



April 5, 2022

RE: EC28.15 Updating Toronto's Food Charter for All

To Mayor John Tory and members of City of Toronto Council,

I'm writing in support of the motion to update the Toronto Food Charter, which is item EC28.15 on the agenda for the City Council meeting on April 6th, 2022.

City Council unanimously passed the current Food Charter over twenty years ago, but food insecurity has become more of a crisis in our city. When 1 in 5 households in Toronto are food insecure and the number rises to 1 in 3 for Black and Indigenous households, the City must take action.

As Co-Coordinator for a network of urban food growers including home growers, community gardeners and urban farmers, I have seen the dire impact on the health of individuals and communities when people cannot access healthy food and green spaces. I've also seen how residents can begin to address food insecurity when they are supported by community agencies, city staff and enabling municipal policies. Good food policy is an important tool for engaging residents on the other pressing issue of our time – climate action.

The City of Toronto has many critical issues to address – poverty, anti-racism, reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, climate change and the health and well-being of an urban population. A renewed Food Charter can empower citizens and community organizations to work with the City to create effective and appropriate responses to these challenges, from growing food to increasing public green space to reducing waste and reliance on fossil fuels.

A revitalized Food Charter must have strong mechanisms for implementation, accountability and resources. It must also be written by the communities most impacted by food insecurity and poverty so that they are not left out of decision-making processes once again.

I respectfully ask that you support the motion on April 6th to renew Toronto's Food Charter in conjunction with people and communities that have been disproportionately impacted by inequities in our food system. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rhonda Teitel-Payne", written in a cursive style.

Rhonda Teitel-Payne

Co-coordinator

Toronto Urban Growers

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