

## Background

At the January 16, 2017 Community Services Committee meeting, Council received a presentation and report regarding a community farm project. Council was advised that the Social Planning Council had received an Ontario Trillium Seed Grant to create a community farm, modeled after similar projects developed across Ontario. Working with City of Greater Sudbury (City) representatives, the Ryan Heights Playground was selected as the proposed location for the community farm.

Council passed the following resolution:

*WHEREAS the Social Planning Council has successfully applied for an Ontario Trillium Seed Grant for a Community Farm Project, and;*

*WHEREAS the City of Greater Sudbury is supportive of the project and its impact on the Strategic Plan of the City of Greater Sudbury and the Social Determinants of Health;*

*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Greater Sudbury approves the concept of a community farm and directs staff, in consultation with Planning Services, to enter into negotiations for a land lease agreement with the Social Planning Council in order to use the Ryan Heights property behind 720 Bruce Avenue for a Community Farm Project.*

Council also requested a report back to the Community Services Committee with outcomes of the program after the first season.

## Update

Upon Council's direction, the City executed a licensing agreement with the Social Planning Council for the development and operation of an urban community farm. The initial term of the agreement was for a three year period, with rights to renew for an additional seven, one-year periods.

Development of the Flour Mill Community Farm initiated in June 2017. A total of 2400 ft<sup>2</sup> of farming area was developed as part of the project. The community farm uses ecological agricultural, meaning there is no use of synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides.

A total of nine individuals were employed as part of the project, with seven neighbourhood youth hired for seven weeks through YMCA Employment Services. The youth were responsible for harvesting, weeding, watering, seeding, transplanting and building new gardens. The youth also visited mentor farms, attended workshops and earned high school credits as part of their experience.

Crops included carrots, potatoes, squash, tomatoes, kale, cucumber, mushrooms and zucchini. Approximately 1000 pounds of food was produced during the first year of

operations. Weekly market stands were organized to make food available for the neighbourhood.

The Flour Mill Community Farm developed a number of local partnerships with community organizations including Sudbury Secondary School, Queen Elizabeth Public School, Ryan Heights Neighbourhood Association, NOAH Community Hub, Sudbury Regional Business Centre and local mentor farms.

The Social Planning Council has secured three additional years of funding through the Ontario Poverty Reduction Fund. The Flour Mill Community Farm will employ another eight neighbourhood youth in the summer of 2018 and there are plans to add a second phase of the farm this summer.

## **Summary**

The Flour Mill Community Farm had a successful launch in 2017. The project is fitting with the Quality of Life priority in Council's strategic plan and supports the Greater Sudbury Food Strategy by increasing local agriculture while providing more healthy food and lifestyle opportunities.

## **Next Steps**

The City will continue to support the efforts of the Social Planning Council with respect to the use of Ryan Heights Playground for the Flour Mill Community Farm. Extension terms of the licensing agreement will be exercised as necessary, provided that the agreed terms of the agreement are followed.

## **References**

Community Farm Project, Community Services Committee, January 16, 2017  
<http://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?pg=feed&action=file&agenda=report&itemid=2&id=1150>

Flour Mill Community Farm Facebook Page  
<https://www.facebook.com/FlourMillCommunityFarm/>