

## Request for Decision

### Community Farm Project

Presented To:	Community Services Committee
Presented:	Monday, Jan 16, 2017
Report Date	Wednesday, Dec 21, 2016
Type:	Presentations

### 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.

### Finance Implications

This report has no financial implications at this time. If the concept is approved, staff will advise Council of financial implications as part of the lease negotiations.

## Health Impact Assessment

This initiative addresses several aspects of the social determinants of health and is intended to enhance food security services based on the results from similar models in other communities.

The Social Planning Council will report back to Community Services with outcomes of the program after the first season.

## Background

The Social Planning Council (SPC) has successfully applied for an Ontario Trillium Seed Grant for the creation of a Community Farm Project, modeled after similar projects that are occurring in different

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communities within the Province of Ontario.

The SPC has met with staff in the Parks Department to identify possible locations in the Flour Mill area, and are interested in proceeding with a proposed location at Ryan Heights playground behind 720 Bruce Avenue (as shown in the attached schematic).

Staff have discussed the project with the Real Estate and will consult with Risk Management to identify the parameters to be put in place should the City of Greater Sudbury approve the project on City property.

### **Outcomes**

Staff is supportive of the Community Farm project as it fits within the Quality of Life priority in the Strategic Plan of Council, and further helps to address the social determinants of health.

The SPC has indicated that “existing models... have proven to ameliorate social, environmental, and economic conditions for those living in marginalized urban communities”.

This project has also been designed to mesh with a \$37,500 Healthy Communities Initiative (HCI) grant that was approved by Council on August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016 for new play structures at the location. The City of Greater Sudbury has also applied for an accessibility grant for the Ryan Heights location which would augment the work that will be done next summer, 2017. At the time of writing, the City of Greater Sudbury had not yet heard if the grant submission was successful. The SPC Trillium grant combined with the HCI grant and possible accessibility grant would allow for a large scale redevelopment of the Ryan Heights playground area.

The attached presentation from the SPC gives a full overview of the project.



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# THE FLOUR MILL COMMUNITY FARM

Presented to The City of Greater Sudbury

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# Project Overview: Description

- Through the proposed Flour Mill Community Farm (FMcF) project, the Social Planning Council of Sudbury (SPCS) will support neighbourhood residents in planning an outdoor urban agricultural area that will remediate an underutilized green space and create future opportunities that will benefit the local community and environment.
- With a focus on engaging the high concentration of youth from the area, the project will aim to encourage the development of marketable skills using ecological agricultural production as a medium to promote teambuilding, healthy work ethic and leadership which will serve as a gateway to future employment opportunities. A group of youth trained by a farm-mentor will be hired to produce and process food which will be sold and donated during the 2017 growing season.
- The Flour Mill Community Farm will use urban agricultural projects to promote community food security and augment the neighbourhood's understanding of the impact food can have on health, the environment, and the economy through educational workshops & workdays.

# Proposed Location: Ryan Heights Playground





## Project Overview: Description (continued)

- The neighbourhood and communities which will be closely connected to The Flour Mill Community Farm geographically are unique and diverse. The SDHU created maps that included the distribution of people living in areas of high deprivation according to social and economic characteristics across the City of Greater Sudbury (CGS). The Ryan Heights Playground is located in a ward that inhabits 9% of the overall population of the CGS (14 886 people), 36% of which live in the most deprived area of the ward (5 384 people, including children).
- EarthCare Sudbury also developed a food access map that shows locations of farm-gate sales in the region. Farms are located more than 30km away from this neighbourhood. An urban farm closer to residents will improve access to affordable local foods and reduce transportation impacts.
- Urban agriculture strengthens food security in impoverished areas and promotes well-being and community collaboration. This project aligns with provincial and local priorities; agriculture is identified as a priority sector in the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario, and environmental remediation and the growth of the agricultural sector are mentioned in From the Ground Up, a community economic development plan for the CGS.

# Demographics of The Ryan Heights Neighbourhood\*

## Population by Age

- Total Population - 3,061
  - ▣ 0 to 4 years old - 225
  - ▣ 5 to 9 years old - 180
  - ▣ 10 to 14 years old - 175
  - ▣ 15 to 19 years old - 200
- Total count of people aged 0 to 19 - 780
- % of population that is 0 to 19 - 25.5% (Greater Sudbury average is 22.1%)

## Income

- Median income - \$19,227 \* (Greater Sudbury is \$32,941)

\*All data is from the **2011 Census Profile** from Stats Can. taken from the closest five dissemination areas around the Ryan Heights playground, all of which are within a five minute walk to the park itself. The exception is the **median income** which was taken from **2011 National Household Survey Profile**.



# Ryan Heights Food Network



## Food Options for residents in Ryan Heights Area

The image above demonstrates the food options available to those living in the Ryan Heights neighbourhood, with the distance in walking minutes to each location listed. The Ryan Heights Playground is a preferred location for the Flour Mill Community Farm as having access to affordable, fresh, local, ecologically-grown produce within a five minute walk may impact residents' food choices, especially if they do not have access to a vehicle.

## Project Overview: Example Urban Agricultural Projects & Workshops which may be held at the FMCM

- 1) Market Gardening 101
- 2) Introduction to Ecological Gardening Techniques
- 3) Get your soil-mix right: Growing nutrient-dense veggies
- 4) Creating Wild Pollinator Habitat
- 5) Plant Identification & Medicinal Plant Walk & Talks
- 6) Composting 101
- 7) Selecting Fruit & Veggie Varieties for a Northern Climate
- 8) Introduction to Permaculture

## Successful Models Currently in Operation

- The Urban Agriculture movement is growing all over Ontario and Canada. Some examples of existing models which have proven to ameliorate social, environmental, and economic conditions for those living in marginalized urban communities will be presented next. The Flour Mill Community Farm project will strive to achieve similar goals when it comes to community development & engagement.



## Successful Models Currently in Operation : Roots to Harvest (Thunder Bay)

- Roots to Harvest is an incorporated, not-for-profit organization based in Thunder Bay, Ontario with a vision of a future where youth are leaders, connecting a diverse community and cultivating food that's healthy and accessible.
- Mission: to provide transformative educational opportunities for youth to engage with local agriculture and cultivate healthy communities
- Their Urban Youth Farming Program runs for six weeks during July and August on a one acre plot located in the heart of Thunder Bay's emerging small business district
- Summer Food Interns are hired, aged 15-18 through the 'Summer Jobs for Youth' employment program with YES Employment Services.
- Food Interns work together to plant, tend, harvest, sell and donate sustainably grown vegetables.
- The Urban Market Garden is a space for the interns to develop skills and confidence through contributing healthy, sustainably grown food to the local food system
- The Urban Market Garden is a meeting place and destination for community members who come to visit the garden, meet the Interns, learn and share knowledge about growing food, and access fresh, locally grown produce



## Successful Models Currently in Operation : Black Creek Community Farm (Toronto)

- Launched in 2013, it is Toronto's largest urban farm. The farm's mission is to engage, educate and empower diverse communities through the growing and sharing of food.
- Located on seven acres in the heart of the Jane-Finch community, the farm aims to:
  - Serve and inspire the local community
  - Build community food security by growing fresh healthy food
  - Support diverse natural and social ecosystems
  - Create new and dynamic economic opportunities through hands-on training and intergenerational learning experiences
  - Provide a food justice leadership model for other communities



ecoSource

Growing a Green Community

## Successful Models Currently in Operation : EcoSource's Community Roots Project (Mississauga)

- The Community Roots project emerged out of the Mississauga Sustainable Urban Agriculture project
- The project increases opportunities for Peel residents to connect with nature, understand their impact on the local food system through hands-on learning and take action to improve the health of their communities through neighbourhood projects.
- The project focuses on food system education and sustainability action projects, and skills training at Ecosource's Iceland Teaching Garden.
- The food that is produced is donated to Eden Food For Change and sold through the #GrownInMississauga social enterprise.
- All proceeds from produce sales help support community programs offered through the Community Roots project.



## Successful Models Currently in Operation : You Made it Café (Food Processing Model) (London)

- The YOU Made It Café in London, ON is a social enterprise owned and operated by Youth Opportunities Unlimited as an employment skills program for youth who face barriers due to homelessness, unemployment and lack of education.
- Youth employed in the café benefit from a thorough skills training program under the mentorship of professional staff.
- Market Quality Preserves are made by local youth in the heart of downtown Strathroy at The Next Wave Youth Centre. Under supervision, local youth prepare jams, chutney, salsa and sauces from start to finish.
- Youth gain skills and confidence in the kitchen while learning employment and life skills to help prepare for future success in the work place.
- With every purchase of Market Quality Preserves, customers contribute to helping local youth build skills, confidence and independence to reach their potential.



# The Flour Mill Community Farm, Project Summary

- Project Launch in the fall of 2016 by The Social Planning Council of Sudbury, funded by The Ontario Trillium Foundation's Seed Grant
- Food will be produced at a determined location in the Flour Mill area in 2017 with the proposed site being the Ryan Heights Playground
- A group of youth will be hired to produce and process food alongside a farm-mentor using ecological agricultural methods as a medium for employment skills development
- The Flour Mill Community Farm will provide a new option for healthy food access in the area, as well as augment residents' food literacy, their connection to the environment and neighbours
- Workshops and workdays will engage members of the neighbourhood to participate in the farm operations and will provide an opportunity to access a "farm to fork" experience in an urban setting



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Thank you