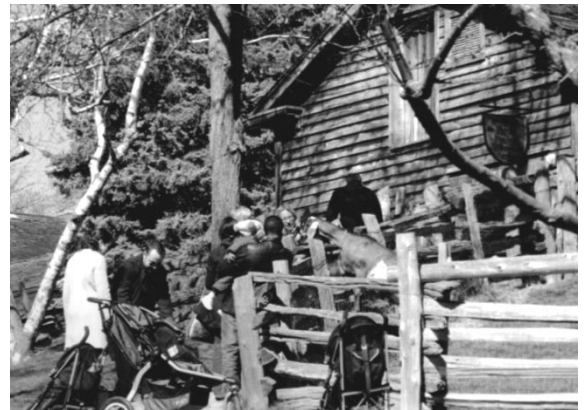


Riverdale Farm Business Plan

Submitted by the Riverdale Farm Coalition



(Photos courtesy of George Rust-D'Eye)

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Executive Summary

On September 26, 2011, City Council unanimously supported the Riverdale Farm Coalition (Coalition) proposal to work with the community and other stakeholders to develop a new partnership and strategic direction for Riverdale Farm (Farm). The Coalition engaged the participation of the community, three orders of government, for-profit corporations, and not-for-profit organizations through surveys, town hall meetings, workshops, and one-on-one discussions. In addition, Coalition members researched opportunities pertaining to urban farming and urban green spaces, and reviewed comparable funding and operating models. The input from the various stakeholders and the research done by the Coalition are the backbone of the business plan (please see *Community Consultation* for details).

Throughout the process, these stakeholders identified the Farm as an oasis in the city that offers a tranquil setting where families can interact with nature and educate children about farming and food issues. From this foundation, the Coalition identified the opportunity to showcase the Riverdale Farm as a centre for urban agriculture, taking advantage of growing worldwide food trends, including locally sourced, sustainable, and organic food. Community members and organizations willing to partner with the Farm (through financial contributions, fundraising initiatives, volunteerism, and programming assistance) have overwhelmingly supported this enhanced vision.

Stakeholders support the transformation of what is currently utilized as a recreation and amusement facility into a City hub that engages the public in sustainable urban agriculture (livestock and plant based) and food literacy through educational events, interpretation, and participatory experiences, while maintaining the “Oasis in the City” feel. They would like to see the Farm retain its informal and unstructured atmosphere, but support the introduction of educational and participatory programming that targets a diverse population. By doing so, they are encouraged by the prospect that the new value created for visitors will further increase the significance of the Farm for the City.

As the only urban farm in Canada, the Farm is already a unique green space and its programs and educational offerings are poised to become increasingly integral. Future programs will focus on the Farm as a hub of sustainable urban agriculture that promotes food literacy and education, healthy lifestyles and the environment. Other complimentary programs (i.e., arts, camp, etc) will underscore the role of the Farm as a community resource and meeting place. Such new programming will enhance the value of the Farm, strengthen the Farm’s social return on investment and will present new opportunities for novel partnerships, which in turn will reduce the City's future financial obligation.

To further reduce the City's costs in operating the Farm, the Coalition’s Business Plan proposes five key initiatives to diversify funding sources for the Farm:

1. **Fundraising** – Donate directly to the Farm through (i) donation boxes at the point of entry to the Farm; (ii) Farm membership; (iii) online contributions through the Toronto Parks and Trees Foundation; (iv) and special events.
2. **Sponsorships** – from both for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, foundations, and government that may involve naming rights of buildings and programs.
3. **Government, Corporate, and Foundations** – opportunities exist within government agencies, corporations, not-for-profits, and foundations to fund program and capital enhancements. Many of these would require an application process or a formal agreement, and funds would only be spent as received.
4. **On-site revenue opportunities** – Farmers Market, event bookings at Farm facilities, food service expansion, retail, and programming
5. **Cost Diversion** – Capitalize on the pool of volunteers who are eager to help with the operation of the Farm and create long-lasting partnerships with organizations such as post-secondary institutions, local food groups, and national organizations.

A summary of the long term financial goals from each initiative is as follows (please see *Financial Overview* for details):

Long Term Financial Goals

Fundraising Initiatives	Fundraising Campaigns	\$200,000
	Membership Drives	\$40,000
	Donation Box	\$40,000
Revenue Generation	Farmers Market	\$4,000
	Venue Bookings	\$6,000
	Gift Shop	\$10,000
	Food Facilities	\$45,000
ANNUAL TOTAL		\$345,000
Program and Capital Enhancements (Budgeted as grants are received)	Naming Rights/Sponsorships	\$150,000
	Government, Corporate & Foundation Donations	\$500,000
ANNUAL TOTAL		\$650,000

Donations collected from the various initiatives would be deposited in a Riverdale Farm account at the Toronto Parks and Trees Foundation, allowing donors to receive a tax receipt. This account was already set up in April 2012 for this purpose. Should fundraising exceed expectations, the Coalition envisions the creation of a reserve fund or the formation of an endowment as a possible strategy to create a

regular source of financing. These funds could be made available for future capital and programming enhancements or to offset some operating costs.

A newly created Riverdale Farm Stewardship Group (RFSG) will oversee implementation of the Business Plan. The RFSG will be responsible for raising funds, seeking sponsorships, and working with partner organizations on programming and priorities. The RFSG will be made up of City staff, community representatives and sponsor / partner representatives, where appropriate. The RFSG will phase in the Business Plan over five years and perform a review during the fifth year.

A significant obstacle to executing this plan is the current lack of long-term stability. In discussions with potential partners, sponsors, and donors – both corporate and individuals – Coalition members repeatedly heard a reluctance to commit to any form of investment while the future of the Farm remained uncertain. For this strategy to be successfully implemented, the Coalition recommends that the City provide a stable source of core funding to see the Farm through its transition to a diversified and stable revenue model, a continued commitment to care for the animals, and human resources to help implement the plan. In return, the City can expect to benefit from a reduction in financial requirements and a revitalized facility that will be a cultural driver, food policy driver, and economic driver for the city as a whole.

Riverdale Farm Mission Statement

The Coalition proposes the following Mission Statement be adopted by the City of Toronto for the Riverdale Farm.

Riverdale Farm is a rural destination for all Torontonians in the heart of the city, serving as a meeting place for families and friends, a hub to promote community participation and volunteering through programming centred around the plants, animals, sustainable farming, urban agriculture, food production, and the environment, in a natural, tranquil setting.

Commitment

In support of the mission, the City of Toronto and the Riverdale Farm Stewardship Group are committed to:

- maintaining the quiet, peaceful, natural setting of the Farm. It is an Oasis in the City;
- supporting a rich selection of programs and activities that encourage full participation from all age groups, and all ethno-racial backgrounds, disadvantaged and under-resourced groups and individuals;
- providing physically accessible facilities and programs;
- partnering with community-based agencies and groups;

- cultivating our role in and contribution to the local and larger Toronto community;
- providing the highest quality of public service that conveys respect and care for all people, animals and possessions; the reflection of our collective, diverse heritage; and the highlighting of our rural Ontario heritage;
- communicating and sharing resources;
- embodying a positive ambassadorial role that represents the best of the City of Toronto to visitors from other cities, provinces and countries;
- a state of financial stability, diversified revenue sources, and operating with transparency and accountability.

The Riverdale Farm Mission will be achieved through:

- the year-round operation within the city of a Farm that includes elements of rural and urban agricultural life from the nineteenth century to the present-day, both as a backdrop for casual visits and for engaging public programming;
- maintaining the presence of natural areas, heritage animals and plants, as well as activities that will contribute to the knowledge, health, and well-being of people in urban communities;
- building partnerships with other organizations to collaborate on, facilitate, and support education programs designed to explore the relationships that exists between people and food, animals, and the natural and cultivated environments;
- active outreach to and communication with the community at all levels – individual, groups, agencies and educational, health, medical, agricultural, and environmental institutions;
- the development of policies and procedures that govern the Riverdale Farm Stewardship Group’s role in supporting the operation of the Farm by the City.

Recommendations

The Riverdale Farm Coalition recommends to City staff:

1. City of Toronto receives donations for Riverdale Farm from the public, businesses, and organizations through the Toronto Parks and Trees Foundations.
2. City of Toronto endorses the Mission Statement and strategic direction outlined in this report.
3. City of Toronto endorses the formation of a Riverdale Farm Stewardship Group and that the Stewardship Group be constituted before 2013.
4. Terms of Reference for the Riverdale Farm Stewardship Group be drafted in consultation with the Coalition, outlining the Group's role in:
 - a. Developing policies and procedures that outline the long-term strategic directions and advising on the day-to-day operation of the Farm.
 - b. Drafting of a Terms of Reference for programming at the Farm and partnerships in programming with for-profit and not-for-profit organizations;
 - c. Finalizing the implementation for the business plan, setting benchmarks, and overseeing the execution of the plan;
 - d. Supporting efforts to secure sponsorships and fundraising activities;
 - e. Setting priorities for the use of donations in the Parks and Trees Foundation and investigating options for the creation of a reserve and/or endowment fund.
5. City of Toronto continues its funding and staffing commitment to the Riverdale Farm.

Introduction

The Riverdale Farm presently serves as a beloved and cherished Toronto institution, offering a unique year-round experience to urban visitors in the heart of the City. As a vital part of the fabric of Toronto, a coalition of concerned citizen groups has joined together to re-imagine the Farm and make a tangible difference in the lives of people across Toronto.

The Farm attracts approximately 100,000 visitors annually and has received high visibility in the media during the last year. This attention has generated a wealth of community feedback about the importance of the Farm. With thousands in the community – and beyond – signing petitions, following on social media, and participating in community consultations and surveys, the importance of the Farm has been clearly demonstrated. The input of users and residents has helped highlight features that are valued and those to be improved.

For decades, the Farm has benefitted from a very active volunteer community that has participated in numerous activities, from painting picket fences to organizing community-wide events at the Farm. In addition, gardening groups, community groups, and individuals have dedicated countless hours to the betterment of the Farm.

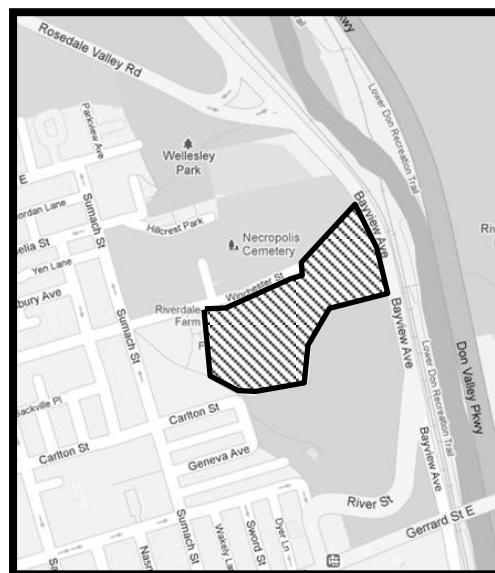
This business plan seeks to capture the numerous opportunities and synergies into a long term vision that includes a funding model that does not rely solely on City resources.

Current State of Riverdale Farm

Located at 201 Winchester Street, Riverdale Farm is a 3-hectare (7.4-acre) working farm owned by the City of Toronto and operated by Parks, Forestry and Recreation. It is open year round from 9 am to 5 pm with free admission (including weekends and holidays).

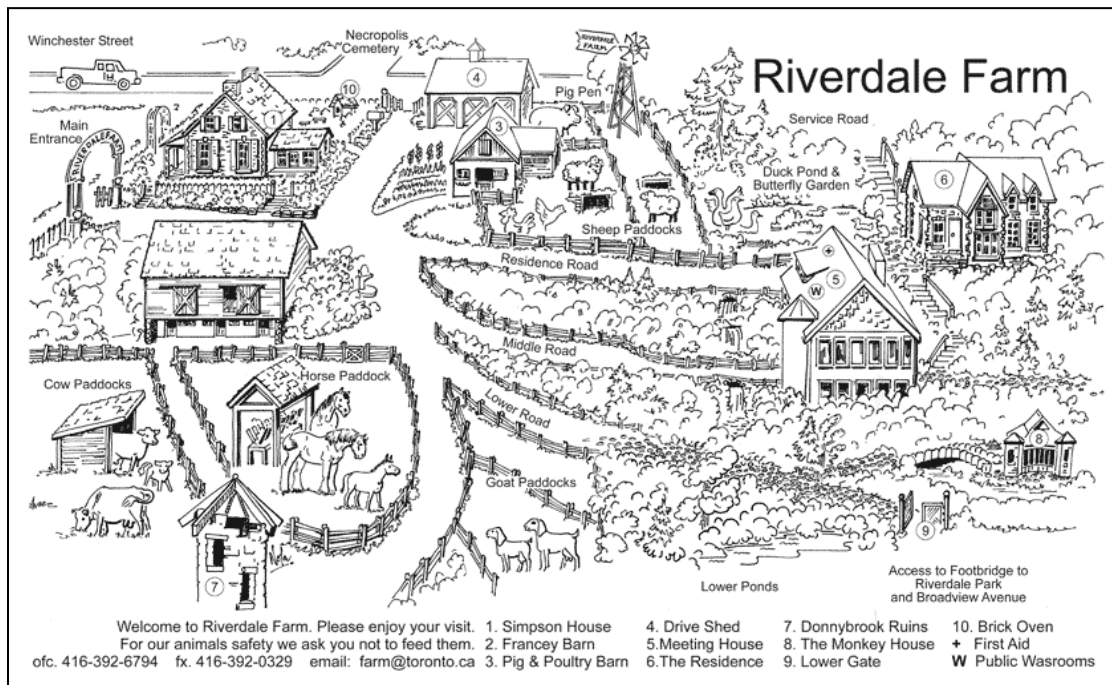
The Farm is accessed through the main gate in Riverdale Park West, the vehicle gate off Winchester Street, and the lower gate which allows access to Riverdale Park East via the footbridge crossing Bayview Avenue and the Don Valley Parkway.

The Farm is made up of the Upper Area (approximately 2 acres) which is the formal area of the Farm that includes the animals and buildings, and the Lower Area (approximately 5.5 acres) which consists of pathways, wooded areas, ponds, and butterfly garden.



When the Farm opened, there were two primary objectives:

- 1) To give city children the chance to see how a farm operated during the late 19th / early 20th century; and
- 2) To feature rare farm animal breeds that would have been on the farm at the turn of the 20th century but that are no longer in use today.



Inventory of Farm Assets

The Animals

The animals at the Farm include rare breeds that might have been on a farm at the turn of the 20th century. They include: cows, horses, donkeys, sheep, goats, pigs, poultry, water fowl and more. Many of these breeds were introduced to Canada from other parts of the world – especially Europe. At that time, these breeds were not rare, but common. It has been the process of industrialized food systems that began to specialize the food supply chain into narrow ranges of breeds. This loss of diversity within the food stock has helped industrial methods to increase the yields from these animals, but there have been costs in terms of loss of biodiversity and problems associated with narrowing the gene pools within agricultural supply chains.

The animals at Riverdale Farm have become much loved by members of the community. Visitors can see and discuss the differences between species and this helps to deepen the public understanding of the issues that need to be addressed within the agri-food system.

The Buildings

Riverdale Farm officially opened on September 9, 1978. The Residence, the Donnybrook, and the Island House are the only zoo buildings left remaining on the Riverdale site.

The Residence - The original Zookeeper's House, the Residence is located at the end of the path past the Meeting House. It was built in 1902 by prisoners of the Toronto Don Jail and has functioned as a residence, staff building, zoo hospital, and temporary morgue for the Necropolis Cemetery. Today, it is used for a variety of farm-related and community-based programs. On the main floor, it temporarily houses the Regent Park Cabbagetown Museum displays.



Figure 1 The Residence

The Donnybrook - The Donnybrook stands beside the cow paddock. Originally a two-storey building, only a tower and main floor remain today.



Figure 2 The Donnybrook

The Island House (Monkey House) - The Island House sits in the middle of the lower pond. It housed many different birds and animals during the zoo's 80 years. The Stone Bridge, which is used to reach the Island House, is also a remnant of the old zoo.

The "new" buildings on the grounds of Riverdale Farm include:

The Francey Barn - Originally built in 1858 on a farm in Markham Township, the barn was donated by Mrs. Garnett Francey to the City of Toronto in 1977. It was disassembled and moved to Riverdale Farm. The Francey Barn represents a rare type of architecture and is known as a Pennsylvania Bank Barn. Bank barns are built on the side of hills or river banks. They have the advantage of having an upper and lower floor accessible from ground level. At the Farm, the animals are housed on the lower level, while upstairs the Francey Barn holds hay, straw, and feed. While most Ontario barns have vertical boards for walls, the Francey Barn is built with horizontal cedar cladding. All other wooden buildings on the farm are finished in this manner.



Figure 3 The Francey Barn

The Simpson House - The Victorian-style farmhouse, named after the restoration architect (Napier Simpson, Jr.) who built it, is situated to the left of the main entrance. It is a reproduction of the original Francey



Figure 4 The Simpson House

farmhouse to complement the Francey Barn. Public washrooms, the gift shop, and kitchen are all located on the main floor. Wheelchair access is available.

The Pig and Poultry Barn - The P&P Barn is located to the east of the Simpson House. Ducks, geese, chickens, turkeys, and pigs are found in and around this barn and in the duck pond located across from the Meeting House.

The Driveshed - To the north of the Pig and Poultry Barn is the Driveshed. This building serves a number of purposes and is often open to the public for special events and seasonal education / interpretive programs. Otherwise, the Driveshed is used for storage and maintenance of farm equipment and staff quarters upstairs.

The Meeting House - This three-storey building, completed in 1993, is located in the centre of Riverdale Farm across from the duck pond. Recreational and interpretive activities are offered to the public in the Meeting House. The Farm's lost and found, first aid, public washrooms, and baby-changing facilities are all found on the main floor.



Figure 5 The Meeting House

The Naturalized Area – The lower portion of the Farm consists of wooded areas which include native deciduous and coniferous trees. Along with the ponds, the area hosts a variety of native wildlife, contributing to interest in conservation issues, local wildlife, and the environment.

Current Activities & Programming

Activities currently available at the Farm include:

- **Explore the Farm:** Explore the landscapes, buildings and animals.
- **Drop by a Demonstration Special Activity or Festival:** On most days, Riverdale Farm offers demonstrations and activities that showcase farming life. Seasonal and themed festivals and events are regularly held on the Farm.
- **Enjoy Nature:** The green landscapes, farm animals, gardens and slower pace, combine to create a rural serenity in the middle of the city.
- **Special Occasion Bookings:** The Meeting House is available for small gatherings including birthday parties.
- **Farmers Market:** The weekly market, operating May to October, with fresh organic produce, free range meat products and other farm products.
- **Programs:** The Meeting House is the home base for the Farm's programs including:
 - Summer Camps – offered in July and August for children aged 4-13
 - Programming geared toward the unique nature of the farm including “A Farmers Life”, “Little Farmers”, and “Children’s Garden”.
 - Other Programs – year round classes including pottery, spinning and weaving, quilting, painting, and drawing classes.

Conclusion

The Farm possesses a considerable potential that has been largely unrealized. One of the obvious core competencies of the Farm is its link with food and agriculture. While it has taken some time for the present Farm to find its niche after converting from being the Toronto Zoo in 1973, it has slowly evolved to showcase a cross section of Canadian heritage livestock and programming that is conducive with the farming theme.

The Farm now sits at a crossroads with the opportunity to transform from a successful, but passive, observational experience to a dynamic interaction through fresh program development, specialized facilities, and skills development.

The Farm is constrained by both the footprint of the site and the size and limited number of buildings for different programs and functions. The quality of programming can be enhanced and improved with partners who are better positioned to capitalize on these opportunities. Leveraging the expertise of leaders in food and agriculture will allow the Farm to maximize the potential and create new revenue generating opportunities.

Community Consultation

Community involvement has always been a foundation of the Riverdale Farm. Residents from the surrounding neighbourhood have participated in structured and informal activities to improve the Farm experience. Both community groups and individuals feel a strong attachment to the Farm as an idyllic refuge in the heart of the city and a unique opportunity to educate children about rural life and agriculture. The community's interest in the Farm was clearly demonstrated in the mobilization efforts in recent months.

To capitalize on this interest, various stakeholders (the public, government officials, for-profit corporations, not-for-profit, and other community organizations) were invited to provide input through surveys, town hall meetings, workshops, and one-on-one discussions. In addition, significant research was performed by the Coalition around urban farming, urban green spaces, and comparable funding and operational models. Details of this process can be found in Appendix II.

Community Survey – The Coalition received 782 responses from across Toronto. Responses reaffirmed the Farm as a peaceful, relaxing, family-friendly setting to learn about animals and the food cycle. Respondents also had many ideas for improving the Farm and generating revenue including improved food service, more animals, more activities and programs, better signage, hours, and marketing. It is worth noting that maintaining the status quo ranked highly in the responses.

The majority of respondents did not support introducing a user fee but many supported the concept of a membership of \$50/year or less, as long as there were additional benefits that came with the membership. Many were also in favour of

donating to the Farm if there were tangible enhancements and/or if the funds were used for animal care and programming – not to fund day-to-day staffing and operations. Respondents were generally supportive of corporate sponsorships to ensure the continued operation of the Farm.

Town Hall Meeting - On February 15, 2012 the Riverdale Farm Coalition hosted 50 people at a town hall meeting. Results of the consultation meeting echoed some key themes that emerged from the public online survey, including a core interest maintaining animal attractions and enhancing the focus on agriculture and food. While there was a strong desire to capitalize on opportunities to improve the overall Farm experience, there was limited appetite to drastically changing the focus of the Farm. Participants clearly voiced their desire to have more interactive experiences at the Riverdale Farm, including opportunities for hands-on demonstrations, education, and interpretation of farm offerings (history, animals, plants and gardens).

Partner Roundtable Discussion - On April 14, 2012, twenty-three individuals, representing a wide range of interests within the food sector, assembled for seven hours to imagine how Riverdale Farm could become a public education hub on agri-food and urban agriculture issues. Professionals from the large and multi-faceted food world strongly affirmed their desire to work together in collaborative efforts of public education and engagement on agri-food issues. Having a city-owned facility, such as Riverdale Farm, act as an educational hub, for both on-site and across-the-city initiatives on sustainable food, is seen as exciting and possible. Such an endeavour has its challenges, but the group assembled saw all as manageable. The work of the Coalition was seen to have laid a strong foundation for continued exploration of these opportunities.

Conclusion

The input received from the community, stakeholders, potential partners, and the Coalition members' own research revealed that there is broad-based support for the Farm and a strong willingness to demonstrate that support through donations and through direct action in identifying and capturing new and innovative means of revenue generation, programming, and overall enhancements. This enthusiasm for the Farm needs to be harnessed and utilized to its fullest. A stewardship group, with close ties to communities and various sectors and organizations would be best positioned to take advantage of this largely untapped asset.

Another underutilized resource is the wealth of experience and effort that the public are willing to invest in the Farm in the form of volunteerism. While it is not possible to rely on volunteers to take care of the day-to-day operations or to bear the entire responsibility for revenue generation and fundraising, the efforts of individuals and groups can add significant value to the Farm as a whole and to the experiences of Farm visitors. Again, the framework for co-ordinating volunteers and volunteer tasks and responsibilities is best overseen by a stewardship group.

Finally, the Farm has long been a site that allows families to learn about farming and the food cycle. The opportunity exists to capitalize on this association and expand the Farm's scope to become a model for urban agriculture, in line with the growing popularity of interest in locally-sourced, sustainable, and organic food. This expansion can be achieved through partnerships with complementary organizations and financial support from the for-profit sector and foundations wishing to align themselves with this movement.

The input from the consultations has shaped the overall goals and the Mission Statement that the Coalition proposes to guide the Farm in the coming years.

Programming Opportunities

The Farm is already an agricultural centre in Toronto, but the current re-visioning of the facility has resulted in the examination of the Farm in the context of what it is and what it has to offer.

Society's thoughts toward food and farming have come full circle since the Farm opened in 1978. At that time, processed frozen and fast foods were in their infancy. Since then they have become a way of life, but with this convenience comes associated health risks and a growing disconnect from and about the food we eat. Today, society is placing greater emphasis on sustainable farming, locally grown and organic food, and food preparation. The Farm should promote this trend while continuing to act as a meeting place for the community and a natural setting in the heart of the City.

The Riverdale Farm is a natural venue for programming to promote partnerships and a strong and productive urban food agenda. This can be broken into three distinct areas: Animal Agriculture, Plant Based Agriculture, and Food Skills promotion.

Animals

One of the Farm's greatest strengths and attractions is its link to Canadian heritage farm breeds. These demonstration animals are used to help educate both young and old about the life cycle of farm animals and the origins of protein sources. It is worth noting that many people – as suggested in both the on-line survey and public engagement session – would like to have more direct interaction with the animals as part of workshops, volunteer opportunities, or hands-on demonstrations. A priority focus will be the development of programs that will reach distinct target groups:

- **School groups** – Develop lesson plans for school groups Kindergarten through Grade 12 with both pre- and post-visit activities to realize the great educational potential of the animals at the Farm. Online links and resources

can add relevance and immediacy and a resource for students beyond the Greater Toronto Area.

- **Adult Education** – Programming that is food-based, such as cheese making, chicken husbandry (which is growing in popularity), and even daily caring for the animals as part of a volunteer opportunity.
- **Animal Therapy** – Interactive animal programs for people who can benefit emotionally from closely interacting with animals.

Plant Agriculture

Plant agriculture is an underdeveloped part of the Farm but one with great potential. While the amount of arable land is limited, opportunities exist for raised garden beds, roof gardens, terracing, and a host of other options. Although the Farm is not a food production facility, it is possible to create a leading demonstration facility for multiple types of agriculture and different food plants, including grain and the introduction of food-yielding trees such as fruits and nuts.

Urban agriculture is a rapidly growing trend in the City of Toronto, and Riverdale Farm offers an opportunity to create a centre of excellence for urban agriculture. As part of the urban food sustainability and security plan for the City of Toronto, the Farm can act as a central resource for community gardens, school groups, and residents who are interested in growing food in backyards or balconies. A rapidly growing number of well-respected groups in Toronto specialize in this area, and the Farm is a natural nexus to make Toronto a world leader in urban agriculture. An emerging theme for Riverdale Farm is the development of allotment gardens for cultivating plants, herbs and vegetables. Gardening clubs, workshops and classes relating to urban farming techniques are programs that could generate considerable interest and revenue. The addition of a demonstration greenhouse would enhance the promotion of urban agriculture, as well as expand program options year-round.

Food skills

As a strategic food centre, the Farm can fill the increasing need for food skill education with programs that focus on the entire food supply chain from “seed to fork”. Target groups can include:

- programming for culinary skills.
- programming for food production
- educational opportunities for new Canadians.
- educational opportunities for students.

To deliver this specialized programming, the Farm would utilize current assets, such as the outdoor community oven, and invest in resources for education and community use, such as cider presses and other processing equipment. In addition, a Farm facility could be repurposed to house an institutional kitchen with a teaching area. This asset could be used for special events and an after-hours restaurant, in conjunction with local chefs and/or post-secondary culinary programs.

Taking advantage of food as a universal interest, the Farm can draw attention far beyond its current catchment and include those who might not typically enter the neighbourhood, such as new Canadians and low income residents from the nearby communities of Regent Park, St. James Town, and beyond.

Programming Partnerships

The delivery of much of this programming would require a close partnership with groups and organizations that are already involved in similar initiatives. To facilitate this exploration, a group of representatives was brought together in April to explore various opportunities and options. Details of this roundtable can be found in Appendix II.

The discussion focused on practical ways that would help citizens understand the complexity of today's globalized food system, thereby equipping them to engage this system in ways that would be beneficial to themselves and Toronto. Essential to this was that visitors to Riverdale Farm should continue to experience the smells, sounds, animals, and vegetation that the Farm is known for. This immersion experience in rural reality helps to open visitors to reflectiveness and dialogue about food and its relationship to life today in Toronto.

Program delivery options include participatory education in on-site initiatives such as growing food and cooking classes, embarking on incubator projects for a variety of food businesses, and curriculum-based school programs.

Collaborations with partner organizations will require a framework to clearly outline how the partnerships would operate and how the programs are delivered, ensuring that decisions are both efficient and effective. In addition, appropriate measures of success will need to be created.

Conclusion

Even in its current form, the Farm exists in an area of the city where green space is at a premium yet also manages to enhance the Toronto Park system with more than traditional manicured properties or playing fields. The transformation of the Farm through new programming will add new layers to the visitors' experiences.

The consultations with the community and different groups were only the starting point, but it clearly demonstrated that there is considerable untapped potential for the Farm. New and enhanced programming has the potential to become a significant revenue generator – through user fees and foundation grants – while greatly enhancing the Farm experience for visitors from across the City. Programming becomes a strong launching point for long-lasting partnerships with businesses, not-for-profit organizations, and school boards. However, the ability to

secure these partnerships is entirely dependent upon the guarantee of long-term stability of the Farm.

The implementation of programming at the Farm will require detailed planning and co-ordination. The stewardship group would be best placed to create and nurture these relationships with partner organizations and to map out a long-term vision and timelines

Financial Overview

Following the direction from City Council in the fall of 2011, the Coalition sought alternate funding models for the Farm. The Coalition investigated the creation of sustainable funding through four initiatives: fundraising, sponsorships, revenue generation, and cost diversion.

Details of each initiative are outlined below.

Fundraising Campaigns

1. Donations from Individuals and Local Businesses

Target

Individuals and local businesses in the surrounding neighbourhoods. Primary target areas will include Cabbagetown, Riverdale and Leslieville. Secondary target areas will focus on the east side of Toronto, in areas such as Rosedale and Leaside. Fundraising may include an animal naming competition or an animal adoption program. Marketing can be done through print, web and social channels and could also include a door-to-door campaign in the primary market. These efforts would be extremely labour intensive and would require a large volunteer base and strong community engagement to co-ordinate and execute an ongoing fundraising campaign.

Assumptions

- 16% of all residents in the primary area donate on average \$100 per year for five years. 10% attrition on these funds per year
- 5% of all residents in the secondary area donate on average \$100 per year for five years. 10% attrition on these funds per year
- Fundraising costs upwards of \$100,000 per year
- Start date of initiative is June 2012.
- Some attrition expected with the Farm Membership Drive.

Long Term Financial Goal: **\$200,000 per year**

2. Charity Events in Support of the Farm

Overview

Organize charity events in support of the farm to create awareness / buzz. Examples of events include The Great Cabbagetown Garage Sale, Cabbagetown Ball / Silent Auction (also an excellent way to test drive using the Farm to host events), Community Cocktail Parties / Dinners in Support of the Farm, Cabbagetown 5K or 10K run, Seasonal Sales (e.g. Christmas trees, Halloween pumpkins, bulbs, seeds). Assumptions and Financial Information will be determined on an event-by-event basis. No benefit has been ascribed thereto in this report.

Of note, in 2012 and 2013, we expect these events to help seed the small capital investments that are required for other initiatives. In 2014, we would continue only those events that have successfully generating revenue and / or marketed the Farm.

3. Membership Drive

Overview

Allow people to become members of the Farm. Membership will confer specific benefits that may include behind the scenes tours and talks, membership-only events (sleepover in the park, vet for a day), 10% discount on all Farm offerings (workshops, camps, food and gift shop purchases,) and/or discounts to strategic partners' institutions. Actual benefits will be determined after a cost benefit analysis is preformed (i.e., What is the incremental cost to the Farm of providing a particular benefit). Keeping proper records and co-ordinating membership work will require fundraising support. However, the membership base would create a reliable pool for annual fundraising asks.

Assumptions

- 1% of all attendees become members of the Farm. 70% Family, 30% Individual
- Individual Membership \$25, Family Membership \$50
- Operating costs over and above staffing costs are 10% of revenue and include marketing and management costs. Capital costs are expected to be minimal.
- Additional costs associated with creating "value added" to the membership
- Start date of initiative is June 2012.

Long Term Financial Goal: **\$40,000 per year**

4. Donation Box

Overview

Set up a secure donation box at each entrance with accompanying signage and takeaway leaflets. Suggested donation of \$2 per person but voluntary.

Assumptions

- 20% of all attendees donate \$2.

- Operating costs are 10% of revenue and include marketing and management costs. Capital costs are expected to be minimal.
- Start date of initiative is June 2012.

Long Term Financial Goal: **\$40,000 per year**

Revenue Generating Initiatives

5. Farmers Market

Overview

The City will oversee the running of the Farmers Market in 2012. Proceeds will be used to offset the operating costs of the Farm.

Assumptions

- 25 vendors growing to 35 by 2016
- Fee of \$120 per vendor per year
- Costs are 10% of sales and include acquisition costs and operating costs

Long Term Financial Goal: **\$4,000 per year**

6. Book The Meeting House and / or Francey Barn for special occasions

Overview

Tranquil, natural and environmentally sustainable venue where any revenues generated will fund the ongoing programs of the Farm. Although this is available to patrons at this point, it needs to be marketed more effectively.

Assumptions

- 110 hours are booked annually, peaking at 16 hours per month during the summer (2 hours per weekend day) and troughing at 2 hours per month in the winter.
- Booking fee is \$100 per hour.
- Operating costs are 50% of revenue and include marketing and management costs. Capital Costs are expected to be minimal.
- Start date of initiative is June 2012.

Long Term Financial Goal: **\$6,000 per year**

7. Reopen Gift Shop at Simpson House

Overview

Offering products in line with the Farm's overall vision, including preserves, produce, fresh baked bread, books, art, posters, and farm-themed toys.

Assumptions

- 15% of visitors spend on average \$3 at the gift shop.

- Operating costs are 80% of revenue and include cost of goods sold and management costs. Capital costs are expected to be \$20,000
- Start date of initiative is June 2013.

Long Term Financial Goal: **\$10,000 per year**

8. Expand kitchen / food offering

Overview

Generate revenue through a small café located on premise which would include seating area. Offerings could include sandwiches, bbq, pizza from stone oven, ice cream, etc.

Assumptions

- 10% of visitors spend on average \$20 at the kitchen.
- Operating costs are 80% of revenue and include cost of goods sold and management costs. Capital Costs of \$100,000 used to renovate the kitchen would be part of the ask to corporate donations, either in the form of funds or in-kind.
- Start date of initiative is June 2013.

Long Term Financial Goal: **\$45,000 per year**

Farm Enhancements – Sponsorship Initiatives

9. Naming Rights and In-Kind Donations

Target

Following the City's policies on sponsorship and naming rights, and working with the Toronto Office of Partnership, the Stewardship Group will target companies whose corporate strategy and vision are in line with the Farm. In addition to financial support, we will request product support, where appropriate. In this regard, the Farm has experienced previous success (i.e. the pond was donated by Lafarge). Potential for-profit sponsors include major food retailers, wholesalers, and manufacturers, and financial institutions. These sponsorships would likely be directed at funding specific capital enhancements (in the case of sponsoring buildings) or in the delivery of certain programs.

In addition to for-profit companies, we will approach the not-for-profit organizations and foundations outlined above as both sponsors and donors (i.e. they are not precluded from being sponsors). The main difference is that the Coalition expects sponsorships to continue in perpetuity.

Assumptions

- Five buildings named at \$20,000 per year
- 5 other sponsorships at \$10,000 per year

Long Term Financial Goal: **\$150,000 per year**

10. Donations from Government, Large Corporations, & Foundations

Target

In exploring potential opportunities for donations, Coalition members found significant interest across a variety of sectors to contribute to significant improvements and new programming. Several foundations offer grants for programs and initiatives that align with their criteria. Similarly, various government and not-for-profit organizations have identified synergies with their mandate and opportunities at the Farm. Some of these donations could include capital enhancements or take the form of in-kind work and may be multi-year commitments. These would require an application process or formal agreement, and the funds would only be spent as they are received. The Stewardship group will target:

- Departments and agencies from all orders of government that may have an interest in assisting in programming – through funding or delivery – and capital projects that fit their mandates;
- Foundations whose mandate and vision are in line with the Farm;
- Domestic not-for-profit organizations whose mandate and vision are in line with the Farm and that have a marketing budget. Such groups include food marketers, growers, and retailers.

Assumptions

- Five donations at \$100,000 per donation
- These donations will likely be directed/targeted by the corporation or organization to specific programs or enhancements. Although these would not contribute to regular operating costs, these will add value to the Farm and attract other donations.

Long Term Financial Goal: **\$500,000 per year**

11. Programming and Capital Improvements

Overview

Through its consultations, the Coalition has recognized that the Farm has enormous, untapped potential for engaging the public in better understanding and addressing the challenges and opportunities facing Toronto's food future. The Coalition envisions a dynamic place of workshops, lectures, forums, demonstration activities and more will become an anchor point for all sorts of topics related to sustainable agriculture in Toronto.

New programming will build upon current offerings and could include sustainable farming techniques, urban farming, healthy eating, cooking, etc. The enhanced programming would be profit-driven, or at minimum, full cost recovery with income generated through user fees and by partnering with like-minded institutions with financial resources to offset costs of programming. A framework and set of partnership principles will need to be established for these collaborations before the revenue potential can be estimated.

Cost Saving Initiatives and Limitations

Current Operating Budget

The Current operating budget is as follows:

Operating Expenses	
Salaries & Benefits	370,659
Materials and Supplies	30,349
Equipment	100
Services & Rents	92,785
Total Operating Expenses	493,893

Annual maintenance capital expenditures are estimated to be \$100,000 per year.

The plan does not contemplate any cost saving initiatives; however these will be explored as more detailed costs become available and are analyzed for potential savings.

The financial overview does not address major capital expenditures other than those that are needed in support of the various initiatives proposed. To the extent major capital expenditures are needed (i.e. Building upkeep and maintenance outside the operating budget), a subsequent plan with additional funding will be needed.

Financial Overview Summary

Based on the initiatives described above and under the best case scenarios, the Coalition believes that a portion of the \$495,000 operating budget of the Farm can be offset through a combination of fundraising initiatives and on-site revenue generation. In addition, various sponsorships and large donations would be directed at expanding the programs and services the Farm offers. These funds would only be spent as they are received and would be dedicated to specific enhancements under the terms of the agreement with the organization.

The summary of long term financial targets is outlined below:

Long Term Financial Goals

Fundraising Initiatives	Fundraising Campaigns	\$200,000
	Membership Drives	\$40,000
	Donation Box	\$40,000
Revenue Generation	Farmers Market	\$4,000
	Venue Bookings	\$6,000
	Gift Shop	\$10,000
	Food Facilities	\$45,000
ANNUAL TOTAL		\$345,000
Program and Capital Enhancements (Budgeted as grants are received)	Naming Rights/Sponsorships	\$150,000
	Government, Corporate & Foundation Donations	\$500,000
ANNUAL TOTAL		\$650,000

The planning and implementation of an aggressive, ongoing, and sustainable fundraising plan to achieve this best case cannot be executed by volunteers in the long term. For these initiatives to succeed, the Farm will eventually require the services of an individual specializing in, and dedicated to, fundraising. However, the role of the stewardship group remains vital beyond simply acting as a steering committee. Members of the stewardship group will be well-placed as ambassadors for the Farm, building networks and relationships with potential donors, sponsors, and partners.

Should these initiatives achieve beyond expectations, the Coalition sees some potential in the creation of a reserve fund, for capital improvements that would enhance revenue options and/or guard against less fruitful efforts, or the eventual creation of an endowment fund, gradually built up, to offset the costs of the Farm. The feasibility of these options needs to be thoroughly investigated.

In addition to revenue options that could be utilized to offset some operating costs, the Coalition identified opportunities for donations and sponsorships that would be directed at farm enhancements. These might take the form of general capital improvements to buildings or other facilities, expanded or new facilities, or partnering in the delivery of specific programming. While these improvements will not directly offset the operating costs, it will add value to the Farm, drawing a higher attendance, a greater, more positive profile, and making it more attractive for investment and donations.

It is important to note that based on feedback from prospective partners / sponsors of the Farm, a clear vision needs to be articulated and the assurance of long term financial stability are necessary prior to sponsoring or donating to the Farm project.

Implementation Overview

Complete

1. Establish relationship with the Toronto Parks and Trees Foundation in order to actively solicit donations
2. Set up Donation boxes in high traffic areas of the Farm
3. On-site solicitation of donations through flyers
4. Fundraising events

Year One

1. Establish the Riverdale Farm Stewardship Group - The RFSG will be responsible for implementation of the Business Plan and will be made up of City staff, community representatives and sponsor / partner representatives where appropriate.
 - a. Establish Terms of Reference for the RFSG.
 - b. Establish Sub-committees to
 - i. Complete needs assessment
 - ii. propose a work plan with benchmarks on the Key Initiatives in the Business Plan:
 1. Fundraising,
 2. Sponsorships,
 3. On-site Revenue Opportunities, and
 4. Programming & Education.
 5. Will also include cross-functional sub-committees focused on Marketing and Volunteer Management.
 - c. Sub-committees will be largely made up of volunteers but may include paid staff and City staff as appropriate.
2. Study the attendance (numbers, demographics, etc.) at the Farm and the social and financial returns on investment to the various stakeholders.

Years Two to Five

Once the Key Initiatives are established, implementation will be outlined in a 5 year plan. At the end of each year, the Stewardship Group will assess the success in attaining the benchmarks.

Key Initiative	What?	Who	Set Up (First Month)	Timing	Marketing
Fundraising / Sponsorship Individuals and Businesses	Donations Membership	Committee Members Volunteers	Establish Lead Develop Membership Benefits Develop Marketing Material Co-ordinate Volunteers	Goto Market - June 2012 Completion - On-going	Print - Flyer / poster Web - Farm website; e-newsletter Social - Facebook and Twitter Farm - Donation Station Other - Door-to-door Canvasing
Government, Large Corporations, & Foundations	Donations Sponsorship	Committee Members Select Volunteers	Establish Lead Develop Sponsor / Donor List Develop Marketing Material	Goto Market - June 2012 Completion - On-going	Print - Reports as needed by prospective sponsors Other - Calling Program
Charity Events	Revenue Generation	Committee Members City Staff	Develop List of Events Establish Lead on each Event Develop Budget / Implementation Plan	Goto Market - June 2012 Completion - On-going	As per Implementation Plan for each individual Event
On-site Revenue Opportunities Farmers Market	Revenue Generation	Committee Members City Staff	Establish Lead Build on Existing Success	Goto Market - June 2012 Completion - On-going	Print - Flyer / poster Web - Farm website; e-newsletter Social - Facebook and Twitter Farm - Bulletin Board
Book the Farm	Revenue Generation	Committee Members City Staff	Establish Lead Build on Existing Success	Goto Market - June 2012 Completion - On-going	Print - Flyer / poster Web - Farm website; e-newsletter Social - Facebook and Twitter Farm - Bulletin Board
Expand the Kitchen	Revenue Generation	Committee Members City Staff	Establish Lead Build on Existing Success	Goto Market - June 2012 Completion - On-going	Web - Farm website; e-newsletter Social - Facebook and Twitter Farm - Bulletin Board
Special Events	Revenue Generation	Committee Members City Staff		Goto Market - June 2012 Completion - On-going	As per Implementation Plan for each individual Event
Programming & Education / Partnerships	Revenue Generation	Committee Members City Staff	Establish Partners Develop List of Programming Develop List of target Schools / Groups Develop Budget / Implementation Plan	Goto Market - TBD Completion - On-going	Print - Flyer / poster; FUN Guide Web - Farm website; e-newsletter Social - Facebook and Twitter Farm - Bulletin Board Other - Meeting with School and other Groups (ie. Cubs)

Social Return on Investment

Discussions with the various stakeholders reaffirmed that the Farm has a profound social impact on the community it serves and that the City benefits from this Social Return on Investment (SROI). These impacts can be grouped into four categories: Social Interaction, Health, Education, and Environment Awareness.

1) Social Interaction

Facilities similar to the Farm typically form a community of social interaction. The Garden Club, Spinners and Weavers, and Young Farmers Group are manifestations of such social impact. The Farm incubates friendship and support groups outside of the Farm gates. This can be especially important to vulnerable groups of the society since the Farm can facilitate social inclusion which overcomes issues of race, gender, age and ethnicity. Such facilities are also excellent developing social and teamwork building skills because of the communal nature of the resources. In addition, volunteer activities provide a sense of ownership of the Farm and a sense of belonging to the greater community.

2) Health

The tranquil setting of the Farm allows people to relax and take a break from their hectic urban lives which have positive health benefits, including reliving stress, lowering blood pressure, and eliciting positive emotions through participatory programming such as community gardening and animal husbandry. Through food education the Farm can offer a further benefit in the health and wellbeing of Torontonians.

3) Education

With an increased focus on healthy eating the Farm can serve as a focal point of this trend. The Farm can continue to serve as a bridge between food seen in retail stores and where it comes from. This can be beneficial as individuals are introduced to their foods sources and nutritional value can be reinforced. The nutritional value education is becoming increasingly important as a part of the ongoing education of healthy eating amongst all parts of the population.

4) Environmental Awareness

Environmental awareness in urban locations is always a challenge. The unique location of the Farm with its naturalized areas in addition to the farming areas affords an excellent opportunity to foster environmental awareness. Learning environmental practices and being exposed to the environmental impact of the food supply chain, the Farm is in the perfect location to instil this knowledge in visitors to the Farm.

Appendix I - The Coalition and Other Stakeholders

The Coalition was formed in the fall of 2011 and is made up representatives from multiple community groups in and around Cabbagetown. The groups are as follows:

Riverdale Farm Advisory Council – acts as liaison between the community and the City in the development, operation, and enhancement of services at the Farm. Represented by Dan Eldridge.

Friends of Riverdale Farm – a volunteer organization represented by Mary Mahoney

Riverdale Park West Stewardship – a community group focused on developing and implementing a plan to revitalize Riverdale Park West. Represented by Anne Pastuszek.

The Cabbagetown Preservation Association - Founded in 1989, the CPA's mission is to preserve the architectural integrity and historic character of the Cabbagetown neighbourhood. Represented by David Pretlove.

Don Vale Cabbagetown Resident's Association –a volunteer organization established in 1967 that represents residents living in Cabbagetown. Represented by Lynn Dionne.

Cabbagetown Arts and Crafts – the organizing body for The Cabbagetown Arts & Crafts Sale – an annual sale held during the Cabbagetown Festival and Riverdale Farm Fall Festival. Represented by Randy Brown.

Douglas Worts, long time Cabbagetown resident and sustainability planning consultant with WorldViews Consulting, organized, conducted and analyzed the results of the Partner Roundtable workshop.

The Coalition sought to engage the City and work together to craft an alternate vision and funding model for the Farm. To that end, the City has been actively engaged in the process through the following people:

City of Toronto – represented by City Councillor, Pam McConnell, Toronto Centre – Rosedale, Ward 28.

Parks, Forestry & Recreation – a division of the City and current operator of the Farm. Represented by Richard Ubbens, Director of Parks, Mary Battaglia, Manager of Parks, Rob Richardson, Manager, Partnership Development.

Toronto Office of Partnerships – Represented by Phyllis Berck, Director.

Appendix II – Community and Stakeholder Feedback

Overview

The planning process contained four main initiatives that were carried out by various Coalition members.

- 1) An extensive research effort culminating in a brief discussion paper around the rationale for urban agriculture, its prevalence in society today and whether it made sense in downtown Toronto.
- 2) Community input was garnered on the vision of the farm, how the farm should be funded and what programming should be offered. This was done through a town hall meeting and on-line survey.
- 3) Not-for-profit and government agencies were invited to take part in a roundtable discussion – invitees included prospective partners of the farm that had similar or complementary visions.
- 4) Research was done to find comparable operations. Comparability was based on three possible criteria: overall vision, programming and funding models.

A brief synopsis of each follows.

1) Rationale for Agriculture in Downtown Toronto

One of the great unifiers in society has always been food. It is important to all levels of society and is a daily activity that we all share. While Cities have grown larger and larger the distance that food has to travel to the plate of the average urban dweller has grown both literally and figuratively. The majority of urban dwellers have little idea of where their food comes from other than from large retailers and restaurants. Urban agriculture can dramatically change our relationship with food while making a real and tangible difference in the lives of people living in the city of Toronto.

Around the world urban agriculture is growing at a rapid pace. One-half of the vegetables consumed in Havana, Cuba are grown in the city's farms and gardens. Singapore has 10,000 urban farmers who produce 80% of the poultry and 25% of the vegetables consumed. Currently, 14% of London's and 44% of Vancouver's residents already grow some food in their gardens. It is estimated that Londoners could produce up to 232,000 tons of fruits and vegetables or 18 percent of the population's nutritional needs.¹

Toronto is becoming a focal point for Canadian urban agriculture. This should not be too surprising since Toronto has the second largest food & beverage sector employment in North America (1.7% of workforce)². With an active grass roots effort, many organizations are working in the city to nurture an urban agricultural movement. Urban agriculture has also been a growing focus of institutions such as

¹ <http://www.foodsecurity.org/PrimerCFSCUAC.pdf>

² Toronto as a Global City: Scorecard on Prosperity -2012, Toronto Board of Trade - Publication

Ryerson and the University of Guelph. Ryerson has a number of professors who focus on this area and have published papers and books on the issues surrounding urban agriculture. The authors of *Carrot City* have even organized a multinational conference about Urban Agriculture at Ryerson to be held August 15th-18th 2012. The University of Guelph has developed an online program that focuses on bringing urban agriculture to anyone with an internet connection. All of these people, organizations and institutions have created a cluster of activity surrounding urban agriculture.

In March 2012, Michael Porter gave a presentation to the Toronto Board of Trade focusing on the importance of “Clusters”. Clusters are geographic concentrations of interconnected companies, specialized suppliers, service providers, and associated institutions in a particular field that are present in a nation or region. One of the clusters identified by the Toronto Board of Trade was the Food and Beverage Cluster. Toronto is already well prepared for urban agriculture to play a strong and vital part in this cluster. We strongly believe that the Riverdale Farm can play a key role in the coordination, inspiration and promotion of urban agriculture across Toronto and serve not only as a centre for this activity but as a role model for other cities around the world.

Sustainable urban agriculture is an essential tool that addresses many of a city's problems in innovative ways. Environmental stewardship is enhanced through urban agriculture's efforts to green cities. Purchasing food that is locally grown decreases energy needs and costs associated with long distance travel and refrigeration. Economic development and community revitalization are achieved when neighbourhoods take pride in a community garden, when inner-city residents gain the ability to grow and market their own food, and when inner-city farmers' markets provide new opportunities for entrepreneurs and commercial farmers. Individual health and a sense of empowerment are enhanced when urban dwellers have access to and greater control over their own food system. The city's residents can benefit from cleaner air, lower summer temperatures and recycled waste water and trash. Urban farming takes into account the real cost of food and the real benefits from a local and regional food system³.

As outlined in a report to Toronto Public Health, urban gardening can increase food security and availability of low cost, nutritious, culturally appropriate food; increase physical activity; improve opportunities for small-scale food entrepreneurship; improve mental health and community cohesion; and reduce carbon footprints. Nearly 10% of Canadians are food insecure, and urban areas have a higher prevalence of food insecure households than rural areas. 2/3rds of Toronto families in low income neighbourhoods are food insecure. Effort to increase urban food production has been identified as an important strategy to improve urban food

³ <http://www.foodsecurity.org/PrimerCFSCUAC.pdf>

security. Studies have also demonstrated that access to community gardens can empower newcomers by supporting healthy and traditional food choices⁴.

The breadth of urban agriculture is only limited to the imagination of individuals. There are the traditional backyard garden and community gardens, but there are also proven opportunities for balcony gardening, roof top gardening, school garden, workplace garden, just to name a few. Any location that has soil and light can entertain the possibility of playing a role in the urban gardening movement.

The current reimagining of the Riverdale Farm offers a unique opportunity to re-establish the link between food production and consumption in this urban environment. It can serve as a unique nexus of an Urban Agricultural cluster of people, organizations, and programming that can further support the current rapid growth in Urban agriculture and food knowledge.

As a focal point for urban agriculture, the Riverdale Farm can serve as a Toronto wide centre of excellence to help develop and promote this burgeoning trend. The Farm can continue to educate all ages of people in animal food sources such as where eggs and milk come from (a seemingly simple exercise but amazingly necessary). However, the Farm can also expand on its basic core competency in urban agriculture

Benefits

- Urban gardening can engage citizen to help in the maintenance of public space.
- Local production of food also allows savings in transportation costs, storage, and in product loss, what results in food cost reduction.
- Urban agriculture also makes the city a healthier place to live by improving the quality of the environment.
- Urban agriculture provides food and creates savings in household expenditure on consumables, thus increasing the amount of income allocated to other uses.
- Urban agriculture surpluses can be sold in local markets, generating more income for the urban poor.
- Urban agriculture saves energy (e.g. energy consumed in transporting food from rural to urban areas).
- Urban agriculture improves the quality of the urban environment through greening and thus, a reduction in pollution.

⁴ Toronto Public Health. *Assessing Urban Impacted Soil for Urban Gardening: Decision Support Tool - Technical Report and Rationale*. Toronto: City of Toronto, May 2011.

- Other natural resources can be conserved. The use of wastewater for irrigation improves water management and increases the availability of freshwater for drinking and household consumption.
- Wastewater and organic solid waste can be transformed into resources for growing agriculture products: the former can be used for irrigation, the latter as fertilizer.
- Vacant urban areas can be used for agriculture production.
- Urban farms also are a proven effective educational tool to teach kids about healthy eating and meaningful physical activity⁵.

2) Community Input – On-line Survey

Survey Overview

A community engagement survey was created and distributed to Toronto residents via local resident associations, community groups and business improvement areas across the City.

The survey asked respondents about their vision of the Farm, what they believe are the value adding or competitive assets of the Farm, improvements that could be made to the overall experience at the Farm, as well as their opinion about a variety of ways to generate revenue.

The Riverdale Farm Coalition received 782 responses from across Toronto. Given the challenges with presenting verbatim text-based comments from 782 respondents, key themes and frequently occurring comments are presented.

Survey Results

1. In which neighbourhood to you live?

Not surprisingly, the majority (59.4%) of respondents reside in Cabbagetown, Riverdale and Leslieville - the immediate catchment areas of the Farm. Respondents were very familiar with the Farm geography and history as well as its significant contributions to the social fabric of their neighbourhoods. With that said, respondents from other neighbourhoods in the City provided robust, thoughtful and emotive responses to the majority of questions. A few respondents are former residents of Cabbagetown who now reside in other provinces or, in one case, Japan.

2. How often do you visit Riverdale Farm?

Thirty seven percent (37.3%) of respondents said that they visit Riverdale Farm on a monthly basis, while 27.7% and 24.1% visit the farm on a yearly and weekly basis respectively. All but 4 respondents who stated that they visit the Farm on a daily basis (5%) live in Cabbagetown. People with school aged children stated that they visit the Farm on a more frequent basis and many respondents visit 3 – 4 times per year.

⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Urban_agriculture

3. Please list your top three (3) reasons for visiting the Farm.

Respondents visit the Farm for a number of reasons; tangible and intangible value was clearly expressed in the many creative and descriptive responses. The following few reasons garnered more than 80% of the responses:

- Animals, birds and butterflies
- Nature, gardens, beauty, smell
- Kids, family time
- Peaceful, an oasis, its simplicity, relaxing
- Educational, learn about the food cycle
- Walk, exercise
- Special events, market
- Farm in the heart of the City

Being free to walk around the grounds, the beauty and wonder of the animals, and the escape from the City noise, concrete and chaos featured prominently in the responses.

4. Please list three (3) recommendations that you believe would improve the experience at the Farm.

The following few reasons garnered more than 80% (80.4%) of the responses:

- More and improved food and beverage options
- Nothing – the Farm is perfect the way it is
- More animals, different types of animals
- More hands on activities or demonstrations
- Interpretive signage (about animals, gardens, history)
- Sell produce, farm products and goods
- Better hours of operation (open past 5pm)
- Better advertising/ marketing about Farm, events and programs
- More kid and youth activities/ programs
- More educational and adult programs, lectures
- Grounds (upkeep, aesthetics, washroom)

Interestingly, ‘nothing – the Farm is perfect the way it is’ was the second most frequent response to this question.

5. Regarding the working context or historical orientation of the Farm, do you believe the farm should be a (i) historical 19th century farm, (ii) contemporary 21st century farm, (iii) working farm that produces and sells farm related products, and/or a (iv) demonstration farm that does not produce and sell farm related products.

Based on the options presented in the survey question, the clear majority of respondents (76.0%) selected a historical 19th century farm that produces and sells

farm related products. That said, a farm that showcases innovative farming methods and materials from both historical and more contemporary eras emerged as a clear theme in the open ended responses. Similarly, many respondents see the Farm as a platform for educating patrons about sustainable, eco-friendly, organic farming (demonstrations, workshops) as well as selling same via a café or shop. Maintaining the historical and authentic nature of the farm and buildings was important to many respondents. Housing rare breed domestic animals versus expanding animal selections to include more contemporary and exotic breeds garnered almost equal attention.

6. What types of services would you like to see at the Farm?

A café/ kitchen/ tea room where visitors to Riverdale Farm could purchase snacks or a meal was a very common response. Further, organic and local (potential for 'Farm-made') products could be used to make food and beverages. A gift shop or market that sells farm related products was suggested by many respondents. An information kiosk, better signage was suggested by Farm staff. A family-friendly seating area and better washrooms were also common suggestions for on -site services.

7. How much would you be willing to pay to visit Riverdale Farm?

Of the 682 people who answered this questions, three (3) responses garnered the same number of responses; \$0 (170), \$2 (170) and \$5 (172). Open ended responses yielded some definite themes, including:

- Kids and seniors should always be free
- A user fee will limit the accessibility for those who can't afford it
- A user fee will limit the accessibility for those who just want to 'pop in' for a quick visit
- People would rather pay for programs than admission
- 'Pay as you can' or donation box is preferred over an entrance fee
- People would reluctantly pay a user fee if it meant keeping the Farm open

It is important to note that the vast majority of people did not support a user fee for the Farm. The question simply asked, if there was a fee, how much would you pay.

8. If an annual membership fee were available, how much would you feel is a reasonable amount to pay?

For individuals, respondents most frequently suggested that they would be willing to pay \$25 (20.0%), \$20 (19.6%), \$50 (14.1%) or \$10 (12.2%) as an annual membership fee. Notably, 4.8% of respondents were willing to more \$100 or more for an annual membership fee.

For families, respondents most frequently suggested that they would be willing to pay \$50 (26.1%), \$25 (12.8%), \$100 (9.1%). Thirty four (6.6%) of respondents were willing to pay \$120 or more for a family membership to the Farm.

Written comments suggest that respondents clearly favour annual memberships over user fees. Importantly, people are concerned about the inequity that may be caused by user fees and see an annual membership as a better way of ensuring access to all visitors. Perks and clear demonstration that user fees are being used to enhance the Farm experience were important caveats for some respondents.

9. Would you be in favour of corporate sponsorship at the Farm?

There is overwhelming, albeit reluctant support (68.2%) for Corporate sponsorship IF it helps to “save the farm”; sponsorship was also preferred over user fees. Respondents included specific caveats relating to sponsorship including;

- Only ethical corporations/ sponsors (e.g., no cigarette companies)
- Sponsors should have a vision, mission or mandate that is consistent with the farm
- Signage should be appropriately understated and consistent with the Farm vision and historical context

10. Would you consider making an annual donation to Riverdale Farm?

Respondents clearly consider an annual donation or giving campaign to be a viable option for generating revenue (71.9% are in favour). However, as with corporate sponsorship, respondents expressed the following concerns and/or preferences regarding annual donations:

- Would like to see improvements, donations going toward animals or programs
- Only if a donations will prevent user fees
- Prefer annual donations over corporate sponsorship
- Not to pay staff wages and benefits
- Membership provides more connectivity and attachment to the farm than donations

11. How do you think Riverdale Farm can generate revenue?

Respondents provided some very thoughtful ideas about how to generate revenue to sustain Riverdale Farm over the shorter and longer term. The following key themes emerged;

- **Food and beverage** – Great food and great products for sale; grow and sell locally produced food and farm-related products like wool, jams; open a restaurant , café or bistro that features simple meals made from fresh, locally produced ingredients; wine tasting
- **Programs** – Expand the selection of fee-based programs to include: urban and box gardening techniques; composting; cooking workshops; history of farming, animals, agriculture; mom, dad and baby /kid programs, youth programs, exercise and recreation, cheese making; preserving and canning; farmer for a day; day camps

- **Rental opportunities and buildings** – Rent historical building space and grounds for weddings, funeral receptions, photographs, corporate receptions, book launches, gallery space, birthday parties. Link catering with restaurant, café or bistro if possible; educational exhibits
- **Animals** – Adopt an animal program, special exhibits for unusual animals (emus, alpacas), expand breeding programs, hands on demonstrations/workshops
- **Gardens** – Sell seeds, seedlings, herbs; seasonal sales of pumpkins, Christmas trees, wreaths, bulbs
- **Education** – Permanent or semi-permanent exhibits; paid excursion to support Toronto District School Board curriculum; link with Universities and colleges regarding animal welfare/ veterinarian, horticulture; alternative school site with Toronto District School Board.
- **Other** – Corporate sponsorship; giving program; membership drive; daily programs or offerings including guided tours, audio tours, sleigh rides, hay rides; gift shop; fundraisers (5K or 10K run, festivals, theme-based dinners, art shows).

3) Community Input – Town Hall Consultation

On February 15th, 2012 the Riverdale Farm coalition hosted a public engagement forum about the future of Riverdale Farm. Approximately 50 people attended this energetic and informative evening.

Participants eagerly shared their vision for the farm, their favourite and most treasured aspects of the farm, as well as their ideas about how to enhance the experience at Riverdale Farm.

Executive Summary

Results of the public engagement survey echo some key themes that emerged from the public on line survey, including a core interest maintaining animal attractions and enhancing the focus on agriculture and food. While there are certainly opportunities to improve the overall Farm experience, there is limited appetite to drastically changing the focus of the Farm. Participants clearly voiced their desire to have more interactive experiences at the Riverdale Farm, including opportunities for hands-on demonstrations, education, and interpretation of farm offerings (history, animals, plants and gardens).

Broadly, responses apply to two distinct yet related categories: facilities and programming. Facilities refer to the physical grounds, staffing and amenities provided. Thematically, programming includes topics such as animal agriculture, plant agriculture, food, events, and programs related to the broader community. Woven throughout all of these themes are children, whether it is their interaction with farm activities or with events that are child-focused.

Overall Feeling of the Farm/ Favourite things about the Farm

Participants identified the sense of tranquility created by the naturalized, informal and historical environment as one of their favourite things about the Farm. The historical buildings and contribute to the unique setting and the wonderment of having a peaceful farm in the heart of this vibrant, international city. The Farm is special; it has been a constant part of the social fabric of Cabbagetown and surrounding communities.

Facilities

Overall, while participants clearly appreciate the historical look and feel of the Farm, they identified the need to ensure that the Farm remains in a state of good repair and suggested several general upgrades needed to improve the overall appearance. Washroom facilities, the state of the pathways, access for physically challenged persons and the appropriateness of the buildings for programming featured prominently in the responses as did a desire to maintain and/or restore the historical Victorian elements. Many suggested amenities such as gift shop, interpretative signage, brochure with a map, and skating pond/rink.

In general, suggestions relating to Farm staff focus on a desire for a more responsive approach with the public, and specifically around conveying information about daily farming activities, the animals, gardens and the Farm grounds.

Programming

Without question, the greatest draw for the participants are the farm animals, such as horses, chickens, and pigs, and the opportunity to see and interact with them year round. Participants explicitly expressed their interest in having more volume and breeds of animals at the Farm. Of note, a number of people – as suggested in both the on-line survey and public engagement session – would like to have more direct interaction with the animals as part of workshops, volunteer opportunities or hands-on demonstrations.

The gardens and grounds continue to generate great pleasure and interest for visitors. An emerging theme for Riverdale Farm is the development of allotment gardens for cultivating plants, herbs and vegetables. Gardening clubs, workshops and classes relating to urban farming techniques are programs that could generate considerable interest and revenue. Couple the desire to learn more about how food is grown with an interest in markets and food preparation, and a restaurant and/or kitchen will play a central role in attracting participants to programs and visitors to the Farm.

Participants identified a series of regular occurring as well as special events that would enhance the use of the beautiful and unique Farm grounds; some are current activities while others are new activities to be developed. Celebrations and activities that feature agriculture or food were common suggestions as were events

relating to music and theatrical performances, harvests, festivals, barn dances and corn roasts.

Participants identified a number of programs that will be important to maintaining and strengthening community cohesiveness. Generally, these programs align with educational (e.g., arts and crafts, exercise, workshops) and social needs (structured activities that foster social interaction, such as clubs). It is worth noting that a number of activities ran counter to the main appeal of a peaceful, simple and relaxed environment.

The final theme that emerged from the public meeting was a reminder that the Farm and Riverdale Park West are intricately connected and should be considered together. Where possible, changes to the Farm and/or the park must ensure appropriate access and flow to the park and the surrounding neighbourhood. Many participants noted the existing relationship to the Toronto Necropolis and potential links to shared gardens as well as using the Farm for necropolis-related receptions.

Funding

Participants were asked to contemplate opportunities for raising money and ongoing revenue for the Farm; these ideas can be broken into five broad categories: fees, direct solicitation, merchandizing, events, and sponsorships.

While most of the suggestions fall into the category of fees, there was relatively little support for an admission or user fee to visit the Farm. A significant number of people expressed support for a membership, but this should not be considered a requirement. Rather, this would be a voluntary arrangement that could bring small incentives such as a regular newsletter, special offers, or events. While participants were willing to entertain fees for special programming, most of the suggested fees relate to revenue generation outside of typical farm use, such as for facilities rentals.

The second most common revenue generating category is merchandizing. Not surprising, most of these related to the marketing of food or farm-related products (e.g., eggs, honey, cheese, wool) or in the form of prepared food from a restaurant, market or gift shop.

The balance of options offered are various types of fundraising opportunities, such as direct donation, fundraising events, corporate sponsorships and partnerships to leverage the Farm's competitive assets.

4) Partner Roundtable Discussion

Event Description and Participants

On April 14, 2012, twenty-three individuals, representing a wide range of interests within the food sector, assembled for seven hours to imagine how Riverdale Farm could become a public education hub on agri-food and urban agriculture issues. The outcome was clear – professionals from the large and multi-faceted food world

welcome the opportunity to work together in collaborative efforts of public education and engagement on agri-food issues. Having a city-owned facility, such as Riverdale Farm, act as an educational hub, for both on-site and across-the-city initiatives on sustainable food, is seen as exciting and possible. Such an endeavour has its challenges, but the group assembled saw all as manageable. The work of the Coalition was seen as having laid an effective foundation for this consultation.

The Coalition recognizes that the Farm has enormous, untapped potential for engaging the public in better understanding and addressing the challenges and opportunities facing Toronto's food future. Set in the very popular locale of Riverdale Farm, the Coalition has envisioned a dynamic place of workshops, lectures, forums, demonstration activities and more will become an anchor point for all sorts of topics related to sustainable agriculture in Toronto. With an ability to invoke the importance of learning from Toronto's agricultural past, this collaborative initiative with other food-based organizations will breathe new life into the activities of Riverdale Farm. It will also make Riverdale Farm a part of Toronto's dynamic and progressive network of agriculture and food-related organizations.

The day was dedicated to four basic steps:

- a. identifying the trends and impacts of Toronto's current food reality
- b. identifying the forces that are creating this reality
- c. identifying ideas for innovative programming that can help move the system towards sustainability
- d. identifying strategies for enabling these innovations.

These steps provided ideas that the group used to weave into the building the four levels of a 'pyramid of sustainability', in a process developed by Alan AtKisson. The four sides of the pyramid integrated **S**ocial, **N**atural, **E**conomic and **W**ellbeing lenses making up the 'compass of sustainability', as applied to food in our city.

Participants provided a significant commitment of time, energy and expertise. They were:

Dan Eldridge	Riverdale Farm Advisory Committee
Helene St. Jacques	Toronto Food Policy Council & Foodshare
Elaine Howarth	Toronto Youth Food Policy Council
Sunday Harrison	Green Thumbs Growing Kids
Roberta Stimac	Withrow Park Farmer's Market
James Kuhns,	Food Access Coordinator, Regent Park
Colleen Smith	Ontario Agri-Food Education Inc
Becky Parker	Ontario Agri-Food Education Inc
Nancy Slamet	St. Jamestown Community Cafe
Patricia Wynter	St. Jamestown Community Cafe
Wally Secombe	Everdale Farm
Nick Foglia	Toronto Region Conservation Authority
Paul Sawtell	100 Km Foods Inc
Dave Harvey	Toronto Park People

Joe Nasr	Prof, Centre for Food Studies, Ryerson U
June Komisar	Architecture Prof, Ryerson University
Gary Hoyer	Culinary School, George Brown College
Michael Curry	Investeco Capital
Mari Caravaggio	City of Toronto, Parks Department
Carole Ferrari	The Local Café, catering
Catherine Mahler	Cabbagetown Resident, educator
David Cohlymeyer	Sustainable Good Food Consultant
Lee Matheson	Donvale Cabbagetown Residents Association

Councillor Pam McConnell joined the group for a portion of the session – both participating in the small group work and leading a mid-day tour through Riverdale Farm.

Based on work undertaken by the Coalition, this group used the following framework for thinking about realizing the undeveloped potential of the Farm:

- a dynamic hub of public education on agri-food issues
- a popular destination for informative, accessible and practical courses and workshops related to urban agriculture, using the special attributes of the Farm
- a site of innovative partnerships comprised of food specialists in diverse fields, such as education, retail/wholesale, non-profits, chefs & restaurateurs, producers and policy people
- a vital public education program generator that, through innovative partnerships, weaves sustainable food education and projects throughout Toronto communities.

The group also used the following definition as a starting point for thinking about the question ‘what is involved in a sustainable food system?’:

- A community’s ability to feed itself, indefinitely
- The ability to foster health in individuals and groups
- A reliable supply of food
- Employing people in all aspects of feeding the community
- Reflecting the heritage, culture and values of the community, as it changes over time.

Summary of Innovations and Strategies Developed

The core of the ideas generated by participants were oriented to practical ways that would help citizens understand the complexity of today’s globalized food system, thereby equipping them to engage this system in ways that would be beneficial to themselves and Toronto. Essential to this was that visitors to Riverdale Farm should continue to experience the smells, sounds, animals and vegetation that the Farm is known for. This immersion experience in rural reality helps to open visitors to reflectiveness and dialogue about food and its relationship to life today in Toronto.

Participatory education – learn by doing (develop both on-site initiatives – and assist with and link to off-site initiatives)

- Growing food
- Cooking food
- History, lifestyle, health
- ‘Green building’ – rooftop gardens, greenhouses, etc.
- Composting
- Small Plot Intensive Farming (SPIN Farming)
- Food literacy
- World crops and ‘recipes for change’

Social Enterprise – act as an incubator

- food businesses
 - producers
 - harvesters
 - processors
 - distributors
 - retailers
 - restaurateurs
- art/creativity related to food

Curriculum-based school programs

- onsite activities
- pre- and post-visit activities that will give shape to agri-food initiatives in communities across the GTA (online resources for community-based school activities and student uploading of projects undertaken)
- internships at Riverdale Farm – and help to identify internship possibilities at other related facilities

Help develop Citizen-Supported Agriculture (CSA) model to help support local farmers and distribute produce to local consumers

Throughout the discussions there was an acknowledgement that there is need to develop a mechanism(s) for identifying public needs related to food. This would help to generate public education initiatives that are rooted in the relevant issues with which people live. It is critical to recognize that there are many food-related educational needs throughout society – from basic hunger to citizens who unconsciously have come to rely on specialty food items that are shipped over thousands of kilometres (according to the Toronto Food Policy Council, the average food item sold in grocery stores Toronto has travelled over 4,000 km).

The group imagined that collaboration amongst partner organizations would be the method of developing the legal and practical frameworks for how such a partnership would operate. There was an awareness that this collaborative mechanism would need to be able to make decisions in an effective manner. Accordingly, it was recognized that there would need to be very clear arrangements made with the City so that decision-making amongst partners would be both effective and timely. It was also acknowledged that this approach to public education would entail both experimentation in program initiatives, as well as the development of effective measures of success and feedback loops that are rooted in the community, as well as in the public programs themselves.

Indicators of Success and Impacts on Systems

This partnership consultation began its work with a review of indicators related to the well-being and needs of the existing food system in Toronto. As one might imagine, the food system is affected by a wide array of societal pressures and characterized by a large number of indicators that signal both positive and negative attributes of the system. The following is a sample of the indicators that participants identified as trends that are significant:

- food miles: increasing
- food costs: rising
- income gap: widening
- use of bio-technology: rising
- investment towards increased profit from food system: rising
- loss of prime agricultural land in Central Ontario: rising
- infrastructure to support small scale food production: declining
- population: rising
- biodiversity: declining
- employment in food sector: rising
- environmental degradation: rising
- large-scale agri-business: rising
- public awareness of impacts of organic farming: rising (at least in some socio-economic groups)
- awareness amongst youth of sustainability challenges: rising
- desire to utilize alternative growing areas: rising
- water quality and quantity: declining
- food waste: increasing
- public awareness of agri-food issues related to products and impacts on human and natural systems: declining
- % of people who buy local produce at farmers markets: rising (at least within certain demographics)
- % of people who make purchase decisions based on origin of food: rising
- food safety: declining / (rate of illness and death from tainted food: rising)

- interest in agriculture that is tied to ethnic and cultural customs: rising
- frequency of eating in front of TV/computer: rising
- rates of obesity: rising
- rates of cancer: rising
- rates of diabetes: rising

The group agreed that activities of public education related to agri-food issues should be organized and prioritized in order to strategically address these trends.

For a public education hub on agri-food issues to be successful, it was acknowledged that all stakeholders needed to be engaged as fully as possible and that it is essential to develop a common vision of what a sustainable food system would entail and a common framework for assessing such a system.

If undertaken successfully, a wide array of societal systems would become involved – which was seen as a positive outcome. Amongst these systems were:

- formal education (K-12 and post-secondary)
- informal and non-formal education (continuing education, online courses, media, cultural organizations, investment coaches, etc.)
- valuing meal-time
- cultural systems (i.e., urban, pluralistic, globalized reality, as well as heritage customs)
- feedback loops that inform the public of current and emerging issues
- community structures and cohesion
- food production systems
- food safety regulations and systems
- local employment opportunities
- architectural impacts through adaptive re-use of existing structures and sustainable new buildings
- urban sprawl

This consultation was a starting point. There continues to be much in the way of detailed planning before an actionable plan is ready for implementation. And yet, the energy, insights and expertise that readily came together to produce this first step is impressive.

Additional Group Input

It is worthwhile to note several other groups that were unable to attend the planning workshop, but that expressed enthusiasm for the concept and want to be included in future opportunities. Evergreen Brick Works was in the midst of ramping up its most active part of the year, but Arlene Stein, the Director of Community Programs expressed her desire to help out in the future.

The University of Guelph (represented by Rene Van Acker (Associate Dean External Relations OAC), Ralph Martin (Loblaw Chair in Sustainable Food Production) and Karen Landman (Associate Professor in Landscape Architecture) all saw great opportunity in potential partnerships between the Riverdale Farm and their institution. Because of the University of Guelph's world-class reputation in the fields of food and agriculture, it is envisioned that they would be able to bring their skills and expertise into the centre of Toronto. There was talk of lecture series, knowledge exchanges and even graduate projects to help develop the facility and programming. What evolved was a vision of the Riverdale Farm being a "rural embassy" in the heart of the City. This location would allow for the urban population to have a conduit to the rural with a facilitated exchange of knowledge and idea.

The 4-H Club of Ontario is also very interested in the opportunities at the Farm. Wraychel Horne (Executive Director) of the 4-H Club spoke about one of their recent mandates being to develop strategies for working with urban population centres. She was able to send extensive literature regarding the programming that they already have in place, and upon review of this information it appears that there is an excellent fit with the current and potential activities at the Farm.

Next Steps

During the course of this workshop and subsequent phone interviews, the primary goal was to establish what these leaders in the field of Food and Agriculture think is the opportunity for the Farm to play in food and urban agriculture in Toronto and to gauge the interest in the Farm.

The one recurring question was: How can we get involved? While a majority of the individuals wanted to participate at the Farm, there was a great deal of trepidation about working with the City. What is clearly needed is a Terms of Reference for groups to come and participate in programming at the Farm. Without clear rules of engagement, it was feared that projects and programming would be "bogged" down in red tape and process with little ever really getting accomplished. All of these organizations and individuals have busy programs already active across the City or in other regions, and it would not be worth their time and effort to come into an environment that was not supportive and encouraging.

It was suggested that there needs to be a new partnership model developed that would not only promote but animate an entrepreneurial spirit at the Farm that promotes programming at all level and is supported by an active and engaged

community of volunteers. With this structure, it is thought that the Farm can become a centre of excellence in food and urban agriculture with a dynamic roster of programming and activities. Using these resources is not only the most cost effective way of dramatically increasing the real worth and value of the Farm, it is also seen as a way to add relevancy to an existing facility. With the added relevancy, it is strongly suggested that the Farm will be able to attract substantial funding from corporate sponsorship, foundations, and granting organizations who recognize the value of their investment in the Farm by being associated with a world-class facility with programming that makes a difference.

5) Comparable Models

Overview

The Coalition looked at many different organizations and compared them to the Farm in areas such as vision, funding model, revenue sources, programming, marketing, and volunteer activities. Example comparables include Black Creek Pioneer Village, Everdale Environmental Learning Centre, Evergreen Brickworks, Fairview Gardens, Lincoln Park Zoo, Stone Barns Center for Food & Agriculture, The Stop Community Food Centre, Toronto Urban Farm.

Comparables generated revenue through a mix of programming, retail operations and donations. Admission is rarely charged for “farm-based” experiences.

Programming

Revenue is generated through programming that, in most cases, includes workshops, kids camps, guided tours and special events. For “farm-based” comparables special events generally revolve around the harvest. Lincoln Park Zoo generates revenue through on-site promotions by third party companies (eg. Pepsi)

Retail Operations

Although not all comparables have retail operations, those that do usually include food service and gift-shop operations. Farm-based comparables often have farmers markets and or food boxes.

Donations

Donations take on the form of direct to the organization, through an established foundation or through government support.

Marketing & Volunteer Activities

Marketing by done largely through e-newsletters, social media, and on-site. Most organizations actively use volunteers to not only help with daily operations and fundraising, but also to help promote in the community.

Appendix III: History of Riverdale Farm

The property upon which the Farm is located was originally owned by John Scadding. In 1856, the City purchased 119 acres from the Scadding estate for the purposes of a park and industrial farm – a jail with surrounding lands for prisoners to work. On August 11, 1880, Riverdale Park was officially opened and 10 years later all of the lands except the Don Jail property were designated as a park.

In 1894, the gift to the City of two wolves became the first acquisition of what was to become Riverdale Zoo, Toronto's first zoo. In 1888, Alderman Daniel Lamb donated some deer and encouraged prominent people to donate other animals or provide money. The first exhibition of animals at the zoo probably took place in 1899.

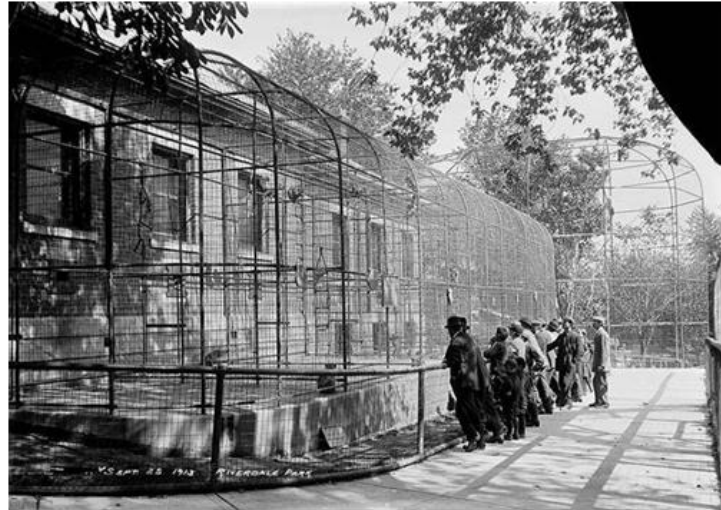


Figure 6: Riverdale Zoo, monkeys, 25 September 1913. City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1231, Item 567.

The zoo's collection grew quickly. By 1902, the zoo had sixteen pheasants, two ocelots, a male camel, a female dromedary, a buffalo bull, six pens of monkeys, a Siberian bear, a young female crane, some lions, and a hippopotamus. That year, the Toronto Railway Company contributed funds to erect the two-story Moorish style building known as the Donnybrook. The first weekend that the elephant and lions were shown, the Railway Company carried 20,000 people to the zoo. In the early decades of the zoo's history, its grounds were maintained by prisoners from the Don Jail on the opposite side of the river (typically men who had been imprisoned for minor crimes such as vagrancy).

The Riverdale Zoo was a typical zoo of its period, with animals displayed as curiosities in dark cages and cramped enclosures. In 1967, Metro Council approved Glen Rouge as the site for the new zoo. Construction began in 1970 and on August 5, 1974, the Metropolitan Toronto Zoo was opened to the public. The Riverdale Zoo closed its gates for the last time on June 30, 1974, and the animals were shipped to the new zoo in Scarborough. From 1974 to 1978, many of the Riverdale Zoo buildings were torn down and the site leveled. The property was converted into an urban farm, Riverdale Farm, which officially opened on September 9, 1978⁶.

When the Farm opened, there were two primary objectives:

⁶ <http://maps.library.utoronto.ca/dvhmp/riverdale-zoo.html>

- 1) To give city children the chance to see how a farm operated during the late 19th / early 20th century; and
- 2) To feature rare farm animal breeds that would have been on the farm at the turn of the 20th century but that are no longer in use today.

At the turn of the 20th century, many farms moved to general purpose breeds (cows that could be used for beef and for milking, or sheep that could produce both wool and meat) and developments in various industries (meat-packing, milk collection, refrigeration & distribution, textiles, food processing) had the effect of standardizing the kinds / breeds of animals needed on a farm. The animals at Riverdale Farm represent the rare breeds that did not meet the specialization needed.

The animals at the farm include poultry, waterfowl, goats, sheep, pigs, cows, donkeys, and horses. Over the years the Farm has worked towards an animal collection policy that supported Heritage breeds that would have been found on the typical Ontario farm in the late 19th century. A further definition of this policy can be found in the Animal Handbook that was published in 2011 by the City and the Riverdale Farm Advisory Council.

Today the vision of the Farm remains much the same as it was in 1978.