

# GL15.14.246

September 14, 2020

Re: *Item GL.15.14, Lease and Contract Extensions for City of Toronto Golf Courses, General Government and Licensing Committee - written submission of comment*

To the General Government and Licensing Committee Members,

We are writing today to encourage you to consider alternative land use options for some of the City owned golf courses, and ask that you designate some of these spaces for food production and food sovereignty work being led by Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) in Toronto.

This request aligns with the City's commitment to the [GrowTO Action Plan](#) and the food access goals outlined in the [Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism](#), as well as the Black Food Sovereignty work being supported by the City.

A model for this work already exists within the City -- the Community Engagement and Entrepreneurial Development (CEED) gardens happening in hydro corridors in the [Flemingdon](#) and Malvern neighbourhoods provide an example of how underutilized green spaces can be converted into food producing spaces that provide both fresh food for communities and income for food growers. These food producing spaces will provide real, material benefits to the surrounding communities. Collaboration between nonprofit organizations, local community leaders, and City departments (SDFA and PF&R) are making this work possible.

A model for this work also exists outside of Toronto -- in 2005 Seattle integrated a racial and food justice lens into all of their municipal departments and as a result made large tracts of public land available for urban agriculture.

As the pandemic makes food insecurity worse, with food prices skyrocketing and food pantries closing their doors, this is the right time to pause and evaluate how we use public land and to ask critical questions about who has access and who benefits.

We would love the opportunity to speak with you further about this work. Thanks for your time in considering our comments.

Sincerely,



Paul M. Taylor  
Executive Director



Katie German  
Director of Programs



Orlando Martin Lopez Gomez  
Community Food Growing Manager