

Background:

Food insecurity is briefly defined as experiencing the lack of or difficulty accessing affordable, nutritionally-dense foods. Providing food can be a stopgap measure, but ideally, food insecurity should be addressed in conjunction with health disparities. Food distribution organizations have been found to play an important role in confronting food insecurity; however, the extent of resource allocation and conscious efforts to address health disparities is ambiguous. The goal of this ARC project is to conduct case studies on Texas food distribution organizations and evaluate institutional program practices that address food insecurity and health disparities together.

Purpose:

Research from the administrators’ and food distribution organizations’ perspective is pertinent to comprehending how to better integrate food insecurity and health disparities together. Understanding significant characteristics among these individual programs can enhance the services they provide and better address the health of food-insecure clientele. Through this, a model program addressing both food insecurity and health disparities can be visualized.

Methodology:

The first task of the project is to collect publicly available information about individual food distribution organization programs from twelve facilities in five Texas counties (Harris, Bexar, Tarrant, Dallas, Travis) that target food insecurity and health disparities together. The second task is to gather a list of programs from each facility. The third task is identifying two to four food insecurity facilities of the twelve and formulating another list with the relevant programs. The fourth task is to create a repository system for collecting the information we compile as we conduct our research. The fifth task is to create a coding scheme based on the program features using similarities identified between the organizations’ programs.

Results:

| County | Facilities/Programs | Food Insecurity | Health Disparities | Geographical Accessibility | Demographic Accessibility | Immigrant Accessibility | Targeted Audience | Adaptability/Innovation |
|--------|--|-----------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|--|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Bexar | San Antonio Food Bank | Yes | Yes | | | | | |
| | 1 Mobile Pantry | | | Yes, Accessibility focused t | Yes, program locations are No, no specifications | | Yes, households with | Yes, guarantee of providing seas |
| | 2 Food Fair/Farmer's Market | | | Yes, Accessibility focused t | Yes, around areas of high no, no specifications | | yes, elderly 60+, preg | Yes, farmer market sites can be |
| | 3 Commodity Supplemental Food Program | | | No, specifications | No, no specifications | potentially but no spe | Yes, elder 60+ years c | No, food package distribution |
| | 4 Backpack Program | | | Yes, sites are specific to at | Yes, all children are elligibl | potentially but no spe | Yes, Children in scho | No, no specifications |
| | 5 Community Wellness Education | | | Yes, organizations can requ | Yes, anyone can register fc | Yes, available for anyon | Yes, primarily parent | Yes, provides online formatting |
| Harris | Houston Food Bank | Yes | Yes | | | | | |
| | 1 Backpack Program | | | Yes, service sites are at o | Yes, all students of school | Yes but no specificatio | Schools with student | Yes, continues to operate even c |
| | 2 Community Assistance for Food Benefits | | | Yes, services provided by t | Yes | Yes, "good change to g | Yes, any individuals or | Yes, recent development for imm |
| | 3 Red Barrels Food Donation | | | Yes, specific to local areas. | Yes, anyone who is near fc | Potentially, no specific | Yes, targets individua | No, only found in grocery stores |
| | 4 Box Food Program | | | Yes, provides home deliver | Yes, any demographic can | Potentially, not all imm | Yes, Seniors | Yes, provides monthly newslette |
| | 5 Food for Change | | | Yes, 9 FFC markets in Hous | No, all markets are situat | Yes, "good change to g | Adults and individual | Yes, they have health and econc |
| | 6 School Food Markets | | | Yes, 30 school markets in H | No, markets are situated i | No, does not specify tl | Children/students an | Yes, became drive-thru distribut |
| | 7 Nutrition Education & Health Promotion | | | Yes, classes offered virtual | Yes, but works with a lot o | No, does not specify tl | Youth ages 14-21 an | Yes, provides in-person and virtu |
| Harris | Brighter Bites | Yes | Yes | | | | | |
| | 1 Food Market | | | Yes, 45 locations within Ho | Yes, serves the students at | No, does not specify tl | Elementary school st | Yes, converted to drive-thru dist |
| | 2 Nutrition Education | | | Yes, 45 locations within Ho | Yes, serves the students at | No, does not specify tl | Elementary school st | Yes, launch of Brighter Bites mo |
| Harris | Interfaith Ministries | Yes | Yes | | | | | |
| | 3 Fun Food Experience | | | Yes, 45 locations within Ho | Yes, serves the students at | No, does not specify tl | Elementary school st | No, the experience can shift to t |
| | 1 Meals on Wheels | | | Yes, spans five counties (H | Yes, disabled seniors withi | No, does not specify tl | Disabled adults and | Yes, made it a drop-off delivery |
| | 2 Hospital 2 Home | | | Yes, spans the Greater Ho | Yes, recently discharged hi | No, does not specify tl | Recently discharged | Yes, they not only provide short |
| | Texas Health Plans | | | Yes, spans the Greater Ho | Yes, appears to be accessil | No, does not specify tl | Senior members | No, offers little information aboi |

Figure 1. Spreadsheet of 18 programs across four facilities and their corresponding program parameters and analyses

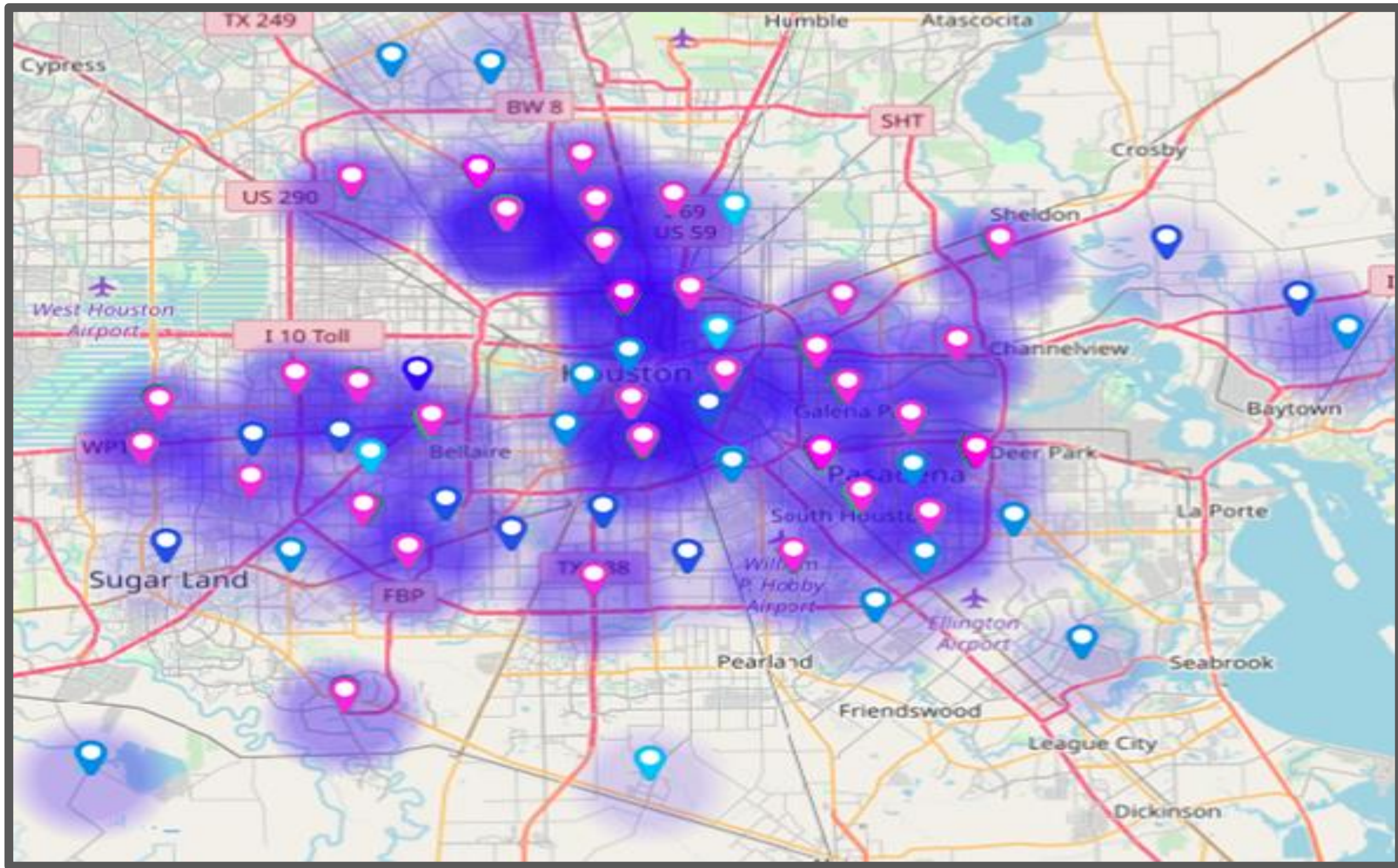


Figure 2. Houston heat map shows overlap of program zip codes

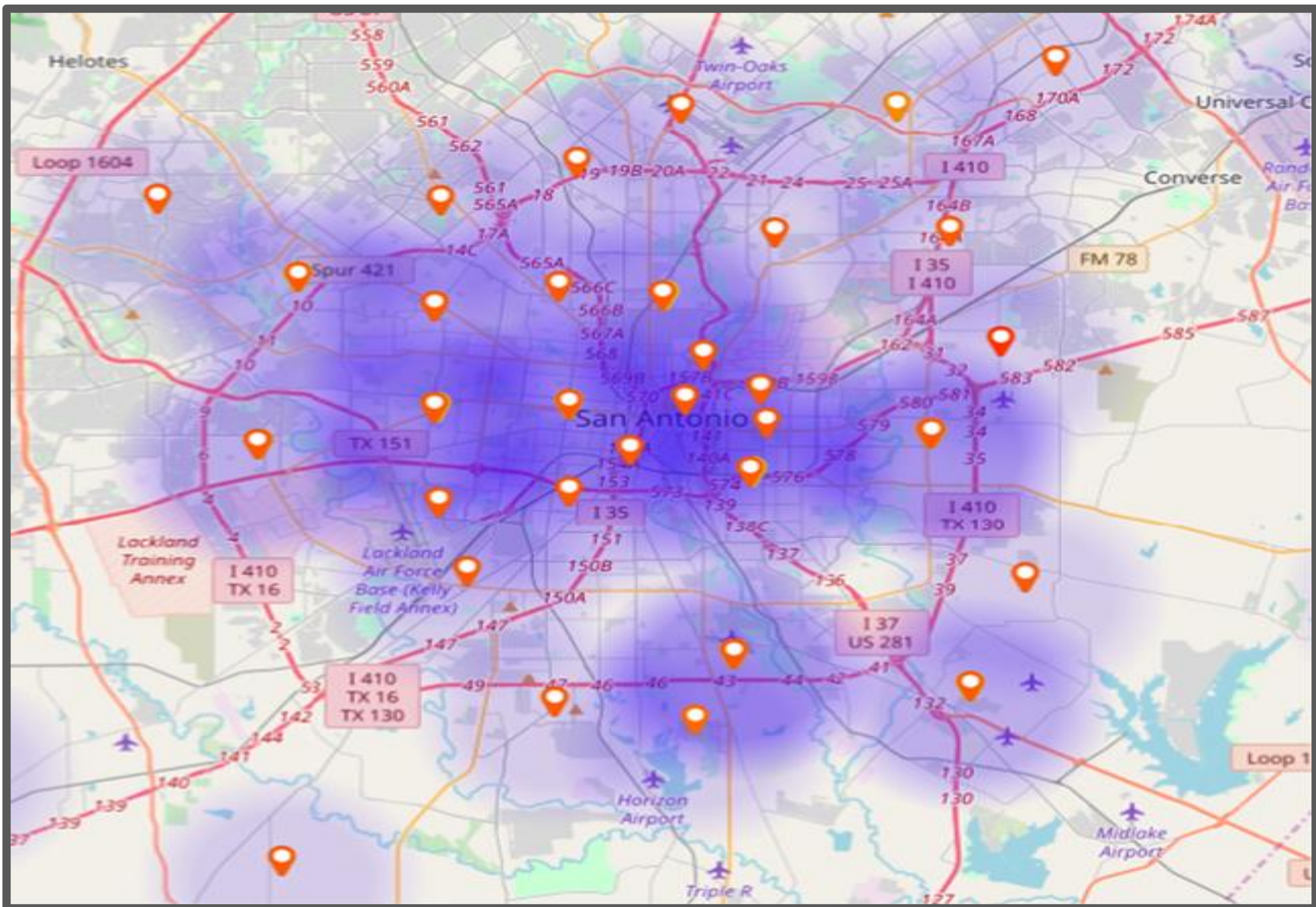


Figure 3. San Antonio heat map shows overlap of program zip codes

Conclusion & Future Studies:

Certain populations are targeted through these programs such as immigrants, seniors, children, and adults. Populations with the least accessibility to these 18 programs is the immigrant population (4/18 programs) and the general adult population (6/18 programs). The senior population (9/18 programs) and the child population (10/18 programs) are offered the greatest range of services by the four organizations. Future tasks include:

- (1)Developing questions at the program level to interview administrators and collect qualitative program information not found in the public domain.
- (2)Writing a report that explains the coding scheme to identify key features of relevant programs and providing exemplars of each feature.
- (3)Exploring the results of specific program parameters, such as low interactions with immigrant populations.

References:

1. Mapline. (n.d.). Retrieved February 25, 2022, from https://app.mapline.com/map/map_458c4d82
2. Repository System Document

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