

Strategic Issue Data Brief

2025



Strategic Issue 6: Access to Healthy Food

Access to healthy food in Detroit is hindered by various factors including proximity, affordability, lack of nutrition education, and prevalence of unhealthy food options, all of which contribute to nutrition-related health issues and poorer health outcomes.

Community Focus Groups

Participants raised awareness of Detroit's lack of healthy food options. Many residents struggle to find affordable healthy food options, which limits their ability to maintain a nutritious diet. Other challenges included the availability of healthy food choices, proximity to grocery stores, food deserts, and a need for better nutrition education to help residents understand the importance of healthy eating. These factors collectively highlight the urgent need for initiatives to improve access to healthy food and nutrition education in Detroit, ensuring that all residents have the opportunity to lead healthier lives.⁷

Top Factor for Quality of Life (2024)*



59%

Of respondents indicated that affordable and accessible grocery stores were most important to their quality of life (n=6,258)¹

Food Retail Landscape (2020)³⁵

64 Full-line grocery stores

34 Convenience stores

89 Dollar stores

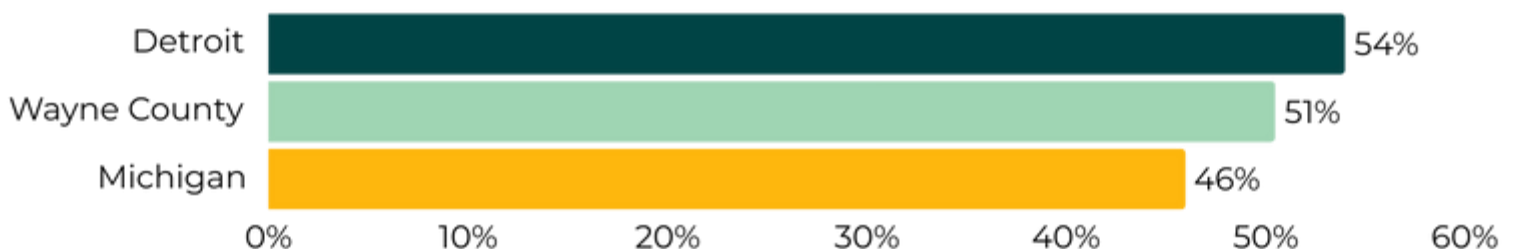
Grocery Retail Access Goal (2020)

Detroit achieved **83%** of the goal of 30,000 square feet of grocery space per 10,000 residents, indicating a shortfall in food retail infrastructure.³⁵



Enrolled in SNAP (2023)

Percentage of people enrolled in SNAP who are below poverty level³²



*Data from the 2024 Detroit Community Survey



Strategic Issue 6: Access to Healthy Food

Access to healthy food in Detroit is hindered by various factors including proximity, affordability, lack of nutrition education, and prevalence of unhealthy food options, all of which contribute to nutrition-related health issues and poorer health outcomes.

Community Status Assessment (Primary Community Survey and Youth Visioning Data)	- Community Survey: 59% of respondents indicated that affordable and accessible grocery stores was the top factor important to their quality of life. (n=6258) ¹ - Youth Visioning: Youth participants shared that a healthy Detroit should include access to fresh produce and limiting the consumption of junk food. ²
Community Status Assessment (Secondary Health Indicators)	- Percentage of Adults Experiencing Food Insecurity (2018): Detroit – 21%, Wayne County – 17.3%, Michigan – 13.6% ^{30, 31} - Percentage of People Enrolled in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (Also known as Food Stamps) who are Below Poverty Level (2023): Detroit – 54%, Wayne County – 50.5%, Michigan – 46% ³² - Percentage of People Enrolled in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (Also known as Food Stamps) by Race/Ethnicity in Detroit (2023): Black – 84.2%, American Indian and Alaska Native – 0.5%, Asian – 0.9%, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander – Data Not Available, Some other race – 1.8%, Two or More Races – 4.8%, Hispanic or Latino Origin – 3.9%, White – 7.2% ³² - Percentage of People Enrolled in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (Also known as Food Stamps) by Race/Ethnicity in Michigan (2023): Black – 31.7%, American Indian and Alaska Native – 0.6%, Asian – 1.8%, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander – Data Not Available, Some other race – 1.8%, Two or More Races – 6.8%, Hispanic or Latino Origin – 5.7%, White – 55.6% ³² - Percentage of Children Eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch in Detroit (2016-2017): 60% ³⁰ - Detroit had an estimated Walkability Score of 48.3 out of 100, making it Car-Dependent (most errands/appointments require a car to access). ²⁵ - Median Household Income (2019-2023): Detroit - \$39,575, Wayne County - \$59,521, Michigan - \$71,149 ¹⁷ - Percentage of People Living Below Poverty (2019-2023): Detroit – 31.5%, Wayne County – 20.1%, Michigan – 13.1% ¹⁷ - Percentage of Children in Poverty (2019-2023): Detroit – 44.2%, Wayne County – 29.7%, Michigan – 17.5% ¹⁷ - Percentage of Detroit High School Youth Who Did Not Eat Vegetables (2017): Total – 10%, Female – 8%, Male – 12.3% ³³ - Percentage of Detroit High School Youth who did not each

	Breakfast on All 7 days (refers to the 7 days prior to survey administration) (2017): Total – 83.7%, Female – 86.8%, Male – 80.1% ³³ • Percentage of Wayne County Youth who ate 5 or More Servings of Fruits and Vegetables in the past 7 days (2023-2034): Middle School – 32.3%, High School – 20.2% ³⁴ • Percentage of Pregnant Persons Utilizing WIC for Nutrition Assistance During Pregnancy (2022): Detroit – 57.4%, Wayne County – 41.7%, Michigan – 30.4% ²⁹ • In 2020, Detroit had 64 full-line grocery stores, 34 convenience stores, and 89 dollar stores. ³⁵ • In 2020, Detroit had achieved 83% of the goal of 30,000 square feet of grocery space per 10,000 residents, indicating a shortfall in food retail infrastructure. ³⁵ • In Fall 2024, 987 students in Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD) were eligible for reduced-price lunch, representing approximately 1.6% of the district's total enrollment (60,587 students). ³⁶ • A total of 40,344 students were eligible for free lunch (out of 60,587 students). (Fall 2024) ³⁶
Community Context Assessment (Focus Groups)	Access to Healthy Food: Participants raised awareness of Detroit's lack of healthy food options. Many residents struggle to find affordable healthy food options, which limits their ability to maintain a nutritious diet. Other challenges included the availability of healthy food choices, proximity to grocery stores, food deserts, and a need for better nutrition education to help residents understand the importance of healthy eating. These factors collectively highlight the urgent need for initiatives to improve access to healthy food and nutrition education in Detroit, ensuring that all residents have the opportunity to lead healthier lives. ⁷ • <u>Lack of affordable food in the community</u> • <u>Lack of healthy food options</u> ○ Participants noted more fast-food restaurants in their community ○ Participants noted a need for more fresh food markets in their community • <u>Access to grocery stores (proximity)</u> ○ Participants noted that equitable access to grocery stores was a barrier ○ Participants noted that grocery stores were selling expired foods • <u>Food deserts</u> • <u>Lack of nutrition education</u> ○ Participants noted a lack of education about healthy eating ○ Participants noted there is a need for education on

	how to use food as medicine for chronic conditions (Chronic Conditions FG)
Community Partner Assessment	• 63% (n=8) of organizations who responded work on/with food access and affordability. ⁸ • 38% (n=8) of organizations that responded plan to focus on WIC/food stamps. ⁸ • 25% (n=2) of organizations reported having sufficient capacity to meet the needs of their clients/members, while the majority (62.5%, n=5) reported that they do not. Those who indicated that their organization does not have sufficient capacity to meet the needs of their clients/members cited a range of challenges, including limited funding, staffing shortages, and inability to keep up with increasing community needs. Specific concerns included rising costs due to inflation, transportation, food insecurity, and housing instability. ⁸

References

¹ Detroit Health Department. (2025). Detroit 2024-2025 Community Health Assessment Survey Data. Detroit Health Department.

² Detroit Health Department. (2025). Detroit 2025 Youth Visioning Activity Data. Detroit Health Department.

³ State of Michigan. (2025). Michigan Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (Michigan BRFSS). https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/-/media/Project/Websites/mdhhs/Keeping-Michigan-Healthy/Communicable-and-Chronic-Diseases/Epidemiology-Services/2021-2023_MiBRFSS_Reg-LHD_Tables.pdf

⁴ State of Michigan. (2025). Age-Adjusted Hospitalization Rate per 10,000 Residents by Zip Code for Michigan and Detroit, 2018-2020. https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/-/media/Project/Websites/mdhhs/Keeping-Michigan-Healthy/Chronic-Disease-Epidemiology/Asthma-Epi/Hospitalization/Mich-Asthma-Hospitalization-Rates_by-Zip-Code_2018-2020.pdf?rev=44a01433cc9c4948b6dce9e688c4bad0&hash=B0F8BDDDD88D02184C816CAB2CCB49F3B

⁵ Broadstreet. (2025). Community Indicator Report, 2020. <https://www.broadstreet.io/board/pubboard/Qm9hcmRDYXJkVXNITm9kZToxMDU3NTEy>

⁶ Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America. (2025). Asthma Capitals. <https://aafa.org/asthma-allergy-research/our-research/asthma-capitals/>

⁷ Detroit Health Department. (2025). Detroit Community Health Assessment Focus Group Themes. Detroit Health Department.

⁸ Detroit Health Department. (2025). Detroit 2024-2025 Community Health Assessment Community Partner Data. Detroit Health Department.

⁹ County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. (2025). 2024 County Demographics for Wayne County, MI. <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/health-data/michigan/wayne?year=2024>

¹⁰ State of Michigan. (2025). 2021 Michigan Certificate of Need Annual Survey Number of Licensed Beds in Hospitals by County Report 011.
<https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/-/media/Project/Websites/mdhhs/Doing-Business-with-MDHHS/Health-Care-Providers/Certificate-of-Need/CON-Eval/Survey-Reports/2021/Beds/2021-Report-011-Hospital-Beds-by-County.pdf?rev=fc7cdb2385fd4cf39deab45ef440aa1c&hash=52B5BEC9F29CDD330655E05579B8ABEB>

¹¹ State of Michigan, Department of Health and Human Services. (2025). 2023 Vital Statistics Mortality Tables.
<https://vitalstats.michigan.gov/osr/CHI/deaths/frame.asp>

¹² State of Michigan, Department of Health and Human Services. (2025). Michigan Environmental Public Health Tracking (MiTracking) Data Tables.
<https://mitracking.state.mi.us/>

¹³ Bauer, S., Bell, S., & Haroon, H. (2025). Detroit overdose surveillance, 2012-2020.
<https://detroitmi.gov/sites/detroitmi.localhost/files/2023-03/2021%20Report%20%28Detroit%20Overdose%20Surveillance%202012-2020%29.pdf>

¹⁴ U.S. Census. (2025). 2019-2023 American Community Survey Comparative Housing Characteristics.
https://data.census.gov/table/ACSCP5Y2023.CP04?g=040XX00US26_050XX00US26163_160XX00US2622000&d=ACS+5-Year+Estimates+Comparison+Profiles

¹⁵ U.S. Census. (2025). 2023 American Community Survey Physical Characteristics for Occupied Housing Units.
https://data.census.gov/table/ACSSTIY2023.S2504?q=housing&g=040XX00US26_050XX00US26163_160XX00US2622000

¹⁶ Detroit Continuum of Care. (2025). 2022 State of Homelessness Annual Report.
https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5344557fe4b0323896c3c519/t/66a0fb8da7d0504a148cd870/1721826193165/2022+STATE+OF+HOMELESSNESS_071924+SPREADS-low+res.pdf

¹⁷ U.S. Census. (2025). 2019-2023 American Community Survey Comparative Economic Characteristics.
https://data.census.gov/table/ACSCP5Y2023.CP03?g=040XX00US26_050XX00US26163_160XX00US2622000&d=ACS+5-Year+Estimates+Comparison+Profiles

¹⁸ Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). (2025). Living Wage Calculator. <https://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/26163>

¹⁹ Goodspeed, R., Slugg, K., Dewar, M., & Benton, E. (2025). Michigan Evictions: Trends, Data Sources, and Neighborhood Determinants. <https://sites.fordschool.umich.edu/poverty2021/files/2021/03/Michigan-Eviction-Project-working-paper-1.pdf>

²⁰ MI School Data. (2025). Homeless Student Data (MSDS) 2007-08 through 2023-24. <https://www.mischooldata.org/homeless-enrollment-data-files/>

²¹ Homeless Action Network of Detroit (HAND). (2025). 2024 Detroit Continuun of Care (CoC) Housing Inventory Count Summary Data Report. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5344557fe4b0323896c3c519/t/6761a5f028726d6e996a83bd/1734452721118/2024+DETROIT+COC+HIC+SUMMARY++W+CHRONIC+DETAILS.pdf>

²² State of Michigan. (2025). 2021 Michigan Certificate of Need Annual Survey Number of Licensed Beds in Hospitals by County Report 011. <https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/-/media/Project/Websites/mdhhs/Doing-Business-with-MDHHS/Health-Care-Providers/Certificate-of-Need/CON-Eval/Survey-Reports/2021/Beds/2021-Report-011-Hospital-Beds-by-County.pdf?rev=fc7cdb2385fd4cf39deab45ef440aa1c&hash=52B5BEC9F29CDD330655E05579B8ABEB>

²³ Michigan Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (Michigan BRFSS). (2025). 2021-2023 Health Indicators and Risk Estimates by Community Health Assessment Regions & Local Health Departments. https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/-/media/Project/Websites/mdhhs/Keeping-Michigan-Healthy/Communicable-and-Chronic-Diseases/Epidemiology-Services/2021-2023_MiBRFSS_Reg-LHD_Tables.pdf

²⁴ Michigan Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (Michigan BRFSS). (2025). 2020-2022 Health Indicators and Risk Estimates by Community Health Assessment Regions & Local Health Departments. https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/-/media/Project/Websites/mdhhs/Keeping-Michigan-Healthy/Communicable-and-Chronic-Diseases/Epidemiology-Services/2020-2022_MiBRFSS_Reg-LHD_Tables.pdf?rev=a0e4d9cad21244f18391f756eac7ab39&hash=A2590D917BEF4489629E0FEEF7B208F3

²⁵ City Health Dashboard. (2025). Metric Detail for Walkability in 2024 in Detroit, MI. <https://www.cityhealthdashboard.com/MI/Detroit/metric-detail?metricId=27&dataPeriod=2024>

²⁶ Mehta S, Moghadasi S, Thomas D, et al. (2025). Reaching the vulnerable: Evaluation of a mobile health unit strategy for COVID-19 vaccination in Detroit, Michigan. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0259524>

²⁷ State of Michigan, Department of Health and Human Services. (2025). Vital Statistics, Infant Deaths, Live Births and Infant Death Rates Detroit City, Wayne County Residents, 1989-2023, Single Year. <https://vitalstats.michigan.gov/osr/Chi/InDx/frame.html>

²⁸ State of Michigan, Department of Health and Human Services. (2025). Vital Statistics, Three-Year Moving Average Infant Death Rates by District Michigan Residents by Race. <https://vitalstats.michigan.gov/osr/InDxMain/WhiteHDTbl.asp>

²⁹ State of Michigan, Department of Health and Human Services. (2025). Vital Statistics, Birth Statistics. <https://vitalstats.michigan.gov/osr/Chi/births14/frameBxChar.html>

³⁰ Broadstreet. (2025). Food Access Report, Detroit, MI. <https://www.broadstreet.io/board/BOARD/collection/Qm9hcmROb2RlOjEyOTgwOQ==>

³¹ Feeding America. (2025). Food Insecurity amount the Overall Population in Michigan. <https://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2018/overall/michigan>

³² U.S. Census. (2025). American Community Survey, Food Stamps/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST1Y2023.S2201?q=SNAP/Food+Stamps&g=040XX00US26_050XX00US26163_160XX00US2622000&moe=false

³³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2025). High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), Detroit, 2017. <https://nccd.cdc.gov/Youthonline/App/Results.aspx?TT=C&SID=HS&QID=QNVEG0&LID=MI&LID2=SL&YID=2021&YID2=SY&SYID=&EYID=&HT=C05&LCT=LL&COL=S&ROW1=N&ROW2=N&TST=false&C1=&C2=&SC=DEFAULT&SO=ASC&VA=CI&CS=Y&DP=1&QP=G&FG=G1&FA=A1&FR=R1&FS=S1&FSC=P1&FSI=I1>

³⁴ Michigan Department of Education. (2025). Michigan School Health Survey System, MiPHY Wayne County 2023-2024. <https://mdoe.state.mi.us/schoolhealthsurveys/ExternalReports/CountyReportGeneration.aspx>

³⁵ Detroit Food Policy Council. (2025). Detroit Food Metrics Report, 2020 with 2021 Update. <https://www.detroitfoodpc.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/DFMR20-Report-20220929-FINAL.pdf>

³⁶ Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI). (2025). Economically Disadvantaged District Counts, Fall 2024. <https://bit.ly/4lezOi1>

³⁷ Detroit Future City. (2025). Overview: On the heels of COVID-19, Detroit's life expectancy faced a historic setback, underscoring persistent disparities by race/ethnicity. <https://detroitfuturecity.com/dashboard/health/#:~:text=As%20of%202021%2C%20the%20life,lower%20than%20for%20the%20state.>

³⁸ State of Michigan, Department of Health and Human Services. (2025). Vital Statistics, Mortality Trends. <https://vitalstats.michigan.gov/osr/CHI/CRI/frame.asp>

³⁹ State of Michigan, Department of Health and Human Services. (2025). Vital Statistics, Hospitalizations by Diagnosis. <https://www.mdch.state.mi.us/osr/CHI/hospdx/frame.html>