improve the livability and viability of communities through the practice of thoughtful design and making. We enrich the lives of citizens by bringing design thinking to areas of our city where resources are most scarce. To do so, (bc) recognizes that it must first understand the social, economic, and environmental issues facing a community before beginning work.
Purpose

This mapbook contains a collection of maps combining three data sources: background demographics, research into food assets in Southern Dallas, and the results of a questionnaire distributed to stakeholders in the food access system in Dallas. The Healthy Food Access Questionnaire asked professionals already working around healthy food access in Southern Dallas to submit knowledge about known activities in the food ecosystem.

It should be used to spark conversation about gaps and opportunities for improvement in the food distribution system in Southern Dallas. We recognize that the most thorough knowledge will come from a variety of sources, which is why this mapbook also displays the results of the Questionnaire.

This mapbook supplements an online, interactive webmap, which hosts versions of the layers contained in this booklet. The webmap can be found at: https://tinyurl.com/cftfoodasset.

Defining Healthy Food Access

The USDA considers a tract Low Access if over 33% of residents live at least ½ or 1-mile from a grocery store. As a starting point for discussing food access in Southern Dallas, the map below displays Census Tracts in Southern Dallas based on these definitions.

Mapbook

The rest of this mapbook presents examples of how to understand problems and solutions using community assets, and to help identify specific areas for intervention. Existing healthy food assets, including businesses, organizations, and nonprofits, have been sorted into 5 categories based on their primary activities.

Supply
Increase availability of healthy food through production, such as farms, community gardens, and food processing facilities.

Distribution
Connect people with food, such as grocery stores, food delivery programs, corner stores, and farmer’s markets.

Consumption
Locations where people consume food, such as restaurants, meal sites, and afterschool programs.

Impact
Asses and study how healthy food is accessed and consumed, including community health initiatives.

Advocacy
Educational programs that connect people to resources, and programs that advocate
This map identifies food production assets in Southern Dallas. Assets include community gardens, current farmland within city limits, and the locations of responses from the Healthy Food Access Questionnaire connected to food production. Some of the most well-known community gardens are Bonton Farms, Big Tex Urban Farm, and Paul Quinn College.

Community gardens are often affiliated with educational or non-profit organizations. If one were to prioritize increasing supply activities as a way to address food access issues in Southern Dallas, it can be helpful to look to where similar organizations already exist.
Connecting gardens or other food production activities to institutions helps to support long term success. This map displays vacant, city-owned land and K-12 schools. Institutions with nearby access to land could potentially be partners in organizing food growing activities.

There are areas where schools are located near a greater amount of vacant, city-owned land. A potential analysis of this data could consider distance to these parcels, as well as student information at various schools, to understand and identify potential sites for intervention to increase supply.

In Southern Dallas, children’s access for children to healthy food is not evenly distributed. The USDA standard for access is being within 1 mile of a grocery store. Some of the areas near Cockrell Hill and east of Fair Park along the city’s eastern limits have a high number of children with limited access to food. These might be areas where new projects related to increasing food supply are needed most.
Map 5 displays a large number of existing food distribution resources in Southern Dallas. Every point corresponds to a site or location where food is sold, given away, or acquired. These points are interactive in the webmap, and supply the name of the resource, as well as its address. Grocery stores are concentrated in the northern and far southern areas of Southern Dallas. The areas nearest the Trinity River have relatively fewer existing distribution resources, and residents there might face much longer commutes to access food.
Map 6 adds more information by adding two new layers—retailers authorized by the state of Texas to sell tobacco, and retailers that are approved as SNAP vendors. Areas with higher concentrations of TABC retailers but few SNAP retailers might be places to offer small business support. They offer pre-existing storefront infrastructure, which could help defray costs of building new food stores that accept SNAP.

Map 7 displays a rough calculation of households that are SNAP eligible, but have not enrolled. By combining SNAP utilization rates with household income data, one can estimate where SNAP utilization could be increased. Areas with low SNAP enrollment, but proximity to existing SNAP retailers, could be areas where additional outreach and help enrolling new applicants could have a near immediate effect. More so, when paired with the map above, one can begin to identify where areas of greatest need and potential opportunity for retailer expansion.
Map 8 displays a variety of sites where food is consumed, with a focus on public resources such as soup kitchens, after-school meal programs, and senior feeding sites.

There are a variety of other sites that might have consumption activities, including churches, community centers, individual meal serve programs without fixed addresses, and food delivery networks. These resources are distributed across Southern Dallas, with a notable concentration in the northern portion of Oak Cliff.
Seniors have particularly difficult challenges accessing food. Map 9 displays the locations of Child and Adult Care Feeding Program (CACFP) sites overlayed over a map showing the number of seniors that meet the criteria for low-access to food by USDA standards.

These child care facilities are often located in or near areas with great senior food access need. Because these facilities are already licensed, they might be organizations that are open to expanding their client base, or supporting other organizations working with seniors in the same geography.

Areas with the highest concentrations of seniors without access to food are located in many of the same areas as other groups with low access. These are areas where intervention could impact people very quickly.

It is important to consider, as well, that distance as an indicator of access has different meaning for people with limited mobility. A 1/2 mile walk can be extremely difficult, and in some cases prohibitive, for many people. The map to the right illustrates the number of seniors without car access. When paired with the map above, one begins to see the compounding problems with...
Advocacy and Impact

This map displays City of Dallas council districts in the Southern Sector, as well as hospitals, universities, and places of worship. These community assets often have deep roots in a local community, and represent important potential nodes for expansion.

Many of the organizations that work in all aspects of food access in Southern Dallas have advocacy activities - they encourage smart policy, provide policymakers with valuable insight into neighborhood conditions, and lead the conversations around improving access to healthy food.

Impact

A few studies of the Southern Dallas food landscape already exist. These include:

- Healthy Food Financing Initiatives by the American Heart Association
- Dallas Community Food Assessment Map by Dallas Coalition for Hunger Solutions and City of Dallas
- NTFB Non-Member Survey by The Neighborhood Change Research Initiative
- Food for Every Child by the Food Trust
Webmap Guide

If you would like to continue using these layers to ask your own questions and to understand what assets exist in the Southern Dallas Healthy Food Ecosystem, please visit: https://tinyurl.com/cftfoodasset

When using the webmap, you can select individual background layers, survey results, and asset layers. The sidebar will contain the list of all available layers. Survey responses will continue to be updated and added to the webmap. Each asset point is interactive, and will show the name, location, and address of a given resource when available.

Please email camille@bcworkshop.org with any technical questions about using or contributing to the webmap.

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**Background Layers**
- Number of households without a vehicle
- 65+ with low access
- <18 with low access
- Low access at .5 and 1 mile
- Language Spoken At Home
- Estimate of SNAP Eligibility but Unenrolled
- SNAP utilization rates
- Median Income

**Questionnaire Layers**
- Supply
- Distribution
- Consumption
- Impact/Advocacy

**Asset Layers**
- SNAP providers
- Small Food/Cornet Stores
- Grocery Stores
- CitySquare Summer Feeding Program Sites (SFPS)
- Senior Feeding Sites
- Vacant city-owned parcels
- Neighborhood Gardens
- Community and Neighborhood Organizations
- DISD Schools
- People and Nutrition Program (PAN) Sites
- Food Pantries
- Food Banks

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What data are we missing?

What questions do these maps encourage you to ask about future food access projects?

What analyses do you want to see?

Submit more information to the webmap by visiting:

https://tinyurl.com/southerndallasfood