What is a food swamp?
A food swamp is a place where unhealthy foods are more readily available than healthy foods. (Unhealthy foods include those that are dense in calories, high in sodium, and high in sugar.) Food swamps typically exist in food deserts, where there are limited options for purchasing healthy foods. On this map, food swamps are represented by the dense clusters of circles and triangles. For example, a food swamp might be an area where there is a predominance of small corner stores and carry-outs, but no healthy food sources, such as supermarkets or farmers markets.

What is a food desert?
A food desert is a low-income neighborhood that lacks easy access to healthy, affordable food. Because healthy, affordable food is usually found in supermarkets, most food deserts lack proximity to a supermarket. In Baltimore, we developed a more specific definition of “food desert” was developed that includes four factors.* On this map, food deserts are represented by the red-shaded areas.

*Food Desert: An area where the distance to a supermarket is more than $\frac{1}{4}$ mile, the median household income is at or below 185% of the Federal Poverty Level, over 40% of households have no vehicle available, and the average Healthy Food Availability Index score for supermarkets, convenience and corner stores is low.

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