



# Navigating Grocery Shopping in Later Life: Identifying Opportunities for Design



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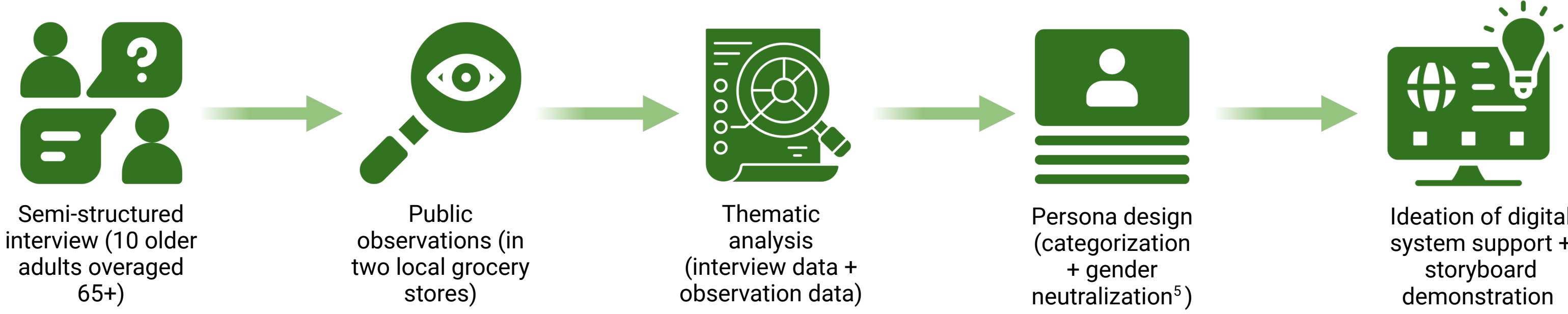
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## INTRODUCTION

While most older adults (OAs) navigate grocery shopping (GS) with ease, whether they prefer in-person or online services, some encounter significant barriers in **transporting**<sup>1</sup>, **affording**<sup>2</sup>, and **planning grocery purchases**<sup>3, 4</sup>. Older adults could benefit from digital services that are tailored to their specific needs and different lifestyle patterns.

Accordingly, this study seeks to 1) gain a better understanding of older adults' grocery shopping behaviours and the nuisances or challenges they encounter in completing grocery tasks, and 2) envision new digital designs that could enhance or support grocery shopping for this demographic.

## METHODS



## PERSONA DESIGN

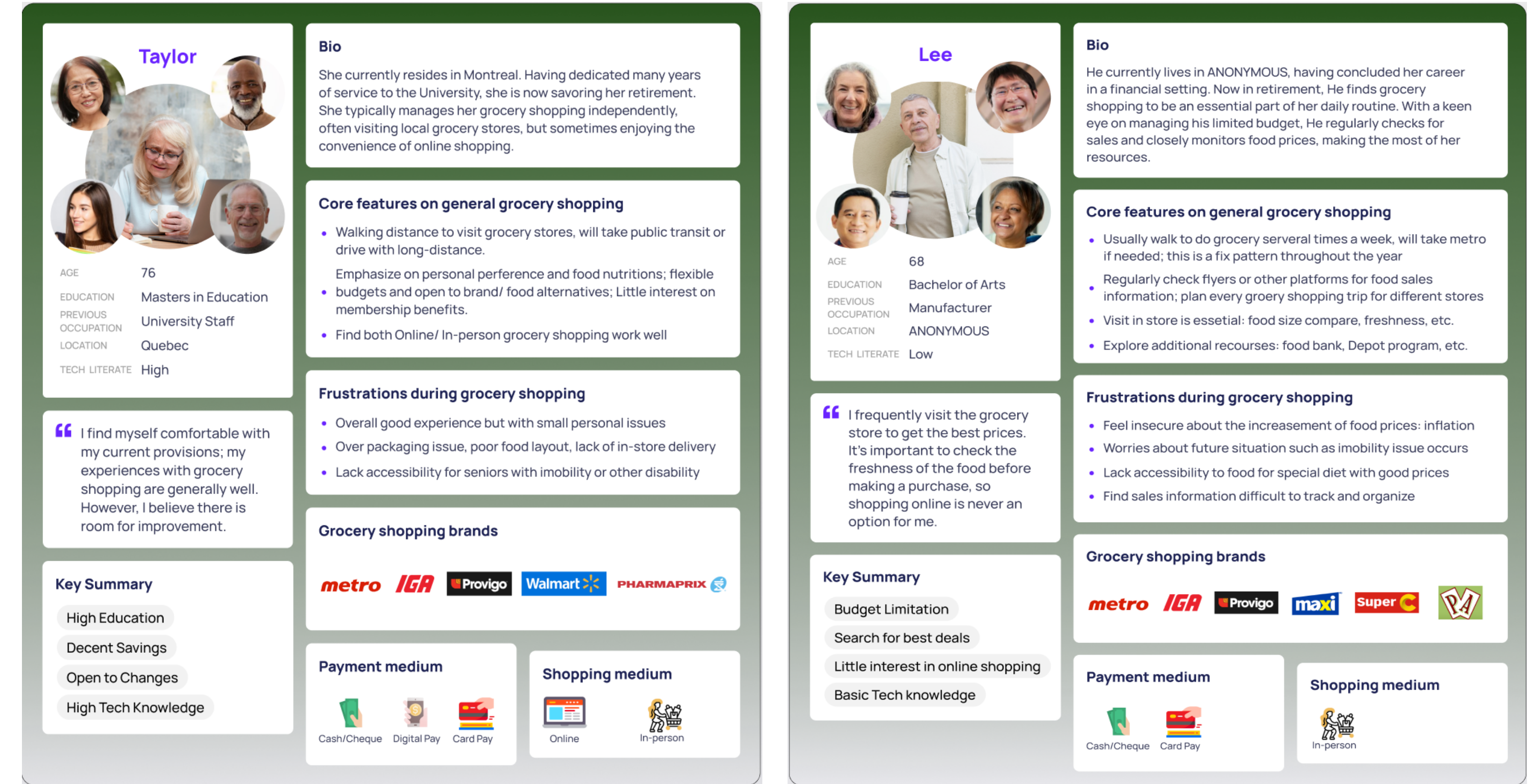
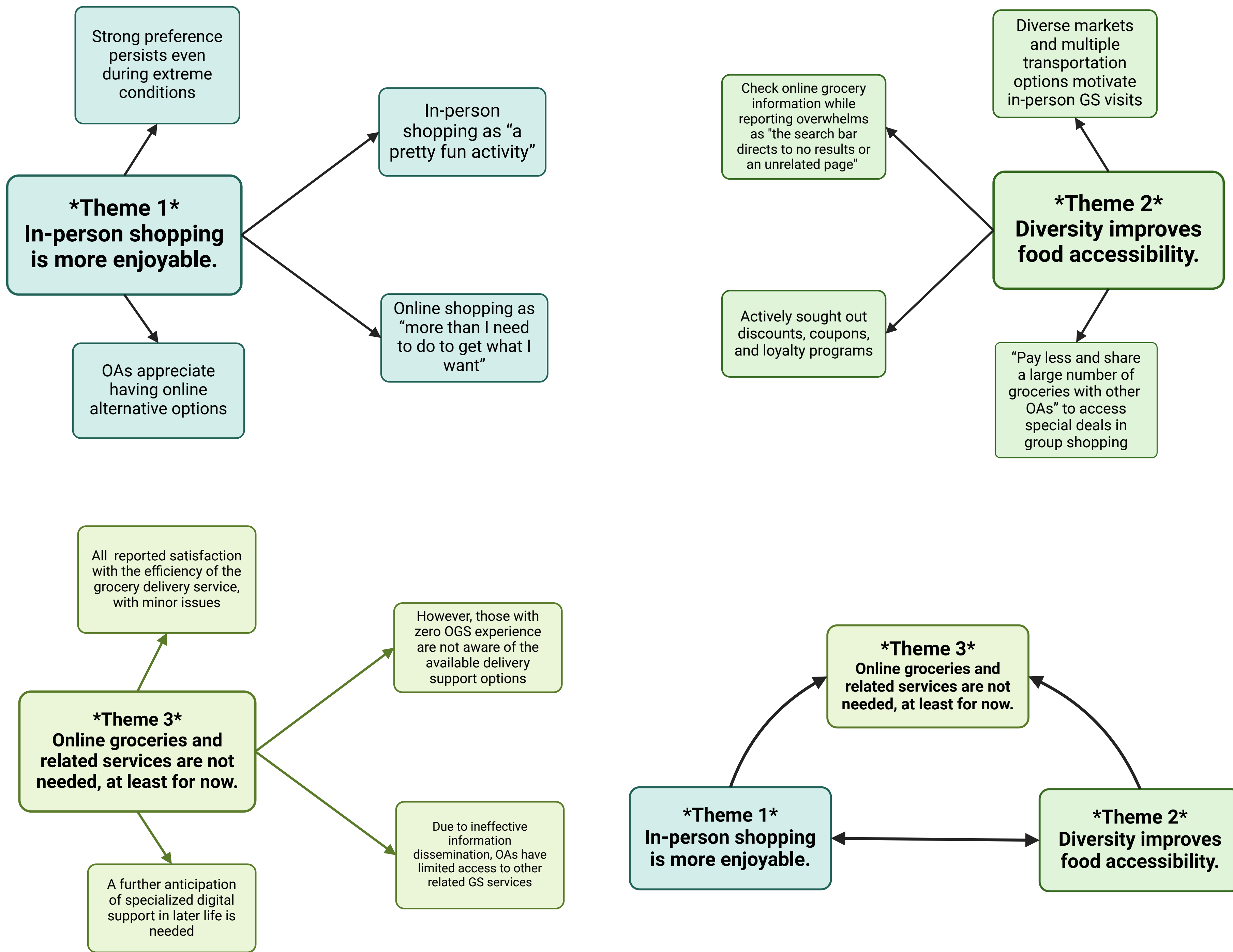


Figure 1. Each persona functions as a vivid, lifelike character, providing insights into the socioeconomic statuses of interviewees, their perceptions and adoptions of related grocery services, and their grocery shopping patterns and routines, serving as references for system support design ideation and thematic analysis.

## THEMATIC EARLY FINDINGS



## ENVISION NEW TOOLS

- We aim to ideate digital supportive systems and gather feedback from older adults to further validate functions that address their needs and preferences.
- Given the strong preference for **in-person shopping**, we are prioritizing ideas targeted to **enhancing or supporting in-person visits**, including features to:
  - support meal and shopping **planning**;
  - form **digital communities** for accessing and sharing grocery-related information; and
  - streamline access to **delivery** services following in-person visits.
- Once refined, we will use these in a follow-on study. Figure 2 shows sketches of our initial ideas.

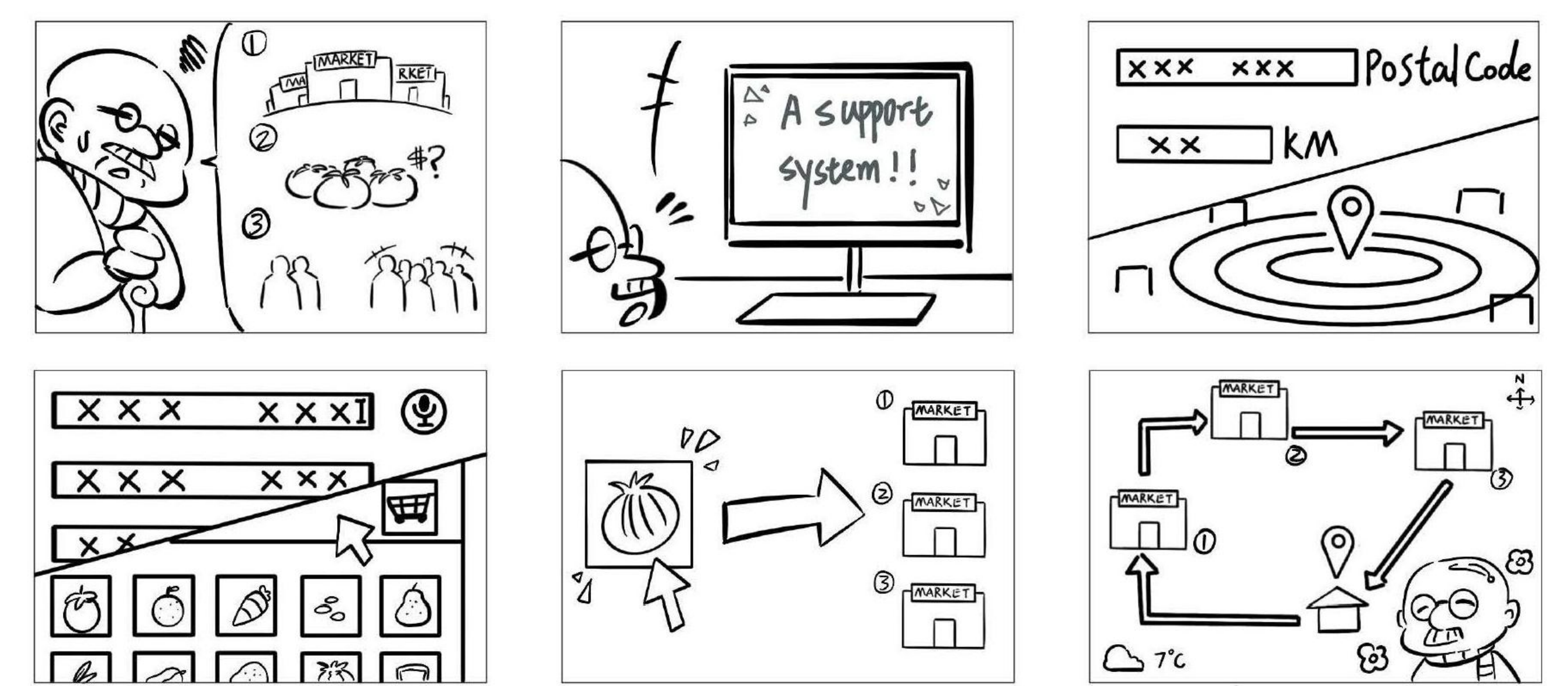


Figure 2. A storyboard for supporting grocery shopping routine planning: John, feeling overwhelmed while trying to plan a shopping list that meets their dietary preferences and budget (1), decides to try a new support tool (2). Supplying only his postal code and desired range (3), he locates options nearby (4), compares prices (5), and plans his trip (6).

## FUTURE DIRECTION

- Our research offers insight into how technologies might be developed to facilitate grocery shopping in later life. It may also offer broader guidelines for designing age-inclusive systems. The outcomes of this project have the potential for broader applications to other marginalized groups that face financial concerns and require health-related assistance.
- We are currently in the process of analyzing data from interviews and public observation and using it to envision designs for new technologies. Our hope is to then use these to further conversations with stakeholders.

### References

<sup>1</sup>Kristin Runzheimer, Jennifer L. Martin, and Michele L. McCarroll. 2024. Factors Affecting Food-Related Activity Performance in Low-Income Older Adults. *Journal of Applied Social Science* 18, 1 (2024), 190–203.

<sup>2</sup>Dagmar Lesakova. 2016. Seniors and Their Food Shopping Behavior: An Empirical Analysis. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 220 (2016), 243–250. 19th International Conference Enterprise and Competitive Environment 2016.

<sup>3</sup>David S Brennan and Kiran A Singh. 2011. Grocery purchasing among older adults by chewing ability, dietary knowledge and socio-economic status. *Public Health Nutrition* 14, 7 (2011), 1279–1284.

<sup>4</sup>Fifi Kvalsvik. 2022. Understanding the role of situational factors on online grocery shopping among older adults. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services* 68 (2022), 103009.

<sup>5</sup>The GENDERMAG project. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://gendermag.org/foundations.php>

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