

Review of the Community Space Tenancy and Granting Request for 5n2 Kitchens in Scarborough Southeast

Date: August 30, 2021

To: Economic and Community Development Committee

From: Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration and Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management

Wards: All

SUMMARY

At its May 26, 2021 meeting, the Economic and Community Development Committee requested that Corporate Real Estate Management and Social Development, Finance and Administration to apply the City of Toronto's Community Space Tenancy Policy and the appropriate granting process to the request in Motion MM32.9 regarding the community agency, 5n2 Kitchens, and report back in September 2021. This request is in response to the pending expiry of the agency's current lease at the end of 2021 and a desire to find a long-term City space for 5n2 Kitchens.

Since 2013, 5n2 Kitchens has served 474,000 people, feeding families across Scarborough. During the COVID-19 pandemic, 5n2 Kitchens has worked with several agencies, schools and communities to address hunger in Scarborough communities. The agency currently serves 3,500 residents with food packages per week in an area encompassing: the Don Valley Parkway and Woodbine Avenue to the west, Danforth Avenue to the south, Finch Avenue to the north and Port Union Road to the east.

This report summarizes the actions taken in response to the Economic and Community Development Committee's request.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration and the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management recommend that:

1. The Economic and Community Development Committee receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact resulting from the adoption of the recommendation in this report.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The City's Community Space Tenancy Policy and Community Funding Unit at Social Development, Finance and Administration granting processes are designed to provide equitable access to funding and community space required by eligible non-profit organizations serving City of Toronto residents including Indigenous, Black and equity-deserving groups. These organizations in turn provide programs and services that align with and support the City's strategic objectives. The absence of community space and funding directly impacts the availability of programs and services that are responsive to local needs.

DECISION HISTORY

On May 26, 2021, the Economic and Community Development Committee requested the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management and the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration to apply the City of Toronto's Community Space Tenancy Policy and the appropriate granting process to the request on behalf of 5n2 Kitchens in Motion MM32.9 and to report back in September 2021. <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.EC22.8>

On May 5 and 6, 2021, City Council referred Motion MM32.9 regarding 5n2 Kitchens to the Economic and Community Development Committee. This motion requested staff to work with 5n2 Kitchens to locate a City-owned site for occupancy no later than November 30, 2021 and to request, and work with, the Provincial government and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs to offer financial support to 5n2 Kitchen <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/mm/bgrd/backgroundfile-166282.pdf>

COMMENTS

Social Development, Finance, and Administration's staff responsible for Community Funding and the Community Space Tenancy Policy reviewed the request from the Economic and Community Development Committee. Managers of the Tower and Neighbourhood Revitalization and Community Funding Units met with the Executive Director of 5n2 Kitchens to share information and explore ways to support the work of the organization. Staff from the Poverty Reduction Strategy Office COVID-19 Food Access team and the Corporate Real Estate Management division were also consulted on the request. The outcomes of the reviews and consultation are summarized below.

Funding Supports:

As part of the City's actions during the COVID-19 pandemic, approximately \$5.1 million in funding was allocated to support community-driven and community-informed food security initiatives across the City through the TO Supports Investment Fund. Of this funding, \$1.7 million was directed to organizations working specifically in Scarborough neighbourhoods. Initiatives funded include: food banks, emergency food delivery, prepared meals, emergency food vouchers, and food handling certification. Ensuring that culturally appropriate food staples and meals were provided through these programs was a priority for funding. 5n2 Kitchens received \$99,600 in funding from TO Supports in 2020 and \$160,000 in 2021 to support food and operating costs for their programming.

The TO Supports Investment Fund was a one-time special fund created using COVID-19 funding sources from a 20 percent allocation of the Province of Ontario's Social Services Relief Fund, and donations from The Canadian Medical Association Foundation and The Scheinberg Relief Fund for a combined total of \$9.62 million. Social Development, Finance and Administration, through the Community Funding Unit, administered a quick response, streamlined process to invest in strategic partnerships with social service agencies and grassroots groups to address urgent needs of Toronto residents who are vulnerable. 85 community agencies/groups received funding across 3 funding rounds of the TO Support Investment Fund. The funds were not intended to meet long-term recovery needs.

While the Community Funding Unit does not anticipate any upcoming funding opportunities, staff have informed the Executive Director of 5n2 Kitchens about other funding opportunities, specifically, the local food infrastructure fund available from the federal government.

Community Space:

Social Development, Finance and Administration administers the Community Space Tenancy Policy in partnership with Corporate Real Estate Management. The Community Space Tenancy Policy supports eligible community organizations by providing opportunities to lease to City facilities at below market rates for use to support community needs. The policy is well used and supports organizations across the City with a portfolio of 92 tenancies, however, it is constrained by a high level of interest from organizations and the limited portfolio of City spaces. At present, there is a waitlist of over 40 organizations with an interest in the City's Community Space Tenancy spaces that become available. 5n2 Kitchens is included on this waitlist.

There are 6 Community Spaces currently tenanted in the Ward 24: Scarborough-Guildwood area. Staff reviewed a number of City-owned properties that were identified in Ward 24 and surrounding Wards that met the 5n2's property requirements. However these properties were are not viable options due to different City jurisdictions or established future plans with the exception of 705 Progress Avenue, Unit 36/37, a Community Space Tenancy opportunity that is now available. When a Community Space Tenancy opportunity arises, a Request for Expressions of Interest process is launched to ensure a transparent and fair process to alert organizations to the

availability and find an eligible occupant. 5n2 Kitchens was included on an email distribution from City staff to alert organizations about Community Space Tenancy opportunities.

The Request for Expressions of Interest process for this space at 705 Progress Avenue, Unit 36/37 was launched in August 2021. The process includes a requirement that organizations must attend the Mandatory Online Information Session prior to submitting an application. The session was held on August 10, 2021 and 5n2 Kitchens was one of the organizations in attendance.

To be considered for the Community Space opportunity, interested organizations that attended the Session are required to submit a Request for Expression of Interest application by the August 31, 2021 deadline. Subsequently, City staff undertake a review of complete, eligible applications via a review panel and determine the recommended eligible occupant based on the review of the financial and organizational capacity to undertake the lease, occupancy costs, and program the space. It is anticipated that a suitable tenant organization will be recommended in a report to the General Government and Licensing Committee in October 2021.

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SIGNATURE

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