

From: Skylar Franke

Sent: Monday, March 28, 2022 1:16 PM

To: PEC <pec@london.ca>

Cc: jeremy; Parker, Charles <CParker@London.ca>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Urban Ag on City Owned Land - Memo and Request

Hello members of PEC,

In October 2017, City Council endorsed the Urban Agriculture Strategy (“the Strategy”). The goal of this strategy is to provide guidance to the municipality and the diverse communities of London in creating a positive and enabling environment for urban agriculture by working together and supporting each other.

The purpose of the Urban Agriculture Steering Committee (UASC) is to support the implementation of the Urban Agriculture Strategy, to increase resident engagement, and to empower residents and community groups and institutions to participate in implementing the strategy by engaging in, promoting, supporting and otherwise ensuring the completion of action items set out within the strategy. We meet 4 times a year to discuss the Strategy and next steps.

As such, in order to continue eliminating barriers for urban agriculture production in the City, the UASC is submitting the attached letter for review and consideration of PEC to direct City Staff to provide a report to PEC that outlines the following:

- A clear process to apply to use city-owned land for urban agriculture
- An inventory of available land and a process to work with city staff to inquire
- A standard licensing agreement and a standard rate for a licensing agreement (ex \$2/year)
- A transparent and equitable approach to determine who can enter into agreements
- Standards for expected outcomes and uses of the City land to ensure productivity and impact
- Ensure cost of this process is low to reduce financial barriers

Please connect with jeremy@urbanrootslondon.ca, who is a member of the UASC if you have any further questions. If possible, we would be happy to send a delegation to PEC to speak to this item.

Skylar Franke

Co-Chair of the Urban Agriculture Steering Committee

Urban Agriculture on City-Owned Land

PREAMBLE:

On Tuesday, March 1, 2022, the Community and Protective Services Committee approved a proposed Licencing Agreement for the Creation of a Food Hub in Cavendish Park to move forward to City Council on March 22, 2022.

We are encouraged to see the City of London continuing to embrace urban agriculture and anticipate this as a precedent-setting agreement between the City and local organizations to utilize city-owned land for urban agriculture.

However, it is unclear how this project and these organizations were able to access this opportunity when others in the City have been denied the same opportunity. It is critical that the City of London ensures a fair and equitable process is used when determining who can access city-owned land for food production.

In the past, as recently as fall 2021, when organizations, including those led by underserved and underrepresented populations, have approached the City to grow on city-owned lands, such as parks, they have been told that the city doesn't license land for urban agriculture or that there isn't a process in place at this time that would allow them to do so.

The City of London needs to develop a transparent and equitable process to ensure other organizations and community groups can bid to license and use city land in other areas of the city for non-profit urban agriculture, so together, we can all work to improve food access.

THE IMMEDIATE ASK:

Council directs City Staff to provide a report to Council that outlines the following:

- A clear process to apply to use city-owned land for urban agriculture
- An inventory of available land and a process to work with city staff to inquire
- A standard licensing agreement and a standard rate for a licensing agreement (ex \$2/year)
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RECOMMENDATIONS:

Some longer-term considerations recommended by Urban Agriculture Steering Committee:

- The development of procedures for urban agriculture to be considered when parks or open spaces are being looked at by city staff for redesign
- Open community discussions on what areas in a neighbourhood could be used for urban agriculture.

- Development of resources for urban agriculture start-up projects, such as soil testing info, native crop information.
- Focus on nonprofits and social enterprises that are or will make a social impact, especially those led by members of equity-deserving groups and on organizations that serve underrepresented populations and city areas, being mindful and consistent with the Diversity and Inclusion Policy for the City of London