



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: October 3, 2017
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Meeting Date: October 31, 2017

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: General Manager of Community Services
SUBJECT: Vancouver Food Strategy Progress Report and Action Plan Update

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT City Council receive for information the Vancouver Food Strategy progress report.
- B. THAT City Council endorse the Food Strategy Action Plan for 2017-2020, as outlined in Appendix A.

REPORT SUMMARY

This Council report provides a Vancouver Food Strategy (2013) progress report towards a just and sustainable food system, and outlines next steps and priorities for 2017-2020.

Since Council adopted the Food Strategy in 2013, the City has adopted community food market guidelines, bylaws to permit urban farming, and implemented a green bin program that has diverted over 216,000 tonnes of organic material (18% of total waste). Food assets have increased by 10% to 4771 and new policy requires that food assets are delivered as part of large rezonings. Funds have been invested in 14 neighbourhood food networks, benefiting 22,000 residents in 2016. As of September 2017, 80% of the 71 Food Strategy Actions are completed or are ongoing.

To ensure the Food Strategy remains flexible with current food systems issues, staff have engaged with stakeholders, reviewed emerging areas of focus, and renewed a Food Strategy Action Plan for 2017-2020.

Based on this work, there are three new focus areas: 1) **Food Access**, with a focus on the ability of residents to access food in neighbourhoods. Actions include broadening the definition of food assets, preserving and encouraging more healthy and lower cost food retail,

and creating a business case for a food procurement system for non-profits and other service providers; 2) **Diversity of Voices and Inclusion**, engaging diverse voices across Vancouver and adjusting policy priorities accordingly; and 3) **Food System Resilience**, to inform the City about the flow of food into and out of the region, the short and long term impacts on residents should food distribution infrastructure fail - and how to mitigate impacts.

In addition to these three new focus areas, staff will continue to support ongoing work encompassed under the five Food Strategy 2013 goal areas as described in Table 3. This work includes: support to neighbourhood food networks, relocating and expanding the Greater Vancouver Food Bank, enabling food growing and harvesting, working with Vancouver School Board to determine the best use of school meal funding, streamlining the permitting of farmers markets, facilitating the creation and use of cooking facilities for community development, creating a Zero Waste 2040 Strategy with food system waste as one of the three key focus areas, and incorporating a food systems lens in city plans and strategies.

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

Greenest City Action Plan - In 2015, Council adopted the Greenest City 2020 Action Plan Part Two with a goal that Vancouver is to become a global leader in urban food systems and to increase city-wide and neighbourhood food assets by a minimum of 50% over 2010 levels.

Healthy City Strategy - In October 2014, Council adopted the Healthy City Strategy with goals of ensuring that Vancouver's children and youth, up to age 24, have the best chance of enjoying a healthy childhood; and that Vancouver has a healthy, just, and sustainable food system. In July 2015, Council approved the first four year action plan.

Vancouver Food Strategy - In January 2013, Council adopted the Vancouver Food Strategy with goals to: support food-friendly neighbourhoods, empower residents to take action, improve access to healthy, affordable, and culturally diverse food for all residents; make food a centerpiece of a green economy, and advocate for a just and sustainable food system with partners and at all levels of government.

CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager RECOMMENDS approval of the foregoing.

REPORT

Background/Context

Vancouver residents are consumers of food produced nearby and from afar and food system activities -whether growing, processing, distribution, retailing, food service, or waste management - take up a considerable amount of land across Metro Vancouver and beyond. Food systems decisions span all three areas of sustainability: economic, social/health, and environmental. Decisions related to built form, housing type and transportation networks can influence access to food and eating habits, physical health, job opportunities throughout the food system, and the environmental impact of our agricultural and food processing /

distribution system. The City's decisions can also support the important role of food as a social connector to build community resiliency.

In January 2013, City Council adopted the Vancouver Food Strategy, an official plan and road map that integrates a full spectrum of urban food system issues within a single policy framework that includes food production, food processing, distribution, access and food waste management. The Vancouver Food Strategy identified (1) vision and principles (2) five over-arching goals; and (3) an action plan of 71 actions to achieve the five goals.

Since the Food Strategy was passed in 2013, multiple departments have collaborated on initiatives ranging from urban agriculture to waste, procurement, community kitchen access, and farmers markets. Several issues have been discussed at Council including street food bylaws, support for farmers markets, and urban farming zoning and licensing changes.

Strategic Analysis

The Vancouver Food Strategy expresses a vision and goals of a just and sustainable food system, and integrates and aligns with numerous other City strategies and policies including those that are health, economic, or environment related.

Eighty percent of actions have been completed or are ongoing

Table 1: Highlights of Vancouver Food Strategy accomplishments since 2013

Achievements by Food System area
<p>Food Production:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increased <u>community garden plots</u> to 4571, a 40% increase since 2010, and provided grants for infrastructure upgrades at 73 community gardens ○ Became one of the first cities in Canada to adopt bylaws to permit and legitimize <u>urban farming</u> ○ Pearson rezoning <u>secured 1-acre urban farm</u>
<p>Food Access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increased <u>Sustainable Food System Grants</u> funding to ~\$188,000/year for Neighbourhood Food Networks, which leveraged \$755,000/year and engaged 22,000 residents ○ Created <u>Community Food Market guidelines</u> that have enabled 12 low-cost markets in 2016 ○ Updated <u>Farmers Markets policy</u>: 10 seasonal Farmers Markets in 2016 created \$15 million in local economic impact ○ Provided \$450,000/year for <u>school food and food literacy programming</u>: providing daily meals to ~370 students and family
<p>Food Processing and Distribution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Developed and implemented a <u>street food cart program</u> which created jobs and increased healthfulness of food carts: 89 hot dog and ice cream vendors in 2010 versus 154 carts with varied cuisine in 2017 ○ Developed a definition of <u>local, sustainable procurement</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Park Board met its goal of 40% local in 2015 ○ Evelyne Saller Centre established baseline in 2016: 26% local ○ Examined the role of <u>small scale grocers</u> in neighbourhood food access

Achievements by Food System area
<p>Food Waste:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Initiated <u>weekly food scraps & biweekly garbage collection</u>: increase in organics diversion from 60% in 2013 to 75% in 2017 from single family homes, representing ~206,560 tonnes of food scraps and yard trimmings (from mid-2013 until Dec. 2016) and ○ Expanded solid waste bylaw requirements to <u>ban food scraps</u> from going to landfill: Organics pick up now reaches 90% of all multi-unit residential buildings
<p>Systems Wide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Three food assets are required as part of any large development rezoning, as per the <u>Sustainable Large Development Rezoning Policy</u> ○ Incorporated food related priorities in <u>community plans</u> including False Creek Flats, Westend, and Grandview Woodlands. ○ Winner of the <u>Milan Pact Awards 2016</u> for Governance

Food asset growth slowing

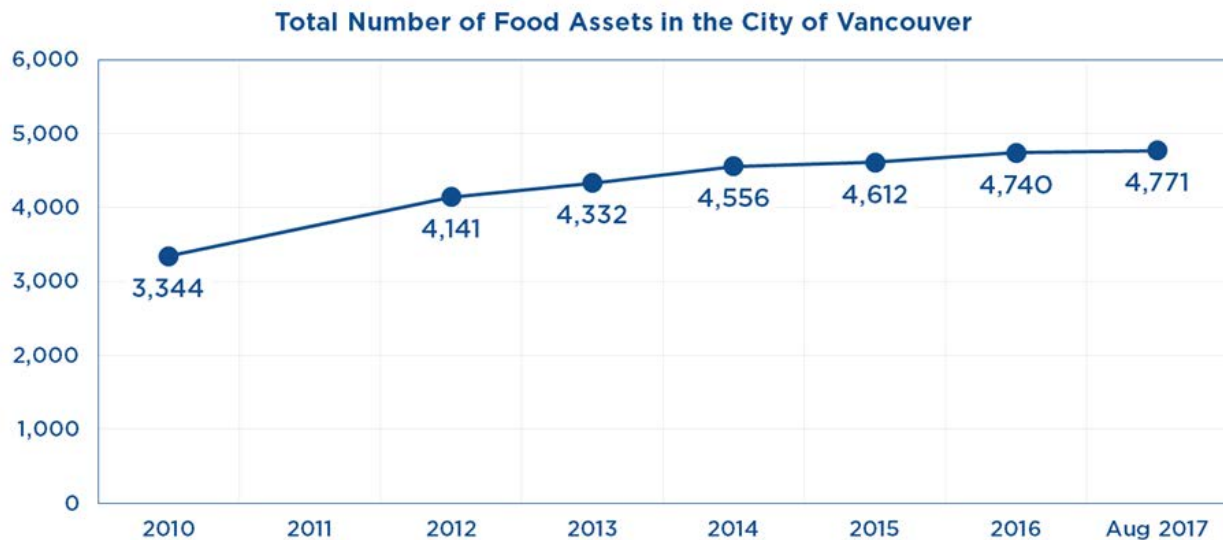
The total number of food assets increased from 3,340 in 2010 to 4,771 in August 2017, an increase of 43%, though the rate of growth is slowing considerably, with only a 10% increase since 2013 and a 4% increase since December 2015. It is likely that several of the GCAP food asset targets will not be met by 2020. For example, the number of community gardens installed is slowing both because there are fewer sites available and also because some sites that were built as temporary gardens are now undergoing development. The Vancouver Farmer's Market Society reports that the goal of 22 markets by 2020 is likely not possible as Vancouver neighbourhoods and our local farmers may not be able to sustain that many markets by 2020. While the intention is to continue to grow the number of farmers markets in the city, a slower rate of growth is expected.

Table 2: Total Number of Food Assets on public land

Food Asset	Baseline 2010	August 2017	Target 2020
Community Garden Plots*	3260	4616	5500
Urban Orchards	3	48	60
Urban Farms	1	16	35
Farmers Market	4	11	22
Community Food Market	3	11	20
Community Kitchens	69	69	80
Community Composting	0	0	5
Total Assets	3340	4771	5723

*Community garden plots in private developments are not included in the City's food asset count.

Graph 1 Total Number of Food Assets



Continued commitment to the 2013 Food Strategy actions

Staff will continue to work on the actions from the 2013 Food Strategy, such as: enabling food growing and harvesting, permitting of farmers and community food markets, facilitating the creation and use of cooking facilities for community development, creating a Zero Waste 2040 Strategy, and incorporating a food systems lens in city plans and strategies. Staff will also continue to work with the Vancouver School Board and other stakeholders to determine the best use of the City's \$400,000/year in funding for school meals. A summary of the actions for 2017-20 is outlined in Appendix A.

Vancouver Food Strategy integrates new focus areas

The Food Strategy actions were developed through community consultation in 2011 and 2012. Since the development of the Food Strategy, some issues have become more pressing, such as the increasing cost of food and ongoing inadequate incomes, as well as the increasing lease rates for food businesses including retailers and processors. Staff met with several City departments, the Vancouver Food Policy Council and others such as Vancouver Coastal Health, the Neighbourhood Food Networks, and Vancouver Economic Commission. They reviewed current issues which led to three new focus areas: Food Access, Diversity of Voices and Inclusion, and Resilience:

a) Diversity of Voices and Inclusion

The current food system benefits some people, but unfortunately does not work for all. There are many voices and groups of people that are left behind and/or are not heard in the mainstream 'food conversation'. It is important to take an intersectional approach in examining the city's existing and emerging food policy, assessing who is benefitting and who is not, and adjusting policy work accordingly. To do so, we will build on the work of the Engaged City taskforce to develop engagement strategies that meet the needs of different demographics, recognizing that each group is diverse and has many points of community connection. We have an opportunity to create ongoing listening processes with communities

that have not typically been engaged in the City's food policy work, to make space for their contributions to the City's decision making regarding food systems. For instance, being a City of Reconciliation and stemming from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission commitments, we have the responsibility to engage with and build relationships with the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations and urban Aboriginal serving groups to align with Indigenous food systems goals. Another upcoming opportunity will be through conversations to redefine food assets. The learnings about the identification of and cultural value of diverse food assets in building connectivity and community resilience can then better enable their inclusion into planning processes.

b) Food Access: Financial Accessibility and Availability

The monthly cost of a healthy food basket for a family of four in the Vancouver Coastal Health region was \$997. The cost had increased 25% since 2007, over two and a half times the Consumer Price Index increase of 10% over the same time period. Seven percent of Vancouverites (38,000 residents) 12 years and older report they face 'moderate or severe' food insecurity - which means they do not have enough to eat on a regular basis.

Another element of accessibility of food is the proximity of healthy and culturally diverse food retail. Of concern is the 50% decline in fresh food retail outlets in Chinatown between 2009 and 2016 (a loss of 12 out of 24 grocery, meat, or fish stores) and concerns of food retail loss in other neighbourhoods. As small grocers and specialty food stores close, impacts include reduced affordability of food, reduced access to culturally appropriate food and to cultural community spaces, and reduced walkability and convenience.

The City uses the metric of food assets to track progress towards food goals. The definition includes the assets listed in Table 2 and does not count other valuable assets including grocery stores, low-cost meals, commercial kitchen space, or spaces that are used for convening neighbours and communities around food. A broader food assets definition can demonstrate the value these diverse assets bring to communities, study the pressures facing them, and incorporate them into planning processes.

Given this context of food affordability, proposed actions for 2017-20 include broadening the definition of food assets; examining opportunities to preserve and encourage healthy and lower cost food retail; and creating a business case for a food procurement system for non-profits and other service providers.

c) Resilience

The City's mandate to develop a resilience strategy through the 100 Resilient Cities initiative provides a strong impetus to simultaneously consider the resilience of each sector of our food system, as well as the role of food in building community resilience. Natural disasters such as earthquakes cause food systems disruptions both short and long term. New York's 2016 Five Borough Food Flow study showed that most small grocers and supermarkets have only a three to seven day supply of food, without accounting for hoarding. There are no studies that show the flow of food into and out of the Metro Vancouver region or the impacts on residents should food distribution infrastructure fail. There are certain populations, for example those who are already food insecure, who will be most adversely affected by any food system disruptions.

Table 3. New focus area alignment with Food Strategy goals

Food Strategy Goal	New Focus Areas		
	Diversity of Voices and Inclusion	Food Access	Food System Resilience
1. Support food friendly neighbourhoods	✓	✓	✓
2. Empower residents to take action	✓		✓
3. Improve access to healthy, affordable, culturally diverse food	✓	✓	✓
4. Food as centrepiece of Vancouver's green economy	✓		✓
5. Advocate for a just and sustainable food system with partners and other levels of government	✓	✓	✓

Table 3 outlines how these three focus areas align with the existing Food Strategy goals. The focus on a diversity of voices and inclusion as well as the resilience focus cross all five goal areas of the Food Strategy, whereas the food access focus is most closely aligned with goal 3 to improve access to healthy, affordable, culturally diverse food for all residents.

Appendix A outlines eight new actions to move forward on these three focus areas. Several issues raised by stakeholders are not included in the proposed Action Plan given the need to prioritize staff time. These include areas of focus such as food waste, transportation infrastructure and goods movement, small/mid-scale processing, local procurement, labour justice for farm workers and food retail workers, and supporting technological innovation. Work on each of these important issues will move forward as opportunities arise including through the community economic development strategy, social procurement framework, and resilience focus. Engineering is leading the development of a Zero Waste 2040 strategy with food waste as a key focus area, and therefore food waste is not addressed in this action plan.

Accompanying the Action Plan is a set of indicators to monitor the health of the food system for Vancouver and its residents (Appendix B). While the indicators have been selected to reflect the five goals of the Food Strategy, the City has a high degree of influence over some, but not all of the indicators.

Public/Civic Agency Input

The Vancouver Food Policy Council (VFPC) supports the Vancouver Food Strategy Action Plan 2017-2020 moving forward and is interested and willing to work with City staff to implement the plan and outline metrics of success, within their capacity. The VFPC also recommends additional staff resources be allocated to implement the actions and address those that were not included in the Action Plan due to limited resources.

*Implications/Related Issues/Risk**Financial*

There are no financial implications.

CONCLUSION

It has been nearly five years since the first Vancouver Food Strategy was developed and adopted by Council. Over eighty percent of the actions are complete or are ongoing. This report has outlined some of the key accomplishments, outlined emerging focus areas for the Food Strategy to positively impact the food system goals. The Food Strategy approach for 2017-2020 integrates three new focus areas: Food Access, Diversity and Inclusion, and Resilience, while supporting ongoing actions.

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VANCOUVER FOOD STRATEGY ACTION PLAN 2017-2020		
NEW FOCUS AREAS		
	ACTION	IMMEDIATE NEXT STEPS (Nov 2017 - June 2018)
DIVERSITY OF VOICES AND INCLUSION		
1.1	Engage and build relationships with the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations and Urban Aboriginal serving groups to align with Indigenous food system goals	Work with the public engagement team and meet with the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations, UAPAC, MVAEC, and others
1.2	Engage and work with under-represented groups	Work with the public engagement team to develop specific engagement strategies
FOOD ACCESS: FINANCIAL ACCESSIBILITY & AVAILABILITY		
2.1	Preserve and encourage more healthy, lower cost, and culturally-diverse food retail	Work with CIRES (community impact real estate society) to secure a space in the DTES for lower cost food retail
		Facilitate a diverse food retail environment in NEFC through policy direction and space design (i.e. one that enables healthy, lower cost, culturally diverse, and local options)
2.2	Revisit and broaden food assets definition and examine opportunities for preserving and incorporating these diverse assets into planning processes and new developments	Meet and work with members of different cultural communities to redefine food assets, with guidance from the public engagement team
2.3	Examine the business case for a food procurement system for non-profits, service providers, and childcare centres	Work with community partners to outline the need for, the opportunity, and the business models for recovered, wholesale and/or local food
2.4	Support the relocation and expansion of the Greater Vancouver Food Bank and partners	Work with the Greater Vancouver Food Bank and partners to develop and refine the concept, programming, location and design
2.5	Work with Vancouver Coastal Health to support the implementation of their DTES Second Generation Action Plan	Contribute to the development of food service quality standards and work to implement them
RESILIENCE		
3.1	Assess the City's food system resilience	Work with UBC Land and Food Systems and host student projects examining opportunities and barriers across the food system
		Explore collaboration with Metro Vancouver to better understand the flow of food in and out of the city and region from a resiliency and disaster management perspective

CONTINUING AND ONGOING INITIATIVES		
	ACTION	IMMEDIATE NEXT STEPS (Nov 2017 - June 2018)
ENABLE FOOD GROWING AND HARVESTING		
4.1	Support urban farming activities, including on city land and through developments	Continue working with Planning, Housing, Park Board, and Real Estate to identify and secure sites Assess implementation of urban farming policy and report back to Council on status of zoning and land-use by laws
4.2	Continue to work across departments and with partners to create new community gardens and other urban agriculture and to support existing models	Conduct Expression of Interest process for new garden spaces, including City and Park Board identified sites
4.3	Continue to advocate for the preservation and agricultural use of the Agricultural Land Reserve	Work towards allowing the keeping of food-producing animals in Vancouver's ALR
FACILITATE THE CREATION AND USE OF COOKING, PROCESSING AND DISTRIBUTION INFRASTRUCTURE AND CAPACITY		
5.1	Expand the use of publicly accessible kitchens through training and through improvements in kitchen infrastructure, equipment, and food storage, and explore additional opportunities with community partners	Provide training for Community Centre staff and others to activate kitchen spaces Develop kitchen design guidelines used for city-affiliated facilities Contribute to the development of a DTES kitchen inventory
INCREASE FOOD ACCESS AND FOOD JUSTICE		
6.1	Continue to advocate for and work towards sustainable and adequate sources of income for all residents	Contribute to the development of the City's and BC's poverty reduction strategy Examine food policy work from an income equity lens Look for opportunities to use food as a community economic development tool, internally through procurement contracts, and externally as part of the CED strategy
6.2	Work with the Vancouver Board of Education and other stakeholders to best meet the food needs of children and families and increase food literacy opportunities	Work with VBE and other stakeholders to determine best use of meal / food literacy funds for 2018-20 Support implementation of the Think&EatGreen school food literacy project
6.3	Support Neighbourhood Food Networks	Streamline grant application process including through three year grant cycle Adjudicate 2018 applications

6.4	Support the development and stability of Community Food Markets and Farmers Markets	Improve efficiency and clarity of application process for farmers markets
		Improve site tenure for farmers markets
		Continue to work towards solutions to infrastructure gaps at farmers markets
ENCOURAGE A ZERO WASTE CULTURE		
7.1	Integrate actions into the Zero Waste Strategy that address food waste across all areas of the food system	Contribute to Zero Waste strategy development by determining synergies and opportunities, risks and unintended consequences, barriers, and potential city interventions.
INCORPORATE A FOOD SYSTEMS LENS IN CITY INITIATIVES AND STRATEGIES		
8.1	Integrate just and sustainable food systems goals into existing and emerging City-wide strategies, policies and community plans, and ensure the use of an equity lens	Assess blind spots in food policy, where a more concerted intersectional approach would be beneficial
		Assess and provide food systems input into community plans and other emerging City strategies / policies
		Apply the <i>Rezoning Policy for Sustainable Large Developments</i> and <i>Guidelines for Urban Agriculture for the Private Realm</i>
		Contribute to other rezoning, development and building application reviews as they arise
CREATE AND SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMPLEMENTARY POLICY AND PROCESSES		
9.1	Support the implementation of the Park Board Local Food Action Plan	Work with Park Board to implement actions
9.2	Collaborate with Metro Vancouver and member municipalities to implement the Regional Food Systems Action Plan	Participate in quarterly meetings and identify opportunities for collaborations between municipalities
9.3	Work collaboratively in national and international networks of cities to share practices and strategies in delivering sustainable food systems	Continue to participate in C40 Food Systems Network and Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, and Canadian food network of cities

Indicators of health of the food system for Vancouver and its residents

Goal		Indicator	Metric
Support food friendly neighbourhoods	1A	Number of food assets (physical infrastructure, for example community garden plots)	2016: 4740 assets, representing a 41% increase since 2010, though plateauing (only a 3% increase since 2015)
	1B	Amount of dollars for food related infrastructure (e.g. kitchens, gardens)	2016: \$190,000 Dollars leveraged unavailable for 2016
Empower residents to take action	2A	Number of people engaged in Neighbourhood Food Networks	2015: Over 22,000 residents engaged, stable since 2014
	2B	Amount of funding provided to non-profit organizations for food system work	2016: ~\$640,000 City funding to Neighbourhood Food Networks of \$188,000 leveraged \$890,000. Leverage of other grants in 2016 not calculated.
Improve access to healthy, affordable, culturally diverse food for all	3A	Monthly cost of Health Canada's healthy food basket for a family of four in Vancouver (vs. consumer price index (CPI))	2015: \$997 in Vancouver Coastal Health region, an increase of 25% since 2007 (vs. CPI increase of 10%)
	3B	Number of residents 12 years and older without enough to eat "Moderate or severe food insecurity"	2011/12 - 7%* of residents (38,068 residents) 2013/4 - CCHS data unavailable *Stats Can cautions regarding the use of the Vancouver level data in 2011/12 due to sampling concern. VCH level data shows food insecurity rates of 10%; BC of 12%.
	3C	Percent of population within 400m of supermarket, or a small or specialty grocery store	2017 (baseline): 62% of Vancouverites were within 400m of a supermarket, or small or specialty grocery store
Make food a centrepiece of Vancouver's green economy	4A	Number of food-related jobs	2011 - 32,600 food-related jobs 2006 - data unavailable
	4B	Number of local food jobs	2016: 7604 local food jobs, an increase of 27% since 2010 2010: 4946 local food jobs
	4C	Average wage of food-sector jobs	2011: \$23,200/year vs. \$43,000 /year individual income for Vancouver residents
Advocate for a just and sustainable food system with partners and all levels of government	5A	Number of advocacy initiatives and quality of partnerships	2017 example: National Food Policy consultation submission National Poverty reduction submission