

**From:** "Johnston, Sadhu" <Sadhu.Johnston@vancouver.ca>

**To:** "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"

**CC:** "City Manager's Correspondence Group - DL"  
"Singh, Sandra" <Sandra.Singh@vancouver.ca>

**Date:** 2/11/2020 10:17:43 AM

**Subject:** Memo - Update on Report Back - Urban Farming RTS 011379

**Attachments:** ACCS - GM - Memo (Council) Update on Urban Farming - RTS 011379 (2020-02....pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

Attached is a memo from the General Manager of Arts, Culture, and Community Services, Sandra Singh regarding the status of urban farming guidelines (RTS 011379) adopted by Council as a pilot in March 2016. Highlights include:

- **Background:** in March 2016, staff were asked to review the guidelines and report back to Council. To date, staff has carried out internal staff engagement and external engagement activities with urban farmers, and funded an independent assessment of the guidelines Stakeholders including the Vancouver Food Policy Council, the Vancouver Urban Farming Society, and others.
- **Of note:** these farmers provide low barrier jobs in several instances, reduces social isolation, in addition to the potential future state of needing to grow more food in urban areas
- **Staff plan to report to Council with the results of this work in May 2019.** Information on potential sites, next steps and timing.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to email Sandra Singh at [Sandra.Singh@vancouver.ca](mailto:Sandra.Singh@vancouver.ca).

Best,  
Sadhu

Sadhu Aufochs Johnston | City Manager  
Office of the City Manager | City of Vancouver  
604.873.7627 | [sadhu.johnston@vancouver.ca](mailto:sadhu.johnston@vancouver.ca)

Pronouns: he, him, his



*The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples.*

---

**MEMORANDUM**

February 7, 2020

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Sadhu Johnston, City Manager  
Paul Mochrie, Deputy City Manager  
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office  
Rena Kendall-Craden, Communications Director  
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk  
Neil Monckton, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Alvin Singh, Communications Director, Mayor's Office  
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Mary Clare Zak, Managing Director Social Policy and Projects  
Jessie Adcock, General Manager Development, Buildings, and Licensing  
Kathryn Holm, Chief Licence Inspector  
Gil Kelley, General Manager, Planning, Urban Design & Sustainability  
Chris Robertson, Assistant Director, City-Wide & Regional Planning  
Nick Kassam, General Manager Real Estate and Facilities Management  
Grace Cheng, Director, Long-term Financial Strategy & Planning  
Caitlin Dorward, Social Planner, Social Policy

FROM: Sandra Singh, General Manager, Arts, Culture and Community Services

SUBJECT: Update on *Report Back - Urban Farming RTS 011379*

---

**PURPOSE**

This memo updates Mayor and Council on the status of:

- February 2016 staff report on urban farming; and
- March 2016 Council motion directing the Managing Director of Social Policy and Projects to collaborate with the Vancouver Food Policy Council, Urban Farming Society and the Vancouver farming community in monitoring this policy pilot and to report back to Council in 2018 (RTS 0011379).

The report back was subsequently delayed given additional time required to review the outcomes of the urban farming pilot and the need to address other Council priorities.

## **BACKGROUND**

In March 2016, Council adopted Urban Farm Guidelines to legitimize urban farming as a permitted land use and a licensable business type (*RTS 11150: Amendments to Zoning and Development By-law and Business License By-law regarding Urban Farming*).

Urban Farming is defined as growing fruits and vegetables for sale. Smaller scale *Class A* urban farms are permitted in residential zones and on institutional properties. Larger scale *Class B* urban farms are permitted in industrial, commercial, and historic area zones and may include farming on vacant sites, in greenhouses, on rooftops, or indoors.

Urban farming supports Greenest City, Healthy City, Vancouver Economic Action Plan, and Food Strategy goals, including increasing food assets, supporting the green economy, and shortening food supply chains. It is further aligned with Vancouver Plan objectives to create a more livable, complete community and to build resiliency.

Council directed staff to collaborate with stakeholders on monitoring the policy over a two season pilot period and to report back to Council on the policy's effectiveness.

## **DISCUSSION**

To date, Social Policy staff has carried out preliminary policy monitoring activities including:

- Conducting interviews with individual urban farmers regarding their experience with the urban farming policies;
- Providing a grant to the Vancouver Urban Farming Society to provide an assessment of the guidelines for Class B urban farms and conduct the 2016 Urban Farming Census, which details the food production, economic, and social impact of Vancouver's urban farms;
- Reviewing urban farming policy precedents from other municipalities; and
- Internal staff consultation on the feasibility of amendments to Vancouver's regulations to address urban farmers' concerns and limitations of the policy.
- Feedback to date has identified concerns related to the limitations of current guidelines on the urban farming sector.
- Urban farmers are reporting on outcomes that include creating low barrier jobs, reducing social isolation, increasing food literacy, in addition to providing a source of healthy local food.

## **NEXT STEPS**

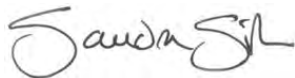
From December 2019 – April 2020, Social Policy staff are building upon the work outlined above by consulting with stakeholders including urban farmers, the Vancouver Food Policy Council, the Vancouver Urban Farming Society, participating at a January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Urban Farming Forum, and working with staff across City departments to develop recommendations for amendments to the Urban Farm Guidelines to support urban farmers.

Staff plan to report to Council with the results of this work in Q2 2020.

## **FINAL REMARKS**

If there are any questions or Councillors need additional information, please feel free to contact Sandra Singh, General Manager at [Sandra.singh@vancouver.ca](mailto:Sandra.singh@vancouver.ca)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sandra Singh". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sandra Singh  
General Manager, Arts, Culture and Community Services  
604.871.6858 | [sandra.singh@vancouver.ca](mailto:sandra.singh@vancouver.ca)

SS/sjp