

Report to Planning and Environment Committee

To: Chair and Members
Planning & Environment Committee
From: John M. Fleming
Managing Director, Planning and City Planner
Subject: The City of London Urban Agriculture Steering Committee

Planning & Environment Committee on: April 3, 2018

Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Planning & City Planner, the attached report on the Urban Agriculture Steering Committee **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Executive Summary

In accordance Council direction of November 14, 2017 staff have established the Urban Agriculture Steering Committee tasked with guiding and monitoring the implementation of the City of London's Urban Agriculture Strategy. The committee is comprised of two members appointed by Council advisory committees, one appointed by the Western Fair Association, one appointed by the Middlesex London Food Policy Council, and six selected from applications by community members. The Steering Committee held its first meeting March 9, 2018 and elected Becky Ellis as its chair.

Analysis

1.0 Previous Reports

Urban Agriculture Strategy – November 6, 2017
Draft Urban Agriculture Strategy – July 17, 2017
Urban Agriculture Strategy Terms of Reference – December 12, 2016
Urban Agriculture Strategy Draft Terms of Reference – September 6, 2016

2.0 Background

On November 14, 2017 Municipal Council endorsed London's Urban Agriculture Strategy. The strategy was developed over the course of 2016 and 2017 through significant community and City effort. At the November 14, 2017 meeting of council, council resolved:

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Planning and City Planner, the following actions be taken with respect to the Urban Agriculture Strategy:

- a) *the attached revised Urban Agriculture Strategy, consistent with the Food System policies of The London Plan, BE ADOPTED in order to guide and support the development of urban agriculture within the City of London as part of London's food system; it being noted that reference to the provision for backyard hens was deleted from the Strategy;*
- b) *the Terms of Reference for an Urban Agriculture Steering Committee appended to the staff report dated November 6, 2017 BE ENDORSED; and,*
- c) *the Managing Director, Planning and City Planner BE DIRECTED to implement the Urban Agriculture Steering Committee;*

**File: Urban Agriculture Steering Committee
Planner: L. Maitland**

it being noted that the initiatives in this Strategy that are the responsibility of the City can be accommodated within existing budgets and any new initiatives may be considered in future multi-year budget cycles; and,

it being further noted that the Planning and Environment Committee reviewed and received a communication dated November 2, 2017, from M. Woods, Chief Operating Officer, Western Fair District, with respect to this matter.

This report addresses item (c) of the resolution, the implementation of an Urban Agriculture Steering Committee.

The Urban Agriculture Steering Committee is tasked with providing on-going coordination and direction of City and community efforts. The approach taken establishes a steering committee to provide leadership, monitor implementation and report to Council on progress over the life of the Strategy. The committee is comprised of community members, including representation from Council's advisory committees, and maintains connections with the groups in London active in urban agriculture and the Urban Agriculture Strategy's development.

On November 28th, the City of London with the Middlesex-London Food Policy Council and the Western Fair Association co-hosted a celebration of local food and announced the call for applications for membership on the Steering Committee. Notice was also provided to those community members who had been involved in the development of the strategy, an email list of over 150. The invitation for applications closed February 5, 2018. In accordance with the Terms of Reference, staff selected applicants who represented the breadth of the community involved in urban agriculture and who could assist with the community implementation of the strategy.

The selected applicants bring a breadth and depth of experience that will benefit the implementation of the Urban Agriculture Strategy. The committee's membership also ensures that links are maintained between staff and active community groups through a consistent line of feedback and communication. In accordance with the terms of reference for the steering committee, members have been sought from community groups, local businesses and institutions.

Rebecca Ellis and Jeff Lucas have been selected to represent the community groups category. Rebecca Ellis is a founding member of London Urban Beekeepers Collective, is an active member of the Friends of Urban Agriculture London and is studying urban beekeeping as part of her PhD study. Jeff Lucas is involved with Friends of Urban Agriculture London, the Blackfriars Community Garden and Urban Roots, he has run programs and sat on committees and boards dedicated to organics, gardening and other co-operative projects in the past.

Paige Postma and Jeremy Horrell have been selected to represent the urban agriculture oriented business category. Paige Postma operates the Sungold Organics market garden, a bio-intensive small scale operation and sells produce locally. Jeremy Horrell is one of the founders and operators of Urban Roots London, a new urban farm in the city which sells produce locally.

Gabor Sass and Madeline Wilson have been selected to represent the local institution category. Gabor Sass is an assistant professor with the Centre for Environment and Sustainability at Western University and has been instrumental in organizing the local conferences on urban agriculture and sustainability. Gabor has a leadership role in the Kensington Village Association and Friends of Urban Agriculture London. Madeline Wilson is the co-ordinator of Covent Garden Farmers' Market and has previously worked in farming; she currently sits on the Harvest Bucks Committee, a program dedicated to providing fresh fruit and vegetables to those who would otherwise have difficulty affording them.

Although the terms of reference limits the appointments to six, two additional applicants have been invited to join the committee ex-officio. Both are community members active in urban agriculture and their experience and insight will be advantageous in this founding year of the steering committee. Stephen Harrott has 35 years of experience with composting, planting, and growing as well as organizing local food activities. He is active with the Thames Region Ecological Association and the Friends of Urban Agriculture London. Alex Tritton operates On The Move Organics within London, an organization dedicated to supplying local and organic food to households and businesses within the region.

In accordance with the terms of reference, the Advisory Committee on the Environment, the Agricultural Advisory Committee, the Middlesex-London Food Policy Council and the Western

Fair Association have appointed members to the committee. The Advisory Committee on the Environment has appointed Diane Szoller. The Agricultural Advisory Committee has appointed Skylar Franke. The Middlesex-London Food Policy Council has appointed Jana Keller. The Western Fair Association has appointed Mike Woods.

The first meeting of the Urban Agriculture Steering Committee was held March 9 and the committee has elected Rebecca Ellis as committee chair and Jeff Lucas as vice chair. In keeping with the development of the Urban Agriculture strategy, the meetings will be open to the public to allow for community attendance and input. Meeting agendas and minutes will continue to be posted on the City's Urban Agriculture Strategy webpage, which was established through the development of the strategy. Committee members are requested to disseminate and share the results of committee meeting with their respective community groups and organizations.

Conclusion

The Urban Agriculture Steering Committee is comprised of the following members:

Representing community groups:

- Becky Ellis and Jeff Lucas

Representing urban agriculture related business:

- Paige Postma and Jeremy Horrell

Representing local institutions:

- Gabor Sass and Madeline Wilson

Representing designated groups and committees as set out in the Terms of Reference:

- Diane Szoller of the Advisory Committee on the Environment
- Skylar Franke of the Agricultural Advisory Committee
- Mike Woods of the Western Fair Association
- Jana Keller of the Middlesex London Food Policy Council

Ex-officio committee members:

- Stephen Harrott and Alex Tritton

Prepared by:	Leif Maitland Planner I, Long Range Planning and Research
Submitted by:	Gregg Barrett, AICP Manager, Long Range Planning and Research
Recommended by:	John M. Fleming, MCIP, RPP Managing Director, Planning and City Planner

March 26, 2018
LM