



KEEP GROWING DETROIT

1445 Adelaide, Detroit, MI 48208 * 313-656-4769 * www.keepingrowingdetroit.org

4/25/2024

Dear City Planning Commission and City Council,

On behalf of Keep Growing Detroit, I am writing to express our support for the proposed Animal Keeping Ordinance in the City of Detroit. Keep Growing Detroit (KGD) is a non-profit organization based in Detroit with a mission to promote a food sovereign city where the majority of fruits and vegetables consumed by Detroiters are grown by residents within the city's limits. To these ends, KGD operates a number of nationally recognized programs including the Garden Resource Program (GRP), which supports a network of more than 2,300 urban gardens and farms in the city and Grown in Detroit (GID), which provides urban growers with low-barrier opportunities to sell their produce and farm products at local market outlets. KGD also operates a 1.38-acre urban farm and teaching facility located in Detroit's historic Eastern Market District.

We believe that passing this ordinance will benefit both the residents and the environment here in Detroit. This ordinance presents an opportunity for residents and nonprofits to legally engage in urban agriculture by keeping chickens, ducks, and bees within city limits. Keep Growing Detroit believes that this initiative will not only enhance the environmental health of our city but also contribute to its economic development. Many residents have expressed an interest in deepening their connection to Detroit's local food system. Of the 2,300 gardens and farms that participated in our programming last year, 1,477 Detroit residents expressed interest in learning about keeping bees, chickens and ducks. Since 2017, 119 Detroit residents have attended our 'Chicken Keeping 101' class. By allowing these forms of livestock, the ordinance aligns with the aspirations of our community members to take charge of their food sources responsibly. Additionally, it recognizes the cultural, economic, and religious significance for many residents to engage in the cultivation of appropriate livestock near their homes. KGD also believes that the practice of beekeeping plays a vital role in pollinating crops cultivated in urban gardens and farms across Detroit. To support new beekeepers, KGD facilitates the [Sweet on Detroit \(SOD\) Beekeeper Training Program](#). Over the last decade, this program has successfully trained more than 250 Detroit residents in responsible and sustainable beekeeping techniques. We also facilitate the SOD Beekeeper Club. With an annual membership exceeding 50 individuals, the Club convenes monthly to enhance beekeeping skills, address pertinent issues, and offer mutual support in the management and upkeep of beehives throughout the city. Moreover, it serves as a platform for local beekeeping entrepreneurs to market honey, wax, pollen, and other hive products, thereby contributing to the local food ecosystem. Notably, in the past decade, no beekeepers affiliated with our programs have faced citations from the city for any nuisance or complaints. While the precise number of beekeepers in Detroit remains untracked, we

estimate their count to range between 100 and 200, encompassing SOD program participants and our collaborative partners within the beekeeping community. Together, this network oversees approximately 200-300 beehives throughout the city.

Please consider the positive impact that the legalization of this ordinance can have on Detroit. By supporting the Animal Keeping Ordinance, Detroit's neighborhoods will continue to flourish and serve as a model for sustainable urban development.

Sincerely,

Kido Pielack

Beekeeping Program Coordinator / Farmer Infrastructure and Technical Assistance Manager

Keep Growing Detroit