



OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR



Edwin M. Lee, Mayor
Naomi M. Kelly, City Administrator

To: The Honorable David Chiu, President, Board of Supervisors
From: Naomi M. Kelly, City Administrator
Re: Urban Agriculture Recommendation

Date: April 19, 2013

CC: Mayor Edwin M. Lee
Members, Board of Supervisors
Phil Ginsburg, General Manager, Recreation and Park Department
Interested Parties

Pursuant to Ordinance 162-12 the City Administrator convened community stakeholders and departmental representatives to engage in a strategic planning process for urban agriculture. The effort was designed to provide baseline data, as defined, on urban agriculture activities. The strategic plan is attached.

It is clear that San Franciscans and their City government support urban agriculture. The City spends \$4.4 million on urban agriculture in the current year and we project City spending of \$3.6 million next year. Thousands of San Franciscans are involved in local urban gardens on public and private land throughout our City.

My office convened four working group meetings and three community town halls attended by departmental representatives and community members. We conducted more than 30 one on one interviews with key public stakeholders. This effort has produced original research which will be shared with the City agency that takes responsibility for this program.

My recommendation is as follows:

- 1. The Recreation and Park Department, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, Department of Public Health and Department of the Environment should continue their leadership roles on urban agriculture.** Due to the unique constraints of the Charter and state law, it is impractical to establish an Urban Agriculture Program in one department with complete jurisdiction over all aspects of the urban agriculture area.

The Recreation and Park Department has unique jurisdiction over its lands, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission controls the water, wastewater and power enterprises and use of ratepayer funds, and the Agriculture Commissioner in the Health Department has state mandated authority. Therefore, it is advisable that these departments, along with the Department of the Environment,

maintain their existing leadership roles in implementing urban agriculture programs and projects. Their existing programs, budgets and positions should remain at their respective departments.

2. **The Recreation and Park Department should be the lead agency for the Urban Agriculture Program.**

Notwithstanding the limitations outlined above, the Recreation and Park Department is the most logical place to house an Urban Agriculture program that convenes multiple departments. My basis for this recommendation is as follows:

- (a) The Recreation and Park Department has Charter authority over its lands, meaning it can easily implement new and existing urban agriculture efforts.
 - (b) The Recreation and Park Department has properties throughout all of San Francisco, assuring geographic equity in the program.
 - (c) The Open Space Fund provides an ongoing, dedicated source of funding for the program.
 - (d) Through its partnership with the San Francisco Parks Alliance, the Recreation and Park Department has experience working with community partners in the urban agriculture space.
 - (e) Senior level management, up to and including the General Manager, express support for the program.
3. **San Francisco's public spending on Urban Agriculture is significant, and should be used to leverage new private investment.** Many City grant programs match public funds with private investment. Kaiser Permanente and other corporate funders have made community gardens a focus of their charitable giving. The San Francisco Foundation will also be making a new investment in this area. Given our existing public budget limitations and the robust funding urban agriculture currently enjoys, it is worth increasing private support for these programs.

I have appreciated the opportunity to work on this matter. My understanding is that the Recreation and Park Department will take the lead at the Board of Supervisors on presenting the proposal outlined in recommendation two. If you require further information, please contact Deputy City Administrator Linda Yeung or Bill Barnes, Project Manager, in the City Administrator's Office.