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

**Participant 122** 12:55

So at least for myself, based on what I know, I would say chain restaurants are utilized more than a local restaurant. I think there is some local restaurant usage. It really just depends. Some of the local restaurants would be, I wanna say like convenience stores in some ways to because like, I know, a lot of my a lot of people that I know, like aren't going to a local restaurant there may be going to like the liquor store for some chicken or something like that, more often than then going to a local restaurant.

**Interviewer** 13:31

Yeah. Interesting. Yeah, maybe we can talk about that next. What would be your perception of how much people are using grocery stores versus convenience stores versus the farmers market.

**Participant 122** 13:45

So it really depends on where in the city. Certain areas may use grocery stores more, or some may be using more convenience stores. And then the farmers market I think is like I know, it's a big thing. But I also think it's kind of niche in some ways, like people go there, but they're not usually shopping as much they may be going there for more to utilize the restaurants or for other reasons, not so much to actually like buy food from what I found, at least the people that I know like nobodys, they're like, oh, let's go pick up some some fruits and veggies from the farmers market. They're like, let's go get coffee or something like, let's go get some pho. It's not so much let's go get but it's funny because then I do like I utilize the farmers market because that's where I get a lot of my meats because I like a lot of the specialty meats. So I'll go to the butcher to get a strip steak and stuff like that.

**Interviewer** 14:40

Yeah, that's funny. The farmers market in my hometown has also slowly transitioned into a fun breakfast place instead of like, a real like, as I had experienced with like, we're gonna go get apples and peaches and sweet corn and that's gonna be our veggies for the week.

**Participant 122** 14:59

And even the Fruits and veggies don't seem like they're from the farmer. They're just from some vendor that is buying these like bulk fruits and vegetables and then selling them. Whereas there are a couple, but some of the bigger stalls are not directly from those farms, which I think is kind of unfortunate.

**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** 15:21

So these last sort of three connections, and what is your sense of, you know, where people are using Supplemental Nutrition Programs, at grocery stores versus convenience stores versus farmers markets.

**Participant 122** 15:37

I think that's one of those ones where I think it's falling along all of them, it just really depends on which demographic, because I know I've used all three myself. A few times, I used my bridge card in the convenience store to get a snack here and there, but then utilized it for my main food from places like the grocery store, the farmers market. I usually buy all of my veggies at the farmers market, so I could get the double up bucks, and then buy a lot of my meats and things at the, at the stores when I didn't have those double up- but I spend at least like 20 bucks a week at the farmers market, but then I use most of it at a grocery store. But I do know, also from our members, it's kind of just has a wide variety, it really just depends on who some of them are like, oh, I like to go here and go here and [inaudible] because they're also I think using the double up also. So they have that kind of conversation of like, where can I utilize my perks and things like that.

**Interviewer** 16:45

Right. So I've set it up as maybe like all vaguely medium connections with the grocery stores maybe being slightly higher. Is that a fair approximation? Or would you describe it differently?

**Participant 122** 16:56

Yeah, I think that'd be perfect.

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

**Participant 122** 19:57

Education for sure. And then I guess quality of life is respected. That's one I can speak the most.

**Interviewer** 20:09

We can go back and add more. But usually starting with less is easier. So I'm going to add those concepts.

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

**Participant 122** 20:43

Well, at least for education. That, I guess, that is- I'm trying to figure out where it would fit in the best, I guess, would be the supplemental sector? For me, at least in general, particularly both the availability and the use of the supplemental sector, just because a lot of it comes directly from like SNAP Ed, with the CRIM Fitness Foundation, in both talking about ways to utilize food, but then also, our community resource developers, and our AmeriCorps program is also connecting those families to the supplemental sector so that they boosting the education of those families who get those resources. So it is kind of like on both sides, both being able to find that ability, but then also being able to utilize the food in the most effective and enjoyable way possible.

**Interviewer** 21:47

Yeah, so this is maybe a fair thing to say, like, I'm going to consider like this ability piece as just like the functioning of the supplemental sector, that they have educational components to what they're doing on which leads to the uptick use of supplemental sector, and you're talking about other sort of educational programs that might have other sort of outcomes? Would you mind speaking about that? And we can add other concepts that maybe aren't on this map, sort of, you know, benefits of education or other ways it impacts people.

**Participant 122** 22:21

We just do a lot of food based education programs, a good one of the Cooking Matters programs that we really support. And that's along all of those, all of the different, both retail, and emergency and supplemental, just trying best use of food in general, being able to be as nutritious as possible, and then also being able to, like, share ideas with other people and know that you're not like, you're not alone.

**Interviewer** 22:58

Thinking about how this might connect to other values. Do you think it'd be fair to connect that to sort of nutritious foods and community empowerment?

**Participant 122** 23:05

Yeah, definitely.

**Interviewer** 23:09

Other connections that you see?

**Participant 122** 23:10

I mean you could also just put use of retail also because a lot of it- One of my favorite things was they, they had like a contest where it was like Iron Chef, but they gave you a certain amount of money. And you had to buy stuff from a store and be able to create a meal under a certain amount of money, which I always enjoyed being able to participate in. But, yeah, I think that's the main connection that I see from education.

**Interviewer** 23:55

Other connections that you see maybe around this quality of life is a respected concept?

**Participant 122** 24:01

So that would be at least for me, both with the ability of the emergency sector, just partially because you want to be able to provide something stable to somebody, but then also that's respecting of them like something that they're going to use, that they're actually going to be able to enjoy, because we've gotten a lot of pallets of lima beans and I don't know how many people are like, I can't wait to go home and eat some lima beans.

**Participant 122** 24:31

That's got to have some sort of negative effect on your self worth, your well being if like you're going home and having to eat but you know, other people are not you're just basically eating whatever other people won't. But then also the quality of life is respected. I think there's a part of it, at least in Flint from the retail perspective. A good example is I typically don't shop at my local Kroger because their meat selection is so low and I've actually talked to the butcher. And they say it's because oh, people steal so much of our meat, we're not going to be able to put like meat out on the shelves.

**Participant 122** 25:06

So just having that mentality that like, okay, this whole area isn't going to have access to these products because they may steal the products, which I understand it from the actual, business point of view, but from like the actual, like human point of view, that's like, That's terrible. Why would you, like, make people have that issue? Just because you feel like it, but you can because at the same time, they still have the $50 steaks out there. But they don't have, like, the more unique cuts of meat. So I'm like, No, but they can steal that. And they're like, Oh, well, we still make money on those things.

**Interviewer** 25:46

Yeah. So I just want to double check with you that I'm ca[turing these things correctly. Is it that grocery stores, like local grocery stores don't have the best availability and like that has a big impact on quality of life. And is this a fair connection that like, as it stands, the emergency sector I guess, how would you consider the strength of this thing that like, it is, or is not sort of achieving this goal? Or like, how much is it?

**Participant 122** 26:23

I would say Actually, it's actually fairly positive. For every pallet of lima beans, we'd have like four pallets of really nice products. So I think the actual, or at least the food bank of Eastern Michigan does a really good job providing some quality stuff. Sometimes it's a little weird, but they actually do a pretty good job providing some quality items for those people. But there are those times when you're like, I liked it, but not everybody wanted 800 cases of chickpeas, for example, like hummus for days.

**Interviewer** 27:04

Other connections that you see?

**Participant 122** 27:09

At least in terms of, I'm just looking at some of the items that we have on there. Some of I do see some other things, but I don't want to get too in depth with some of the things.

**Interviewer** 27:32

Let's talk about it. And it's not-

**Participant 122** 27:35

I'm looking at both food availability and nutritious foods. A lot of people are utilizing convenience stores for food, which is very low availability, and the food is not nutritious. And I know I've been on that side myself at times where it's like, well, the closest place to me might be the corner store. And I know they have fried food there. I might go grab something real quick.

**Participant 122** 28:03

But I know it's horrible. It's pretty, it's a pretty negative type thing. But then even at the same time, like I think I've mentioned, going to the farmers market, the availability of things that are actually from farmers is not always there I'll go there looking for certain things and it's just like, okay, it's I don't want to buy apples from some other state when I know I could get there someplace I can go get them nearby, or something like that, although that's a terrible example. Because they do have a local place that sells apples, it's the first thing I could think of.

**Participant 122** 28:48

Same thing with our local restaurants, a lot of our local restaurants are fairly like not nutritious, at least the ones that are available in most neighborhoods. One of my favorite local restaurants is the local like Chinese food place that I know that's terrible for me, like going and getting their lunch, their lunch plates. It's probably the reason why I need to start losing some weight at the moment.

**Interviewer** 29:18

How do you think that compares to chain restaurants?

**Participant 122** 29:22

Same thing. They're not nutritious either. We don't have a lot of very nutritious options in Flint. And the ones that are harder to come by. And you'd have to like to travel to the other side of town to get something good and like not like you said like for the convenience factor. I'm not going to spend 20 minutes driving to the other side of town to pick something especially like right now you're not you're not eating in so it's like okay, I'm gonna go to spend 20 minutes there. 20 minutes back by the time my food's cold. Not going to do that.

**Interviewer** 29:55

Yeah, I was gonna ask. Like, then where do people get nutritious foods in Flint I guess maybe outside of Flint?

**Participant 122** 30:03

Yeah, I mean, I'll be totally honest when I, when I'm, when I eat at like a local restaurant I drive to Novi for for food, it's still not nutritious, but I'm gonna go to Novi to have a bowl of ramen or something or to go have Korean barbecue, I'm not gonna eat it in Flint because those things don't exist.

**Interviewer** 30:31

Other connections that you see?

**Participant 122** 30:41

I know it fits in with grocery stores. But it would be more like the big box stores. I just know they are the ones that do supply a lot of the emergency sector, I'm just looking at things that I see. And I think they do a pretty good job with that. Being able to provide some decent stuff I know, I've helped out at the food bank quite a few times. And Catholic Charities also, and just being able to see the wealth of stuff that they do get in is pretty interesting. That's one of the few things that do make me feel a little bit better about some of those organizations is how much they do for our local populations that are in need. I'm glad that they do provide that.

**Participant 122** 31:35

But at the same time those same corporations also are some of the people that are providing less nutritious food and you're like, oh, come on, step it up a little bit, which is really interesting. It's weird to see, in a lot of the emergency sector, the food is a lot more like nutritious food that didn't get sold. So you see a lot more like vegetarian, vegan foods or, oddly enough, a lot of organic foods that don't get sold. So they'll have the manager special stickers or things like that. But a lot of those more healthier options don't get bought, and then get sent and are given through the emergency sector, which I think is one of the reasons why they do provide such nutritious foods is because people just start eating them.

**Participant 122** 32:23

I think it's kind of crazy. Like I'll say, that's one of the places I love going to Kroger to go, like where their manager's special place is at because you can find some really good organic foods and like health foods that are like 75% off. And I like to message people like, hey, you need to go here because like, I have a friend that can't have nuts until there's a whole bunch of nut free things, you should go get them like right now. And I'll pick them a whole bunch of stuff up. I think that's another big thing in Flint is having that network, like there's a lot of communication between people to find good deals, or where the good places are at or where to go to there's a lot a lot like communication.

**Interviewer** 33:06

Yeah. Maybe if that would be the wrong way to connect it but something- I don't know if this would be the best way to sort of encompasse this. But something- because I want to include this idea of like communication or like having this sort of community sense. And how that affects, you know, how people interact with the food system. If that changes affordability in a sense so that now you have a source telling you Oh, this is a great deal over here or something like that. Would that be a fair connection? Or would you want to sort of draw it a different way?

**Participant 122** 33:57

No, I think that's fair. Nothing else is really jumping out at me.

**Interviewer** 34:14

Okay, great. Can maybe talk about, I mean, we have several things to do.

**Interviewer** 34:24

We can maybe draw- if you see any connections if you want to talk about affordability in the context of food in Flint we can if you don't want to, we can skip that. Sort of ways to connect these two pieces to the rest of the map. But again, this is your map. If you don't really see connections we don't have to.

**Participant 122** 34:43

The biggest thing would be that the grocery stores are probably the most affordable. When it comes to food in Flint, convenience stores are not affordable at all. And same thing with the farmers market and a lot of examples with the farmers market. Like I think I've said that you have vendors that are sourcing them through probably other- like they're just like a middleman. And you can usually get stuff that are the exact same brand. Let's say, the strawberries, for example, are much cheaper at the grocery store than you could at the farmers market. Unless you go right before it closes, and then that's when you get really good deals. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 35:27

Great. Cool. Um, so any other values we talked about that you would like to include? Are you sort of feeling good about- we ended up with quite a few of them.

**Participant 122** 35:42

That's probably pretty good.

**Q6: Are there other things that influence these variables? For example, if we got back to the traffic example, I might add carpooling, as something that decreases the number of cars on the road. Is there anything else you would like to add to your map?**

**Participant 122** 36:48

The biggest one is like- what would be the best way to like put it? I don't want to say like social pressures, because that doesn't really sound like- but like the whole like, making sure your friends know which restaurants you're going to. And I don't do it but I know other people do or like I got to snapchat my food from BlackRock while I'm getting my steak and things like that. I know that's a big thing, at least for the different for local restaurants, chain restaurant, that whole experience is that there's a big thing of like, going and getting the new go into that new restaurant and getting that new thing before other people or going because you heard from such and such that this is the best place ever and things like that.

**Participant 122** 37:34

So there's a lot of social pressure. I don't wanna say pressure, it's not really pressure like I can't think of the word.

**Participant 122** 37:42

There you go. Yeah definitely for the restaurant side I can say I'm a little guilty of it myself in some respects but yeah, definitely some social influence I mean even with some even some of the the convenience store grocery store farmers market to just in general there's a lot of social influence that goes along like you have a lot of people that will go to the farmers market during lunch just to get seen.

**Interviewer** 37:43

Influence?

**Participant 122** 38:16

And I know- I've worked downtown and you'll see people that are there just to see other people or have other people that are seeing them. With the convenience stores, there's certain ones that you want to go to for certain things that other people will like. Why did you go to that? You should've gone here, went to this other place or this other thing. Same thing with grocery stores. I don't know. Flint is a very competitive place so you like to make your stand like this is mine and every other one is bad. I don't know if other places are like that but I know it can be even different with your grocery store. If we're going to go to like Aldi's, your Kroger person or if you're going to go to Meijer and all the other stores like they don't have really good food, there. It's the exact same stuff. Why are you complaining about where [inaudible]? What else can I think of for all these?

**Participant 122** 39:24

I think I've mentioned it but just the location where you're located in the city completely changes how you view all these different things. There's areas where the whole word food desert gets thrown around. But I know, when I was living more towards the north side, grocery stores like you didn't go to the grocery store because you'd have to travel to a whole other neighborhood. Especially when I didn't have a car. Grocery stores were not something that I went to often whereas now where I'm at like yes, groceries stores are cool.

**Interviewer** 40:07

So like, if you're in north lint versus south Flint you might go to less, like, if you're more north, you're gonna go less grocery stores need to go to more convenience stores?

**Participant 122** 40:16

Yes, yeah, actually probably yeah, more convenience stores, more chain restaurants. Then if you wanted to put it like downtown Flint, that would be more local restaurants, farmers markets.

**Interviewer** 40:51

So the variables, like the dynamic that we can in like we can increase or decrease. And I was like, considering if we're putting it on instead of like an increase or decrease scale in North versus the south or like North versus downtown. So it's like, down and so I think we got Yeah, that looks right.

**Interviewer** 41:23

Other concepts, other connections that you would like to add?

**Interviewer** 41:27

Now it's getting a little bit busy, I have a few tricks up my sleeve, if you want to focus down on one thing in particular.

**Participant 122** 41:33

Nothing that I can really think of right now, though.

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

**Participant 122** 42:34

At least for me, I think it would be the availability. And then on top of that, the education, things like you can lead, you can give a man a fish, or you can teach a man a fish, whatever that thing is. I think it's like both of those, like, we need both the fish and then we need to know how to cook the fish. We need all of those things. So just being able to up the availability of fresh, nutritious foods, and then being able to teach people in ways that they actually want to enjoy them, like you can give people ideas like a black bean salad, but if nobody likes black beans, then it's not gonna happen. I think that one of the biggest issues is that they try to like shoehorn specific tastes to Flint. I think that's one of the reasons why things aren't working. We need to figure out ways that like nutritious foods that we are actually going to enjoy. So yeah, I think it's just thinking outside that box like okay, we basically need like nutritious junk food to be able to get to like most of the people.

**Interviewer** 43:46

I keep trying to convince myself that kale chips are healthy right? Not salt, it's fine. Yeah, do you have any more specific thoughts on things that you think would help the sort of availability of fresh nutritious foods?

**Participant 122** 44:12

I think the biggest thing would be it's one of those hard things like creating ways that people can actually get them and they have had in the past there used to be, like, school buses that were full of fresh fruits and vegetables. I went through the [inaudible] neighborhoods, and it was almost like a mobile Farmers Market type thing. I'm having those types of availability, where they actually have local sources, so it might be smaller shops that that's what their main focus might be. And we know we have enough. We have enough vacant buildings in Flint that you could do a couple of things even if there would just be pop up shops or something like that.

**Participant 122** 44:57

And different neighborhoods. Specially identifying those areas that really need them and being able to provide them directly. Because I think that's one of the biggest things, and I think one I haven't put down there is transportation. Transportation is a huge issue in Flint and being able to mitigate that, as much as possible, I think is, is key. Because people just don't have cars, like, you're not going to be able to drive around to places. So being able to, like take the food to them, I think is the biggest thing.

**Participant 122** 45:32

And like being able to deliver it is one thing, but having that kind of model isn't sustainable, because you have to have all these people moving around, and all of that. So being able to provide as much in one location to as many people as possible. So if that might be bringing as many fruits and vegetables and doing like neighborhood distributions, instead of doing a box on one person's house or something like that. Because then there's also sustainability issues of traveling. Now you have to source boxes, and you have to do this. And there's all these other additional components. So being able to keep it both streamline as much as possible, while being able to be effective.

**Interviewer** 46:17

Any other sort of leverage points or changes that you see?

**Participant 122** 46:25

Maybe some more initiatives around advertising local restaurants? Maybe even some local grants or things like that, that supports local restaurants, and especially in areas where they just don't seem to exist. My neighborhood, on the east side of Flint, we're a good example. I think we have like two local restaurants, but we have a whole strip of chain restaurants. Yeah. It's just unfortunate, or a lot of our local restaurants are now becoming chain restaurants, which is really, like Halo burger, for example. Used to be more of a local place. Now it's not really here. Same thing, like YaYas, and all of those. I don't know if they considered local restaurants if you can claim a world headquarters.

**Interviewer** 47:13

Yeah cause then, you know, Little Caesars can be local. It's from Michigan, right? No, we're really considered places that aren't franchised.

**Participant 122** 47:26

It was weird walking, because I went to Michigan State, and they put in a halo burger while I was there, and you walk in, and it's like pictures of Flint. And I'm like, this is kind of weird, like I've been to all of these places.

**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?**

**Participant 122** 54:20

Nothing that's really coming straight to mind.