# What's in a partnership?

## Ingredients of a practitioner-researcher relationship in Baltimore

**What makes a food desert?** It was that question that led Celeste Chavis, a transportation researcher at Morgan State University, to partner with Alice Huang, a food access planner with the City of Baltimore. Together, the pair researched transportation and how it relates to food access in Baltimore. Each contributed skills and expertise that benefited the other, leading to a mutually beneficial partnership lasting beyond the initial project. So what made it work?

## Alice Huang
### City of Baltimore

**Food Access Planner**

- Works on good food procurement, SNAP and WIC assistance
- Expertise: public health, health behavior research

## Celeste Chavis
### Morgan State University

**Assistant Professor, Transportation & Infrastructure**

- Researches traffic, public transportation and policy with a focus on equity
- Expertise: civil engineering

## Skills and contributions to the project

- Expertise in crafting food-related survey questions
- Knowledge of policies and programs already in place, and of how the research project might interact with those programs

- Expertise in crafting transportation-related survey questions
- In-depth knowledge of research methods, with the skills to "dig deeper into some of the nuance"

> "We're not researchers. We need people to do the research to inform the decisions we make ... We trust a researcher knows how to ask the right questions and dig deeper into some of the nuance."

> "I think the greatest impact happens when you have partnerships. University resources are there, so they should be used."

## Benefits of partnership

**Ability to make well-informed policy decisions**

**Connections to each others' networks**

**Opportunity to impact policy decisions**