



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Toronto Food Policy Council 2014-2015 Annual Report

Date:	April 13, 2015
To:	Board of Health
From:	Community Co-Chair, Toronto Food Policy Council Councillor Co-Chair, Toronto Food Policy Council
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This report provides an update on the activities of the Toronto Food Policy Council (TFPC) for 2014-2015. TFPC members are appointed by the Board of Health for terms of up to 3 years. Eight new members are seeking appointment to the TFPC, as well as 2 new City Council members.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Co-chairs, Toronto Food Policy Council recommend that:

1. The Board of Health appoint the individuals named in Attachment 1 to the Toronto Food Policy Council for the terms indicated, or until their successors are appointed.

Financial Impact

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

DECISION HISTORY

The Toronto Food Policy Council (TFPC) was created as a subcommittee of the Board of Health in 1991. The TFPC's current Terms of Reference (Attachment 2) were adopted by the Toronto Board of Health in 1991 and revised in 2011.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The Toronto Food Policy Council (TFPC) was created as a subcommittee of the Board of Health in 1991. The TFPC reports on its activities to the Board of Health annually. Four broad roles are outlined for the Council. The TFPC will:

1. Advise and support Toronto Public Health in the development of inclusive and comprehensive food security policies and programs expressing internationally-recognized principles of healthy public policy, social determinants of health, and the Ottawa Charter on Health Promotion;
2. Advocate for innovative community food security programs that address City-wide commitments of the Toronto Food Strategy, Toronto Food Charter and Toronto Environmental Plan;
3. Foster dialogue with Toronto Public Health, community groups, social agencies, educational institutions and businesses in the research, promotion, design, implementation and evaluation of emerging ideas in the field of community food security.
4. Act as the community reference group for the Toronto Food Strategy with a focus on identifying emerging issues, facilitating linkages between the community, Toronto Public Health and City Divisions, and advising the Food Strategy team on their implementation process.

TFPC members are appointed by the Board of Health. Members include three City Councillors, one member from the Board of Health and up to 30 citizen members from diverse sectors of the food system. Toronto Public Health provides staff support to the Council. Staff supporting the TFPC report to the Manager of the Toronto Food Strategy to ensure effective coordination. The Council meets monthly to carry out activities to advance TFPC's aims and objectives.

In order to select the proposed new members for the TFPC, the Council's Diversity, Outreach and Membership Committee reviewed TFPC membership in relation to sectoral and geographic representation and cultural diversity. Gaps in membership were identified and broad outreach was undertaken to fill these gaps. The proposed membership list (Attachment 1) reflects Toronto's neighbourhood and cultural diversity, as well as sectoral representation across the food system.

The TFPC has endorsed the proposed new members and an orientation session is scheduled for May. The proposed membership will ensure that the TFPC is able to act upon and implement the priorities of the TFPC, continue to inform the Food Strategy and Toronto Public Health, and continue to provide leadership and community engagement on food systems issues.

COMMENTS

Food Policy Council activities bridge economic development, sustainability and public health issues. The TFPC recognizes that broad food systems issues, including access to sufficient, safe, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food are important social determinants of health. The TFPC's cross-sectoral and diverse participation enhances Toronto Public Health's capacity to implement its Strategic Plan and the objectives of the Ontario Public Health Standards to reduce health inequalities. The TFPC provides advice

and support for the implementation of the Toronto Food Strategy and serves as its community reference group.

Across North America and Europe, municipal food policy development and food policy councils are proliferating. Interest continues to build in Toronto's leadership related to the TFPC and municipal food policy development. The TFPC is often contacted by the municipalities and organizations in the process of launching food policy initiatives and plays an important advisory role provincially, nationally and internationally.

The TFPC undertook a number of activities to fulfill its mandate in 2014-2015. The highlights of these activities are outlined below.

Community Meetings, Events and Presentations

A cornerstone of the TFPC's work is identifying emerging issues and facilitating dialogue, information sharing, and collaboration. Over the past year, TFPC meetings focused on the following themes and topics: Rouge National Park, Meat Consumption, Street Food, Social Finance, Indigenous Food Teachings, Solidarity City, Hospital Local Food Procurement, Urban Agriculture and Community Gardens Supported by Public Institutions, Urban Beekeeping, Evergreen's Cities for People Campaign, Public Markets, Food Sector Employment, City of Toronto Social Policy Priorities, Toronto Public Health Strategic Plan Development.

The TFPC also partnered with other organizations to host a number of community and networking events, including:

- Global Food Equity Events at New College, University of Toronto
- The Mindful Plate Food Waste Reduction Events and Appetite for Change Panel at The Green Living Show
- Municipal Food Policy Presentation and Networking sessions at Bring Food Home in Windsor, ON and Halifax, NS.

The TFPC presented at a number of conferences and meetings, with invitations from the following groups and organizations:

- Rural Ontario Municipal Association
- The Guelph and Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination
- Guelph Organic Conference
- Ontario Public Health Association Nutrition Resource Centre
- Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs
- Ontario Professional Planners Institute
- Sheridan College, School of Craft and Design
- Moisson Montreal/La Conférence Régionale des Elus, Montreal
- Global Alliance on the Future of Food
- LHForum, France
- City of Halifax
- International Sustainability Unit, UK
- Communitas Coalition, New York

Food Policy and Advocacy in Toronto and the Greater Golden Horseshoe

The TFPC advocates for food policies that generate access to healthy food, enhance social justice, strengthen the regional food economy, promote environmental sustainability, and embed a food systems approach through municipal policy development. The following food policy and advocacy work was undertaken by the TFPC in 2014-2015.

What Food Can Do For Toronto

- Developed food policy priorities for the next four years of TFPC work.
- Educated municipal councillor and mayoral candidates on the importance of a healthy sustainable food system in Toronto.
- Created “What Food Can Do For Toronto” resources, outlining food assets and opportunities ward by ward.

Urban Agriculture

- Participated in the Toronto Agriculture Program and City-Sector Urban Agriculture Steering Committee with the goal of scaling up urban agriculture in the City of Toronto.
- Advocated for market gardens in hydro corridors.
- Supported successful funding applications to the Trillium Foundation, Local Food Fund, Metcalf Foundation, and McConnell Foundation in partnership with the Toronto Urban Growers.
- Participated in the Healthier Harvest Research Consortium, a community-university research initiative working on a Health Impact Assessment of the Black Creek Community Farm and on identifying urban agriculture indicators.
- Published a Guide to Growing and Selling Fresh Fruit and Vegetables in Toronto.
- Provided feedback to the Rouge National Urban Park’s draft management plan.

Food Waste Reduction

- Published an issues paper exploring food waste reduction opportunities for the City of Toronto.
- Co-Sponsored the screening of Just Eat It, a documentary on food waste at New College, University of Toronto. Organized a panel of experts to discuss the film.
- Co-Sponsored “The Mindful Plate” a food waste education event and organized an expert panel on food waste, “Appetite for Change” at the Green Living Show.
- Created a hub for food waste reduction resources online.

Good Food, Good Jobs

- Convened an advisory group to work with the Food Strategy and a labour market consultant to understand food sector employment dynamics.
- Co-Published a report on food sector employment dynamics.
- Explored next steps related to a “Good Food, Good Jobs” strategy for the City of Toronto.

Greater Toronto Area Agricultural Action Committee / Greater Golden Horseshoe Food and Farm Alliance

- The TFPC participates on the Greater Toronto Area Agriculture Action Committee (GTA AAC). The GTA AAC is a unique partnership involving the four regional municipalities of Halton, Peel, York and Durham, the four Greater Toronto Area Federations of Agriculture (Halton, Peel, York and Durham), the City of Toronto, the TFPC, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and the private sector.
- TFPC staff participate on a regional working group that supports the implementation the *Greater Golden Horseshoe Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy, Food and Farming: An Action Plan 202*.

TFPC Communications

- The TFPC continues to maintain a blog (www.tfpc.to) and engage in social media through Facebook (2500 “likes”) and Twitter (3000 followers @TOfoodpolicy). Over 1500 people receive regular e-newsletters from the TFPC.

Cross Jurisdictional Food Policy and Advocacy

The TFPC works with provincial and national partners on a number of food policy initiatives.

Sustain Ontario Municipal/Regional Food Policy Working Group

- The TFPC worked with Sustain Ontario to convene a network on municipal/regional food policy.

Food Secure Canada

- The TFPC participated in Food Secure Canada’s strategic planning meeting in Montreal, as well as the bi-annual assembly held in Halifax, NS.

International Partnerships

- In partnership with Ryerson University and the Food Strategy team, received funding for a four city municipal food policy learning and research network.
- The City of Toronto has been selected by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the RUA Foundation, for a food system assessment in collaboration with the Wilfred Laurier Centre for Sustainable Food Systems.
- The Toronto Food Policy Council supports the development of the Global City-Region Food Systems Collaborative.
- The Toronto Food Policy Council supports the development of the Milan Food Policy Pact.
- The Toronto Food Policy Council is an advisor to the International Urban Food Network.

Toronto Food Strategy

The Toronto Food Strategy continues to build momentum with the development of a number of initiatives. The TFPC plays an important role in the ongoing evolution of the

Toronto Food Strategy, and the Food Strategy appears on the agenda of all TFPC meetings to facilitate in depth reports and knowledge-sharing between the staff team and TFPC members. This provides expanded capacity for the implementation of the Food Strategy, and ensures stronger linkages between Toronto Public Health and a range of community food initiatives. It also enables stronger linkages between the TFPC and City of Toronto government. TFPC members, the Food Strategy Team and other Toronto Public Health staff work in partnership on several Food Strategy initiatives:

- Mobile Good Food Market
- Wholesale procurement for the community food sector.
- Community access and commercialization of world crops
- Healthy corner stores
- Urban agriculture

The Medical Officer of Health will report to the Board of Health on these activities later in 2015.

Toronto Youth Food Policy Council

The Toronto Youth Food Policy Council's (TYFPC) activities are supported by staff of Toronto Public Health, regularly engaging youth in events, discussions and policy-making. The TYFPC seeks to mobilize and engage youth to make change by building a just food system. The 12 member Council provides youth with a vehicle to network, share opportunities, learn from one another, and connect to community food initiatives. The TYFPC strives to become Toronto's leading youth voice in sustainable municipal food policy change. At their well attended monthly meetings the youth consider a variety of food issues. The outcomes of meetings are reported back to the TFPC, and youth priorities are presented to the TFPC and the Food Strategy team.

Some of the highlights from TYFPC 2014-2015 activities include:

- Hosted 5 community-based events focused on food and mental health, engaging youth in municipal politics, food justice, youth poverty and food bank use, urban agriculture and Aboriginal food security.
- Published the second edition of the peer reviewed youth journal *Gathering* featuring 5 young writers and launched a creative journal.
- Designed and delivered a food policy workshop 101 to community youth groups across Toronto.
- Mentored 5 service learning students from different Toronto based colleges and universities.
- In addition to working closely with the TFPC, the TYFPC collaborated with a variety of community food groups and organizations including: Sustain Ontario, Black Creek Community Farm, Everdale Farm, Evergreen, Food Forward, Three Sisters House, University of Toronto – Equity Studies and New College, FoodShare, Parkdale Activity and Recreation Centre, Regent Park Community Food Centre, Food Secure Canada, Justicia for Migrant Workers and MealExchange.

- The TYFPC was the first youth food council represented on the Food Secure Canada's Youth Caucus.

TFPC meetings, open to the public, will continue to be engaging and relevant and will continue to be an excellent vehicle for information sharing and spirited discussion. The TFPC will continue to act upon and implement the above priorities, continue to inform the Food Strategy, and continue to provide leadership and community engagement on food systems issues.

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Toronto Food Policy Council 2015 Membership Update
Attachment 2: Toronto Food Policy Council Terms of Reference