

Certificate Program in Food Security, Community Studies

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October 20, 2023

203 Westlake Avenue
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City of Toronto
Chair Alejandra Bravo
Economic and Community Development Committee

Dear committee members,

Letter of Support for marketcityTO request

I am pleased to provide a letter of support in support of the marketcityTO request for the development of the first City of Toronto Public Market Action Plan.

Toronto boasts over 105 public food markets, bolstering over 2,500 urban and rural entrepreneurs (2019 data). This number has likely increased as the COVID-19 pandemic fueled a surge in start-ups, particularly among millennials, launching businesses from home. Though deeply valued by city-dwellers to connect local growers and traders while surrounded by a festive atmosphere, entertainment and access to arts, crafts, street food and fresh produce, the widespread benefits of public food markets still need to be discovered and appreciated. As such, many public markets exist on the margins.

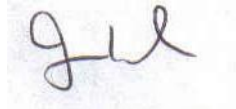
In my lengthy involvement in food security and urban agriculture in Toronto, I have seen the power of farmers' markets as an important engine of economic growth, and community cohesion. Farmers' markets are well-known, but there is a need and room for many other public markets in the city. The marketcityTO proposal would be a very positive step for public markets, and for Toronto.

Toronto has an opportunity to be a leader again in sustainable food and inclusive economies. Since 2015, a group of public market organizations and market managers, supported initially by the Toronto Food Policy Council, have been advancing the work required to increase awareness and understanding of Toronto public markets and their role in city-building. It is now the time to have an Action Plan that allows city staff, Councillors, market managers, vendors, the

private sector, academia, and the not-for-profit sector to work together and build the sector for the benefit of the markets, regulators and the city at large.

Please feel free to contact me directly if you would like to discuss further my support of the initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JK", is centered below the word "Sincerely,".

James Kuhns
Contract Lecturer
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