

Date: 2021-04-23

Subject: **Off-Grid Organic Food Shed**

Contact: Ed Fagan, Acting Director, Parks Maintenance & Forestry
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Report Number: Community Services-2021-528

Recommendations:

That the report titled **Off-Grid Organic Food Shed**, dated April 23, 2021, to the Committee of Council Meeting of April 28, 2021 be received.

Overview:

- The Off-Grid Organic Food Shed is an innovative pilot program that provides food and nature science education year-round in a self-sustaining envelope.
- This initiative is a continuation of the Brampton Backyard Garden Program, which supports our local food banks.
- This pilot partnership is with Community Services and Brampton Fire and Emergency Services.
- The purchase of the Off-Grid Organic Food Shed would be through the approved 2021 Community Services Capital budget.

Background:

In 2020, the City of Brampton initiated a Backyard Garden Program that was very successful. This eco-friendly initiative was implemented to support residents with food security, support mental well-being of residents all the while encouraging residents to stay active during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through the Backyard Garden Program, we had over 14,000 residents inquire about the program in 2020, which provided almost 10,000 pounds of produce to our local food banks. This included our Brampton Firefighters participating in this program as well as our Community Garden program where several dedicated plots grew vegetable for our community.

During the 2021 budget deliberations Community Services obtained approved capital funding to support our City-wide Community Gardens Program.

Current Situation:

February 1, 2021 the City of Brampton launched the second annual Backyard Garden Program providing the residents free soil, vegetable seeds and ongoing gardening tips on how to grow their own garden. The supplies were delivered in advance of the spring weather so residents would be ready to plant their gardens when the warm weather arrives.

Our Brampton Firefighters are eagerly waiting to start their gardens again this season, which supports the Mayor's COVID-19 Social Support Task Force focused on food security and reaffirms the City's priority of being a sustainable Green City, which promotes residents mental and physical well being.

The Off-Grid Organic Food Shed is powered by renewable energy (solar and wind), collects rainwater, and is made of highly energy efficient building materials. Inside, the shed's automated LED lighting and grow beds would provide year round organic food production, increasing the yield of the program and allowing for year round food initiatives.

The proposed site location for the Off-Grid Organic Food Shed six-month pilot would be at Fire Station 212 and would be implemented July 2021.

Corporate Implications:

Financial Implications:

Sufficient funding exists in Capital Project 205865-013, which can be utilized to purchase this Off-Grid Organic Food Shed

Term of Council Priorities:

This report supports the Term of Council Priorities and the 2040 Vision.

Through demonstrating the City's commitment to sustainability, focusing on energy efficiency, and supporting the Backyard Garden Program, this report demonstrates that Brampton is a Green City.

Conclusion:

Staff are working to implement a pilot program of the Off-Grid Organic Food Shed at Fire Station 212 in support of the Backyard Garden Program. The pilot will launch in July 2021.

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