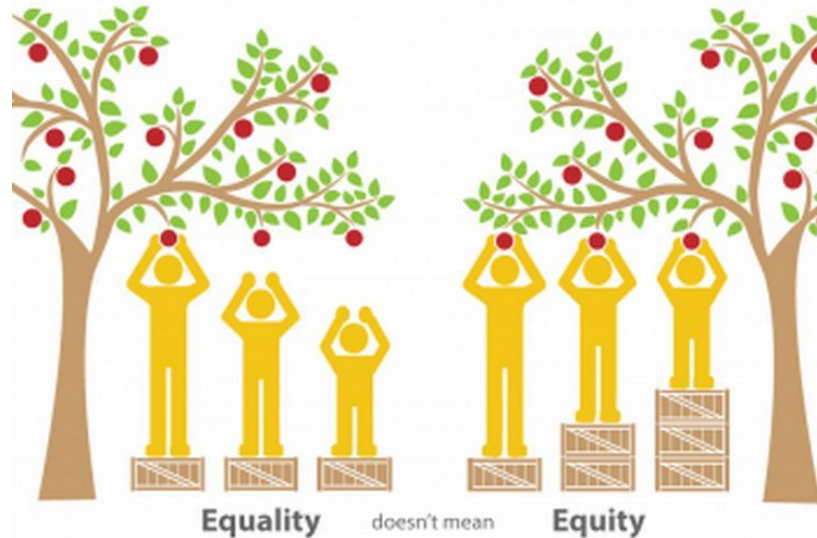




Cultivating Food Equity

in Glassboro, NJ

Undergraduate Planning Studio 2021 | Geography, Planning, & Sustainability, Rowan University





Presentation Outline

- Introductions
 - The team
 - The project
- Concepts
- Context & data
- Community voices
- Recommendations
- Concluding remarks
- Questions or comments from the audience



Planning Studio Team

- Emma Callan
- Gabrielle Davis
- Teddy Markou
- Daniel McAleavey
- Samuel Opal
- Camden Putnal
- Mason Spino
- Hunter Swanson
- Kymonie Thomas-Nagil
- Shane Weeks



Faculty Advisor

Mahbubur Meenar, PhD

Partners



Glassboro
Health Equity Coalition





Purpose & significance of the project

- To create a **vision plan** to achieve food equity in Glassboro
 - Based on literature review, data analysis, and community input
- Significant because --
 - 22% of Glassboro residents live below the poverty level, compared with 7.6% of all Gloucester County residents
 - 70% of Glassboro residents have limited access to healthy food
 - Poor and minority populations across the nation have less access to healthy and affordable food
 - Food inequity issue became more crucial during the global pandemic.



The process

- Methodology included a four-step process

THE PROCESS



Understanding concepts

Food equity, health equity, community food access, local food system, community food projects, programs, and policies.



Collecting & analyzing data

Socio-demographic data, local food environment, existing food resources and projects, land use, zoning and other regulations.



Capturing community voices

Two online surveys (48 and 24 responses), interviews with 21 local stakeholders, two focus groups with 20 participants.



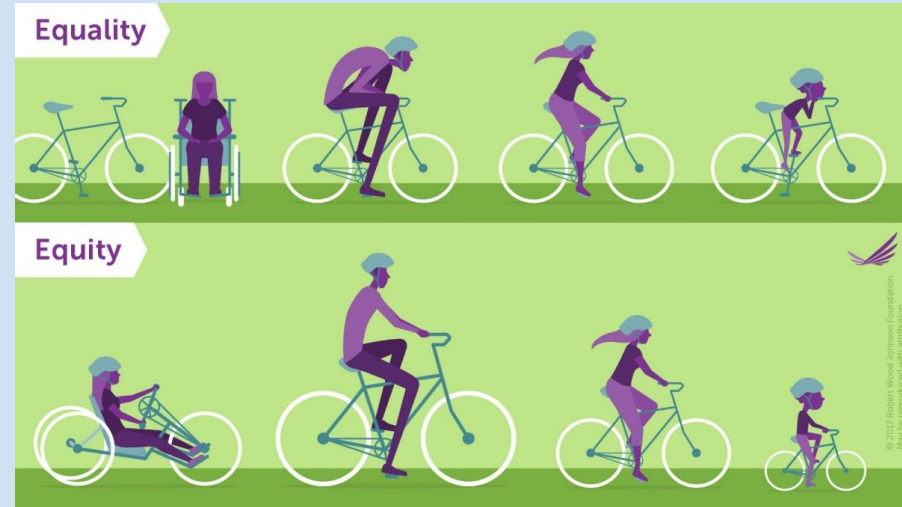
Drafting recommendations

Recommendations for potential food-related projects, programs, and policy changes, along with the visualization of sample projects.



Food and Health Equity

- Geographic, economic, and informational access and opportunity to grow and consume healthy, affordable, and culturally appropriate food
- Equitable access to physical and mental health services, medications, and healthy foods
- Poverty, systematic racism, and access to physical and mental health services do not allow for true health equity



Source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



Local and Regional Food Systems

- Place-specific clusters or collaborative networks of agricultural producers, consumers, and institutions engaged in sustainable food production, processing, distribution, consumption, and waste management in order to enhance the environmental, economic, and social health of a particular city, region, or foodshed
- Democratically controlled local or regional food system





Other concepts (plus case studies) presented in the report

- Community gardens
- Urban farms
- Home gardens
- Healthy corner stores
- Food deserts, food swamp, grocery gap
- Farm to table programs
- Farmers' markets
- Food co-ops
- Food pantries, food banks, fresh food distribution program
- Gleaning
- Edible landscaping
- Fruit tree projects
- Foraging
- Community food education programs



Glassboro, NJ

- A small historic town specialized in glassblowing as well as local agriculture such as berry farms and orchards
- Loss of agricultural land - development pressure - Rowan University's expansion - influence on food scene



Source: Summit City Winery

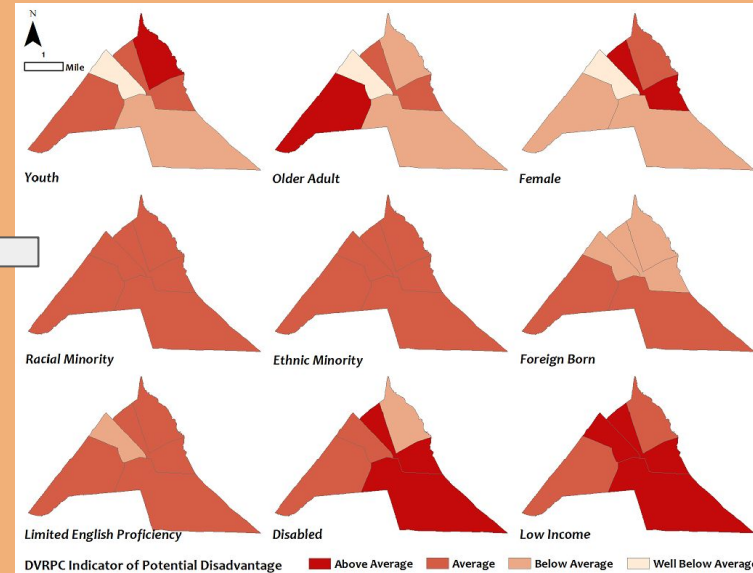
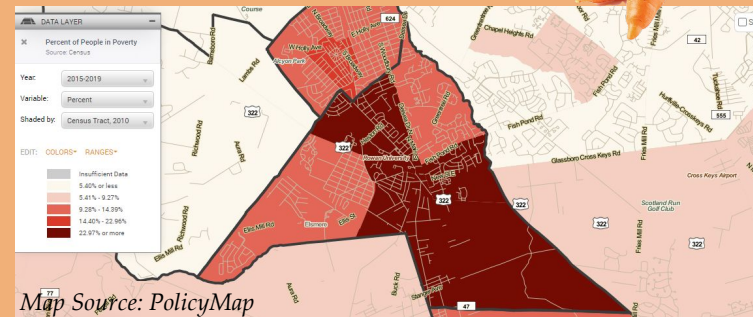
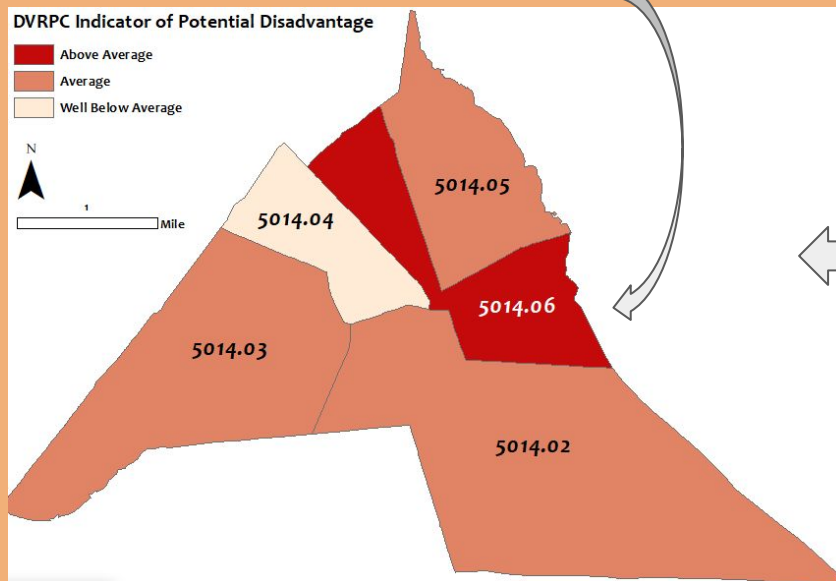
Glassboro Legacy Mural





Socio-Economic Environment

- A diverse community
- 22% people under poverty (tracts 2, 4, & 6)
- DVRPC indicator of potential disadvantaged (IPD) data - Tract 6 ranked “above average”

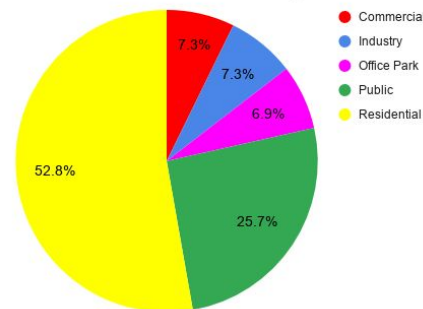




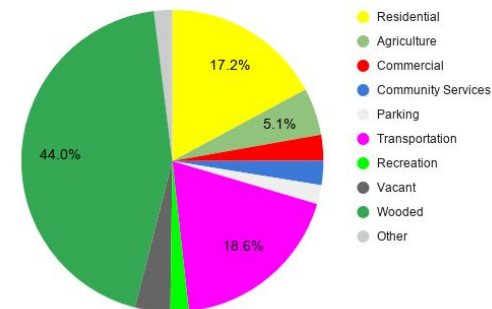
Built Environment

- Zoning, land use, public transportation
- Urban agriculture provision

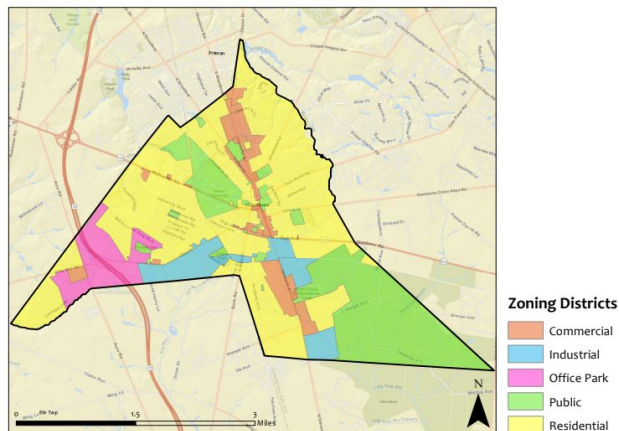
Glassboro Zoning



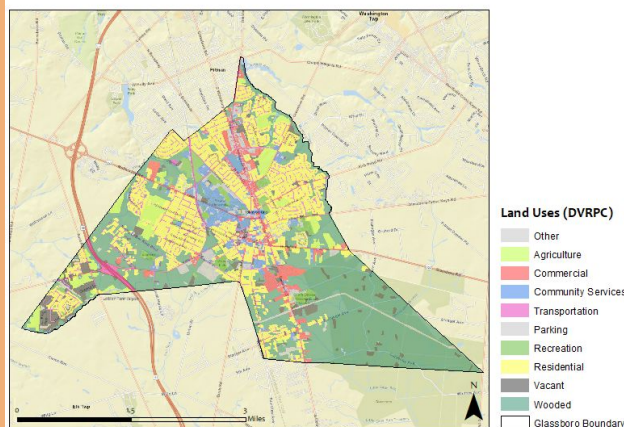
Glassboro Land Use



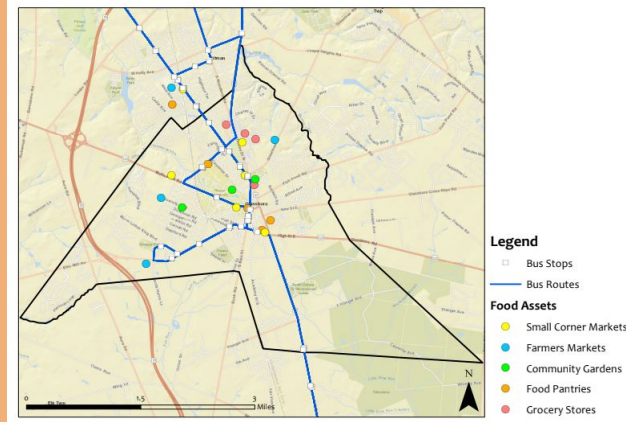
Glassboro Zoning Districts



Land Use in Glassboro, New Jersey



Bus Transportation in Glassboro





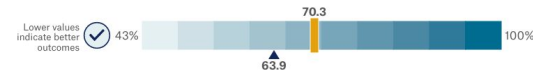
Food Environment

- 70% of residents have limited access to food
- Almost half of the area - low income + low access
- Organizations, institutions, and food security programs

Data Source: City Health Dashboard

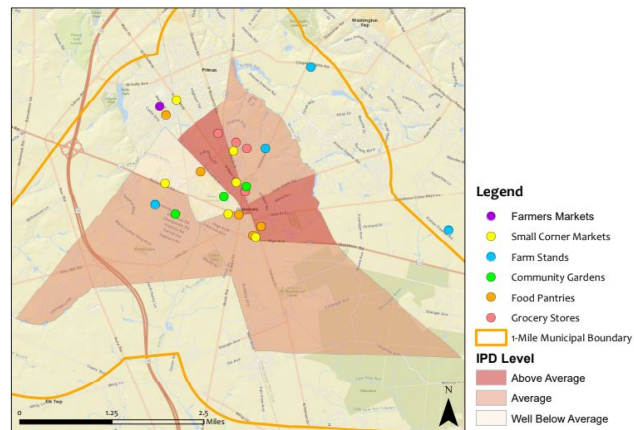
Limited Access to Healthy Foods in Glassboro, NJ

Source: City Health Dashboard; Data from Food Access Research Atlas, Economic Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture, 2015

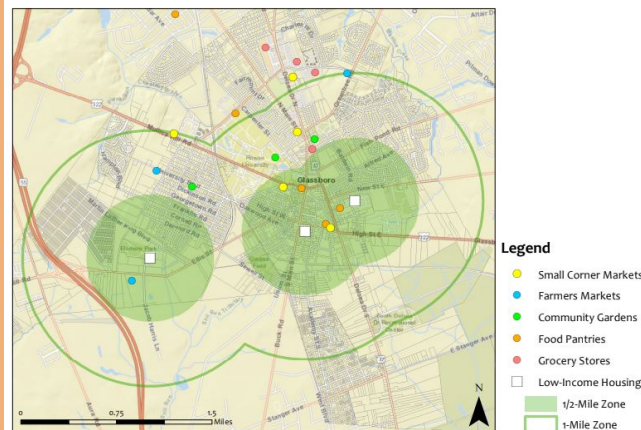


70.3% of Glassboro's residents had limited access to healthy food, compared to an average of 63.9% across the Dashboard cities.

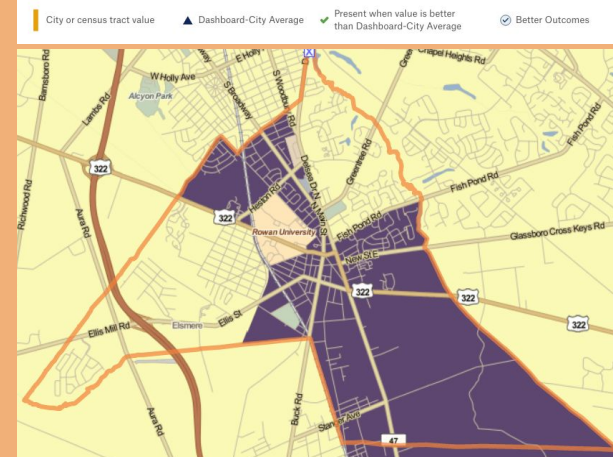
Glassboro Food Sources with IPD Scores



Low-Income Housing Spatial Food Access



Data Sources: DVRPC, Google



Map Source: PolicyMap (low income - low access to food)



Three ways to learn from the community:

- Surveys
 - Community residents and stakeholders
 - “Glassboro Grows” participants
- Interviews
 - Stakeholders and residents
- Focus groups
 - Rowan University students
 - Glassboro Health Equity Coalition

4 Community Voices



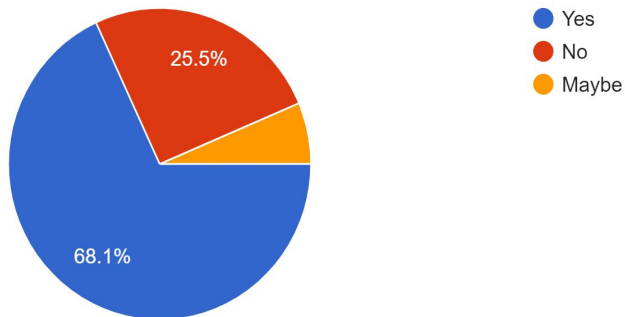
Results - Glassboro Food Equity Survey (n = 47)

“people like me don’t like to talk about it but experience food insecurity all the time. I think food is a right but many people don’t have access to food (let alone healthy food) all the time, kids go hungry, and we need to do more collectively.”

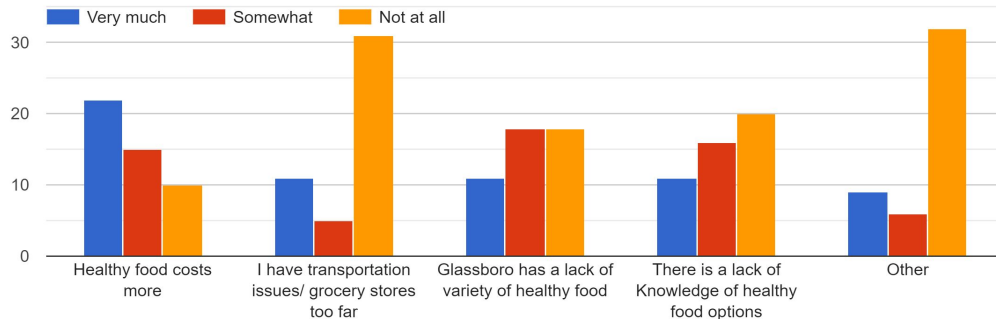
“Glassboro is for rich people where some kids go hungry.”

Do you have easy access to healthy and fresh food?

47 responses



How is healthy food access restricted to you? (If it is)

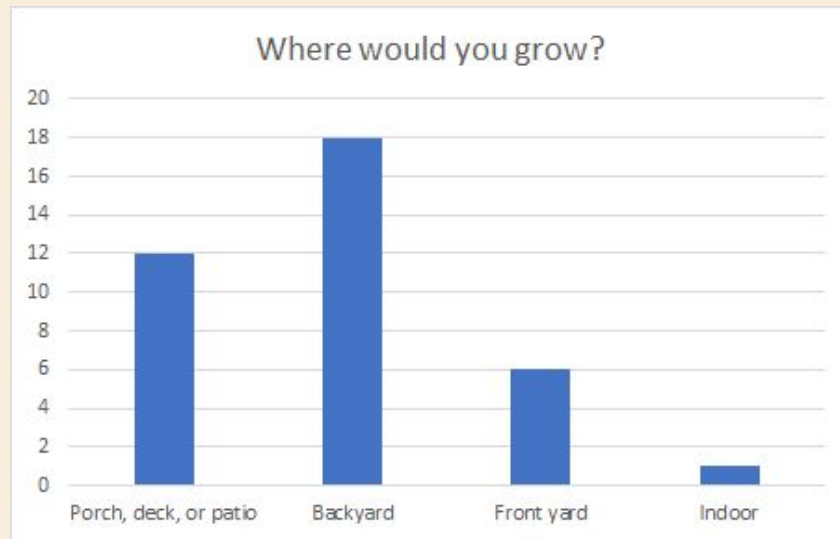
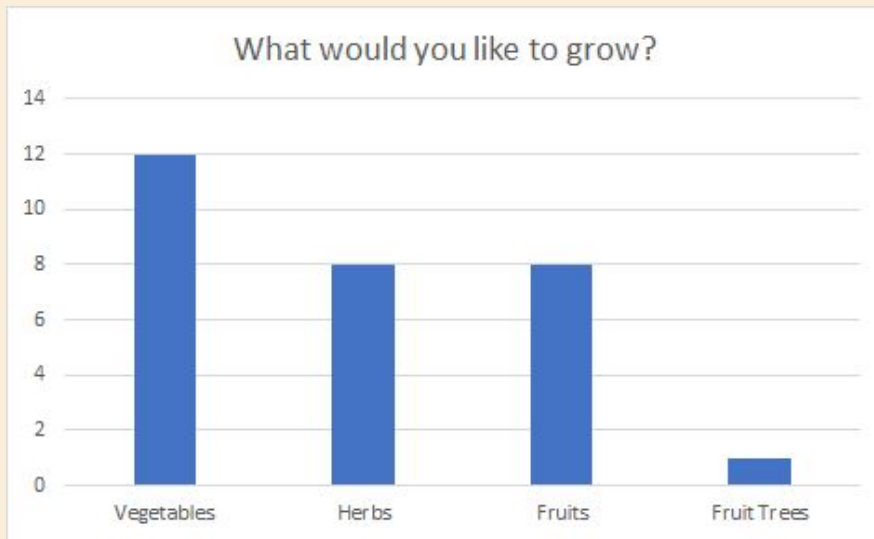


4 Community Voices



Results - Survey of “Glassboro Grows” participants (n = 20)

- Interested in growing vegetables, fruits, and herbs
- In the backyard or deck, even in the front yard



4 Community Voices



Results - Interviews (n = 21)

- “Food inequity exists in Glassboro”
- “Food equity is two fold” - physical access and financial access
- “The issue isn't the availability, but it is the transportation and the affordability”
- “Look at where big grocery stores are located and where lower income and minority residents live. The lack of access is clear.”

“...back then, everybody had gardens, people used to have chickens, and so they had fresh eggs, um, those kind of things. So they were a little bit more self-sufficient, I believe, as far as when it came to food and vegetables.”

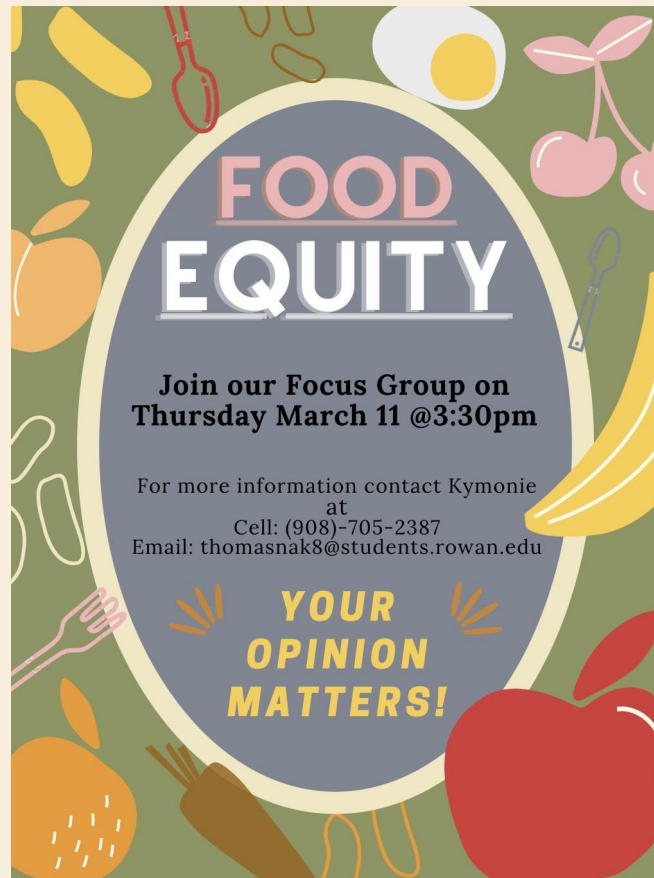


Results - Focus group (RU students, n = 6)

- “Food equity ... means having the access and the resources to be able to have, at least three nutritional meals, a day.”
- Rowan Rouge Initiative



Focus group flyer



4 Community Voices



Results - Focus group (Glassboro Health Equity Coalition, n = 17)

- Diverse group of members
- “the neighborhoods with the most minorities were also the neighborhoods with the least access to fresh foods and overall betterment to their health”
- Eight top ideas generated to address food inequity



Glassboro
Health Equity Coalition

5 Recommendations



Projects

- **Goal:** Achieve food equity through various projects, so that residents have a variety of options to choose from in order to best suit their needs, affordability, and schedules.
- **Objective 1:** Empower residents to cultivate their own food through community gardens and home gardens. Increase ease of access, equitable access for people of all abilities, and affordability.
 - Community gardens
 - Home gardens



5 Recommendations



Projects

- **Objective 2:** Increase healthy food supply through various initiatives such as
 - Healthy corner stores
 - Mid-size grocery or food co-op
 - Pop-up farmers markets
 - Community fridge

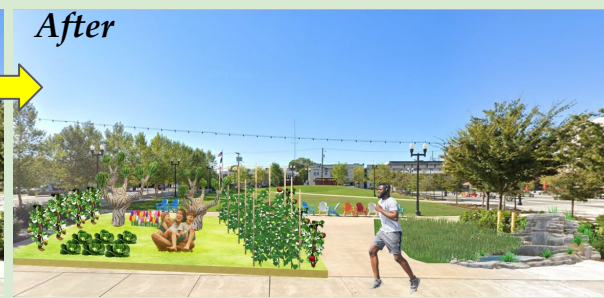


5 Recommendations



Projects

- **Objective 3:** Increase “free” access to healthy food by adding edible plants and fruit trees to Glassboro’s existing landscapes and streetscapes.





Programs

- **Goal:** Reinforce local food systems and community food security by engaging community institutions, increasing cross-sector collaborations, and empowering residents through various programs.
- **Objective 1:** Serve food insecure residents by including healthy food options to existing charitable programs or creating/expanding such programs.
 - Healthy food pantries
 - Gleaning and foraging program

5 Recommendations



Programs

- **Objective 2:** Empower residents by increasing informational access and providing education and training programs on healthy food production, preparation, consumption, and business.
 - Communication hub
 - Community education and training program
- **Objective 3:** Create cross-sector collaborations between multiple entities to ensure equitable local/regional food systems.
 - Farm to table program



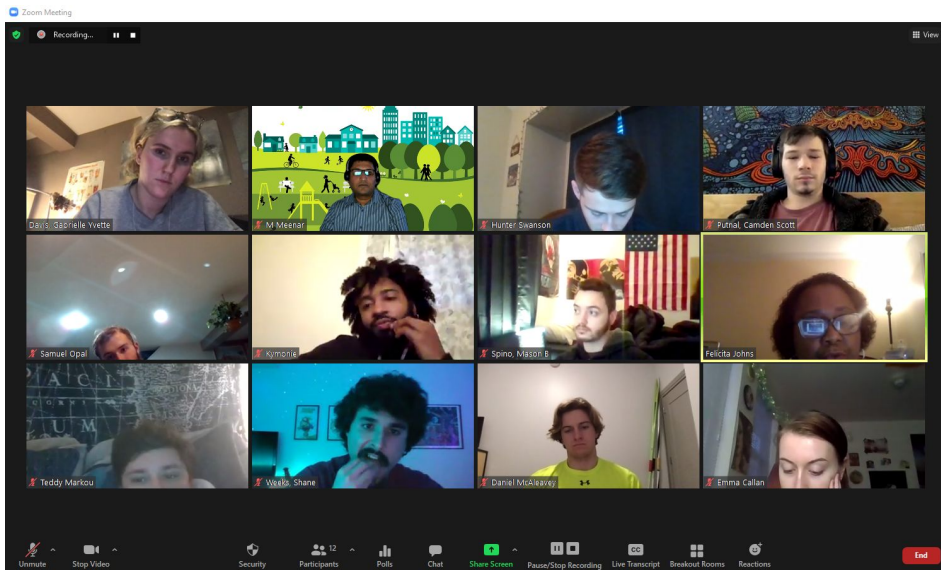
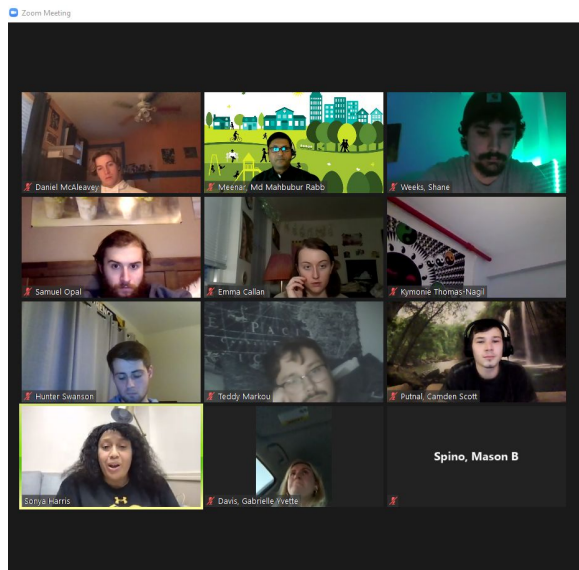
Policies

- **Goal:** Provide financial and legislative assistance to establish healthy food programs and increase healthy and affordable food access.
- **Objective 1:** Provide legislative support to food and poultry production as well as food programs.
 - Urban agriculture ordinance
 - Chicken ordinance
- **Objective 2:** Provide financial support to establish healthy food programs and increase healthy and affordable food access.
 - Borough incentives

Concluding Remarks



- Strengths
- Limitations
- Next steps



*Having class meetings week after week on ZOOM was sometimes challenging, but we were pleased to have guests like **Felicita Johns** and **Sonya Harris** in our class.*



Acknowledgements

Questions - Comments

