CONFRONTING THE ILLUSION: DEVELOPING A METHOD TO IDENTIFY FOOD MIRAGES AND FOOD DESERTS IN WINNIPEG
WHY DOES WINNIPEG NEEDS ITS FOOD ENVIRONMENTS MAPPED?

• POLICY TARGETED AT INCREASING FOOD SECURITY NEEDS TO ADDRESS RANGE OF ISSUES PREVENTING ACCESS TO FOOD

• TRADITIONAL RESEARCH HAS ONLY MAPPED FOOD DESERTS

• FOOD DESERTS ONLY DESCRIBE AREAS WHERE DISTANCE TO FOOD IS A PROBLEM, BUT THERE ARE MANY BARRIERS PEOPLE FACE TO ACCESSING FOOD

• WE DEVELOPED A METHOD THAT IDENTIFIES FOOD DESERTS AND FOOD MIRAGES

• FOOD MIRAGES: AREAS THAT EXPERIENCE HIGH LEVELS OF SOCIAL-DEPRIVATION BUT ARE NEAR HEALTHY FOOD SOURCES

• FOOD DESERTS: AREAS THAT EXPERIENCE HIGH LEVELS OF SOCIAL-DEPRIVATION AND ARE FAR FROM HEALTHY FOOD SOURCES

• IN FOOD MIRAGES, BARRIERS TO HEALTHY FOOD ARE AFFECTED BY LOW-INCOMES AND FOOD AFFORDABILITY RATHER THAN THE PRESENCE OF FOOD
DISTANCE TO A SUPERMARKET:

KEY FINDINGS:
DISTANCES WITHIN 1KM ARE WALKABLE

INNER CITY: 65% WITHIN WALKABLE DISTANCE TO A SUPERMARKET

INNER CITY HAS CLOSER ACCESS TO SUPERMARKETS THAN THE NON-INNER CITY

FINDINGS CHALLENGE CLAIM THAT DISTANCE IS THE PRIMARY BARRIER TO HEALTHY FOOD

PROXIMITY TO FOOD ALONE IS NOT ENOUGH TO DETERMINE INDIVIDUALS ABILITY TO PURCHASE HEALTHY FOOD
SOCIAL DEPRIVATION:

METHODS:
Social deprivation index;
i. % low income families
ii. Unemployment rate
iii. % population with low education
iv. % Recent immigrants
v. % Lone-parent families
vi. % of Labour-force that does not drive
vii. % population Aboriginal

KEY FINDINGS:
INNER CITY: 62% of dissemination blocks high social deprivation – 85,000 people

NON-INNER CITY: 5 % of dissemination blocks high social deprivation – 35,000 people
CALCULATING FOOD ENVIRONMENTS:

DISSEMINATION BLOCK DISTANCE TO SUPERMARKETS + SOCIAL DEPRIVATION SCORES
WINNIPEG’S FOOD ENVIRONMENTS:

KEY FINDINGS:

60,000 PEOPLE IN THE INNER CITY LIVE IN SEVERE FOOD MIRAGES

FOOD MIRAGES PREVIOUSLY IGNORED

25,000 PEOPLE IN THE INNER CITY LIVE IN SEVERE FOOD DESERTS

INNER CITY: 85,000 PEOPLE LIVE IN SEVERELY UNSUPPORTIVE FOOD ENVIRONMENTS

NON-INNER CITY: 36,000 PEOPLE LIVE IN SEVERELY UNSUPPORTIVE FOOD ENVIRONMENTS
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