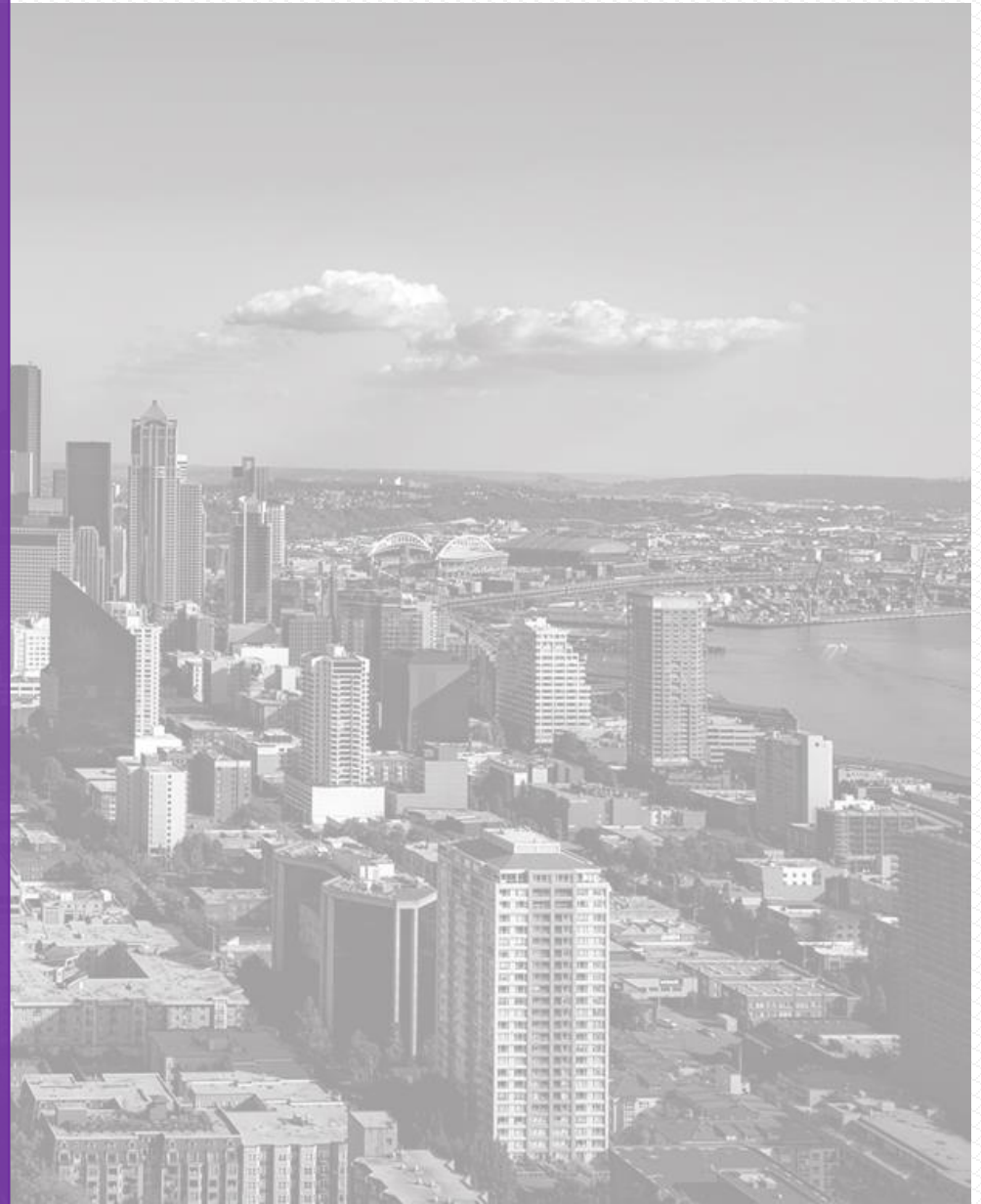


# Report on healthy food availability and assessment of Seattle's Food Bank Network

2/27/2019

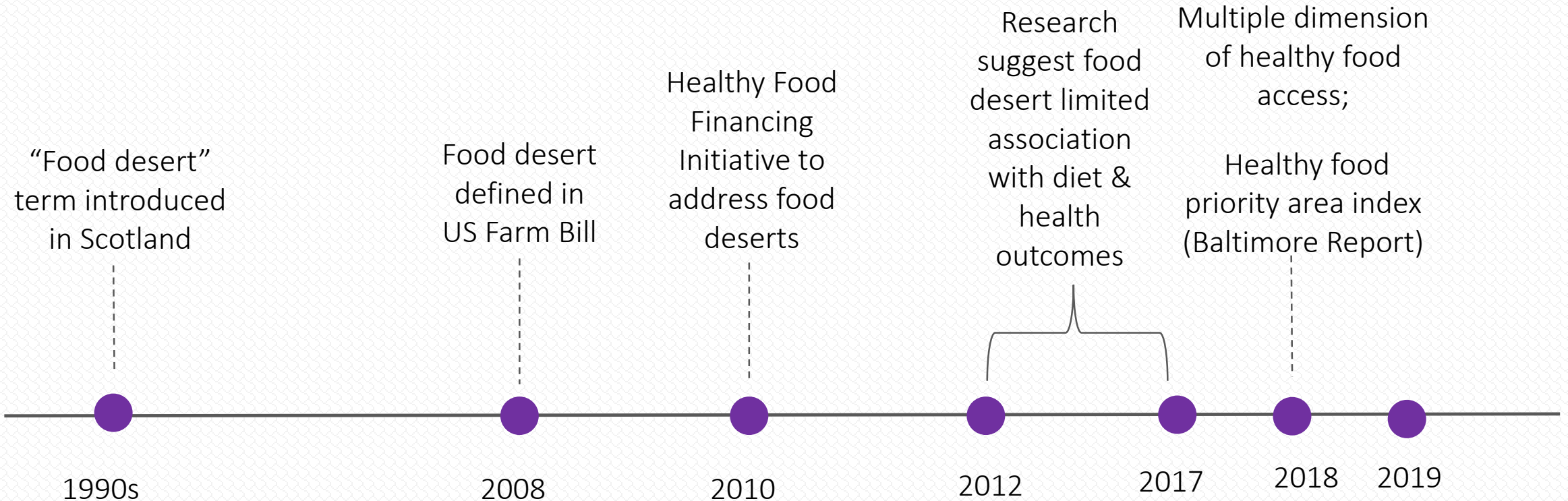
Nadine Chan, PhD, MPH, Jesse Jones-Smith,  
PhD, MPH, and Kaylin Bolt, MPH, MSW



# Overview

1. What is “access” to healthy food and what do Seattle maps show?
2. Price and availability of healthy food in Seattle stores
3. Meeting the need: the food bank network

# Evolution of concept of healthy food access



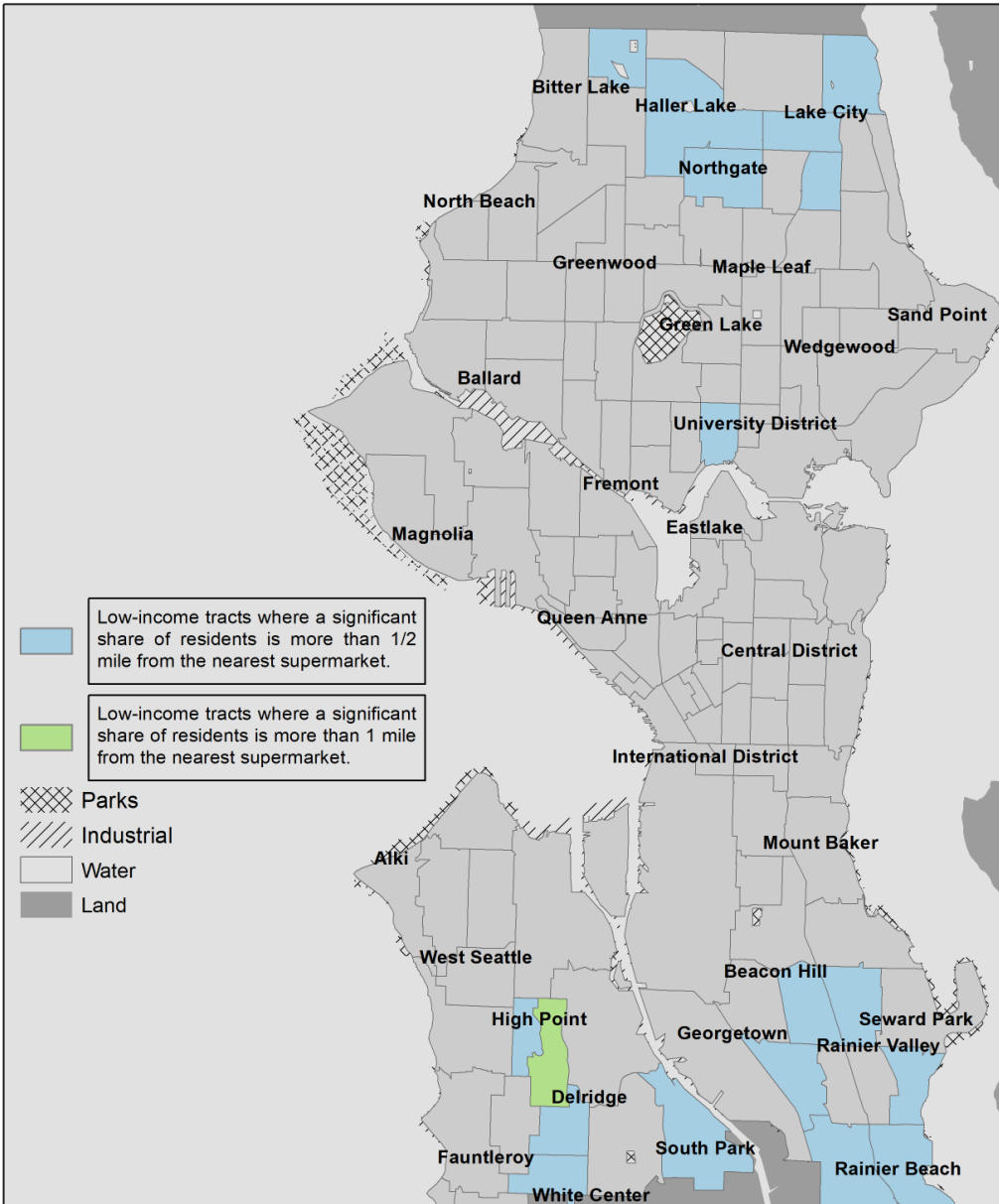
It's not just physical distance to a supermarket

# Mapping access to healthy food

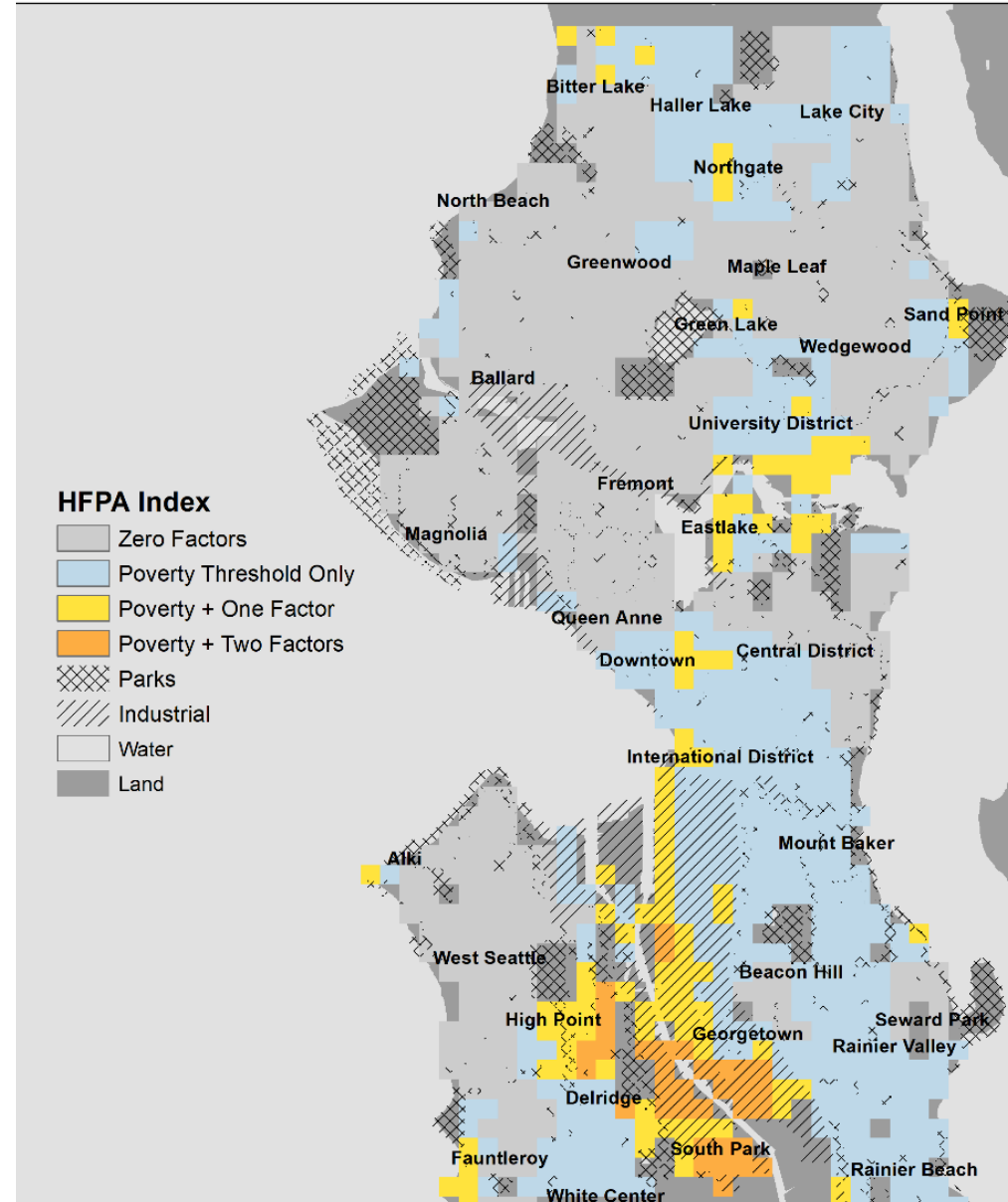
Map at right: Healthy Food Priority Areas (HFPA) show where three food access factors overlap

## Factors

1. At least 25% of households live below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level
2. Time to nearest healthy food retailers is at least 10 minutes
3. High percentage of food retailers without produce section



USDA 2017 <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/go-to-the-atlas/>



Public Health – Seattle and King County, Assessment, Policy Development, and Evaluation, 2018

# **SECTION 3:**

## **Price and availability of healthy food in Seattle stores**

# FOOD PRICES AND AVAILABILITY STUDY GOALS

## THE GOALS

- ★ Assess the price and availability of healthy food in Seattle by neighborhood characteristics (e.g., race, income).

## THE BASICS

- ★ In-person surveys of food stores throughout Seattle to measure the availability and price of healthy food items.

# FOOD PRICES AND AVAILABILITY DATA COLLECTION

Warehouses &  
superstores



Supermarkets



Grocery  
stores



Drug  
stores



Small  
stores





# FOOD PRICES AND AVAILABILITY STORE SAMPLE

**134**

Seattle food  
stores surveyed

**27%**

of all food  
stores in Seattle





# FOOD PRICES AND AVAILABILITY DATA COLLECTION



## Fruit

Apples  
Bananas  
Oranges



## Vegetables

Broccoli  
Carrots  
Green  
Lettuce  
Tomatoes  
Onions



## Grains

Wheat bread  
White bread  
Frosted flakes cereal  
Cheerios  
Rice



## Protein

Beans  
Eggs  
Lean meat



## Milk

1% milk  
2% milk  
Fat-free milk  
Whole milk

Health Food Availability Score = 1-2 points for having each of these foods

**Range 0-25**

# FOOD AVAILABILITY AVERAGE SCORE BY STORE TYPE



**20.6**pts

Warehouse &  
superstores



**19.0**pts

Supermarkets



**16.2**pts

Grocery  
stores



**9.5**pts

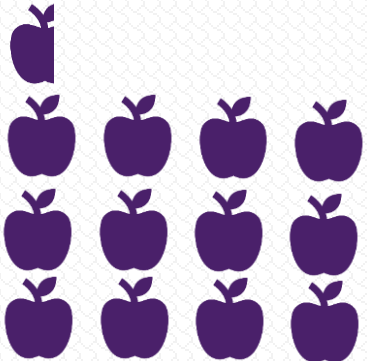
Drug  
stores



**6.8**pts

Small  
stores

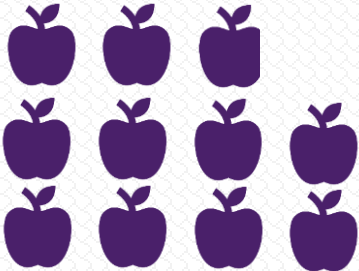
# FOOD AVAILABILITY AVERAGE SCORE BY INCOME



**12.80**pts

Highest

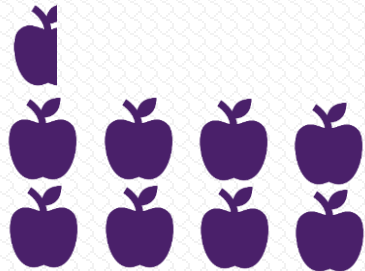
income group



**10.98**pts

Middle

income group



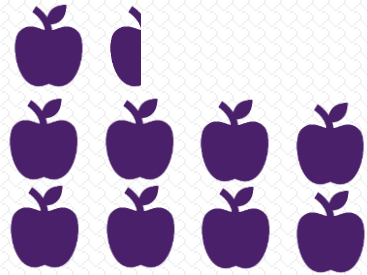
**8.58**pts

Lowest

income group

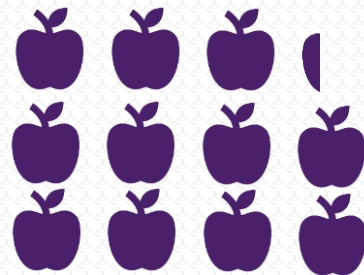
Stores in **high income neighborhoods** had **4 more** healthy foods on average,  
i.e. **50%** more healthy foods

# FOOD AVAILABILITY AVERAGE SCORE BY RACE



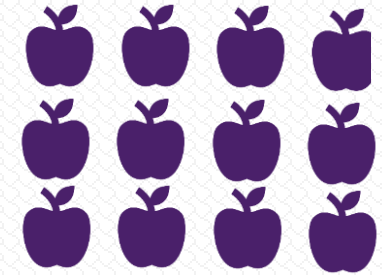
9.29<sub>pts</sub>

Highest  
% Black or  
Hispanic



11.05<sub>pts</sub>

Intermediate  
% Black or  
Hispanic

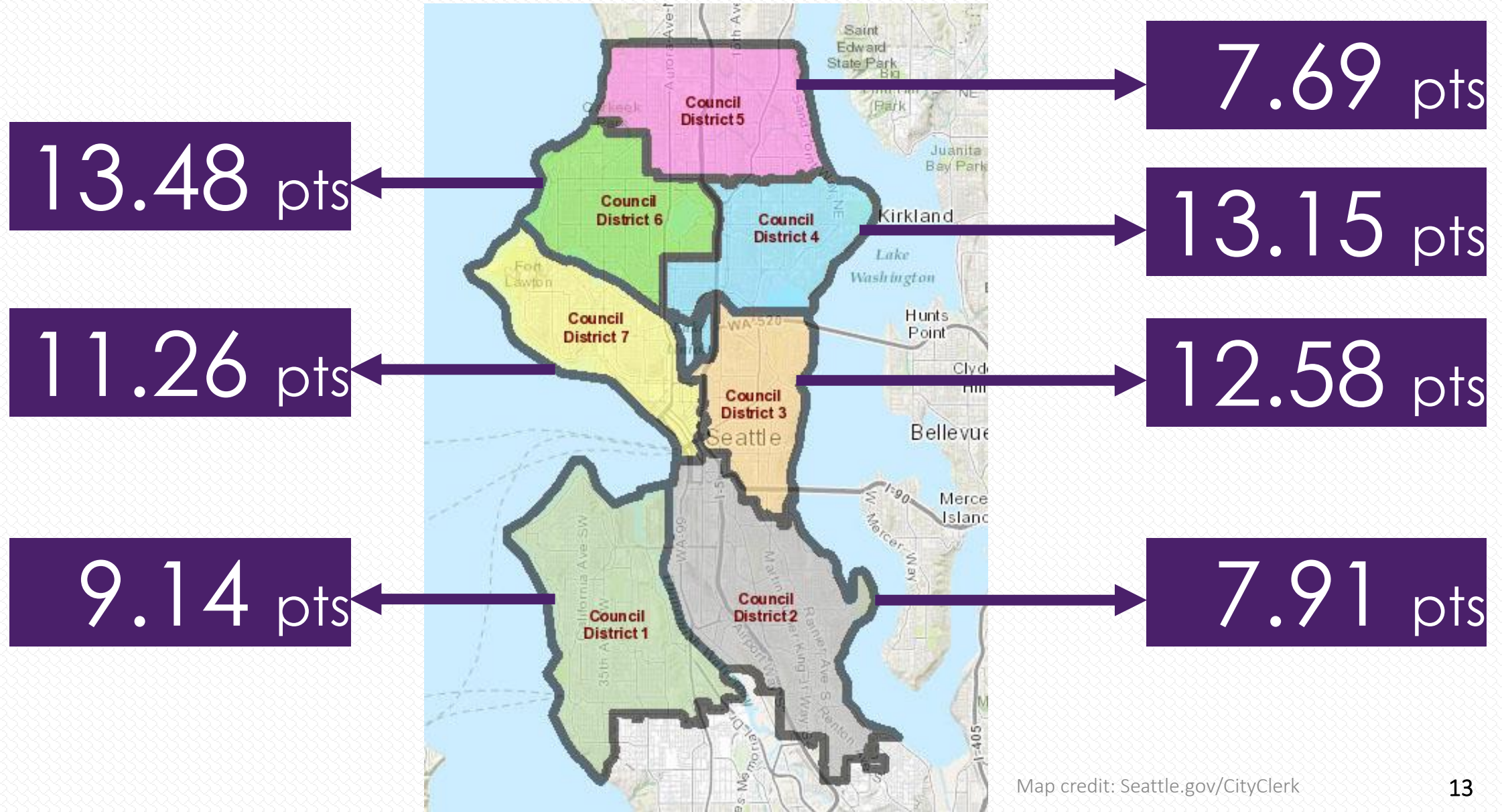


11.90<sub>pts</sub>

Lowest  
% Black or  
Hispanic

Stores in neighborhoods with **fewer black or Hispanic residents** had **~3 more healthy foods**,  
i.e. **30%** more healthy foods

# FOOD AVAILABILITY BY COUNCIL DISTRICT



# FOOD PRICES RESULTS SUMMARY



Except for fruit, the average **price of healthy foods** tended to be lower in **lower income & neighborhoods with higher proportion Black or Hispanic**. Most differences likely not statistically significant



# FOOD AVAILABILITY AND PRICES KEY TAKEAWAYS



Lower-income & neighborhoods with more Black or Hispanic residents had **fewer supermarkets and superstores** and **more small stores**.



There was **lower availability of healthy foods** in lower-income & neighborhoods with more Black or Hispanic residents.



Mean **healthy food availability scores varied by Council District**, with District 5 & 2 having lowest scores



The **price of healthy foods tended to be lower or similar** in lower-income & neighborhoods with more Black or Hispanic residents. Differences likely not statistically significant.

# Meeting the need: The food bank network

# FOOD BANK NETWORK THE GOALS

## 1 Estimate need

Who in Seattle is experiencing food insecurity?

## 2 Assess capacity

To what extent is the food bank network able to serve this population?

## 3 Identify opportunities

How can the network improve equitable access to health food?



# Who is experiencing food insecurity?

While estimates vary across data sources, we saw consistent patterns among groups commonly reporting food insecurity

People  
of color

Lower  
income

Less  
educated

LGB  
identified

Families  
with young  
children

Older  
adults

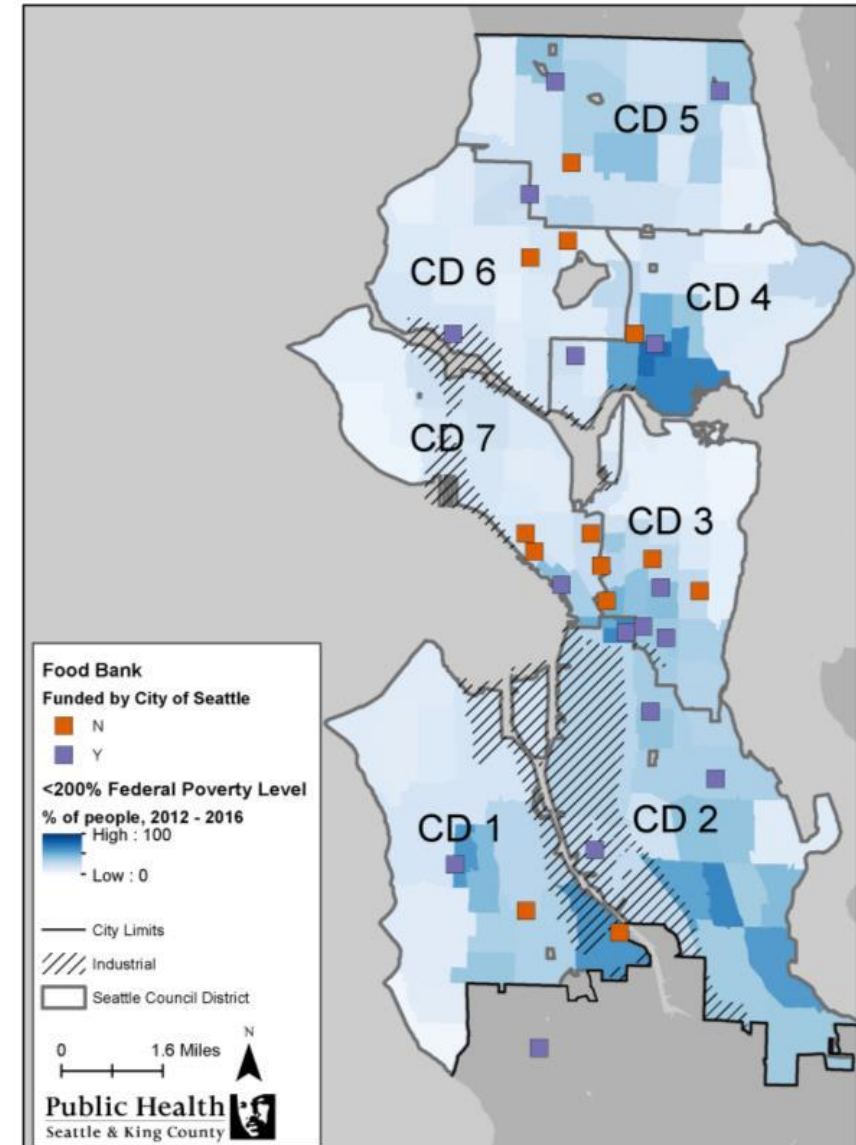
# FOOD BANK NETWORK SAMPLE

**30** FOOD BANKS  
MET INCLUSION CRITERIA

Actively operating

Distributing food on-site more than once a month

Located within Seattle limits or serving many Seattle residents



Data for basemap comes from the 2012-2016 American Community Survey. Data on location, classification, and funding status of food banks provided by City of Seattle: OSD & HSE. Current as of Fall 2018. The inclusion criteria for displaying an organization as a Food Bank for this map are: (1) Member of the Seattle Food Committee, (2) Open more than once a month for on-site distribution, and (3) Be in the Seattle boundaries or serve a large number of Seattle residents. Fall 2018 PH-SKC APDE.

# FOOD BANK NETWORK DATA COLLECTION



electronic survey

25



client discussions

7



staff interviews

13



## Non English

- Spanish
- Vietnamese
- Cantonese
- Russian

## English

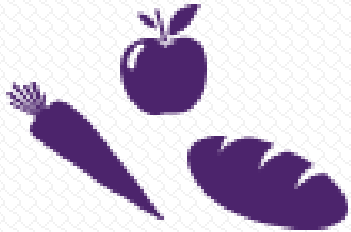
- Young adult
- African-American
- General



# FOOD BANK NETWORK DATA COLLECTION

## TOPICS COVERED

Resources



Sufficiency



Accessibility



Impact



# FOOD BANK NETWORK RESULTS

## Impact

The network provides a **critical food safety net**, while also providing a connection to services and a sense of community.



# FOOD BANK NETWORK RESULTS

## Demand

The network is seeing **a rise in need**, particularly: older adults, homeless, and those further north and south of Seattle.

# 60%

FOOD BANKS REPORT

increase in  
client visits

*“We’re seeing an increase from rising cost of rent & healthcare, aging population, more people experiencing homelessness.”*

- Food bank staff member

Resource  
constraints result  
in reduced quality  
& quantity of food

# FOOD BANK NETWORK RESULTS

## Ability to meet demand

The food bank network lacks necessary resources to meet demand, namely **staffing, vehicles, food, funding, and space.**

84%

FOOD BANKS REPORT

**funding  
difficulties**

- predictable long term funding
- finding opportunities
- operational expenses
- resource heavy fundraisers

average of  
**3** full-time



# FOOD BANK NETWORK RESULTS

## Client Priorities

Food bank clients emphasize wanting a **dignified experience, food safety, quality and convenient access.**

*“ It’s useful if food banks are open on Friday because then I know at least from Friday to Tuesday or Wednesday I will have food. Most places aren’t open on weekends so from Friday [on], I am trying to ensure I can make it at least through the weekend if not a little longer.”*

*-Food bank client (Council District 3)*

# FOOD BANK NETWORK RESULTS

## Gaps in Access

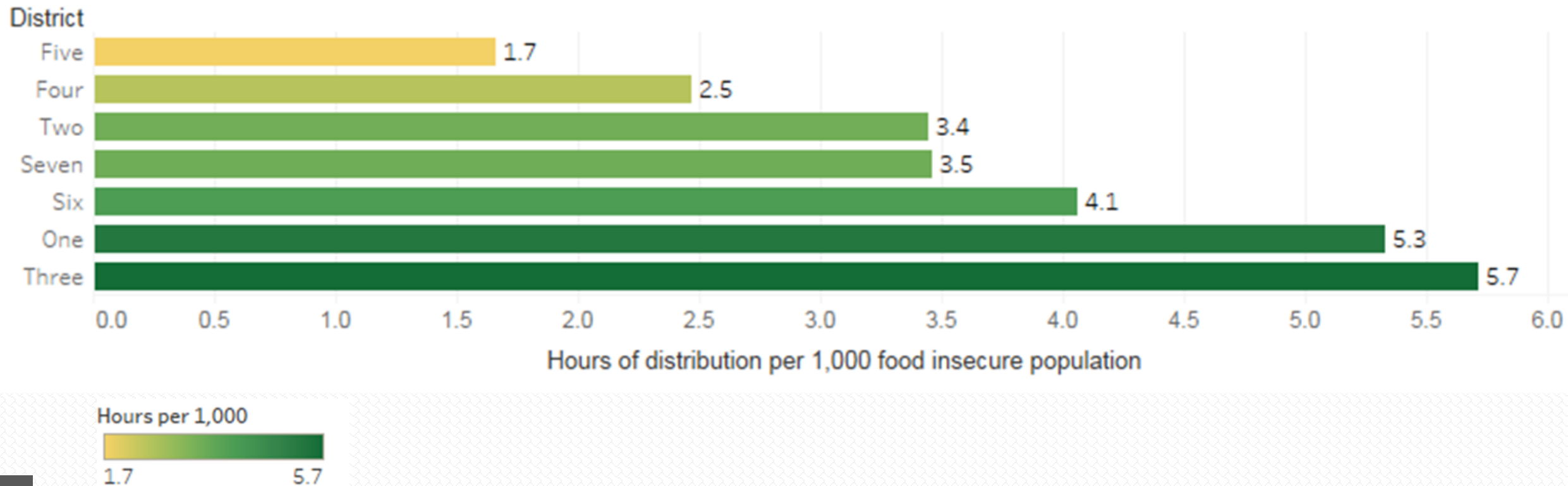
Analysis of distribution hours revealed:

- Weekend and evenings hours are limited
  - Lack of morning access in Districts 4, 5, and 6
  - Lack of afternoon access in Districts 1 and 5
  - Lack of evening access Districts 1, 2, 3, 5, and 7
- Council Districts 5 and 4 have fewest hours  
(proportional to need)



# FOOD BANK NETWORK GAP ANALYSIS

Comparing Council Districts by distribution availability and level of adult food insecurity



# FOOD BANK NETWORK KEY TAKEAWAYS

## Opportunities to improve equitable access

Expand client choice



through the grocery store model to create a more dignified experience

Increase purchasing power



to improve cultural relevancy of healthy food provided

Increase mobility



Coordinated systems of distribution to target areas of most need

Invest in operational costs:



- Staffing and salaries
- Building space
- Purchasing power

# FOOD BANK NETWORK KEY TAKEAWAYS

## Opportunities to improve equitable access

Expand client choice



“The grocery style gives more dignity, [you’re] not alienated. To pick out what you want and not feel like you’re just a number in a line is a lot more dignified than being handed a box”

– Food bank client (CD 4)

Increase purchasing power



“It’s less having enough food as it’s having the right kind. When you rely on donations that’s hard. Which is why we say [prioritize] purchasing budget. That’s what gives the autonomy.”

- Food bank staff member

Increase mobility



“It doesn't have to be that everyone goes the extra mile to get [food] exactly to their door. Maybe it is just getting it someplace that’s more convenient for them. Maybe a mobile Food Bank in a parking lot, or getting food to their place of worship or community center..”

– Food bank staff

Invest in operational costs:



“We’re open 8 hours a week to serve 1,000 visitors which makes it difficult to replenish food. Expanding hours would improve access but require more staffing and potentially more food. Our home delivery program has had a waitlist for years but we just don’t have capacity.”

- Food bank staff member

An aerial photograph of a city skyline is shown, with a large, semi-transparent purple rectangle overlaid in the center. The text "THANK YOU" is written in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the purple area. The background image shows various buildings, including a prominent tall skyscraper, and some greenery.

**THANK YOU**

# FOOD STORE WEIGHTING

Table 3. Comparison of Seattle food stores in the categorized food permit database to the SBT retail audit store sample		
	All Seattle stores in categorized food permit database	SBT retail audit store sample
	N = 493	N = 134
	N (%)	N (%)
Store type		
Supermarket	58 (11.8)	23 (17.2)
Warehouse /Superstore	7 (1.4)	7 (5.2)
Grocery	86 (17.4)	29 (21.6)
Small store	298 (60.5)	58 (43.3)
Drug store	44 (8.9)	17 (12.7)