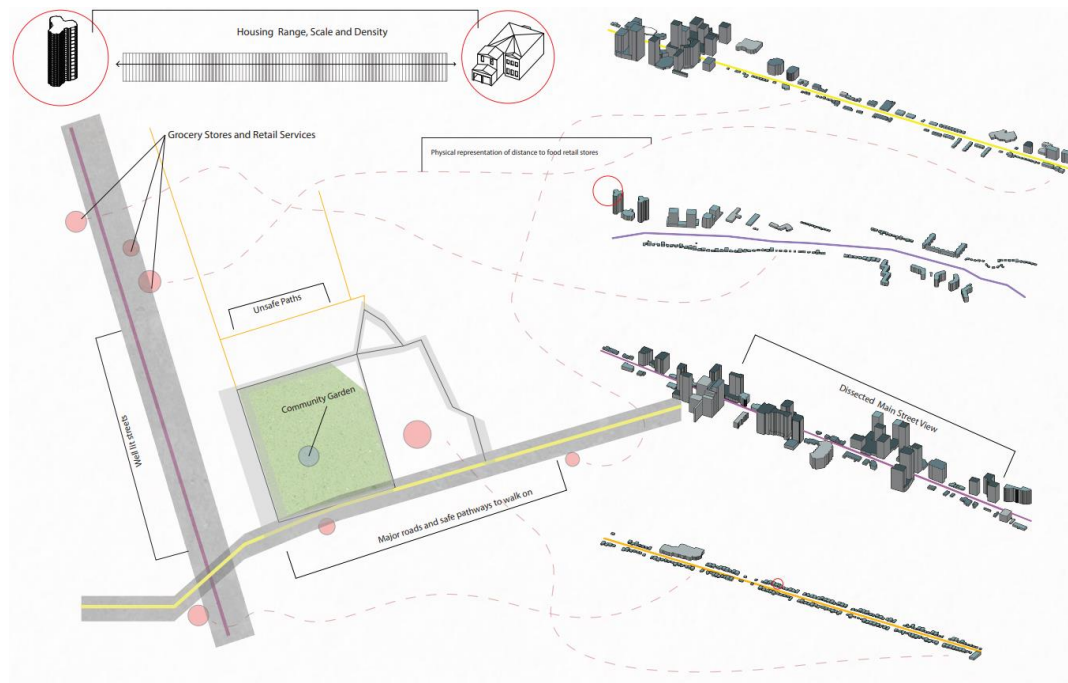


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Term: Winter 2019



St. James Town is a primarily residential neighborhood situated in the North-East quadrant of downtown Toronto. Its distinguishing feature is the incredibly densely packed, primarily immigrant population that inhabits the core area of the neighborhood. Surrounding the community garden that we have chosen to study for our project are several high-rise apartment buildings that supplement the atmosphere of compact, dense, and seemingly restrictive housing. In relation to the garden and food, this means that there ought to be a diverse selection of healthy foods spanning price points and cultural options. It is important to understand the neighborhood in two senses: how insecurity happens, and where it happens. Historically, St James Town has dealt with insecurity, but some areas experience more barriers to quality, affordable food than others. We will discuss in reference to our map how the community food garden dissolves the barriers brought on either by distance or pricing.

Our map shows the residents' accessibility to their food sources. Accessibility refers to the level of safety afforded to individuals as they take various routes to food vendors. On the traditional map of the core of St. James Town published by Google Maps the routes of visible travel are limited to mainly city roads, such as the principal roads of the city including Sherburne Street and Wellesley Street. When we arrived at

the site, we found there were several alleyways, side streets, and footpaths that had been less prominently presented on Google Maps or were not displayed at all. These seemingly less legitimate routes of travel were not being maintained in relation to the winter weather; while the sidewalks adjacent to the main roads were cleared and salted these secondary pathways were un-cleared. We walked the entire area of the dense, residential core that is nearly completely encased in high rise buildings. Even at midday, in full daylight, we found the atmosphere of the area to be unwelcoming and daunting to walk through. Many of these secondary paths were also void of any kind of lighting systems. Since it was daylight during our visit this did not directly impact us, but we imagine it would only contribute to the sense of insecurity an individual would experience while walking in the daunting areas. Currently, this is pure speculation and our position as outsiders may be different than the residents. This is something we will ask residents about to confirm our assumptions. Moreover, it made us question how the residents feel about moving through the space impacts where they opt to obtain food from.

We created a map based on the Google Maps structure devoid of traditional road labels. We kept the buildings to highlight the density of the region but removed the road labels so viewers could see the site without the imposed, more conventional routes of travel. We then added lines to represent the routes we walked while visiting the neighborhood. To demonstrate the various levels of safety, we felt while moving around the area we chose to colour our pathways accordingly. The darker the line the more unsafe we felt walking in that section, while the lighter roads would signify feeling quite secure moving about that area, respectively. From the map, the viewer can see that the lightest pathways correspond with the major roads, the same ones that are most clearly labeled on Google Maps. The darker roads tend to highlight areas that are less maintained and more unconventional routes of moving about. To enter the main coop, where the garden we are studying is located, there is a short sidewalk that readers of the map would notice a drastic change in colour from compared to the main road. The significance is that although side streets may be a time-saving route, they are not a viable option because residents know it is not a safe option to walk down. Therefore, they must go out of their way to major roads, which makes the commute for food longer to prioritize safety. While the main road is light and we felt reasonably comfortable walking along it when we had to turn down the sidewalk to approach the building the pathway was narrower, putting us in closer contact to any individuals who would be sharing the space, and poorly maintained regarding snow removal. Due to these factors, the sidewalk, and many similar short stretches to get from main roads up to buildings go from light green to dark green quite quickly.

Next, on our map, we chose to label the center where the community garden is housed with a blue circle, as it draws attention to the primary site of study in the neighborhood. Since we are interested in how physical security impacted where people might go to get food from, we also labeled all the food sources we found while visiting the site. We labeled these with a red circle, the larger ones representing grocery stores and the smaller ones representing fast food or convenience stores. We noticed that there were few options for the residents regarding places to obtain food from in the St. James Town core, but most of them appeared to be fast food or other less healthy options.

The ability to access resources is often overlooked when they are introduced to a community. An example of such a phenomenon is when taps were built in a drought-ridden region of Africa. The taps and sanitation systems were not used as predicted because they were put in stigmatized neighborhoods due to lack of consultation with local communities, and we are curious if the lack of sense of security could be imposing a similar barrier to food access for the residents of St. James Town. By creating an image of the pathways, we considered most comfortable to walk down in conjunction with an image that shows the retailers offering food we hope to develop questions and trends about how this might impact resident's movement patterns and food purchasing patterns. We will explore how barriers regarding commuting and safety play a negative or positive role in residents' grocery shopping patterns. Following this, we hope to learn how community food projects are educating residents and creating linkages in the community for healthy, feasible food procurement.