

August 8, 2017

City of London, Advisory Committee on the Environment

Att'n: **Susan Ratz, ACE Chair**

Re: **ACCAC Review – Urban Agriculture Strategy (UAS), July , 2017**

Thank-you for your recent request (July 31st) for our Accessibility Advisory Committee (ACCAC) to review your most recent Draft UAS document with regards to inclusive strategies and/or design elements.

Once again though, timing for this review is a challenge for us as your requested response date of August 8th pre-dates our next scheduled meeting. However, in this regard we have circulated your draft version amongst 4 notable members of our committee (listed below) for their input going forward.

Background is that through our Built-Environment Sub-Committee we were able to review and provide input towards your document through the first draft of the Urban Agriculture Strategy – Terms of Reference (dated 2016-11-08). From that review we presented a three-part Motion to Council within the minutes of our Jan 26, 2017 meeting.

<http://sire.london.ca/advisory/mtgviewer.aspx?meetid=1422&doctype=MINUTES>

Namely: The following actions be taken with respect to the Built Environment and Facilities Sub-Committee reports from the meetings held on December 12, 2016 and January 9, 2017:

- a) a member of ACCAC BE REQUESTED to attend the upcoming Urban Agriculture Planning Meeting to be held on February 4, 2017; it being noted that if a member of ACCAC is not able to attend, a member of the Urban Agriculture Planning Meeting will come to the February ACCAC meeting to give an update;
- b) the Urban Agriculture Team BE REVISED to include ACCAC as a Council Committee “stakeholder” that supports an Urban Agriculture Strategy that recognizes accessibility and provides inclusive design considerations for our community; and,
- c) prior to the development of a newly constructed Urban Agriculture project location, the ACCAC BE PROVIDED with a proposed site plan for review and opportunity for comments related to design considerations for accessibility.

In review of this final strategy draft, we (the undersigned) note that at no place within your strategy do you reference any legal, social, or practical obligations to meet the requirements of the AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act) or the City’s Inclusive Community. Although broad references are made to accessibility through the ideals and benefits of Urban Agriculture (page 4, 6th bullet point) (page 6 speech bubble), as representatives of ACCAC we would like to see that a stronger and more direct connection is presented to confirm that the needs and benefits of accessibility and inclusive use are being recognized through all stages of your strategic plan.

Note: just as with the City’s Community Garden projects, we see any/all Urban Garden opportunities as inclusive of the City’s mandated requirements for Built-Environment “Facilities” in terms of both the AODA Legislation and it’s present Facilities and Design Standard (FADS, 2007).

Continued,

Suggestions would be that:

- a) within the descriptive paragraph of your governance (page 34, par. 3, point 2), instead of the general statement that “appropriate City of London Advisory Committees” will be included, you specifically name the individual Committee(s) that will be represented and include ACCAC as a supportive stakeholder*
- b) within the descriptive paragraph of your steering committee (page 49, composition), instead of the general statement that “appropriate City Advisory Committees” will be included, you specifically name the individual Committee(s) that will be represented and include ACCAC as a supportive stakeholder*
- c) that within your various Policy Considerations “best practices and references” that both the AODA legislation and the City of London’s Accessibility Plan be given credit for assuring that inclusive design and communication considerations will be recognized at all levels of implementation

* Note: the above referenced term “supportive stakeholder” should not imply that a member of ACCAC need be directly connected with your Steering Committee as a sitting member. Our intent is that with regards to accessibility our committee will be available, upon request, to provide assistance towards that goal as an advisory resource.

Trust this note helps present our position in this regard. And we look forward to further development of Urban Agriculture for our city.

Sincerely,

Michael Dawthorne, ACCAC, Committee Chair

Jacqueline Madden, ACCAC, Committee Vice-Chair

Jim Sanders, ACCAC, Chair of the Built-Environment Sub-Committee

Michael Cairns, ACCAC, Chair of the Policy Sub-Committee

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