

NOTICE OF MOTION

New Toronto Street Food

Moved by: Councillor John Filion

SUMMARY:

Over the past few years, I've had discussions with health officials and community members about the desirability of creating new, exciting, nutritious, and ethnically diverse street food. Toronto's current street food – the hot dog – is none of these.

Current rules governing street food vending (Ontario Regulation 562/90) essentially limits it to the sale of wieners or sausage products served on a bun. While there is widespread recognition that these regulations need to be changed to allow a greater variety of more nutritious street food, without compromising food safety, I have been unable to obtain a response from Ministry of Health staff on how or when such changes might happen.

Accordingly, I am asking the Toronto Board of Health to endorse this initiative and to formally seek a response from the Ministry. In the meantime, in order to move this issue forward I am asking that the Board endorse my plans to hold one or more special events this summer to showcase what Toronto street food could be. There is a precedent for this since, at certain special events, greater flexibility in outdoor food sales has been allowed, under the supervision of Public Health staff.

Toronto's street food could and should showcase our city's ethnic diversity, its fabulous chefs, and its entrepreneurs. Many cities have great street food particular to their cultures; Toronto could become the city with great street food from around the world. This would be an attraction not only for those who live and work here but for visitors to the City as well.

Fast food does not need to be unhealthy or boring. Great street food should celebrate our diversity, encourage healthy eating, support local food producers, and provide greater access to affordable nutritious food.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Accordingly, I ask the Board to support the following motion:

- 1) That the Toronto Board of Health request the Minister of Health and Long Term Care to amend the provincial food safety regulations without compromising food safety to allow for a broader range of street food that is healthy, affordable and culturally diverse.

- 2) That the Public Health staff and the Chair of the Board of Health look for opportunities to present New Toronto Street Food on a limited basis, as early as this summer, in accordance with existing regulations for some special events.
- 3) That the Toronto Board of Health endorse efforts to create new Toronto Street Food which meets the following criteria:
 - a. Is prepared and served in a way that does not compromise food safety
 - b. Is nutritious
 - c. Is affordable
 - d. Reflects the ethno-cultural diversity of our City
 - e. Will help make Toronto a more interesting place to live in and visit
 - f. Uses locally grown and produced food as much as possible.
- 4) That, in anticipation of legislative change, the Medical Officer of Health consult with staff of Municipal Licensing and Standards to determine whether changes in City licensing regulations might be required in order to create new vending locations for new street food (as outlined above), and to look at protocols so that restaurants do not face unfair competition from street vendors.
- 5) That Toronto's chefs, restaurant owners, and others in the food preparation industry be invited to participate in the creation of new Toronto Street Food.

That the Board be kept informed of progress on this initiative.