

HL10.2.3

From: Heather Marshall
To: Board of Health
Subject: Re: Request to appear before October 28, 2019 Board of Health on item 2019.HL10.2
Date: October 28, 2019 8:01:24 PM
Attachments: TEA Submission - HL10.2 28oct2019.pdf

Dear Clerk,

I deputed today at the BOH on Item HL10.2. Please find attached my written submission, which I consent to be published as a communications item (including a hyperlink provided so people can read the contents of my submission).

Thanks for your hard work,
Heather

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Heather Marshall
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torontoenvironment.org

On Wed, 23 Oct 2019 at 11:37, Board of Health <boh@toronto.ca> wrote:

Hello Heather,

Thank you for your email. We have added you as a speaker for Item [HL10.2](#), Food Systems Transformation and Toronto Food Strategy - 2019 Update, which will be considered by the City of Toronto's Board of Health during their meeting on Monday, October 28, 2019 at 9:30 a.m., in Committee Room 1 which is located on the second floor of Toronto City Hall (100 Queen Street West).

Please find below some important information about being a speaker:

- When you request to speak, your name, e-mail, mailing address, and the name of the organization you represent (if applicable), become part of the record of the meeting.
- On meeting day, your name will appear on the "Speakers List" which is posted online.
- If you choose to speak, you will appear on the live broadcast and video archive of the meeting, and your name will appear online in the meeting minutes.

For more information on speaking or writing to the City of Toronto's committees, please visit the following web link: <http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/tmmis/have-your-say.htm>.

If you wish to make a PowerPoint presentation or show a video to the Board of Health, please note that you would need to bring your own laptop. We suggest that you save your presentation to your desktop and also bring a few hard copies in case there are any technical issues with your presentation (that way, you can display your presentation on the document projector if need be). Should you have video, sometimes streaming from the web does not work well because of buffering or a lack of a solid Wi-Fi connection. We generally advise people that, for a smoother presentation, it is best to save and play back your video from your laptop or memory stick. AV staff can assist you with setting things up prior to your deputation. If you have a Mac computer, you will need a Mac computer to VGA connector.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions or concerns.

Regards,

James Martin

City Clerk's Office – Secretariat – Committees and Boards

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From: Heather Marshall [mailto:heather@torontoenvironment.org]

Sent: October 22, 2019 4:47 PM

To: Board of Health <boh@toronto.ca>

Subject: Request to appear before October 28, 2019 Board of Health on item 2019.HL10.2

To the City Clerk:

I would like to appear before the October 28, 2019 Board of Health to speak on item 2019.HL10.2, Food Systems Transformation and Toronto Food Strategy - 2019 Update

Name: Heather Marshall

Organization: Toronto Environmental Alliance

Mailing Address: Suite B1, 30 Duncan St, Toronto, ON M5V 2C3

Telephone: 416-596-0660

Thanks!

Heather

October 28, 2019

Re: HL10.2 Food Systems Transformation and Toronto Food Strategy - 2019 Update

Dear Members of the Board of Health,

The Toronto Environmental Alliance strongly supports the recommendations put forward by the Medical Officer of Health and wants to commend Toronto's commitment to join the C40 Good Food Cities declaration.

The timing is critical, especially since the City's climate action plan, TransformTO, is currently consulting with the public on the next 3 year implementation plan. One of the proposals is to develop reduction strategies for consumption-based emissions and food is a great place to start.

Transforming our food system is a necessary part of Toronto's response to climate change. The food system needs to change in order to adapt to the impacts of climate change and increase food security as well as to significantly reduce consumption-based greenhouse gas emissions. We're talking about transforming the way food is grown, produced, transported and consumed.

Many organizations and communities across Toronto already know the interconnections of food security, resilience and climate change and they've been tending to this work for many, many years. Community spaces are transforming lawns, parking lots, and rooftops into gardens and some run their own good food markets. Some hubs have invested in commercial-grade kitchens to serve local growers and catering entrepreneurs. Not only are these local leaders taking climate action, they are fostering resilience and a strong sense of community, their breaking down social isolation and developing their community.

We've been organizing tours to bring community hub members from other neighbourhoods to see the East Scarborough Storefront and the Bathurst Finch Hub, both of which have a thriving community garden and innovative rainwater collection systems that increase their sustainability. Tonight at the Bathurst-Finch Unison Hub, the community will be launching a new food coalition and one of their goals is to produce healthy local food year round.

These communities, and many more, have already started our food system transformation. But now it's time for the City to make some new commitments to propel that change forward.

We agree with the Food Policy Council that food should be considered a public good and that strong food policy can be used as a tool to increase the health and wellbeing of Torontonians and build equitable and sustainable communities.

The Medical of Officer's recommendations continue Public Health down a path of good food policies.

Many years ago, my organization was involved in promoting the adoption of a local food procurement policy at the City. Our city is surrounded by incredibly productive agricultural land in the Greenbelt, so it's important to support local farmers and buy our fruits and veggies close to home when we can.

Procurement policies are a very powerful tool that cities can use to ensure that public spending contributes to the public good.

We support the City in procuring food that is healthier, plant-based and sustainable.

When doing so, please also consider procuring food that:

- Is locally produced or harvested
- Comes from suppliers that are decent work employers
- Minimizes single-use packaging

When you are deciding who to **consult** in order to implement policies and programs that change food procurement and consumption and decrease food waste, please know that a more sustainable, plant-rich, low-carbon food system is going to need a lot of people power to make it happen.

Remember to consult with the community leaders in Toronto who are already producing fresh veggies and fruits in our city.

Remember to consult with Indigenous peoples and First Nations who have a long history of managing our region's traditional food systems and are actively pressing for food and land sovereignty.

Remember to consult with all the farmers and land holders who want to protect these abundant food and natural ecosystems from overdevelopment and need help regenerating land so it can produce sustainable food again.

And remember to consult the workers who are a major part of our food system. An incredible amount of labour that goes into our food system and commit to transforming this system with workers.

According to the Migrant Workers Alliance for Change, over 40,000 migrant agricultural workers come to Canada year after year. They are working in farm fields, greenhouses and food production factories. They are a major part of our food system and they work dangerous, low-waged jobs and our laws exclude them from basic protections.

As your own reports confirm, food insecurity is caused by poverty. Other aspects of climate resilience, such as ability to survive through extreme heat waves or recover from catastrophic loss,



are also dependent on income. There needs to be a commitment to reduce poverty with every policy the City passes.

My last few points are about valuing the food we produce by eliminating waste and creating sustainable methods to return food scraps back to the land to start the cycle of growth again.

The City's Solid Waste department has been tackling **food loss & waste** in a variety of ways and it's exciting to see other departments like Public Health step up to play a role in this work. A circular economy for food waste can include many solutions, some of which are already at play in our city such as food redistribution (e.g. Second Harvest), food preservation (e.g. Not Far From the Tree) and the Green Bin program (e.g. City of Toronto).

Given the size of Toronto's food and beverage manufacturing sector and the presence of the Food Terminal, there are ample opportunities to support businesses in reducing food loss in the supply chain.

The City must also lead by example and ensure that its own facilities and permitted events are doing what they can to eliminate food waste. At a minimum, all facilities and events should have Green Bins to ensure that food scraps do not end up in a landfill where they contribute to powerful greenhouse gas emissions. Instead, they should be sent to one of the City's own organics processing plants to turn it into compost and biogas!

Food system transformation needs to be embedded in Toronto's climate action work. With the TransformTO consultation underway, I hope to see this food strategy and policy directions reflected in the next 3-year implementation plan.

If Council is serious about the climate emergency declaration they passed, they must be prepared to turn these great strategies into action by investing in the City staff & programs as well as the community infrastructure needed to make it happen.