



## STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

### Toronto Food Policy Council 2015-2016 Annual Report

<b>Date:</b>	October 14, 2016
<b>To:</b>	Board of Health
<b>From:</b>	Rachel Gray, Community Co-Chair, Toronto Food Policy Council Councillor Joe Mihevc, Councillor Co-Chair, Toronto Food Policy Council
<b>Wards:</b>	All
<b>Reference Number:</b>	

### SUMMARY

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This report provides an update on the activities of the Toronto Food Policy Council (TFPC) for 2015-2016 in relation to the goals of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, of which Toronto became a signing member in 2015.

TFPC members are appointed by the Board of Health for terms of up to 3 years. Thirteen new members are seeking appointment to the TFPC.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

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**The Co-chairs of the Toronto Food Policy Council recommend that:**

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

## **Financial Impact**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2012/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-48319.pdf>)

On October 1, 2015 City Council endorsed the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (Attachment 3).

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2015/mm/bgrd/backgroundfile-84075.pdf>)

## **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

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

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

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

In order to select the proposed new members for the TFPC, the Council's Diversity, Outreach and Membership Committee reviewed TFPC membership in relation to sectoral

and geographic representation and cultural diversity. Gaps in membership were identified and broad outreach was undertaken to fill these gaps. The proposed membership list (Attachment 1) reflects Toronto's neighbourhood and cultural diversity, as well as sectoral representation across the food system.

The TFPC has endorsed the proposed new members and an orientation session is scheduled for November. The proposed membership will ensure that the TFPC is able to act upon and implement the priorities of the TFPC, and continue to inform the Food Strategy and TPH on food related initiatives and healthy sustainable food system change. The TFPC continues to provide leadership and community engagement on food systems issues.

World Food Day on October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016 marks the one-year anniversary of Toronto signing the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP). Launched by the Municipality of Milan on the occasion of the 2015 Expo "Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life" The Milan Urban Food Policy Pact's goal is to engage world cities for the development of food systems, based on the principles of sustainability and social justice. The aim is to establish a network of cities that work on sustainable food policies, sharing ideas and suggestions, and providing strategic options to achieve more sustainable food systems. Signatory cities agreed to build local food policies or strengthen the commitment to existing food policies. The Pact currently has 128 signatory cities from around the world. The TFPC was involved in shaping the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact and provided an advisory role in forming the key priorities for the Framework for Action outlined as part of the pact as voluntary measures to achieve more sustainable urban food systems. On October 15, 2015 Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam signed the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact on behalf of Mayor Tory and represented the City of Toronto in Milan on this occasion.

## **COMMENTS**

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

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

At the TFPC's strategic planning meeting in January 2015 the TFPC outlined top priorities for 2015-2016. These priorities include: Engaging the Mayor, Councillors, City

Staff, and the Medical Officer of Health in support of a health-focused, equitable food system; strengthen Toronto's neighbourhood and regional food assets; support the Poverty Reduction Strategy and food justice work, and promote local economic development through food.

## **Milan Urban Food Policy Pact and C40**

The TFPC has taken great strides over the past 25 years to achieve many of the goals outlined in the pact and is recognized as a world leader in achieving these food policy goals. However, Toronto has many areas in which we still need to show leadership and progress. The key challenges identified in the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP) are acknowledged in Toronto-challenges such as the prevalence of malnutrition and hunger in the city. Toronto has made commitments to address climate change and Toronto's food system faces challenges to provide permanent and reliable access to adequate, safe, local, diversified, fair, healthy, and nutrient-rich food for all.

The goal of the MUFPP is to address food insecurity through a comprehensive, interdisciplinary, and inter-institutional approach. The Pact outlines how policies must not only address food insecurity but also a host of contributing factors or consequences such as poverty, health, social protection, hygiene and sanitation, land use planning, transport, commerce, energy, education, and disaster preparedness.

The Milan Urban Food Policy Pact outlines 37 recommended actions that cities can take, as part of its Framework for Action for achieving more sustainable food systems. Recommendations fall into thematic clusters, seen as entry points to achieving a sustainable food system:

- Ensuring an enabling environment for effective action
- Sustainable diets and nutrition
- Social and economic equity
- Food production
- Food supply and distribution
- Food waste

The City of Toronto is an active participant in the newly established C40 Food Systems Network. The network recognizes the important role of cities in climate change action and builds on the work of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact. The network serves to convene city officials through webinars and other forms of engagement that facilitate information sharing and solution oriented collaboration between cities and regional food networks to address pressing food challenges. The TFPC is part of other informal municipal food policy networks at regional, provincial, national and international levels.

The TFPC undertook a number of activities to fulfill its mandate in 2015-2016. The activities undertaken by the TFPC and affiliated organizations in the TFPC network help to meet the goals stated in the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact Framework for Action. The highlights of these activities and how they meet the MUFPP goals are outlined below.

## **Community Meetings, Events and Presentations**

A cornerstone of the TFPC's work is identifying emerging issues and facilitating dialogue, information sharing, collaboration, and action. Over the past year, TFPC meetings focused on the following themes and topics: Public Markets, Food Waste, the City's Poverty Reduction Strategy, Food by Ward Asset Mapping Project, City of Toronto social policy priorities, The Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, Planning for the Food Secure Canada National Assembly in Toronto in 2016, Urban Agriculture and the Community Engagement and Entrepreneur Development Gardens Project, World Food Day, Increasing the Impact of the Toronto Food Policy Council, The City's Food Champions, City Region Food System Assessment Partnerships, and What Food Can Do for Toronto.

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

- A Tale of Two Neighbourhoods: Food Access and City Planning, A Tour Organized in partnership with Food Share and the Toronto Food Strategy utilizing Food by Ward research.
- Municipal Food Policy Presentation and Networking sessions at the Food Secure Canada National Assembly in Toronto.

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

- OMAFRA Policy Branch
- TOPHC
- Ryerson University
- University of Toronto
- International Urban Food Network
- RUAF Foundation
- Halifax City Hall
- Halton Food Policy Council and Sustain Ontario
- City of Montpellier
- New Zealand Food Network
- Canadian Association of Food Studies
- Global Alliance on the Future of Food
- Black Creek Food Justice Network

## **Food policy and advocacy in Toronto and the Greater Golden Horseshoe**

The TFPC advocates for food policies that generate access to healthy food, enhance social justice, strengthen the regional food economy, promote environmental sustainability, and embed a food systems approach through municipal policy development. The following food policy and advocacy work was undertaken by the TFPC in 2015-2016.

### **Food by Ward/ Food Champions Initiative**

- Launched *Food by Ward: Food Assets and Opportunities in Toronto*, a food asset mapping tool that identifies food assets across Toronto by ward and identifies where assets need to be enhanced or where opportunities for growth exist.
- Food champions, a broad network of individuals and organizations doing food work across the City. The food champions have come together to identify areas where supports are needed and how food opportunities should be prioritized and to network with colleagues from across the city.
- Food champions have been using *Food by Ward: Food Assets and Opportunities in Toronto*, as a way to engage with local City Councillors and with other food champions to collaborate and to strengthen food networks and food assets in their local communities and wards.
- This project continues to evolve and the next steps will include identifying capacity building opportunities within existing and emerging food networks and among food champions. Next steps will also include further developing the Food by Ward asset mapping tool into a more interactive virtual tool that will allow for knowledge sharing between food champions and for profiling the stories of food champions and the good food work that is being done across the city.

### **Urban Agriculture**

- Played an instrumental role in the Toronto Agriculture Program and City-Sector Urban Agriculture Steering Committee with the goal of scaling up urban agriculture in the City of Toronto.
- Advocated for market gardens in hydro corridors as part of the Community Engagement and Entrepreneurial Development Gardens Program. The TFPC has been involved in developing an innovative approach to accessing hydro lands for community use and has advocated for this process to be streamlined and accessible for community members through the City. This initiative has involved a variety of City divisions working together with community organizations to add specific hydro corridor sites to the City's Master Lease with Hydro One and establish market gardens to promote entrepreneurial development and community development opportunities in some of Toronto's priority neighbourhoods. This project is currently awaiting final approval with Hydro One.
- In partnership with TPH, Toronto Urban Growers, and community partners the TFPC has been involved in helping to develop indicators for measuring urban agriculture in Toronto.
- Supported funding applications for external funding opportunities.

### **Food Waste Reduction**

- Held a consultation, in partnership with the Solid Waste Management division, on a motion for the City of Toronto to endorse tax incentives for corporate donations of food that would otherwise be sent to landfill to charitable organizations. The TFPC response to the tax incentive proposed was that it would likely pose significant challenges for food bank organizations with limited operating capacity to accept increased food donations and that the tax incentive fails to address issues of food waste throughout the food production chain, instead of at the end.

Other concerns raised at the consultation included whether this was a needed policy approach. Representatives from the retail and private sectors expressed that many retailers already have corporate social responsibility policies that encourage donating otherwise wasted food. Many stakeholders also expressed that they are looking for policies that help to address hunger, poverty, and food insecurity in a comprehensive way that does not rely on corporate donations of food to meet the immediate food needs of those experiencing poverty.

### **Public Markets**

- The TFPC supports a working group that is developing a strategy to make Toronto a Market City. This strategy would involve providing supports for entrepreneurs wanting to get involved in public markets, for market managers wanting to set up markets, for information sharing between market managers and vendors, and to create streamlined processes at the city for establishing markets. The Market City initiative would provide recognition at the City for markets as important community hubs and opportunities for community development and engagement with diverse populations.

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

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

### **TFPC Communications**

- The TFPC continues to maintain a blog ([www.tfpc.to](http://www.tfpc.to)) and engage in social media through Facebook (2500 “likes”) and Twitter (4000 followers @TOfoodpolicy). Almost 2000 people receive regular e-newsletters from the TFPC.

### **Cross Jurisdictional Food Policy and Advocacy**

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

#### **Sustain Ontario**

- The TFPC has participated in the Municipal/ Regional Food Policy Working Group.

#### **Food Secure Canada**

- The TFPC has partnered on the planning of the Food Secure Canada bi-annual assembly held in Toronto in October 2016.

### **International Partnerships**

- In partnership with Ryerson University and the RUAF Foundation, TPH and the TFPC received funding for a four city municipal food policy learning and research network.
- The Toronto Food Policy Council sits on the Steering Committee of a food system assessment project initiated by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. This project is a collaboration between the Wilfred Laurier Centre for Sustainable Food Systems and the RUAF Foundation.
- The Toronto Food Policy Council supports the development of the Global City-Region Food Systems Collaborative.
- The Toronto Food Policy Council is an advisor to the International Urban Food Network.

### **Toronto Food Strategy**

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

- Mobile Good Food Market
- Wholesale procurement for the community food sector (FoodReach)
- Community access and commercialization of world crops
- Healthy Corner Stores
- Urban agriculture

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

### **Toronto Youth Food Policy Council**

The Toronto Youth Food Policy Council's (TYFPC) activities are supported by staff of the Toronto Food Policy Council regularly engaging youth in events, discussions and policy-making. The TYFPC seeks to mobilize and engage youth to make change by building a just food system. The 13 member Council provides youth with a vehicle to network, share opportunities, learn from one another, and connect to community food initiatives. The TYFPC strives to become Toronto's leading youth voice in sustainable municipal food policy change. At their well-attended monthly meetings the youth consider a variety of food issues. The outcomes of meetings are reported back to the TFPC, and youth priorities are presented to the TFPC and the Food Strategy team.



This year the TYFPC strived to work on internal processes, including an increased commitment to diversity, inclusion, and anti-oppression as expressed through increased Council representation, the strengthening of existing collaborative partnerships and improved outreach and execution of Council activities in neighbourhoods throughout the city. These goals were also realized through the focus on four thematic areas, which were explored in five bi-monthly community meetings exceeding a combined attendance of more than 300 people:

- Food Politics in the Election: Striving for a National Food Policy
  - Eat Think Vote, held in partnership with Black Creek Community Farm
- Food Access and Food Justice: Exploring Local Food Realities through Art
  - The Creation of a Community Poem, facilitated in partnership with youth organization Spoke N’ Heard at York University
- Mental Health & Food: Understanding the Relationships, Interventions and Narratives around wellbeing and food
  - A Panel Discussion on Food & Mental Health, held in partnership with the University of Toronto Youth Food Policy Council and New College
- Food Business and Technology: Youth Entrepreneurship and Alternative Economies
  - A tour and panel discussion held in partnership with Scadding Court
- Urban Agriculture and Access to Space: Growing on Rooftops
  - A tour and panel discussion on rooftop growing spaces in the city, in partnership with Access Alliance

The TYFPC hosted two additional events, including the launch of the first issue of *Melange* (a creative arts journal), in collaboration with the Toronto Food Policy Council’s 2016 Strategic Planning meeting, and a workshop on the Environment Bill of Rights outlining methods for citizen engagement and participation in law making processes.

The Council’s two chairs presented on the work of the Council at more than ten speaking engagements throughout the year. The TYFPC has also supported the development of strategic partnerships with Meal Exchange, through the National Day of Action Against Student Poverty, with Black Creek Farm working on the Jane & Finch Garden Resource Network and Food Justice Committee, and Food Secure Canada, as an active participant on the various organizing committees. The TYFPC was able to secure its first Laidlaw grant this year. Recognized as one of 20 Youth-led Change Community Leaders, the Council has received a \$10,000 grant to execute a city-wide, food-focused storytelling project. The initiative will highlight how various youth in three neighbourhoods experience food issues in order to animate city spaces with conversations on food to improve food literacy, drive systemic change and increase engagement and understanding of food issues in their own communities.

## **Partnership and Collaboration**

The Toronto Food Policy Council, because of its long history and because it is embedded within the structure of the municipal government, meets many of the goals outlined

within the governance stream of the MUFPP Framework for Action, ensuring an enabling environment for effective action. Through the City's endorsement of the Food Charter, the establishment of the Toronto Food Strategy, the adoption of the GrowTO Urban Agriculture Action Plan, and the establishment of the Toronto Agriculture Program, the TFPC has seen the results of advocacy campaigns and partnerships created across City divisions. The work of the TFPC and collaborations with other organizations within Toronto, throughout Ontario, and across Canada shows the interdisciplinary and comprehensive approach that the TFPC seeks in organizing to address food policy issues.

The Toronto Food Policy Council recognizes the leadership taken by Toronto Public Health and community organizations across Toronto in developing innovative programming and initiatives that help to address nutrition and sustainable diets, emergency food needs, food waste, social marginalization, cooking skills, community gardening, and other necessary integrated service programs aimed at addressing food insecurity, social and economic equity, and food access and distribution.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Toronto Food Policy Council and Toronto Food Strategy team work together to promote and achieve the goals and actions outlined in the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact Framework for Action, recognizing how the collaborative food work in Toronto already meets many of the goals outlined in the Pact and what goals can be incorporated into combined strategic planning initiatives to strengthen current projects and to meet goals not yet achieved or addressed.

Key areas of opportunity exist in continuing to address food waste at a municipal, provincial, and federal level in ways that comprehensively address food waste throughout the food supply chain. Opportunities exist in strengthening regional networks like the Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance that connects the city with nearby rural food production, especially in the City's resiliency plans to work towards creating a resilient food system in the face of natural disasters or climate change. Lastly, opportunities exist in comprehensively understanding Toronto's food flows and where Toronto can continue to support infrastructure, the sustainable distribution of food, and opportunities for food production.

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## **SIGNATURE**

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## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: Toronto Food Policy Council 2016 Membership Update  
Attachment 2: Toronto Food Policy Council Terms of Reference  
Attachment 3: Milan Urban Food Policy Pact