

NOTICE OF MOTION

Grocery Store Pilot Project

Moved by: Councillor Anthony Perruzza _____

Seconded by: Councillor Mike Colle _____

SUMMARY:

The rising cost of living continues to place significant pressure on many residents across Toronto. Food costs, in particular, represent one of the largest household expenses. As a result, food bank usage has increased dramatically throughout the city.

In several neighbourhoods, residents face limited access to full-service grocery stores offering affordable, high-quality food. These areas are often referred to as “food deserts,” where the lack of accessible grocery options forces residents to rely on smaller convenience or boutique stores with significantly higher prices.

Access to nutritious and affordable food is a key determinant of health. Too many Torontonians are experiencing food insecurity and related health challenges because healthy food options are simply unaffordable.

The City of Toronto must explore innovative ways to improve food access and affordability. Making life more affordable for residents should remain a central goal of municipal government. Establishing City operated grocery stores could help increase access to affordable food while addressing food insecurity in underserved communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. City Council establish a pilot project to open four municipally operated grocery stores within the City of Toronto, with the following parametres:
 - a. one grocery store located within each of the City’s Community Council districts;
 - b. priority given to neighbourhoods with limited access to full-service grocery stores and where residents have lower average household incomes;
 - c. a not-for-profit model under the City of Toronto with the goal of providing residents with the most affordable food pricing possible;
 - d. financial supports including potential waivers of property taxes, development charges, and other applicable fees, to reduce operating costs and maximize affordability for residents.
2. City Council request the City Manager report to City Council at the April 22, 2026 meeting on the implementation measures required to give effect to the municipal grocery store pilot.

Date: March 25, 2026