



Growing in the City Program Update

Council Committee of the Whole

June 6, 2019



Purpose

Provide an update on the impact of the Growing in the City urban food programs and highlight opportunities to advance strategic priorities



Background

Program initiatives implemented (2016 – 2018):

-  A review and update of the Community Gardens Policy;
-  An inventory of City-owned land for community food production;
-  Guidelines for food-bearing trees on City-held lands;
-  Final version of Boulevard Gardening Guidelines;
-  A review of City regulations and policies to explore the opportunity for, and implications of, supporting expanded small-scale commercial urban agriculture;
-  Voluntary guidelines for food production in mixed use, multi-unit residential developments.

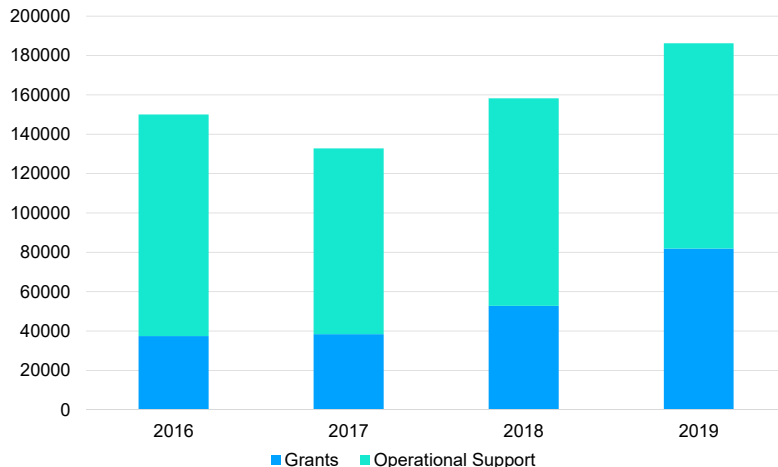


City Investment



City Investment

Grants and Direct Expenses



Program Performance

Initiatives	Results
1. Review and update Community Gardens Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13 Expressions of Interest • Four new community gardens built on City land
2. Inventory of City-owned land with community gardening potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 103 sites identified • Sites displayed in Community Gardens Feature Map on Vic Map
3. Boulevard Gardening Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All 13 neighborhoods have boulevard gardens
4. Urban Food Tree Stewardship Pilot Program: residents can partner with a non-profit to plant and maintain up to five food trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 new apple and hazelnut trees in James Bay (Charles Redfern Green, Ernest Todd Park)
5. New guide Growing Food and Gardening in Mixed-Use, Multi-Unit Residential Developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide released in March 2019
6. Bylaw amendments to enable small-scale commercial urban food production and small rooftop greenhouses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 businesses licenses granted to 10 producers. • Mixed vegetables, flowers and micro-greens



Strategic Plan Actions

Objective #5: 25. “Look for opportunities to increase food production on public land including increasing community gardens in all neighbourhoods in the city, and building urban food systems into our parks operations” (Ongoing)

Objective # 5: 15. a) “Look for opportunities to increase food production on private land” (2020)

Objective #5: 18. d) “Work with non-profits to bring back the *Sharing Backyards Program*” (2021)

Objective #5: 18 a) “... explore agriculture water rates for food production in the City on land that is used primarily for food production” (2021)



Options and Implications

A Expand City grant eligibility

1. Revise Volunteer Coordinator Grant Terms of Reference to include food tree stewardship and boulevard gardens.
2. Enact new Start-Up Grant to support convening, planning and design of new community gardens



B Pilot a City-built allotment garden

This hybrid “City-built, community-run” model ensures design and build prioritizes safety and accessibility, invests in proper site preparation, leverages existing City resources and explores new site options.



Options and Implications

C Pilot City-sponsored distribution of gardening materials

Free distribution of materials including compost, wood chips and plants at up to three locations in partnership with community organizations.



D Investigate the re-introduction of *Sharing Backyards*

Online platform to connect landowners with available backyards and gardeners looking for a gardening space.



E Support access to agricultural water rates

CRD subsidized agricultural water rates for farm class-action from BC Assessment



Options and Implications

F Establish food system targets and outcomes

Setting targets to assist with monitoring progress towards desired outcomes.



	2019 Benchmark	2022 Targets
Community Gardens	77% of neighbourhoods have a community garden	85%
Allotment Gardens	46% of neighbourhoods have allotment gardens	75%
	230 plots in 7 gardens	460 plots in X gardens
Community Food Trees	31% of neighbourhoods have community food trees	100%
Urban Agriculture	10 producers obtained business licenses between 2016-2019	20 producers will obtain business licenses by 2022



Beyond Growing in the City

2019-2022 Strategic Plan Actions	
<p>1) Objective #5: 18. c) “Support neighbourhood food/meal programs” (2021 Action)</p>	
<p>2) Objective #5: 17 b) “Support food infrastructure including farmers markets, and storage and distribution” (2020 Action)</p>	



Recommendations

That Council direct staff to proceed with the recommendations listed below, with all resource implications referred to the annual financial planning process;

- A. Expand City grant eligibility
- B. Pilot a City-built allotment garden
- C. Pilot City sponsored spring distribution of gardening materials, in partnership with community organizations
- D. Investigate the re-introduction of the Sharing Backyards program
- E. Support access to agricultural water rates
- F. Establish food system targets and outcomes

