

**From:** [Josephine Grey](#)  
**To:** [councilmeeting](#)  
**Cc:** [Edward LaRusic](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Urgent: Support Letter for OASIS planning and design project- needed today  
**Date:** September 30, 2019 4:38:36 PM  
**Attachments:** [LETTER OF SUPPORT - ST JAMES TOWN COMMUNITY COOPERATIVE 2017.pdf](#)  
[OASIS BROCHURE.pdf](#)

---

Hello,

I was directed to send this letter (attached) to this address for inclusion in the council package re the OASIS community food hub motion being brought by Councillor Wong Tam. Also attached is the brochure for the project as background information ...sorry to be so late in the day...

For a Better World Always,

Josephine Grey,  
OASIS Food Hub Project, ([oasisfoodhub.ca](http://oasisfoodhub.ca))  
Director: St. James Town Community Co-operative, ([stjamestowncoop.org](http://stjamestowncoop.org))  
& LIFT Toronto ([www.lift.to](http://www.lift.to))  
Ontario, Canada

Mobile: 416 827 7119

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Michael Skaljin** <[Michael.Skaljin@toronto.ca](mailto:Michael.Skaljin@toronto.ca)>  
**Date:** 31 July 2017 at 08:57  
**Subject:** RE: Urgent: Support Letter for OASIS planning and design project- needed today  
**To:** Josephine Grey <[jogreylift@gmail.com](mailto:jogreylift@gmail.com)>, Aderonke Akande  
<[Aderonke.Akande@toronto.ca](mailto:Aderonke.Akande@toronto.ca)>

Jo,

I've attached a PDF version of the Letter of Support for your review. If it's all good from your end feel free to send it along to meet the deadline.

Michael



Michael Skaljin  
Community Development Officer  
Tower & Neighbourhood Revitalization  
Social Development, Finance & Administration

City Manager's Office  
City Hall, 15<sup>th</sup> Floor East Tower  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Tel: (416) 993-9590  
Fax: (416) 392-1827  
Email: mskalji@toronto.ca

Community Funding Unit  
Social Development, Finance & Administration Division  
City of Toronto  
100 Queen Street West  
15<sup>th</sup> Floor East Tower  
Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2

July 31, 2017

Re: Letter of Support – St. James Town Community Co-operative Inc.

This is a letter of support for the funding proposal submitted by the St. James Town Community Cooperative Inc. This project aligns with Tower & Neighbourhood Revitalization Unit's mandate to improve the sustainability of Toronto's apartment neighbourhoods: a cleaner and greener city, stronger communities, increased social and cultural benefits, and enhance local economic activity.

The Tower Renewal Program has been aware of the project since 2014 and considers it an interesting potential model that could address several aspects of the Tower Renewal's mandate. Tower Renewal agrees that producing a feasibility and design report, business plan and developmental evaluation model for the pilot project could provide useful information and climate adaptation ideas that could benefit St James Town, as well as other low income high rise communities.

The City of Toronto believes the St. James Town Community Cooperative and the staff have the capacity to deliver this project and see them as a partner of the City of Toronto that consistently delivers on City-funded initiatives. With our ability to liaise between City departments and staff we feel that we can add value to this potential project as well as support the development of sustainable partnerships to enhance the work. If you have any further questions then please don't hesitate to contact me.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 416-993-9590.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M Skaljin".

Michael Skaljin  
Community Development Officer

# OASIS GOALS

## GREATER FOOD SECURITY

enhance access to healthy food for low-income families

## REDUCING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

use low carbon, resilient, and efficient technologies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other harm

## SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT

create more opportunities for youth and immigrants in the renewable energy and food sectors

## YOUTH EDUCATION + PARTICIPATION

empower children and youth voices, train youth to build and maintain OASES

The OASIS Food Hub is a project of the St. James Town Community Co-operative. Our

co-op's mission is to build inclusive community through healthy, affordable food and meaningful engagement.

We work to keep capacity and management with the community through our democratic non-profit that maintains at least 50% resident membership. Co-ops are resilient, inclusive, and most suited for addressing all dimensions of poverty reduction, exclusion, and building sustainable economies (UN, ILO, ICA).

OASIS can support communities with climate change adaptation and mitigation by providing training and education, technical support, governance model, and other resources needed to design, build and maintain their own resilient self-sustaining food hubs.



IMAGINE IF BY 2030, EVERY COMMUNITY ACROSS ONTARIO WAS ABLE TO ENSURE FOOD WATER ENERGY SECURITY, NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS WITH CLIMATE CHANGE...

## CALLS TO ACTION

- Join the co-op, contribute your skills
  - Join the Bulk Food Buying Club: Access organic food at affordable prices
- Contribute to the financial success of OASIS: help us cover start-up and operating costs!
- Tell your politicians and influencers that St. James Town deserves our OASIS Food Hub
- Get an OASIS in your building/neighbourhood

Visit us at: [www.stjamestowncoop.org](http://www.stjamestowncoop.org) & [www.oasisfoodhub.ca](http://www.oasisfoodhub.ca) to find out how to support! Facebook & Instagram: @SJTCOOP Email us: [sjtcommunitycoop@gmail.com](mailto:sjtcommunitycoop@gmail.com)

## OASIS FOOD HUB: GROWING A RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEM TOGETHER



## WHAT IS OASIS?

Our diverse community of St. James Town is struggling with the intersecting issues facing the world: climate chaos, food insecurity, pollution and waste, growing inequality, and a rising climate refugee population.

Together, we've designed a way to address all these issues in one comprehensive project.

The OASIS model combines urban food production through aquaponics and mushroom growing, farm-to-city exchanges, a certified community kitchen and café, organic waste diversion, and sustainable energy into one **Organic Agro-ecological Sustainable Integrated System**.

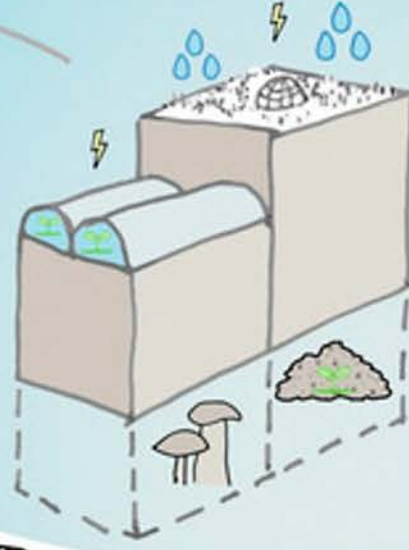
The OASIS Food Hub can produce and process hundreds of kilos of healthy organic food per week and provide education, training and employment for residents and students.

Take a closer look at the OASIS model and its benefits - flip open!

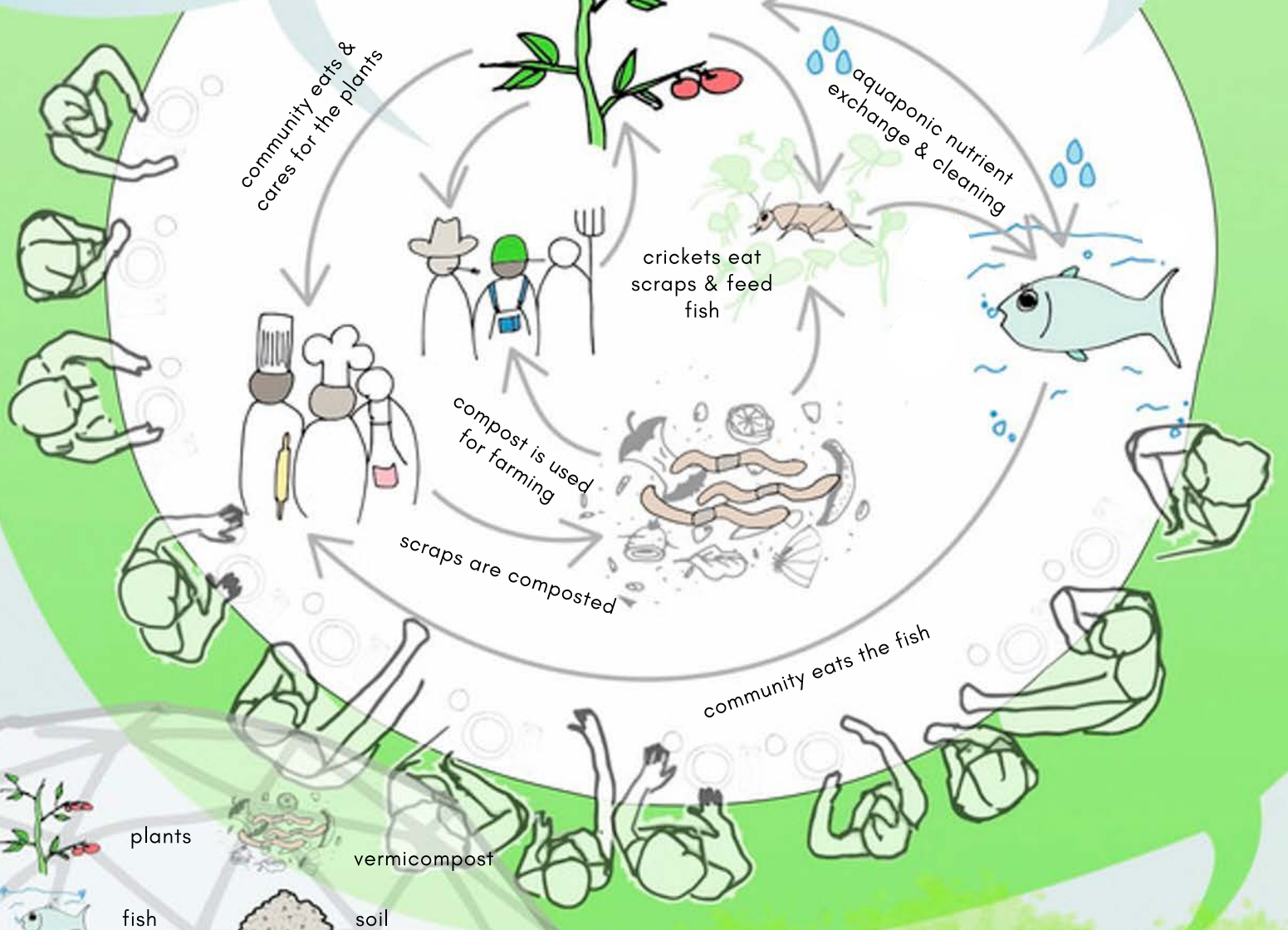
farms  
consumers



Community Hub  
- kitchen  
- cafe  
- marketplace  
- co-op office  
- training centre



Technical Elements  
- rainwater catchment  
- aquaponics  
- mushroom growing  
- sustainable & backup power  
- vermicomposting  
- food storage



community eats & cares for the plants

aquaponic nutrient exchange & cleaning

crickets eat scraps & feed fish

compost is used for farming

scraps are composted

community eats the fish

- plants
- fish
- crickets
- farmers
- cooks
- vermicompost
- soil
- mushrooms
- water cycle
- electric power
- OASIS - the dna of the food security network



**From:** [Josephine Grey](#)  
**To:** [councilmeeting](#)  
**Cc:** [Edward LaRusic](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: possible appendices -support letters  
**Date:** September 30, 2019 4:48:01 PM  
**Attachments:** [GM letter pdf-1.pdf](#)  
[LETTER OF SUPPORT - ST JAMES TOWN COMMUNITY COOPERATIVE 2017.pdf](#)  
[CREW letter of support Oasis \(1\).pdf.pdf](#)  
[HCC ltr of support for OASIS.pdf](#)  
[GTGK - OASIS Support letter.pdf](#)

---

Hello again,

Here are the rest of the support letters we collected for the OASIS food hub design feasibility study grant we received, and fulfilled from the City (2018)

we would esp like the HCC and Crew letters to be included along with the letter i sent you from Tower Renewal and the brochure (previous email).

Thanks,

Josephine Grey,

OASIS Food Hub Project, ([oasisfoodhub.ca](http://oasisfoodhub.ca))

Director: St. James Town Community Co-operative, ([stjamestowncoop.org](http://stjamestowncoop.org))

& LIFT Toronto ([www.lift.to](http://www.lift.to))

Ontario, Canada

Mobile: 416 827 7119

To whom it may concern,

The St. James Town Residents Association has been collaborating with LIFT and the St James Town Community Co-operative's OASIS project for 3 years; assisting with outreach, arranging meetings, and providing input and advice. We are pleased to offer a letter of support to the OASIS Food hub Planning and Design project as we believe such a project is much needed in our community where hunger is common and access to healthy food is rare and too expensive for the majority of residents.

The residents association will continue to support the development of the OASIS project. Currently we are engaging with the co-op and its partners to help develop an emergency plan for residents in case of extreme weather and other events that could cause power outages and/or hinder access to water, food and other basic needs.

St James Town has long needed community based programs that can help address urgent needs like access to affordable healthy food, sustainable community development, climate resilience strategies, good job training, organic waste diversion, and employment opportunities. We hope the selection committee will agree that this pilot project could be of much benefit to our community and other high rise and or low income neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

On behalf of the St James Town Residents Association

Milan Slavkovich  
Yours Truly M. Slavkovich  
Director of Safety and Security



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
DALLA LANA SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
Healthier Cities & Communities Hub

July 30, 2017

Josephine Grey  
Low Income Families Together (LIFT)  
St Jamestown, Toronto

Dear Ms Grey,

I'm writing as co-lead of the [Healthier Cities and Communities hub](#) at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto, to express our enthusiastic support for the St. James Town Community Cooperative's application for funds to complete a feasibility study for the OASIS project.

The OASIS food hub pilot project is a visionary concept that shows potential in addressing many determinants of community health: climate adaptation, environmental remediation, nature connection, food security, green job creation and training, local community economic development, poverty reduction, and community building. It touches all 3 thematic foci of the Healthier Cities & Communities hub (described in more detail [here](#)): (i) resilient and equitable cities in a global context, (ii) built environment and health, and (iii) place-based interventions. OASIS has the potential to put Toronto on the map as a leader in grassroots innovation in sustainability transition, and its appearance is timely alongside the recent Toronto City Council approval of TransformTO's ambitious GHG reduction targets and strategy. That it fulsomely and meaningfully engages low income residents and attends to issues of equity by building transformative initiatives in a low-income neighbourhood make OASIS all the more appealing, in our view.

Our interactions with LIFT to date include funding a time-bank pilot project (one of 9 [seed grants](#) awarded from an applicant pool of 30 community-based research proposals), and involvement of LIFT staff in teaching (GGR434 Building Community Resilience) and a recently funded research seed grant entitled "Pedagogy for the Anthropocene" (with support from the Institute for Global Health Equity and Innovation at UofT). These experiences have led us to appreciate the solid foundation of resident engagement and the depth of thinking that is behind the OASIS concept proposal. We can therefore state our confidence in the capacity of the St James Town Community Co-op and LIFT to undertake this work.

Warmly,

**Dr. Blake Poland**

Associate Professor, Dalla Lana School of Public Health  
co-lead, Healthier Cities & Communities hub, DLSPH  
Director, Collaborative Specialization in Community Development  
Director, SBHS PhD program, DLSPH  
Principal Investigator, Transition Emerging Study  
University of Toronto  
Health Sciences Building, 155 College, 6th Floor  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5T 3M7  
Phone: 416-978-7542  
[www.dlsph.utoronto.ca](http://www.dlsph.utoronto.ca)

# GLEN MURRAY, MPP

Toronto Centre

Wednesday, November, 25, 2015

Neil Carter  
Advisor, Stakeholder Relations  
Toronto Community Housing  
7<sup>th</sup> Floor 931 Yonge St.  
Toronto, ON  
M4W 2H2

Dear Mr. Neil Carter,


It is with pleasure that I write to you today in support of the Organic Aquaponics Sustainable Integrated Systems (OASIS) Project in St. Jamestown. Food Security in the St. Jamestown neighbourhood is a major concern and I believe the OASIS Project would help significantly in creating a sustainable, accessible food source for residents of the community.

As climate change continues, our weather and climate will become increasingly destabilized. Pursuing alternative methods of growing our food has become critically important. The OASIS Project would create a predictable food source for the community as the green house and aquaponics farm would allow for a full year growing season. Furthermore, by utilizing closed-system agriculture, the OASIS would limit greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change.

St. Jamestown is one of the most densely populated neighbourhoods in North America. Located in the downtown region, food access is a major issue for the residents of the community. Along with this limited access comes limited food education. The OASIS project could serve as an educational resource for the residents by teaching youth about food production and healthy dietary choices.

I believe the OASIS green house and aquaponics farm would be a beneficial and important addition to the neighbourhood of St. Jamestown. Serving as a local food source and educational hub to the residents of the community, the OASIS could become a model of future sustainable agriculture. I am pleased to support this project and sincerely hope you consider the proposal for the OASIS in St. Jamestown.

Sincerely,



Glen Murray, MPP  
Toronto Centre

Community Action Centre 120 Carlton Street, Unit 318, Toronto, ON M5A 4K2  
Tel 416-972-7683 | Fax 416-972-7686 | Email [gmurray.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org](mailto:gmurray.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org)  
[www.glenmurray.onmpp.ca](http://www.glenmurray.onmpp.ca)





Kin-Wah Siu  
Agency Review Officer, Social Development, Finance & Administration  
City Hall, 100 Queen St W.,  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5H 2N2

July 30, 2017

Dear Kin-Wah Siu,

Re OASIS Foodhub. Letter of Support. Project Grant Application

I am writing to add my support for a Project Grant to fund a feasibility study of the OASIS Foodhub. I am the project lead and co-founder of the Toronto based Community Resilience to Extreme Weather (CREW). We have been working with community leaders in the St James Town neighbourhood for the past weeks to develop a community resilience plan for residents. Much of CREW's work promotes action around growing robust social networks and encouraging family and community emergency preparedness strategies.

In partnership with St James Town leaders we will co-host a number of community events that will continue through to the early spring of 2018. Thus far, two asset mapping workshops, held in July 2017, have shown us that food security is a significant motivator for local residents. Participants from a range of backgrounds were excited by the potential of existing local assets that could contribute to food production, storage and preparation. Residents are also exploring the potential of dehydrated food for emergency kits which could become a possible revenue source and deliver local employment opportunities.

It is clear to me that St James Town is more than ready to develop innovative food strategies that also promote local resilience. The Oasis Foodhub has the potential to become a linchpin component of the St James Town Community Resilience Plan. Your funding will be used for a feasibility study to ensure that the creation of the Foodhub will be successful.

Sincerely,

Sheila Murray



---

January 4, 2016

Ms. Pam McConnell  
Deputy Mayor/City Councillor, Ward 28  
City Hall, Toronto

Dear Pam McConnell,

As you know, we work with schools and families in St. James Town, specifically at Rose Ave. PS., where we have maintained and increased garden spaces and food literacy programs in and out of classrooms. Our goals are to increase food access and food literacy in the dense, urban neighbourhood that is really the size of a large town. We know from our 10 years at Rose Ave. PS as a community partner, how valuable the food garden and culinary arts programs are in the community. With so many wonderful food traditions from all over the world coming together, it's a learning experience like no other, and we believe in starting young, to increase cross-cultural knowledge and compassion. Buy-in to the garden & classroom programs is extremely high, from teachers, students and families.

We have reviewed the proposal for the OASIS foodhub and greenhouse project in St James Town and agree it is very much in line with our goals and objectives. We share the concern that with climate change affecting growing seasons and other factors that will impact agriculture, it is very important to find more ways to grow healthy local food year round, in cities. Beyond this goal, the OASIS project even helps to provide access to tropical plants to families for whom these foods are staples, and shortens the distance such foods must travel to get onto these families' plates.

We love the idea of using the OASIS project to train community residents and provide jobs for local youth, once the facility is operational. We are willing to engage with the project, to use our expertise gained over many years of practicing urban agriculture in-ground and in greenhouses, and support it, once built, to become an educational facility.

We also like the adjoining concepts of a Community Co-operative and the use of a time-bank/credit exchange to increase access to healthy food grown in the community and encourage local trading of services, as this will be very helpful for low-income residents. We believe that creating a community based model in a diverse multi-lingual community such as St James Town is a great idea for potential replication in other parts of the world facing food insecurity as well.

The aquaponics greenhouse provides an innovative solution to the challenges we will be facing as climate change progresses, because aquaponics can provide healthy fish protein and well as organic vegetables and greens. Our organization is willing to provide assistance based on our expertise and we look forward to engaging with this unique and innovative community project.

Sincerely,

Sunday Harrison  
Executive Director