



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: December 11, 2016
Contact: James O'Neill
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RTS No.: 11711
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: December 14, 2016

TO: Standing Committee on City Finance and Services

FROM: General Manager of Community Services

SUBJECT: Proposed Lease Renewals for 1500 Main Street, 1580 Vernon Drive and Proposed Licence Renewal for 58 West Hastings Street for the Continuation of Urban Farming Programs

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT City Council authorize the Director of Real Estate Services to renew the lease agreements with Cultivate Canada Society (dba Sole Food Street Farms), for a further three years for City owned property located at:
- a) 1580 Vernon Drive, legally described as PID: 007-074-654 , 007-074-671, 007-074-697 Lots A, B and C Block 59, District Lots 264A and 2037, Plan 18874; and
 - b) 1500 Main Street, legally described as PID: 011-086-947, 011-086-963, 011-086-971, 011-086-980 Lots 10 - 13, Block A2, District Lot 2037, Plan 5703;
- at the nominal rental rate of \$10.00 for the term and subject to early termination upon 6 months' notice.
- B. THAT City Council authorize the Director of Real Estate Services to renew the licence with PHS Community Services Society (dba Hastings Urban Farm) for an additional one year term for the license area described in Appendix A, which area may be expanded at the discretion of the General Manager of Community Services depending on timing and use of the remaining portion of the site for a temporary Mobile Health Unit for City-owned property located at:

- a) 58 West Hastings Street, legally described as PID: 027-736-032, Lot 1
Block 29 District Lot 541 Group 1 New Westminster District
Plan BCP39144;

at the nominal rental rate of \$10.00 for the term and subject to early termination
upon 60 days' notice.

- C. THAT no legal rights or obligations will be create by Council's adoption of
Recommendations A and B unless and until all legal documentation has been
executed and delivered by the respective parties.

Pursuant to Section 206(1) of the Vancouver Charter, approval of the grants contained in
Recommendations A and B requires a resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of all
members of City Council.

REPORT SUMMARY

The report seeks Council's approval of lease and licence renewals for three city-owned
properties for urban farm use. The three farm sites are located at 1500 Main Street and 1580
Vernon Drive, operated by Sole Food Farms for Cultivate Canada Society ("Sole Food"), and 58
West Hastings Street operated by PHS Community Services Society ("PHS"). All three sites
have been in operation for four years and lease agreements require renewal. Both farming
operations provide low income residents with both paid and volunteer training and jobs to
grow fruits and vegetables for distribution to markets, restaurants, and non-profit
organizations and promote healthy and green development in Vancouver. These urban farm
leases will allow the two organizations to continue their urban farming activities and
programs. Recommended length of term for Sole Food's sites are for three years for each site
due to anticipated outcomes of False Creek Flats Planning Programs, and one year for
Portland Housing Society in anticipation of future social housing at the site. All noted
agreements are subject to early termination provisions.

The commencement date of the lease agreements is December 15, 2016.

The commencement date for the Licence with PHS is December 15, 2016.

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

Urban Farming Bylaw and Guidelines - In April 2016, Council adopted the urban farming
guidelines, zoning and development bylaw, and licence bylaw that allow urban farming as a
defined use on zoned lands.

PHS Community Services Society (Hastings Urban Farm) - In March 2015, Council authorized
a lease agreement for PHS to develop and deliver urban farming programs at 58 West Hastings
Street.

Vancouver Food Strategy - In January 2013, Council adopted the Vancouver Food Strategy
including goals and actions to support urban farming.

Sole Food - In February 2012, Council authorized three lease agreements for Cultivate Canada to develop and deliver urban farming programs.

Greenest City Action Plan - In 2010, City Council adopted the Greenest City Action Plan that included the need for a food systems strategy and identified a target to increase food assets by a minimum of 50%.

CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager RECOMMENDS approval of the foregoing.

REPORT

Background/Context

Cultivate Canada (Sole Food) is the largest urban farming organization in Vancouver and has been using two city-owned sites to empower individuals with limited resources by providing jobs and training. The agreements for these sites have now gone into overholding. In addition, Sole Foods has agreed to relinquish one of five lots it has leased at 1500 Main Street to accommodate a pilot modular housing project.

In February 2012, Council authorized a lease agreement for Cultivate Canada (formerly Blue Heron Charitable Foundation) at 1580 Vernon Drive and 1500 Main Street.

A recent study from Queens University, found that there were \$1.70 in savings to the health care, legal, and social assistance systems for every dollar paid to Sole Food employees. Over the past seven years, Sole Food has had a significant impact in the community including: 75 people employed, putting about \$1.3 million in total wages/salaries into low income residents' pockets; and donating roughly \$26,400 worth of fresh and healthy food to the Food Bank.

PHS has been operating a garden and agriculture-oriented programs at 58 West Hastings for four years with goals of being a neighbourhood gathering place focused on food growing, education and sharing together. The PHS gardening operations on this property pre-date City ownership. The garden provides low income residents with training and skills development, and part time employment; including growing vegetables and fruits, managing the site, maintenance of farm infrastructure and hosting weekly seasonal markets. The site is also home to bee hives that are managed by Hives for Humanity, a non-profit organization that encourages community connections through beekeeping.

In March 2015, Council authorized a licence agreement for PHS to develop and deliver urban farming programs at 58 West Hastings Street.

Strategic Analysis

Sole Food and Hastings Urban Farm are leaders in urban farming in Vancouver and North America with innovative business and operational models that directly align and advance the City's overarching sustainability objectives including:

- Supporting the Healthy City Strategy interests by helping to address food security, social and mental health and addictions needs of the low income community,
- Supporting the Vancouver Food Strategy and Greenest City Action Plan targets including increased food assets and increasing the number of green jobs,
- Aligning with the Vancouver Economic Strategy by supporting sustainable employment within the food sector that is identified as an area for economic growth opportunity.

The 1580 Vernon Drive property is 1.4 acres, of which less than 1 acre is flat and in use for urban farming operations. Prior to Sole Food in 2012, the property was last used as a Petro Canada (cardlock) fuelling station. Prior to 2012, it had been vacant for 10 years in which time environmental investigation and monitoring occurred. See Appendix A for lease agreement area.

The property located at 1500 -1550 Main Street is approximately .39 acres and was also a former Petro Canada fuelling station site prior to Sole Food using it. The property was vacant for 10 years prior to Sole Food's use. This property has also been limited to surface uses and a portion of the property is the site of a pilot modular rental housing project that is scheduled for construction in early 2017. See Appendix A for lease agreement area.

Because of the nature of the former uses of both the sites, Sole Food would continue activities that do not disturb the ground cover and grow in raised garden boxes; in affect, avoiding contaminated soil concerns.

The Sole Food's sites are located within the False Creek Flats Planning Area. The False Creek Flats Plan is nearing completion and it is expected that the City may proceed with development in accordance with the new plan. Accordingly, staff is recommending the Sole Food leases be on the same terms as the original leases granted to them to include early termination provisions.

The property at 58 West Hastings Street is a mid-block half-acre site of which the City of Vancouver received title on November 14, 2014, from Concord Pacific as a community amenity contribution for the rezoning of 10 Terry Fox Way. PHS has been operating a garden and agriculture-oriented programs at this location for four years. The gardens would be temporary until such time the site is redeveloped for social housing purposes. See Appendix A for licence agreement area.

Implications/Related Issues/Risk (if applicable)

Financial

Should Council approve the recommendation related to Cultivate Canada (Sole Food), the City will continue a lease with the Tenant at nominal value. This represents an estimated annual rent subsidy for the two properties totalling \$140,000 per year.

Should Council approve the recommendation related to PHS (Hastings Urban Farm), the City will continue a licence with the Tenant at nominal value. This represents an estimated annual rent subsidy of \$79,000 for the year.

The three sites represent an estimated rental subsidy totalling \$219,000 per annum.

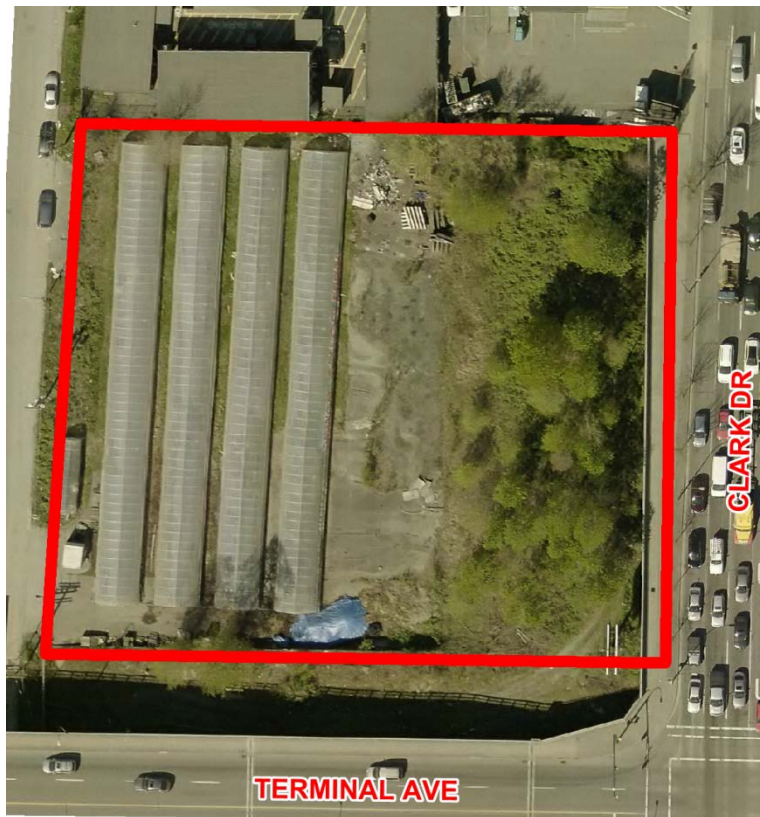
If market rental rates were charged, neither organization would be able to sustain their level of programming.

CONCLUSION

The urban farming activities and programs operated by Cultivate Canada (Sole Food) at 1500 Main Street and 1580 Vernon Drive and by PHS at 58 West Hastings Street add positive contributions to the neighbourhoods in which they're situated, and contribute to many of Council priorities and goals outlined in the Vancouver Food Strategy, Greenest City Action Plan and the Healthy City Strategy. The General Manager of Community Services is seeking Council's authorization for Director of Real Estates Services to enter into lease and license agreements with the Cultivate Canada and PHS, both non-profit organizations, to maintain urban farming activities and programs at their present sites.

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1580 Vernon Drive Lease Agreement Area



1500 Main Street Lease Agreement Area



58 West Hastings License Agreement Area

