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Food-Fight

The intersection of empathy and design is the future of an architect. This juncture begins with the local community— in this case, Scranton, PA. A large portion of low—income families in the region exist within food deserts, meaning they are more than ½ mile from a grocer in urban locations and more than 10 miles in rural areas. Through exploring the issue of food deserts in conjunction with the historical context of the region, a design solution in system development emerges.

The Scranton region has a long history and extensive networks of rail. Instead of railways falling out of use, and becoming 'train graveyards', designers could intervene, creating a new system of food distribution. Instead of expecting communities to move great distances to purchase food, perhaps the food could move to them. Through tailoring railcars to house mobile grocers, food now comes into the communities. A move that simultaneously answers the problems of food access while also paying homage to the long-standing cultural and historical conditions imbued in the city. This typology, of empathy-driven research and problem recognition, may offer creative solutions while also ensuring access to the most basic of necessities: food.