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| The Battle of the neighborhoods  Finding Location Options for a New Vegan Restaurant in Salt Lake City |
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## Introduction

### **Background**

According to a 2019 Gallup poll, about 5% of Americans consider themselves vegetarian, and 3% consider themselves vegan. Those numbers have remained nearly unchanged for the last 20 years. While there has not been an increase in people committing to a meat-free diet, almost 1 in 4 Americans have cut back on meat consumption. Most respondents cited health concerns as the reason for the reduction.[[1]](#endnote-1)

Salt Lake City, UT is was recently named one of the ten best cities for vegetarians in America by Apartment Guide. The city ranked number 7 and was noted for its strong vegan presence.[[2]](#endnote-2)

### **Business Problem**

Since the demand for healthy, plant-based dining has increased, a local chef has decided to open a restaurant. This project is focused on narrowing down locations options for opening a vegan restaurant in Salt Lake City, UT, USA. With a limited marketing budget, she wants to be in an area where her target market already frequents. The goal is to find available real estate in neighborhoods with the most vegan-friendly restaurants.

## Data

The factors that will influence her decision are the number of vegan-friendly restaurants in each Salt Lake City neighborhood, paired with a current listing of commercial real estate. Three sources of data are required to complete the analysis:

### **Neighborhood Boundaries**

Under a Creative Commons license provided by Zillow, a GeoJSON file containing neighborhood location data for Salt Lake City, UT was downloaded from OpenDatasoft.com. This data file contains the coordinates of the neighborhood boundaries. With this information, neighborhoods will be assigned to the venues and real estate locations.[[3]](#endnote-3)

**Vegan-Friendly Restaurant Data**

Through the use of the Foursquare API, a list of venues near Salt Lake City will be compiled. The results contain the venue name, the latitude and longitude coordinates, and the venue category.[[4]](#endnote-4)

**Available Commercial Real Estate Data**

CityFeet.com was scraped for available commercial real estate that could be suitable for a restaurant in the city. The results contain the street address of the property, as well as the available square footage and price per square foot.[[5]](#endnote-5)

## Methodology

### **Python Libraries Used**

The following python libraries required for data gathering and analysis are:

* **Pandas**: Similar to the two-dimensional structure of a spreadsheet, used to store and manipulate the data in a dataframe.
* **Numpy**: Adds support for multi-dimensional arrays and matrices, along with high-level mathematical functions.
* **JSON**: Used read and write JSON-encoded data.
* **Geojson**: Functions for encoding and decoding GeoJSON formatted data
* **Requests**: Used to send HTTP requests.
* **BeautifulSoup**: Used to scrape data from websites.
* **Geopandas**: Extends the datatypes used by pandas to allow spatial operations on geometric data.
* **Shapely**: Used to *perform* *geometric* operations.
* **Geopy**: Used to *locate* the coordinates of addresses.
* **Pyproj**: Used to place coordinate data at the appropriate location correctly.
* **Time**: Used to measure the time of lapsed seconds to aid with request timeouts.
* **Folium**: Used to create interactive maps.
* **Matplotlib:** Used to plot charts to analyze data.

### **Data Acquisition and Cleaning**

As mentioned previously, the sources of data include Zillow, Foursquare, and CityFeet.com.

Zillow is a leading real estate marketplace and has compiled the boundaries for neighborhoods across the United States. The company has made this information available on Opendatasoft.com. The GeoJSON file for Salt Lake City was converted into a Geopandas dataframe to define the boundaries for each neighborhood. The data remained unchanged.

Foursquare provided the list of vegan-friendly restaurants using the company's API. Since a list of vegan-friendly restaurants is desired, the search term "vegan" was applied to all venues, rather than filtering for only restaurants that Foursquare categorizes as "Vegetarian / Vegan." The query returns a list of restaurants that may not cater specifically to vegans but offer vegan menu items, along with latitude and longitude coordinates. The neighborhood of each venue was determined using the provided coordinates. If a venue fell out of bounds of Salt Lake City, it was removed from the dataset. Duplicate venues were also dropped, and the final venues dataframe was constructed.

CityFeet.com, a marketplace for commercial real estate, was scraped using BeautifulSoup to compile the available listings in Salt Lake City. Rather than latitude and longitude coordinates, the street address was provided. Geopy was used to find the latitude and longitude coordinates. As with the venues, those coordinates were used to determine the neighborhood of the property listing. The search was focused on retail spaces in Salt Lake City, UT, but produced many results outside of the specified city. Listings outside of the city's boundaries were removed, and the final listings dataframe was constructed.

### **Data Exploration and Visualization**

To understand where the vegan-friendly venues are located, the final venues dataframe was grouped by neighborhood and count. Foursquare categorizes some venues as "Vegetarian / Vegan" if the restaurant chooses to serve only that type of cuisine. A new dataframe with only this category was created to see if there is any difference in neighborhood locations between these restaurants and the ones who only have vegan options on their menus. The distribution of both vegan-friendly and vegetarian/vegan specific restaurants was plotted has horizontal bar charts with Matplotlib.

The final listings dataframe was filtered to contain only listings from the top 3 neighborhoods from the venue counts. A list of available properties within those neighborhoods was produced for the client.

To aid in visualizing where the property listings in relation to the neighborhoods, an interactive map is created using Folium. A choropleth map shows where the highest concentrations of vegan-friendly restaurants are, and blue markers indicate the listings. Neighborhood names are displayed when the user hovers over the area. Clicking on the marker will identify the listing number.

## Analysis

Of the 20 neighborhoods in Salt Lake City, 10 contain at least one vegan-friendly option. Because the goal is to find property locations with the highest presence of vegan-friendly restaurants, the total number of restaurants per neighborhood was tabulated (Table 1).

A screenshot of a cell phone

Description automatically generated

Table 1: Count of vegan-friendly restaurants by neighborhood.

After analyzing the distribution of vegan-friendly (Figure 1) and vegetarian/vegan specific (Figure 2) venues, it is apparent that the same three neighborhoods have the highest concentration of both. Although, it is worth noting that Downtown has the most vegan-friendly venues, while People's Freeway has the most vegetarian / vegan venues.

A screenshot of a cell phone

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Figure 1: Distribution of vegan-friendly restaurants in Salt Lake City neighborhoods.

A screenshot of a cell phone

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Figure 2: Distribution of vegetarian/vegan specific restaurants in Salt Lake City neighborhoods.

## Results

Upon narrowing down the top 3 neighborhoods, the property listings for available real estate shrink from 15 (Table 2) to 7 listings provided to the client (Table 3 and Figure 3).

A screenshot of a cell phone

Description automatically generated

Table 2: Commercial real estate listings in Salt Lake City.

A screen shot of a social media post

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Table 3: Real estate listings provided to the client.

A close up of a map

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Figure 3: Map of listings provided to the client.

## Discussion

Results of the analysis show that People's Freeway is the neighborhood with the most vegetarian/vegan restaurants and the most property listings. While the goal of finding locations in the specified neighborhoods was met, the number of locations is limited.

## Conclusion

The goal of this project was to find possible commercial real estate locations for a new vegan restaurant in Salt Lake City. Since the client wants to be located near other vegan or vegan-friendly restaurants, the neighborhoods with the highest concentration of those types of restaurants were identified. Available property listings in those neighborhoods were found. Should the client not like the properties identified, the same process can be followed as listings update on the marketplace.

## References

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