

29 June 2022

City of Calgary
Executive Committee of Council; and
Office of the Chief Financial Officer
PO Box 2100, Station M
Calgary, AB T2P 2M5



Attention: Mayor Gondek (Committee Chair), Carla Male (Chief Financial Officer)

RE: EC2022-0563 – Council Innovation Fund Application
Operation Social Enterprise – Urban Agriculture Pilot at the Armour/Reliance Block

Mayor Gondek / CFO Male:

The Crescent Heights Planning Committee received a presentation from Fresh Routes and Sunspring Farms on June 21, 2022. The presentation outlined the plans for a Council Innovation Fund Application for a pilot project to determine whether a social impact business model could be used to support a vertical farming operation in vacant commercial building spaces in Calgary. The site of the proposed pilot project is in a city-owned garage located at the rear of the Armour/Reliance Block, located along 4th Street and Meredith Road NE.

The Community Association supports this project and the proposed venture between Fresh Routes and Sunspring Farms. Efforts to grow more of our food locally are appealing as is the potential reduction in carbon output related to lower transportation requirements. The presenters highlighted their focus on underserved local groups with this project. They hope to provide social benefits such as employment, food accessibility and resilience, and social equality for residence. Additionally, the Pilot Project and larger scale projects as proposed in Phase 2, could help revitalize a currently under occupied and historic block in our neighbourhood.

It has come to our attention that The City is currently engaged in a planning exercise related to the future of this site. As The City contemplates the feasibility of improving the Armour/Reliance Block for potential tenants, we encourage City Council and Administration to approve the Innovation Fund request, not only to support a project with positive impacts on our community, but to investigate the potential a project like this has in revitalizing many vacant commercial spaces in communities across Calgary.

Respectfully,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Crescent Heights Community Association

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "D Marr". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Dennis Marr, President, Crescent Heights Community Association