Food access in Duluth’s Lincoln Park neighborhood

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Photo credit: Codie Leseman
FOOD DESERTS OR FOOD ACCESS?

- Food deserts—low-income neighborhoods that have relatively poor access to healthy and affordable food (Larsen & Gilliland, 2008; USDA, 2009)

- McEntree (2009) argues that food access is a more appropriate concept because it is a more generally understood concept that points scholar’s attention to the specific problems faced by those living in communities that lack grocery stores

- Our take—originally didn’t want to label one or the other with this research
We think that ambiguity is ok because it recognizes the diverse coping strategies within the food desert and allows for a broader appreciation of the relationship between food provisioning and poverty.

- No singular experience of living in a food desert
- Many residents are highly mobile and shopped at a wide variety of local grocery stores
- Many rely on public transit
- Many rely on convenience stores
- Many borrow vehicles or get a ride when a friend/family can drive them
## LINCOLN PARK

### Lincoln Park and Duluth Demographic Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Duluth</th>
<th>Lincoln Park / West End</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>86,265</td>
<td>6,145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Age</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Household Income</td>
<td>$45,135</td>
<td>$34,847</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Home Value</td>
<td>$129,572</td>
<td>$88,729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Population with Bachelors Degree</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeownership Rate</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Our research examined

- **Physical**
  - distance from a store; snow or ice-covered streets, lack of curb-cuts and sidewalks which makes travel difficult for people in wheelchairs, and a lack of convenient transit connections to grocery stores

- **Economic**
  - difficulty people who live in food deserts have paying for the groceries they need

- **Attitudinal**
  - different tastes and desires of individual consumers

Shaw (2006)
METHODOLOGY

“How are residents of the Lincoln Park / West End neighborhood accessing groceries?”

1) Price Comparison

2) Shopper Survey

3) Market Analysis
Fewer Stores in Duluth

*49 Food Stores

1975 Grocery Stores
Duluth, Minnesota

*11 Food Stores
LIMITED AVAILABILITY OF FRESH AND AFFORDABLE FOOD

Figure 16: Market Basket of Goods* Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Store</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Woodland Marketplace Foods</td>
<td>$11.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cub Foods</td>
<td>$10.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Street Market</td>
<td>$13.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Super One Foods</td>
<td>$10.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Little Store</td>
<td>$18.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday Stationstore</td>
<td>$17.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Items included in market basket: 3 apples, 2 oranges, white bread (16 oz.), cereal (12 oz.), canned peaches (15 oz.), canned corn (15.25 oz.), and skim milk (1 gal.).

Figure 15: Fruits and Vegetables Available at Stores Surveyed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Store</th>
<th>Apple</th>
<th>Banana</th>
<th>Orange</th>
<th>Lettuce</th>
<th>Carrot</th>
<th>Potato</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Woodland Marketplace Foods</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cub Foods</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Super One Foods</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Street Market</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Little Store</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday Stationstore</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HIGHER PRICES AT CONVENIENCE STORES

Figure 17: Percent Difference of Food Prices in Lincoln Park Convenience Stores vs. Large Grocers
13. How do you usually get to the store to buy groceries?

- Walk 0.5%
- Bike 0.3%
- Bus 3.2%
- Drive 82.1%
- By being driven to the stores 10.7%
- Taxi 2.7%
- Other (please specify) 0.5%
WHERE RESIDENTS SHOP VARIES BY INCOME

- Lower income residents were more likely to shop at local convenience stores while upper income residents were more likely to travel to more expensive stores outside of the community.

- While 12% of households earning less than $25,000 per year shop at convenience stores in Lincoln Park/West End for the majority of their food, none of the households earning more than $75,000 per year shop at those stores.

- 88% of households earning less than $25,000 per year shop at the West Duluth Super One, while only 50% of households earning more than $100,000 shop at this grocery store.

- Similarly, while 9% of households earning less than $25,000 a year shop at the discount grocer Save-A-Lot, no households making over $100,000 a year shop there.

The clearest link between income and shopping is evident with the Whole Foods Co-op, which draws in 33% of the richest households in the neighborhood and only 3% of the neighborhood's lowest income group.
GETTING TO AND FROM STORE

- Most rely on cars

- the remaining residents travel to the grocery store by getting a ride with someone else (11%), taking a taxi (3%), taking the bus (3%), or by walking/biking (1%).

- Getting home from the grocery store is messy for those that do not drive themselves with the exception of taxi and bus usage: only 2% of residents take the bus home from the store and a slightly larger 5% take a taxi home.

- Where residents shopped was also closely related to how many cars were in the households. For example, 29% of those households who had no car shopped at the convenience stores in Lincoln Park, while only 7% of the households with at least one car shopped at these stores.
OTHER SURVEY TOPIC AREAS

- Fast Food, Dining and Cooking in Lincoln Park

- Non-traditional Food Sources (meat from hunting, fish that you caught, food from your garden)

- Food shelf, SHARE food buying club, Minnesota Family Investment Program, Ruby’s Food Pantry
QUALITATIVE QUESTIONS

- 1 of 3 surveys completed the open ended questions
RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS

$1,345 in grocery spending per capita

$5,394,767 in annual grocery spending
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAICS</th>
<th>Food, Health, and General Merchandise</th>
<th>MN Sales Per Capita</th>
<th>Average Sales per MN Store</th>
<th>Potential Sales in Trade Area</th>
<th># of Stores (Demand)</th>
<th># of Stores (Supply)*</th>
<th>Potential Stores (Demand - Supply)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4451</td>
<td>Grocery stores</td>
<td>$1,345</td>
<td>$4,373,159</td>
<td>$5,394,767</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>4452</td>
<td>Specialty food stores</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>$237,854</td>
<td>$201,714</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>4453</td>
<td>Beer, wine, &amp; liquor stores</td>
<td>$225</td>
<td>$1,053,080</td>
<td>$901,097</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>44611</td>
<td>Pharmacies &amp; drug stores</td>
<td>$551</td>
<td>$4,236,414</td>
<td>$2,207,929</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-2.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>44612</td>
<td>Cosmetics, beauty supplies, perfume stores</td>
<td>$28</td>
<td>$96,585</td>
<td>$113,629</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>44613</td>
<td>Optical goods stores</td>
<td>$33</td>
<td>$507,314</td>
<td>$130,654</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44619</td>
<td>Other health care (vitamin, medical equip)</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>$223,721</td>
<td>$202,002</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4471</td>
<td>Gasoline stations</td>
<td>$1,877</td>
<td>$3,803,352</td>
<td>$7,527,142</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>452</td>
<td>General merchandise stores</td>
<td>$2,011</td>
<td>$9,124,699</td>
<td>$8,065,050</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CURRENT ACTIONS

- LISC led task force on food access
- Healthy Duluth Area Coalition wins $25,000 award
- Lots of media
- Howard’s Fish House adding produce
- CAD USDA/National Institute of Food and Agriculture Community Food Projects Competitive Grant Program
- HDAC holding community meetings to learn more about food problems and visiting residents in homes
SOLUTION IDEAS?

- Convenience store
  - Similar to 4th Street Market
- A full-service grocery store
- Food hub
- Increasing transit access
- Public private partnerships
Download report at

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