**Statement of Characteristics**

Nourish Surrey seeks to perform two main functions. The first is to arm citizens of Surrey with a resource that allows them to find free or low-cost food available in their area. Since there is a reported stigma against utilizing food resources, it can be assumed that many individuals may not know the exact locations of these resources. To educate the public, the app highlights the locations of food banks, free or low-cost grocery stores, and centers that provide free or low-cost meals. Additionally, the user can toggle different days of the week to see what free meal services are in operation. Each of the free meal locations were verified to be operational as of March 2025 which is important as many of the locations listed on 211 and the City of Surrey’s Community Food Resources map were incorrect. We believe that by providing accurate, up-to-date information, users will be more likely to utilize the service. They do not need to perform any additional steps than looking at the app to identify where they can get their needs met. Reducing the barriers to entry allows more to access the resource.

Users can select a method of travel, which allows them to view various distance buffers. These buffers indicate a walking time radius around a point of interest. For example, if a user was interested in visiting the Surrey Urban Mission, they can see if they are within a 10 or 30-minute walk. If they aren’t currently within those walking distances, the same user could then check to see what skytrain stations or bus stops are within a 10-minute walk of the mission. Allowing users to visualise distances addresses accessibility concerns, as those with limited mobility may need to verify how far they will need to travel after transiting. These radii also give citizens more agency. In visualising the locations of services, users can see where services are absent. They can then lobby local government organizations strategically.

To further aid in addressing unmet need, a Food Accessibility Index was created. Here, users can see areas of need across Surrey created from a boundary's proximity to a free or low-cost resource, normalized population, and poverty index. To provide further insights, an optional layer showing well-served areas can be toggled on. The table and chart will update to show the distribution and records for a set map extent. Although primarily a visualisation tool, users can select multiple records in the table and export them to a CSV, JSON, or GeoJson file for further use.

***Food Accessibility Index***

Our team developed a single value index in order to evaluate the relative degree of accessibility to low-cost food resources for a particular dissemination area (DA) located in the City of Surrey. The index ranges from 0 to 1 where 0 represents a low level of need for more low-cost food resources in the DA. Here, there is no unmet need for low-cost community food resources as there is a high accessibility to current resources. On the other hand, a value of 1 represents a high level of need for more low-cost food resources as there is currently an unmet need in the area. The index considers various factors such as the overall walkability to the nearest low-cost food resource, the income level of families, and the population density of the DA.