# **Design Thinking Assignment**

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**Problem Statement:**

# **Massive food waste in urban restaurants and grocery stores while people go hungry.**

## **Empathize**

* Restaurant owners and grocery store managers struggle with overordering, leading to tons of perfectly good food being thrown away daily
* Homeless individuals and low-income families in urban areas face food insecurity and hunger despite abundance of wasted food nearby
* Environmental activists worry about the massive carbon footprint and landfill impact of food waste
* Restaurant staff feel guilty throwing away good food while knowing people are hungry in their community
* Food bank workers are overwhelmed trying to collect and distribute food donations with limited resources and volunteers
* Solving this issue would reduce environmental impact, feed hungry people, and help businesses reduce costs while contributing to their community

## **Define**

The world needs an efficient system to redirect surplus food from restaurants and stores to people in need because it addresses both food waste and food insecurity simultaneously while reducing environmental impact.

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## **Ideate**

* Create a mobile app that connects restaurants/stores with local food banks and individuals in real-time when surplus food is available
* Develop a network of automated food collection kiosks placed strategically around the city that restaurants can deposit excess food into
* Establish a subscription-based service where restaurants pre-commit to donating certain amounts of food daily to scheduled pickup routes
* Create a "food rescue" delivery service staffed by volunteers who collect surplus food and deliver it directly to those in need
* Design smart refrigerated storage units in public spaces where businesses can deposit food and verified recipients can access it using QR codes

## **Prototype**

**Selected Solution:** Create a mobile app that connects restaurants/stores with local food banks and individuals in real-time when surplus food is available.

### **Why it is the best solution:**

* Cost-effective and scalable solution using existing technology
* Provides immediate connection between food surplus and food need
* Allows for real-time coordination and reduces food spoilage
* Creates transparency and tracking for businesses to see their impact
* Can incorporate user verification and safety features
* Enables community building and volunteer coordination

### **How it works:**

Restaurants and grocery stores post available surplus food on the app with photos, quantities, and pickup times. Verified food banks, shelters, and individual users receive notifications based on their location and needs. The app includes scheduling features for pickup coordination, rating systems for reliability, and impact tracking showing pounds of food saved and people fed. Built-in messaging allows direct communication between donors and recipients for coordination.

### **Key Features:**

* Real-time food surplus posting by businesses
* Location-based matching with nearby recipients
* User verification system for safety
* Scheduling and coordination tools
* Impact tracking and analytics
* Photo upload and food description features
* Volunteer driver coordination system
* Integration with existing food bank databases

**Implementation Steps:**

1. Partner with local restaurants and food banks for pilot program
2. Develop MVP app with basic posting and notification features
3. Implement user verification and safety protocols
4. Test with 10-15 businesses and 5 food banks for 30 days
5. Gather feedback and iterate on design
6. Scale to city-wide deployment with volunteer driver network