**FLPP: Interview Template**

**Q: How would you describe the different connection strengths between retail use and the five retail types?**

**Interviewer** 22:19

You know, how much you think people are purchasing food from these different sources? Like maybe differently of, you know, so for the first one might be, we'll think about sort of, like, are people using will be the connection strengths between local restaurants versus chain restaurants in Flint? Do people sort of go to them for the same amount different amounts?

**Participant 118** 22:43

So we're talking about in Flint, then, and local use of chain versus local restaurants? I don't I don't know. But I would guess that the chain restaurants are probably more accessible to more people, you know, if you're talking about a McDonald's or Wendy's or, you know, wherever, I would guess that that's more accessible, there are probably fewer local restaurants that are just locally owned, is what you're saying? Sort of.

**Interviewer** 23:14

Yeah, yeah.

**Participant 118** 23:15

So I would, I would guess that to be true. However, I don't know that to be true.

**Interviewer** 23:24

It is something that sort of a corollary project to this major project is working on an inventory of sort of, what is the availability of locally owned restaurants versus like chain or franchise restaurant.

**Participant 118** 23:38

And I wonder now with the pandemic, how many of those smaller local restaurants can even survive, you know, so that's a concern that I have, I guess.

**Interviewer** 23:53

And then thinking about sort of these different store options of sort of grocery stores, convenience stores versus farmers markets, are people using them similar amounts, leaning one way or another, what's sort of your your understanding,

**Participant 118** 24:07

I would say in Flint, there aren't really very many, there are no large chain grocery stores, like a Kroger, there are none there. So in order to go there, you have to go outside. And if you have, you know, other social determinants of health kind of issues impacting you like lack of transportation, those kinds of things, then it's really going to be hard to use a grocery store.

**Participant 118** 24:33

So, you know, and I would say that the convenience stores are more prevalent, particularly in neighborhoods of low income. So I would guess that if I lived there and I didn't have transportation, I would probably be utilizing a convenience store more. We do have our farmers market downtown, which I think is getting some use and particularly helpful too, there are the double up food bucks where you can utilize those at the Flint farmers market. So I would say that that all of them are used. But I would say that the grocery stores are probably not used as much, just because the accessibility is.

**Q:** **Okay, then thinking about the connection strengths between use of the supplemental sector and the different types of stores,** **how do you think about these strengths? Are supplemental nutrition programs used at certain places more often in Flint?**

**Interviewer** 25:22

And then other two connections here. So I've already made sort of like a fairly strong relationship between supplemental sector farmers markets, that there are programs that incentivize the use of farmers markets. Do you have a sense of sort of how people use Supplemental Nutrition Programs, grocery stores or convenience stores? Similar different?

**Participant 118** 25:46

You know, I really don't know. I mean, I know I know that, you know, WIC is available and Double Up Food Bucks is available, Snap is available. I know that's available to people, I don't have a good idea of how those dollars are being used or in what- what venue.

**Q4: Which of these other values are important to the Flint food system that you want to include in your map?**

**Interviewer** 26:14

Do you have questions about these values? And then do you have a sense of which two or three you would like to include in your map?

**Participant 118** 28:31

Well, well, I mean, they're all important. I mean, I know that when we were, you know, working with the various groups in the navigation project, each one of these right, you can't really do one without the other. So I'll preface that by saying they're all interconnected, and you need all of them. But relative to the food sectors that we're talking about retail emergency and supplemental, I guess, if I'm that person in a position where I have those three things that I'm dealing with in my environment, I am going to want nutritious food that's available and affordable. I mean, those three at the bottom, it really fit, I think into these categories.

**Participant 118** 29:19

I absolutely believe that education, how you cook the food once you get it. You know, I know there's a lot of questions around how to prepare healthy foods, I think there's a huge issue there. The quality of life just- just in terms of being able to access food are all important too. But I guess if I'm looking at emergency food, supplemental nutrition program, and retail. Those last three kind of fit there and to have nutritious food that's affordable and available, and I think that really gets at the equity issue. You know, I do not worry about ever myself finding food that's affordable and that's nutritious, right? I my Kroger is the half a mile up the road from my house. And so and I can't get to my farmers market, you know. And so I feel like for people that are in the city who don't have access those three things, that's how I run my household. So those are going to be important to me.

**Interviewer** 30:26

Great. So I will add those, and we definitely if we have time, I just want to be respectful of your cutoff. We'll go ahead and add them.

**Participant 118** 30:34

Sorry, guys [laughs].

**Interviewer** 30:37

I appreciate you taking any time out of your busy schedule to meet with us. Great so we'll have nutritious foods, affordability. Okay, great. So how would you maybe start drawing connections between these concepts? And I can also ask for specific questions that will be useful sort of guide the process.

**Participant 118** 31:16

So in terms- did we lose one? We have affordability-

**Interviewer** 31:22

Availability, and nutritious foods.

**Participant 118** 31:24

Yeah. So I see affordability and nutritious foods.

**Interviewer** 31:32

Availability is kind of over at the side. Do you have the zoom window pulled up?

**Q5a:** **Based on how you see the current food system in Flint, how would you draw connections between these concepts?**

**Participant 118** 31:39

See if I can see it. Oh, it's over here. Sorry. My tiles are blocking me. Zoom challenges. Okay. So I would say that, that if we started with availability, and you want to you want me to think about the availability relative to grocery stores? I would say it's very low. Yeah. Right? Is that the kind of thing you're trying to connect right now?

**Interviewer** 32:07

Yeah. So yeah, maybe how these different sectors relate to availability.

**Participant 118** 32:13

Yeah, that's- okay let's start with that. I think with grocery stores, the availability in Flint is low, they don't exist. I mean, we have a few small grocery stores, you know, we have like the local grocer and that kind of thing, but we don't have any larger grocery stores in Flint. So, you know, there used to be obviously, you know, as you referenced my living in Flint my whole life, you know, there was- then, I had [inaudible] brothers on every store, so now I'm really dating myself [laughs].

**Participant 118** 32:49

So, and you would never know that Krista and Renee, [inaudible] she had come to Flint. So, that has changed significantly over the years, and as the population of Flint is getting smaller. And I would say probably more poor, there are less, there's less accessibility to grocery stores. So that's a huge one. Relative to convenience stores, I would say accessibility is pretty high. There are lots of convenience stores. And farmers markets, I would say medium, I mean, I think that they are a viable option for people. Our farmers market is on the bus line. And it's also connected, for example, to the Hurley pediatric clinic.

**Participant 118** 33:40

So there's some things in place that not only incentivize use of a farmer's market, like double up food bucks, or, you know, some of the other supplemental programs, they also, you can get there, right, because it's on the bus line, so. And I think even if a grocery store is on a bus line, you know, if you've had to travel out of Flint, for example, I don't want to carry 12 bags of groceries on the bus. So it's not feasible. You know how to do that. Or if I have two little kids with me or whatever my situation might be.

**Participant 118** 34:18

So accessibility varies, I think in those three instances, affordability, I would say the affordability comparatively of the three problems that grocery stores are most affordable and the least accessible.

**Interviewer** 34:36

Yeah.

**Participant 118** 34:37

You know, so I think that's an issue. The opposite is true of the convenience stores, they're probably the most accessible and the least affordable. The food is expensive, and it's very low quality, which we'll talk about in a moment. And then farmers markets, I would say affordability is probably good. Also, because you have the capacity to utilize some of the supplemental programs to purchase the food. So the markets are kind of a win in my opinion. Right?

**Interviewer** 35:15

Yeah. And so I want to just before we move on to talking about nutritious foods, I want to sort of double check that all these changes are sort of accurate in reflecting what you said. So I sort of separated out this sort of availability piece and accessibility piece. So availability with this definition is sort of like the physical presence of food. And the accessibility is how able people are to get those those foods. So something that I've connected is maybe that grocery stores, when they are present have a high availability of food. The problem in Flint is that there aren't any grocery stores.

**Participant 118** 35:56

Right.

**Interviewer** 35:56

So that's sort of this negative driver, ultimately, a negative impact on availability.

**Participant 118** 36:02

Correct.

**Interviewer** 36:03

And then sort of like convenience stores and farmers markets are fairly available. And then these sort of relationships that you've talked about that sort of these trade offs between affordability and accessibility of grocery stores, convenience stores, and sort of the difference between farmers markets, that sort of accurately capture. Oh, yes and then from connections between transportation accessibility and accessibility and availability,

**Participant 118** 36:24

Right.

**Interviewer** 36:26

Awesome. Great. Yeah. Fantastic. So yeah, how do you sort of see connections and to nutritious foods?

**Participant 118** 36:35

So I would say, for the most part, the foods at convenience stores are not nutritious. That could be a bias that I have, I don't shop in them for that reason. So that could be abias, but I think I'm probably close. And, you know, as I say, flaming hot Cheetos are not on the meal plan. And so, you know, so I think that that's a problem there.

**Participant 118** 37:04

I think nutritious foods are available in grocery stores, but not all food and grocery stores is nutritious. So I will give that caveat, but it is available. And that's where even though we're not talking about education right now, that's where education comes in. Right? To say that eve- when I go to the grocery store, I can learn how to shop the grocery store, in order to access the most nutritious food offering my shop around the edges, I'm going to have better food than if I go down the aisles, right? Those things are really important. There's definitely that education link there was once you get in the grocery store, you can still fix yourself up with a very non nutritious diet. We're talking about availability, they do have nutritious food, right, that is affordable.

**Participant 118** 38:02

So then, for farmers markets, I would say that the food is very nutritious. And, you know, I think people sometimes think that the food is not affordable, but I just agree with that, I think, pay for high quality food, you support a farmer, right? So if you want to get into the economics of it, you support somebody who's fairly local, at that- at that market, and so it supports, even if it's with some supplemental that you get, it supports that farmer to stay in business. and it lifts the economy here locally. So there's some great connections for and benefits for the farmers market. Even if the initial cost is a little bit higher, it's probably in the long run a better value. So how's that for a really money answer?

**Q5b: Were there other values that we went over that you also think are important and want to include?**

**Interviewer** 39:01

Great. We're getting there. We're capturing stuff. Any other connections you want to make? Any other of these values you want to include before we move on to the next question?

**Participant 118** 39:15

I guess it's more of a sort of an overarching thought, you know, from from where we sit in the hospital, and healthcare, we look at the social determinants of health. And so, you know, food security or insecurity, however you want to talk about it is certainly part of those, you know, results from those social determinants.

**Participant 118** 39:42

So if we have a significant number of people who live in poverty or who don't have access to work, don't have access to transportation don't have access to education. I mean, the list goes on and all those social determinants, it's really, without looking at any of this work through that lens, I think is is sort of to overlook the issues that really need to help if we're going to correct food insecurity. So what else is going on for people? And how do we start to really take a look at our communities and how they're structured?

**Participant 118** 40:27

And, and you know, and I think that gets into the whole and this is was illuminated with COVID, it gets into the whole racial inequities that we see in the systemic racism that we see in Flint is no different, right? We've had issues for a long time. And so people who- of color are also more represented in all of these areas. So I want I say that to say that as we're looking specifically at the food system, like any other issue, we have to really look at it through the context or that lens of those other social determinants, to really start addressing the equity that or lack thereof, that pertains to the food system. So that was sort of my umbrella of thought when I kind of look at anything like this.

**Interviewer** 41:19

Yeah. So with this sort of structure I'm building here, sort of sum up those those ideas of like these other determinants of health, right? Education, transportation, and accessibility, income and employment, any other [inaudible].

**Participant 118** 41:37

Safety

**Interviewer** 41:37

Safety.

**Participant 118** 41:41

There's probably more, but those are the ones on the top of my head right now.

**Interviewer** 41:44

Yeah, definitely. And sort of all these major major influences on health. And then sort of a social inequities piece, affecting income and employment, affecting transportation ,affecting accessibility. Are there other connections you would want to make from this?

**Participant 118** 42:03

Well, I think these then, you know, as you presented your list of all of the areas, you know, that I could choose from, I started with sort of the base, right, affordability, accessibility and nutrition. But even though those are sort of the basic things, that we need to be healthy, it's really then how do we elevate or connect back up into that structure that can make that possible. So, you know, if you go back to your other areas of education, and quality of life, and partnerships, and some of those things, and as I said earlier, you can't leave them out.

**Participant 118** 42:49

So, you know, when you're drawing this thing, I don't know what these things are called. But they're those balls that you can expand out, they have all their little connections and on right, they can get bigger, you know, I don't know what those are. It's like a big molecule, kind of, and, and I kind of look at this as that, right? This is, it's, it's three dimensional. And so when you're making the connections, right, it's gonna stand out on the page. And, and I don't know, if it's concentric circles, I think it's more cross, like it cuts across, but none of these issues can exist without being influenced by the other. So, you know, pick your spot. So wherever you start, if it's on accessibility, or affordability, or partnerships, any of those is going to have to take into consideration that lens of equity and social determinants right to really get at sort of those root causes I think you're looking for.

**Q9: So now considering your map of the current Flint food system, how would you make changes to improve it?**

**Interviewer** 44:40

If you sort of ran the world, what are maybe one or two things that you think would be really beneficial? Changes, programs, relationships, any sort of ideas of what you would change about the food system?

**Participant 118** 44:54

Oh, no, I don't know. The access to food is kind Have non proprietary right? I mean, we all, no one, no one has the corner on the market. So, you know, I guess, there there is no, we've talked about this in this community for a long time. You know, is there some sort of, and that's what we tried to get at in the Navigator Project, right, is that we're not here to do the work of somebody, but we are here to connect everyone. So does that take place in a council of Food Policy Council?

**Participant 118** 45:35

Does it take place and on some sort of a network? I think, you know, we have to pay attention to it and dedicate some resources to it. So is there is there an entity, a person that doesn't coordinate the food system, but it navigates the food system is very much like what we, you know, tried to work on initially at the Community Foundation, so that people have a voice. And I think that's where the inequities come in, you know, we think we know best and healthcare, or maybe the grocery stores know, best or whoever knows best, but really, until we get the voice of the consumer, and the farmers, you know, we leave them out, and they're the ones from the food.

**Participant 118** 46:22

So how do you? How do you create an environment where everyone has a voice at the table, so that when we're making decisions for our community, that it's not just the bank, or the big chain that makes the decision, but it is, from a community's perspective, you know, looks like we have need for x in this neighborhood. And we've really done our homework, and we've gotten the input of the people who live there, so that we're making equitable decisions. So I don't know, if there's a silver bullet for this, I think it looks different, depending on where you are.

**Participant 118** 47:03

But I do think that it's really important to make decisions based off of the kinds of data that you're collecting number one, right, so we really have a good picture of what our community looks like. And then ask people what they need, and how they would like to receive it. And we, we don't do that I'm guilty, too. I mean, we're all guilty. And so how do we create a forum in which those voices are heard, and are valued in the design of what we provide? You know, it's not just a business, or it's not just a health issue, it's a people issue. You know, and then they talked about it and quality of life that that segment, so maybe you start with quality of life? And say, What do you need? Yeah.

**Q12: We’ve talked a lot about different food system sectors and values, and the impact of COVID-19. Is there anything important about this conversation that I forgot to ask you, or something that you want to add?**

**Interviewer** 48:02

Great, so I'm going to save this, and then stop sharing. You know, and just the last real question is sort of, you know, we're talking a lot about these sectors about these different values where the impact of COVID-19 but there's- is there anything about sort of this conversation around food employment that we haven't talked about, that you want us to make sure that we carry forward in this research?

**Participant 118** 52:29

Yeah, I mean, I think you probably know, this, probably from from talking to other people in the community foundation, particularly, is, is that we've had been having this conversation for a long time. We've, we've been studying it, we've been addressing it, it's been, I think, historically a siloed process or issue, right, everybody has their thing. And, and, and really figuring out and acting on what those connections are, as you say, leverage points, which I love. One of my favorite words, is how do we really leverage resources so that we can create a situation where the all boats rise? Right? No matter if you meet people where they are the boats rise.

**Participant 118** 53:22

And so I feel like we've had a lot of study and a lot of conversation, and a lot of funding, oh, my goodness, tons of funding to address food inequity and food insecurity. And so, in sort of in search of, how do we make systemic change to address this issue, no one should be hungry. So I guess that's my only thought is that we've done this a lot. So my hope is that through this really interesting mapping that you're doing, which is very intriguing. I really, this is so interesting to me, I love you know, I love to see how what this looks like. My hope is that it just that it actually gets translated into some real action. So that is, that is a real concern that I have and and I've been a part of it, and not been a part of it. And it's still you know, what I mean, it's a real issue for me a real concern.