

Measuring Food Insecurity

Alex Firestine, Community Research Fellow

Motivation

The goal of this project is to effectively collect qualitative data at the community level to gain a better understanding of the food security climate in communities. This data is otherwise unavailable at the macro level from public data sources.

Project Description

The primary goal of this project is to develop an effective method to collect regional food security data that sheds light on the root causes of food insecurity in affected communities.

Context

Food insecurity research primarily focuses on data at a macro level. This includes an assessment of regional data pertaining to factors like diversity of food outlets and other demographic measures. However, in order to understand the context of this data in communities, oftentimes further investigation is necessary. This Primary Food Outlet Survey seeks to contextualize this macro level data and make it even more effective when assessing potential risk factors for food insecurity.

Creating a new method to analyze food insecurity holistically, effectively assessing the root causes to better address the issue in affected communities

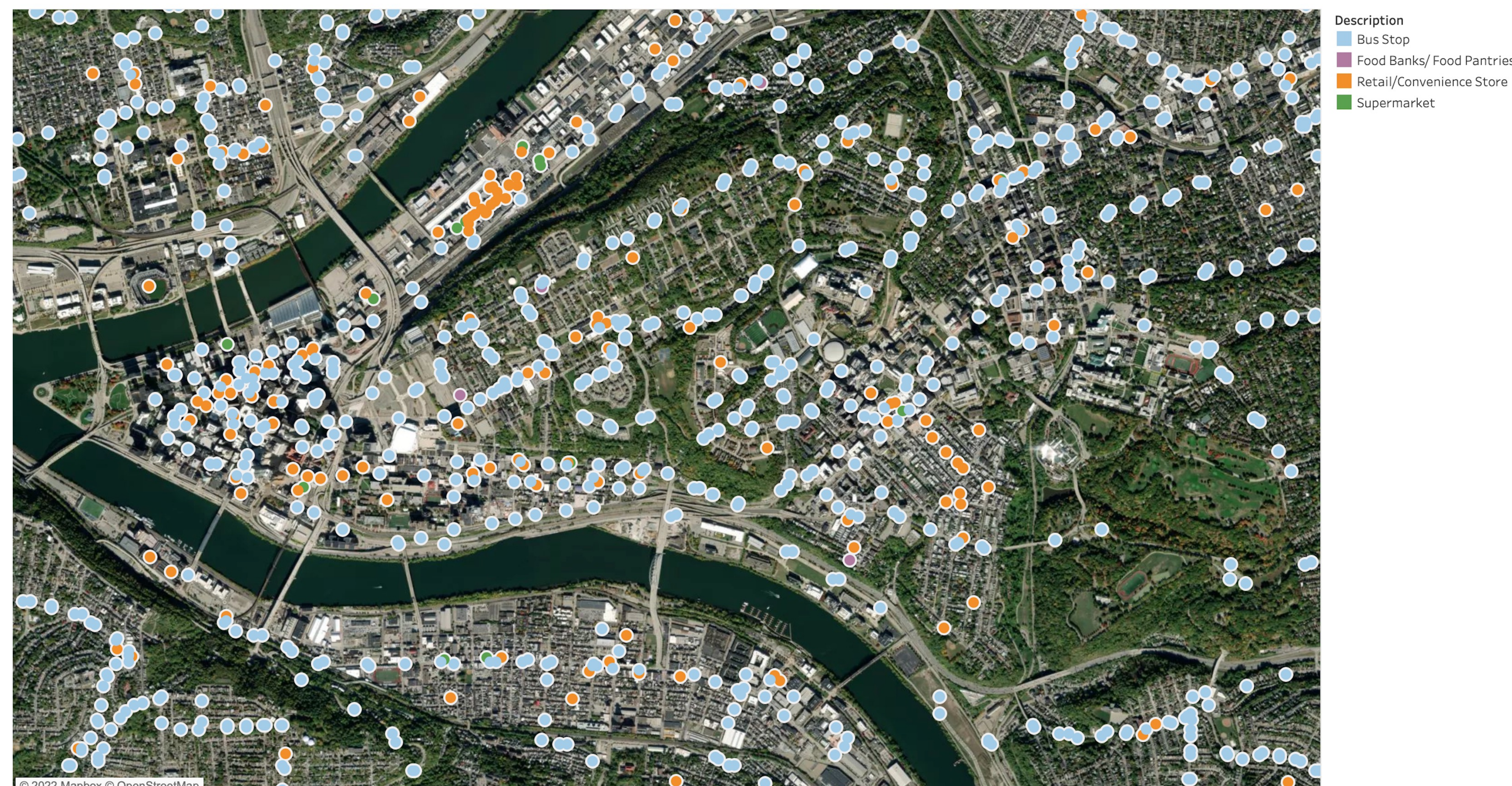
Project Deliverables

The development of the survey using Qualtrics technology is the primary deliverable. Upon completion, it will then be distributed in Oakland as a pilot test for the assessment. This collected data will be corroborated with the data collected at a regional level to provide a holistic view on the food security of Oakland. The findings will be culminated in an interactive Tableau dashboard.

Potential Impact

Below is a map constructed using data from the Western Pennsylvania Regional datacenter of Food banks, Convenience stores, and supermarkets, along with the public transportation location. From this map, we can determine which stores are in proximity to public transportation stops, an especially impactful factor regarding access to food. With the addition of the Primary Food Outlet Survey to this data, information can be gathered on the transportation utilized in different communities, where we can gather even further insight into the accessibility issues in a community.

Retail Food Outlets and Public Transportation Stops



Please zoom in to view the map!

Acknowledgements

- [Food21 of PA](#)
- [The Food Abundance Index](#)
- [Dr. Audrey Murrell](#)
- [Sam Rose, Former Director at Food21](#)