

5. Resolution setting the date to consider adoption of an ordinance amending Chapter 73, Title VI of City Code entitled "Urban Agriculture" to update the Urban Agriculture Committee membership and authorizing publication of the proposed ordinance



Item Number: 5

CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS AGENDA ACTION REQUEST

DATE: December 17, 2024

TO: Mark Washington, City Manager

COMMITTEE: Committee of the Whole
LIAISON: Mark Washington, City Manager

FROM: Connie M. Bohatch, Senior Managing Director of Community Services
Community Development

SUBJECT: **Resolution setting the date to consider adoption of an ordinance amending Chapter 73, Title VI of City Code entitled "Urban Agriculture" to update the Urban Agriculture Committee membership and authorizing publication of the proposed ordinance**

Attached is a resolution scheduling January 14, 2025, to consider an ordinance amending Chapter 73, Title VI of City Code entitled "Urban Agriculture." The resolution also authorizes publication of the proposed changes that would update the membership of the Urban Agriculture Committee.

In preparation for the new year, members of the Urban Agriculture Committee reviewed its bylaws, goals, and purpose. While the Committee has had significant accomplishments, members discussed challenges in obtaining and retaining a full membership roster. Members believed reducing the number of seats would be beneficial.

The attached ordinance would amend Section 6.50 of the Code that establishes the thirteen-member Urban Agriculture Committee. The language supports the Committee's recommendation to reduce the number of members to nine (9) to enhance participation and improve effectiveness. Specifically, seats designated for representatives from the Blandford Nature Center, Grand Rapids Public Schools, and Kent County would be removed due to difficulty filling and being vacant for long periods. Additionally, the number of City staff appointed to the Committee would be reduced from two to one.

The number of appointments by City Commissioners would remain at six (6), with each Commissioner continuing to appoint one member interested in urban agriculture issues. Mayoral appointments would be reduced from four to two (2) members. The

appointments would continue to be citizens with demonstrated interest or expertise in agriculture, with one member representing a farmers market and one a local community support agricultural organization. City Manager appointments would be reduced from three to one (1), with the staff member appointment having responsibility in the areas of zoning, community or economic development, code compliance, or sustainability.

The recommendation was discussed by the Committee on Appointments on December 3, 2024. Commissioners indicated reducing the number of seats aligns with actions taken for other City boards and commissions to help achieve meeting quorums. Commissioners were supportive of making the change now and plan to have further discussion at a later date about the Committee's purpose, particularly in light of adoption of the Community Master Plan, related work in the Sustainability Office and other community system efforts.

Your COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE recommends the adoption of the following resolution setting the date to consider adoption of an ordinance amending Chapter 73, Title VI of Grand Rapids City Code entitled "Urban Agriculture" to update the Urban Agriculture Committee membership and authorizing publication of the proposed ordinance.

RESOLVED:

1. That the attached ordinance be considered for adoption by the City Commission at its meeting on January 14, 2025; and
2. That the attached ordinance amending Section 6.50 of Chapter 73, Title VI of Grand Rapids City Code entitled "Urban Agriculture" shall be published as part of the proceedings; and
3. That pursuant to Section 10 of Title V of the City Charter, the City Clerk shall publish the attached ordinance in a newspaper of general circulation in the city.


CORRECT IN FORM
DEPARTMENT OF LAW

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 73 “URBAN AGRICULTURE” OF
TITLE VI OF THE GRAND RAPIDS CITY CODE BY AMENDING SECTION
6.50 THEREOF**

ORDINANCE NO. 2025- _____

THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS DO ORDAIN:

Section 1. That Section 6.50 of Chapter 73 of Title VI of the Grand Rapids City Code be amended in its entirety to read as follows:

“Sec. 6.50. - Urban Agriculture Committee.

An Urban Agriculture Committee of nine (9) members is hereby established. Each member shall be appointed to serve for a term of two (2) years. The Mayor shall appoint two (2) members, all of whom shall be citizens with a demonstrated interest or expertise in agricultural issues as follows: one member representing a farmers market and one representing a local community support agriculture organization. The City Commission shall appoint six (6) members, with each Commissioner appointing one member with an interest in urban agriculture issues. The City Manager shall appoint one (1) City staff member with responsibility in the areas of zoning, community or economic development, code enforcement, or sustainability.”