



# SMALL BOX STORES | FOOD DESERTS | POLICY

*Presentation by Commissioner Lorraine Cochran-Johnson*





 CBS  
SUNDAY  
MORNING



COMMISSIONER LORRAINE COCHRAN JOHNSON

Featured on the December 8, 2019  
CBS News Sunday Morning Cover Story  
"Deal or no deal? The expansion of Dollar Stores"





# SMALL BOX DISCOUNT STORE DEFINITION

For the purposes of legislation in DeKalb, a “small box discount store” means a retail store that is 16,000 square feet or less in size, which offers for sale a variety of convenience shopping goods and continuously offers the majority of the items in their inventory for sale at a price lower than traditional retail stores. Small box discount store does not include stores that contain a pharmacy, sell gasoline or diesel fuel, or primarily sell specialty food items, i.e. meats, seafood, cheese, or oils and vinegars.



Photo by: [supermarketnews.com](http://supermarketnews.com)





# BOX STORE CONCERNS

- Proliferation of Store Presence
- Perceived Negative Impact On Community
- Existence Within Food Deserts
- Perceived Health Disparities



# MORATORIUM GRANTED DECEMBER 2019

Click [HERE](#) to view the  
legislation.

JEFF RADER  
DISTRICT TWO

LARRY JOHNSON  
DISTRICT THREE

PERSEVERANCE  
THE GREATER THE OBSTACLE,  
THE MORE GLORY IN OVERCOMING IT.



# DeKalb





# MARKET TRENDS FOR DOLLAR STORES

- Concentrated Locations. The business model for many dollar store chains involves over-saturating an area with outlets. (ILSR) Many stores are located in close proximity.
- Household Income. Dollar General executive Vice President Jim Thorpe stated characteristics of loyal shoppers included those who live "paycheck to paycheck," or have fixed incomes such as seniors. The presentation also predicted the growing customer demographic of typically white shoppers with household income lower than \$40,000 would "shortly expand to include large numbers of African Americans and millennials". (MSN.com) Dollar Tree's business model targets "medium-to-low-income" neighborhoods.
- Poverty. Because of the above characteristics, this means that many dollar store chains are often found in impoverished neighborhoods.

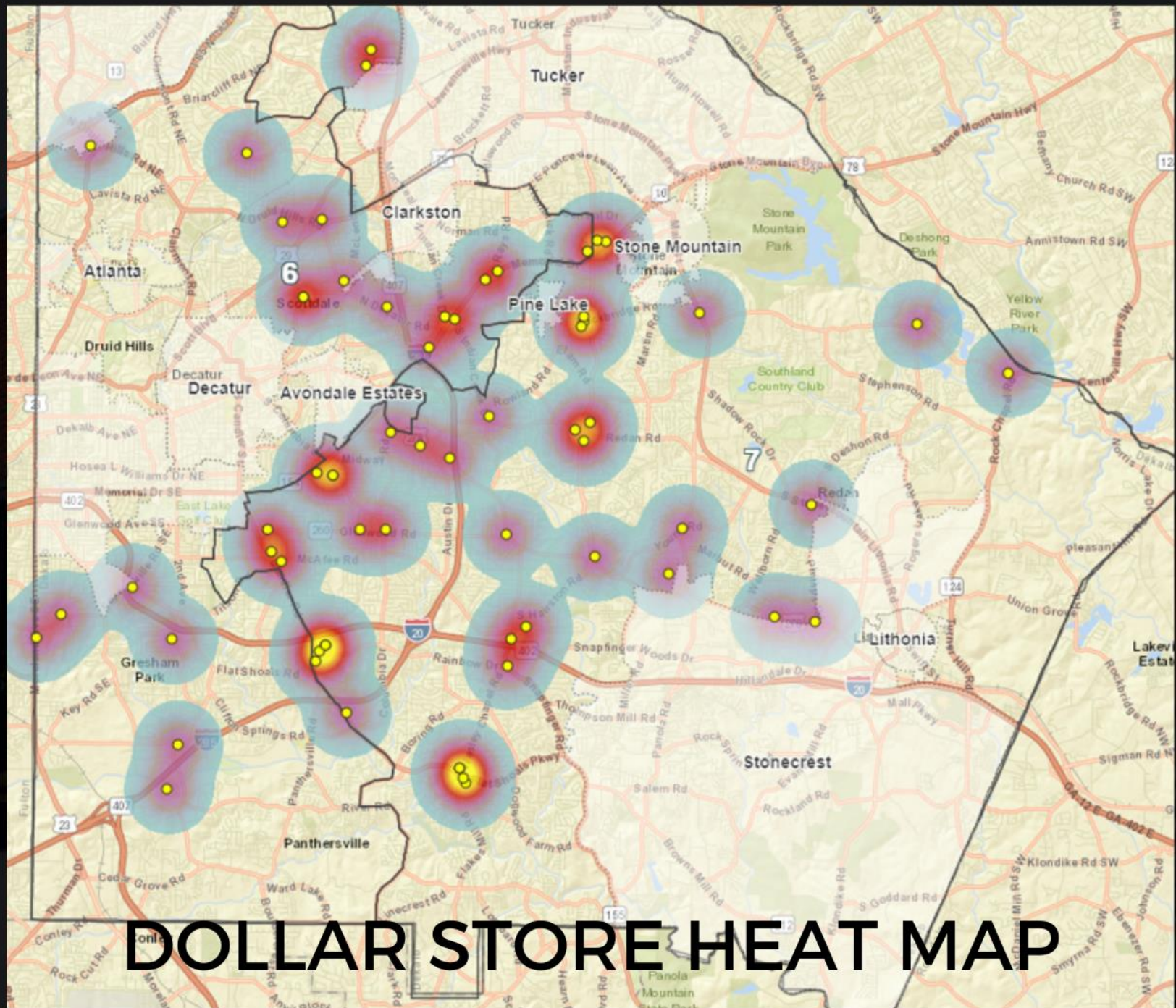


# MARKET TRENDS FOR DOLLAR STORES CONTINUED

- Building Size. Most stores have a square footage of 9,000-10,000 SF, and one-story height.
- Population. DeKalb stores are concentrated in communities where the African American population is above 50%.
- Products. Although many dollar stores have expanded their products to include healthier options and more food choices, it is debatable whether or not the distribution of the expansions are uniform and some argue that there is still not enough healthy food or produce.



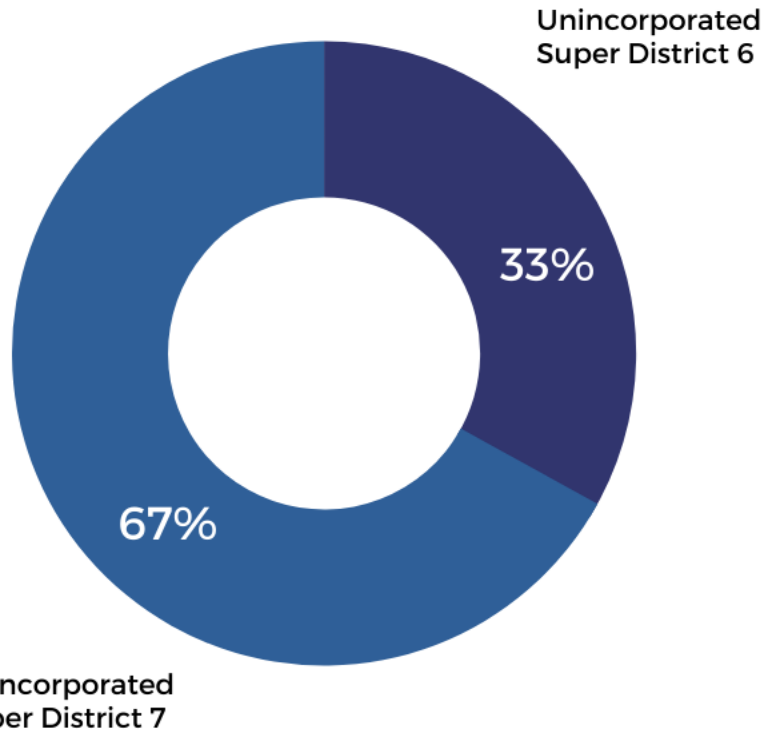




**DOLLAR STORE HEAT MAP**



# DOLLAR STORES IN DEKALB COUNTY



Unincorporated Commission District Dollar Store Peer Analysis	
Geography	Total
Unincorporated District 1	2
Unincorporated District 2	3
Unincorporated District 3	25
Unincorporated District 4	21
Unincorporated District 5	13
Unincorporated Super District Convenience Store Peer Analysis	
Unincorporated Super District 6	20
Unincorporated Super District 7	41

- The distribution of Dollar Stores within the County is not uniform.
- The number of Dollar Stores in Unincorporated Super District 7 amounts to 67% of the Dollar Stores in the entire unincorporated region of the County.
- This is more than double that of Super District 6's percentage.
- Over half of the total Dollar Stores in the unincorporated County are accounted for in Super District 7.



# Hunger Data for DeKalb County, GA



Total Population	743,190
Food Insecurity Rate	12.9%
Food Insecurity Rate (2020 projection)	17.9%
# of Food Insecure Persons	96,060
# of Food Insecure Persons (2020 projection)	133,240
% of Food Insecure People not eligible for SNAP	44.0%
% of Food Insecure People not eligible for F/R Meals or WIC	34.6%
Child Population	174,270
Child Food Insecurity Rate	16.6%
Child Food Insecurity Rate (2020 projection)	25.4%
# of Food Insecure Children	29,010
# of Food Insecure Children (2020 projection)	44,350
% of Food Insecure Children not eligible for F/R Meals	32.0%
Cost per Meal	\$3.28
Annual Meal Gap	16,257,000

The data above is from Feeding America's annual Map the Meal Gap data. Food insecurity is calculated based on six indicators: unemployment, poverty, median income, home ownership, disability, and race/ethnicity. The data for these indicators comes from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey. The latest data available is from two year prior to the release of Map the Meal Gap. This year, in an attempt to measure the impacts that COVID-19 has had on food insecurity, Feeding America has calculated projections. These projections are indicated above with "(2020 projection)". All other fields are based on data from 2018.



# Hunger Profile for DeKalb County, GA



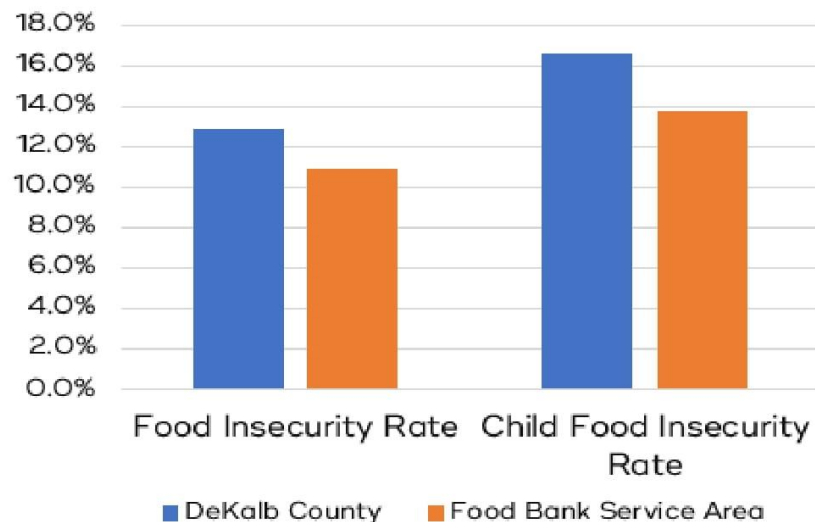
## Food Insecurity

Food insecurity refers to the lack of access to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members and limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods. Food insecurity is calculated by Feeding America using the following indicators: poverty, unemployment, median household income, home ownership, disability, and race.

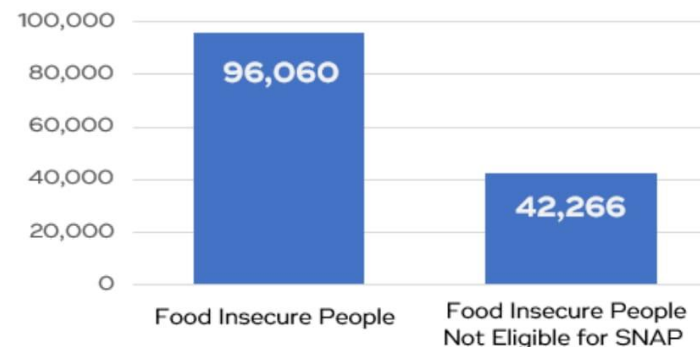
## Food Assistance in DeKalb County

Benefits programs provide assistance for people experiencing food insecurity. SNAP is available to households that are below 130% of the poverty line. Free & Reduced School Meals and WIC are available for children living in households that are below 185% of the poverty line. Poverty is determined by the number of members in a household and their annual income.

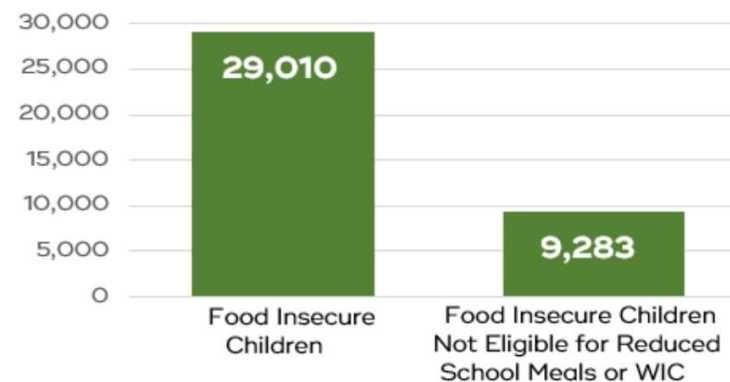
### Food Insecurity Rates



### SNAP Gap



### Free & Reduced School Meals & WIC Gap





# Food Insecurity in DeKalb County, GA

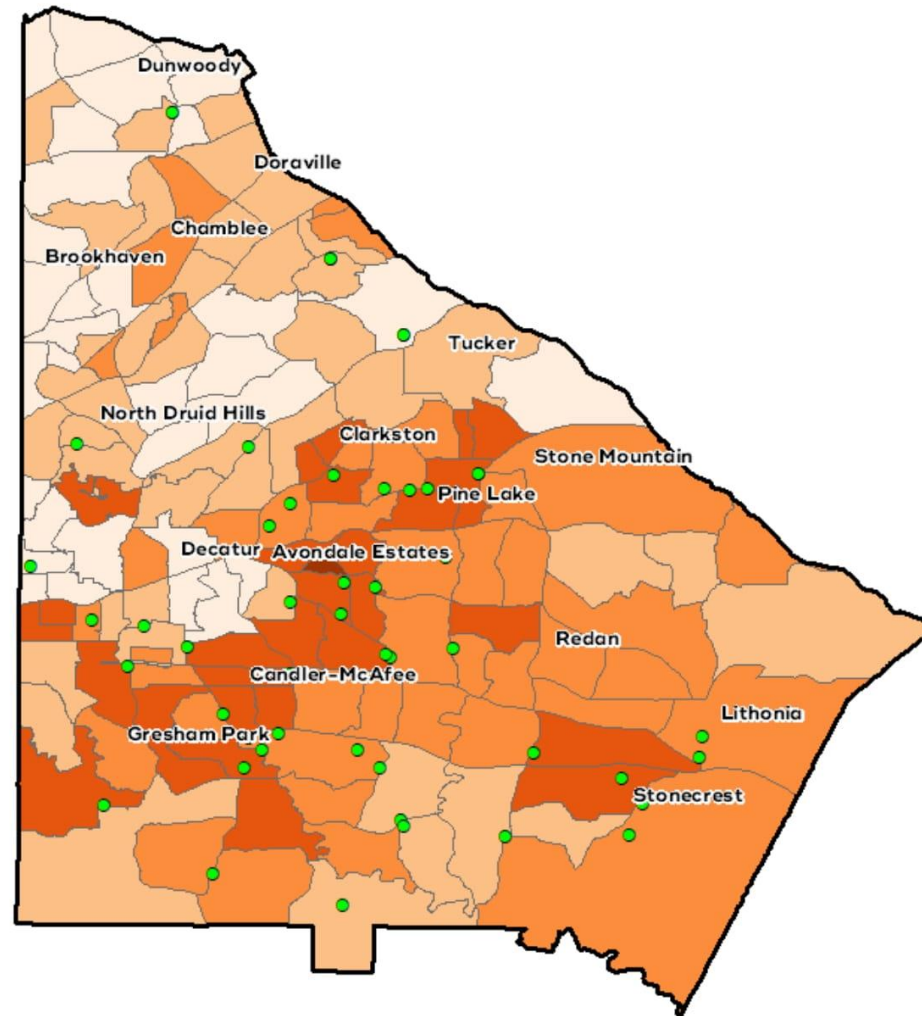
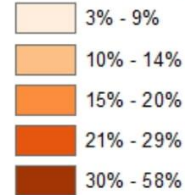


## Food Bank Partner Agencies\*



## Census Tracts

### Food Insecurity Rate



\* The partner agencies shown on the map represent the active partners from the summer of 2020. For an updated map of partner agencies visit [www.acfb.org](http://www.acfb.org) and click on *Find Help*.

Gundersen, C., A. Dewey, E. Engelhard, M. Strayer & L. Lapinski. *Map the Meal Gap 2020: A Report on County and Congressional District Food Insecurity and County Food Cost in the United States in 2018*. Feeding America, 2020.



# IMPACT

- Population – Because of the demographics in Super District 7, the impacts of Small Box Store chains have a disproportionate impact on African American communities.
- Mobility – Some residents may shop at Small Box Stores because of limited mobility as 1.80% of households in target area have no vehicles.
- Market – Super District 7's demographic profile appears to closely match the market criteria expressed by Small Box Store chains.
  - A. Medium-to-low-income
  - B. A somewhat high poverty rate
  - C. Potential market for people who may be on a fixed income (higher senior population)
- Data – Use demographics at the census tract level along with other known data on food and health to make a better determination of comprehensive impact.
- Property Values – Current data shows a direct impact between property values and dollar stores, Lower property values associated with areas with greater presence of small box stores.







# LEGISLATION CONSEQUENCES

- Address Small Box Distance Requirements
- Addresses Safety Measures – Lighting, Security, Staffing



# POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

- **Strengthen Planning Review Policies**: The County can designate certain uses as conditional ones. This means the stores must undergo a review process to meet certain conditions before they open. These conditions can include economic impact and health criteria. (ILSR)
- **Expand Financing for Locally Owned Grocery Stores**: One of the biggest barriers for entrepreneurs starting new local grocers is securing a business loan. This can be mitigated by supporting local grocery stores in needy areas through financing programs. Funding for these programs could come from eliminating tax incentives for chain stores. (ILSR)
- **Speaking Out**: Developing local organizations to raise awareness about the negative impacts of Dollar Stores in a given community. (ILSR)
- **Education**: Early exposure to the importance of healthy eating and lifestyles.
- **Community Gardens**: Increase local emphasis and funding on community garden development and local farmer markets.





# E.M.B.A.R.C. COMMUNITY YOUTH FARM



E.M.B.A.R.C. Community Youth Farm

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DEKALB, COUNTY

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