



**Revised
Member Motion**

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM10.13	ACTION			Ward: 13
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Providing an OASIS for Food Security in St. James Town - by Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, seconded by Councillor Gord Perks

** Notice of this Motion has been given.
* This Motion is subject to referral to the Economic and Community Development Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.
Communications MM10.13.1 to MM10.13.3 have been submitted on this Item.*

Recommendations

Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, seconded by Councillor Gord Perks, recommends that:

1. City Council request the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration, in conjunction and in consultation with OASIS Food Hub, the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, the Chief Executive Officer, Toronto Community Housing Corporation, the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, the General Manager, Solid Waste Management Services and other divisions as required to review the actions and approvals necessary to facilitate the following matters, and to report back to the March 10, 2020 meeting of the Economic and Community Development Committee:

- a. the creation of an underground aquaponics farm at 325 Bleecker Street, a Toronto Community Housing Corporation Building; and
- b. the location for OASIS Food Hub for the production, distribution and management of food and water in St. James Town.

Summary

The St. James Town Neighbourhood is one of the largest and most diverse neighbourhoods in Toronto. Food insecurity is a major issue facing this neighbourhood and many other low-income neighbourhoods across the City. Whether a resident can access inexpensive, healthy food is one of the social determinants of health recognized by the Canadian Mental Health Association and other organizations. The importance of food security is also recognized through the City’s 2018 Toronto Food Strategy and the City’s 2017 climate action strategy, TransformTO.

The OASIS Food Hub (Organic Agricultural Sustainable Integrated System) is a model designed by and for St. James Town residents to ensure climate resilient access to healthy

affordable food and to strengthen onsite capacity and preparedness for extreme weather and emergencies. OASIS aims to reduce environmental impact and increase social inclusion. OASIS is a full-cycle urban food hub meaning that it engages every phase of the food cycle from growing to soil regeneration in efficient and connected loops. OASIS works with local farms and distributors to increase food access, with the model designed to be replicable across high rise and vulnerable communities.

Many apartment buildings in St. James Town, including those owned by Toronto Community Housing Corporation, were built in the 1960s with amenities that have since been shuttered. One such facility is a swimming pool that exists in the sub-basement of 325 Bleecker Street, a Toronto Community Housing Corporation building. Rather than allowing this underground pool to sit dormant, OASIS is interested in creating an aquaponics farm that could grow vegetables and fish that could be distributed to the neighbourhood. Aside from being able to grow cheap, healthy food that meets the varied dietary needs of St. James Town residents, OASIS would also assist with food waste diversion and be able to provide training and skills to participants.

The long-term plans for St. James Town is to rethink the open space within the neighbourhood through the St. James Town Connects Framework that was adopted by City Council in 2018. Part of that work is exploring the creation of a market place area that would formalize informal commercial activity that is already occurring on the grounds of 200 Wellesley Street East. This and other potential spaces in the neighbourhood could provide the opportunity to create, such as through the use of shipping containers, a physical space for OASIS for the production, distribution and management of food and water to the neighbourhood.

Background Information (City Council)

Revised Member Motion MM10.13

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2019/mm/bgrd/backgroundfile-138289.pdf>

Communications (City Council)

(September 30, 2019) Submission from Josephine Grey, OASIS Food Hub Project, Director, St. James Town Community Co-operative and LIFT Toronto (MM.Supp.MM10.13.1)

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2019/mm/comm/communicationfile-97477.pdf>

(October 1, 2019) E-mail from Nicole Corrado (MM.Supp.MM10.13.2)

(October 1, 2019) E-mail from Nicole Corrado (MM.New.MM10.13.3)