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# GUELPH FARMERS' MARKET:

## *Refreshing Our Local Tradition*

### Business Plan and Governance Report

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Prepared for

The City of Guelph  
Infrastructure Development  
and Enterprise Services

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# 1.0 Executive Summary

The Guelph Farmers' Market has operated for almost 200 years and is seen as an important community asset. The current location, formerly a horse barn on Wilson Street, has been the Market's home for over 50 years. The Market operates every Saturday from 7am to 12noon. It has loyal shoppers and dedicated vendors. Thirty-nine (39) of the Market's 112 vendors identify as farmers. Overall, the Saturday farmers' market is successful.

The City manages the Market through a municipal by-law. The last by-law revision was in 2009. In 2017, after hearing concerns from Market vendors and customers about outdated policies and procedures and lack of funding Staff began a review of the Market's by-law, policies, and regulations. Staff established a project team and engaged Philip Powell, a public and farmers' market consultant, and the author of this report.

In 2018, Staff initiated a consultative process entitled [Refreshing Our Local Tradition](#). With the input of vendors and shoppers, the Market's vision and mission were reviewed, and five goals were developed. If met, these goals would provide a policy direction and framework for action to address outstanding concerns and ensure the Market's long-term success.

### **Refreshed Vision**

*The Guelph Farmers' Market is a dynamic, year-round public market and community cornerstone - the destination of choice for the best products Guelph-Wellington has to offer.*

### **Refreshed Mission**

*The Guelph Farmers' Market offers a diverse range of quality farm-fresh and local foods, unique art and craft and friendly personal service. A community cornerstone in the heart of Guelph since 1827, the Market supports the farmers and the economy of Guelph-Wellington while promoting sustainability and healthy living.*

### **Goals**

1. Diverse range of quality local and farm-fresh foods, unique art and craft
2. Friendly, personal service
3. A community cornerstone in the heart of Guelph
4. Support the farmers and the economy of Guelph-Wellington
5. Promote sustainability and healthy living

### **Challenges**

The Market **only operates for 5 hours on 52 days of the year**. Yet, it requires a dedicated facility and financial subsidization. For the remaining 313 days of the year the

building is closed. Vendors only pay a basic fee (average of \$43 per booth) on Market days, yet are permitted to leave their equipment year-round, preventing other uses. The Market Building is relatively small (11,400 square feet) with 50% required for customer circulation and only 50% available as rentable space.

This operating reality is why the Market has been minimally managed by the City for many years. There is not enough revenue to address the operating issues, outdated policies and procedures and staffing challenges.

The City of Guelph should be commended for its dedication to the farmers' market tradition. And the citizens of Guelph are to be credited for their strong support of the Market and its vendors. Market research undertaken for the review indicates that 46% of Market shoppers come every week, year-round. The Market's total sales are estimated at between \$4.5 and \$5 million with an economic impact of between \$13.5 and \$15 million. The Market has a very good mix of vendors with 39 (35%) identifying as farmers.

As successful as the Saturday farmers' market is, there is no way to make it operationally or financially viable. Adding additional market days is likely to spread the same sales out over a longer period of time while increasing operating costs. Vendors and farmers have other retail outlets and are not likely to participate at the Market on other days of the week. Other municipalities including Kitchener, Cambridge and Welland struggle with the same operating reality. A dedicated building has significant fixed operating costs that cannot be recovered with a one day a week market.

Unless the City of Guelph is prepared to subsidize the Market operation to a much greater degree it is not possible to implement the goals of the business plan. Even if more money and staff were allocated to the Market, the result would be the same: a dedicated building operating one day a week.

Many cities have found themselves in this situation. Over the years their markets have been over-regulated and under-managed. They have lost sight of their mission to serve their communities. Market vendors have become the dominant stakeholders protecting their vested interests (seniority rights, product quotas, low rents) rather than the interests of shoppers and citizens.

In the last twenty years municipalities have been exploring other governance models that provide more responsive, innovative and entrepreneurial management for their markets. Options include public-private partnerships, municipal service corporations and non-profit corporations.

## **Opportunities and Recommendations**

The City of Guelph and Wellington County have an emerging opportunity through the Our Food Future initiative, to explore an innovative and strategic partnership to expand on the success of the Saturday farmers' market. The Building and grounds hold tremendous potential to be the focus of local food and business incubation for Guelph-

Wellington on multiple days of the week.

Local production and buying supports local economies and has a positive impact on the environment. Covid-19 identified issues in global supply chains that drove shoppers to search for locally produced food. Guelph Farmers' Market shoppers said buying fresh local food was the main reason they come to the Market. Ninety-three (93%) of shoppers said it is important to buy fruit and vegetables directly from the farmer that grew them. These same shoppers would be interested in other local food related activities and events at and around the Market.

***It is recommended that:***

- 1. the City approve the Market's refreshed Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives to ensure the continued success of the Saturday farmers' market, and***
- 2. explore opportunities with the Our Food Future project collaborators to identify an existing or new non-profit corporation to operate the Market and program the Building and grounds on other days of the week with a focus on local food and business incubation for Guelph-Wellington.***

Ideally, the partner would be a non-profit corporation with a vision and mission that align with the Market's. It would operate the Saturday farmers' market based on the Market's Vision and Mission and be guided by the policies and procedures that have been developed with stakeholder input. The partner would have the opportunity to program the Building and grounds on other days of the week. The City would continue to own and maintain the historic Building's structure and have oversight of its use by way of a headlease.

This arrangement has the potential to be a win-win for the City of Guelph, the Guelph Farmers' Market, the local food movement and the economy of Guelph-Wellington. It would also ensure the continuation of the Market's almost 200-year tradition of being a community gathering place.

## 2.0 Guelph's 200-year-old market tradition

Ontario has a rich market tradition: Kingston was home to the first market in 1780 followed by Toronto, Belleville and Ottawa. In 1827, John Galt, the founder of Guelph, established the first market on Carden Street. In 1857, a new stone Market House/City Hall (now the courthouse) was constructed to accommodate the growing market and city services including the police and fire departments. Throughout the 1800's, Guelph played host to the travelling Ontario Provincial Fat Stock Show. In 1889, the show was renamed the Ontario Provincial Winter Fair and Guelph was made the permanent location. The success of the Fair resulted in the expansion of the market building and the addition of buildings on Wilson Street. One of these was the Show Horse Barn (c. 1913) that had a tunnel under the railway tracks connecting to the Winter Fairgrounds (now the location of City Hall). The Winter Fair was cancelled when World War II broke out in the fall of 1939, never to return.

For almost 100 years, markets served as the main source of fresh food in Ontario's growing cities and towns. Retail stores established around these open town squares. It was only in the 1920's that small-town grocers began to affiliate with chains and by 1930 most had. Markets large and small declined after World War II. Suburbs changed traditional shopping patterns. Modern grocery stores provided convenience, variety and one-stop shopping. By the 1960's, market squares were being bulldozed to make way for urban renewal projects. That is what happened in Guelph. In 1968 the market was moved from Market Square into what had been the Show Horse Barn.

Over the years, the Market has been managed by a number of different City departments and in late 2020 it became the responsibility of Economic Development and Tourism.

The Market will celebrate its 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2027.

### 3.0 Maintaining the Focus on Farmers

Farmers' Markets are a success story for Ontario – there are over 180 markets with sales of more than \$650 million. Shoppers feel a strong sense of community and local pride when shopping at their market. Consumers are more motivated than ever to buy local and know where their food is coming from.

[Farmers' Markets Ontario \(FMO\)](#), the provincial association that represents markets, defines a farmers' market as "a seasonal, multi-vendor, community-driven organization, selling agriculture, food, art and craft products including home-grown produce, home-made crafts and value-added products where the majority of vendors are primary producers...". The Guelph Farmers' Market reports that 39 of the market's 112 vendors are farmers. Of the 39 farmers, 25 are from Wellington County. The number of farmers does not reflect the total amount of outdoor stands allocated to them. During the summer months farmers occupy the majority of the Market's vending space. When the number of farmers and other producers (including value-added food and art and craft persons) are added up, the Guelph Farmers' Market meets the FMO definition of a farmers' market.

To ensure the farmers' market claim, it is recommended that new vendor categories be established to clearly identify and promote farmers. Farmer authenticity was raised at vendor workshops as a major issue that needs to be addressed. Market shoppers and residents also asked for clarity in signage. They wanted to know who the farmers, resellers and certified organic vendors are. A number of other markets have addressed this issue by requiring farmer verification as part of the Farmers' Markets Ontario's [MyPick Verified Local Farmer](#) program.

The Guelph Farmers' Market could also be considered a public market because it is city owned and operated. Traditionally, "public market" has been defined as a municipally owned and operated building or square where fresh food is sold. Ontario's public

markets include Toronto (St. Lawrence), Kingston, Kitchener, London (Covent Garden), Ottawa (ByWard and Parkdale), Cambridge, etc. Those markets may have local farmers at different times of the year or even operate a farmers' market on certain days as Toronto's St. Lawrence does on Saturdays.

The Guelph Farmers' Market has maintained a focus on farmers and provides a variety of quality farm products that has kept its shoppers coming over the years. The Market has a loyal following with 46% shopping every Saturday. Shoppers identify that buying fresh local food and supporting local farmers are their main reasons for coming to the Market.

#### 4.0 Operating Challenges Identified

In 2017, after hearing concerns from Market vendors and customers about outdated policies and procedures and lack of funding Staff began a review of the Market's by-law, policies, and regulations.

The *Guelph Farmers' Market Refreshing Our Local Tradition* Initiative was launched in the fall of 2018. Philip Powell, a public and farmers' market consultant and the author of this report was engaged, a project team was established, and a project charter was approved. The initiative had three phases:

1. Engage vendors, shoppers and other stakeholders to learn what is special about the Market and what needs to be improved.
2. Draft a vision and mission for the Market that will shape its operating goals and objectives.
3. Develop a business plan that includes policies, regulation and budgets based on the operating goals and objectives to ensure the Market's long-term success.

In November of 2018, the first of four vendor workshops kicked off the process. Vendors identified the best things about the Market:

1. Open year-round
2. Central downtown location
3. Customers that support the vendors
4. Quality of products offered for sale
5. Devoted customers

Vendors also identified things that need to be improved at the Market:

1. Parking
2. Marketing/promotion/advertising
3. Market hours (change from current 7am-12pm to 8am-1pm or 9am-2pm)
4. If it can be grown locally and is available, it should be sold by farmers only, not

resellers

5. Clear identification of producers and resellers

A shopper survey was conducted at the Market and provided the following key findings (refer to Appendix # 1 for the 2019 Market Shopper Profile):

- **46% of shoppers come to the Market every week**
- 78% local residents, 13% students and 9% visitors
- 63% drive, 26% walk, 8% transit and 3% bike
- **Top 3 reasons why shoppers come to the Market:**
  - **Buying fresh food**
  - **Buying local food**
  - **Supporting local farmers**
- **93% of shoppers said it is important to buy fruit and vegetables directly from the farmer that grew them**

Shoppers said they were happy with the Market's:

1. Friendliness of service
2. Quality of Products
3. Variety of Products
4. Convenience of location

Shoppers said the following items need to be improved:

1. Parking
2. More seating/larger space
3. Longer hours – open more often
4. Indication of farmer vs. reseller and organic products

## 5.0 Looking to the Future: A Business Plan for the Guelph Farmers' Market

Early in 2019, the Guelph Farmers' Market Stakeholder Working Group was established to provide a forum for stakeholder input and to advise the City's Project Team during the *Refreshing Our Local Tradition* Initiative.

Vendors and the Stakeholder Working Group reviewed and revised the Market's Vision and Mission based on their input and the results of the shopper survey. The Vision, Mission and five goals provide the policy direction and framework for the Market's Draft Business Plan.

## Refreshed Vision

***The Guelph Farmers' Market is a dynamic, year-round public market and community cornerstone - the destination of choice for the best products Guelph-Wellington has to offer.***

## Vision Elements

- Farmers' market—focus on local farmers and their farm-fresh products
- Year-round—open 52 weeks a year
- Public market—operated by The City of Guelph
- Community Cornerstone—sense of community and meeting place
- Focus on other “best” products (produce, art and craft, baked goods, prepared foods, etc.) that Guelph-Wellington (Canada's First Food Smart Community) has to offer

## Refreshed Mission

***The Guelph Farmers' Market offers a diverse range of quality farm-fresh and local foods, unique art and craft and friendly personal service. A community cornerstone in the heart of Guelph since 1827, the Market supports the farmers and the economy of Guelph-Wellington while promoting sustainability and healthy living.***

## Goal 1: Diverse range of quality, local and farm-fresh foods, unique art and craft

### Strategies

- Ensure a diversity of products is maintained
- Recruit new farmers
- Identify and promote existing farmers and vendors

### Objectives

- Ensure policy and procedures support product diversity with a focus on local farmers and producers and local artists and craftspeople
- Undertake a detailed review of the vendor product mix to establish clear targets
- Create a criteria-based application process with reviews by impartial and qualified selection panels
- Reach out to the local farming and buy-local communities to find new products and to recruit new vendors
- Undertake a branding initiative to identify and promote the Market's local and farm-fresh product diversity, friendly personal service (Goal 2), importance as a community cornerstone (Goal 3), and how the Market supports sustainability and healthy living (Goal 5)

## Goal 2: Friendly, personal service

### Strategies

- Acknowledge and promote customer satisfaction with friendly, personal service

### Objectives

- Launch a *friendly vendor* initiative with vendors wearing a Guelph Farmers' Market branded shirt, hat or apron and name tag
- Create an opportunity for customers to vote for the friendliest vendor in the Market and acknowledge the vendor at an awards ceremony
- Continue to measure satisfaction levels in future customer surveys

### **Goal 3: A community cornerstone in the heart of Guelph**

#### **Strategies**

- Promote the Market's history, location and importance as a community gathering/meeting place

#### **Objectives**

- Reach out to community groups and invite them to promote and host events at the Market
- Ensure the branding/promotion for the Market reinforces the tagline "a community cornerstone in the heart of Guelph since 1827"
- Develop interpretative displays that promote the Market's history and its place in the community
- Create a dedicated and branded community stand in the Market for community groups
- Consider an architectural element (gateway or tower) to identify the Market and serve as a meeting point

### **Goal 4: Support the farmers and the economy of Guelph-Wellington**

#### **Strategies**

- Support, recruit and retain local farmers ensuring they remain the focus of the Market
- Promote the Market's economic impact on local farmers, vendors and the community

#### **Objectives**

- Identify, quantify and report on the economic impact of the Market on the local community
- Collect and share case studies/testimonials from local farmers, vendors and businesses about the impact of the Market on their business

### **Goal 5: Promote sustainability and healthy living**

#### **Strategies**

- Identify and promote the Market's impact on sustainability and healthy living

#### **Objectives**

- Identify, quantify and report on how the Market is sustainable (e.g., reduced carbon footprint with reduced food miles and the ability to walk, bike or bus) and supports healthy living (e.g., fresh wholesome local and seasonal fruits and vegetables, eggs, meat, poultry; reduced packing; produce trimmings go back to farm, composting, etc.)

- Reach out to healthy living organizations/agencies and groups and invite them to promote and host events at the Market
- Undertake an energy/resource audit of the Market Building
- Identify and promote Market energy and waste reduction initiatives

## 6.0 Implementing the Business Plan: Organizational Structure, Management and Budget

The next step in the process was the development of a business plan to implement the five goals. It was quickly identified that there was a lack of financial and human resources to implement the plan.

The Market only operates for 5 hours on 52 days of the year. Yet, it requires a dedicated facility and financial subsidization. For the remaining 313 days of the year the building is closed. Vendors only pay a basic fee (average of \$43 per booth) on Market days, yet are permitted to leave their equipment year-round, preventing other uses. The Market Building is relatively small at only 11.3M (37') wide and 76M (250') long for a total of (11,400 square feet) with 50% required for customer circulation and only 50% available as rentable space.

This operating reality is why the Market has been minimally managed by the City for many years. There is not enough revenue to address the operating issues, outdated policies and procedures and staffing challenges.

The Guelph Farmers' Market 2019 Operating Revenue and Expense Statement (Appendix #2) shows vendor fee revenue and recoveries of \$140,069 and expenses of \$133,844 for a surplus of \$6,225. That number does not capture significant amounts of City management and communications staff time. If those costs were charged to the Market, it would have an operating loss. The staffing budget of \$56,166 is only for on-site staff. It provides two part-time Market Clerks and one cleaner who cover shifts Thursday through Saturday. They are focused on the day-to-day operation of the Market and have very limited time for communications and administration. A staffing management review is required to ensure the efficient allocation of time and resources.

Market fees do not cover any of the Building's capital costs. In 2020, the City spent \$426,000 on a new roof and the floor was re-laid in the last ten years. The City's Capital Budget identifies a total of \$700,000 for improvements to the Market Building and surrounding grounds over the next 10 years. Of that amount, \$225,000 is identified in 2025 for exterior siding and an entrance on Wilson St. The Building is listed as a non-designated built heritage resource on the City's heritage register. It does require some cosmetic improvements and signage to enhance its overall appearance and appeal. It is recommended that an architectural element (gateway or tower) be added to identify the Market and serve as a meeting place.

The current Markets By-law is out of date. It supports vendor product quotas and stand allocation by seniority. Stand fees remain very low considering vendors occupy the

space seven days a week, year-round (refer to Comparison of Farmers' and Public Market Operations [Appendix 3]). The By-law commits seven pages (33% of its content) to the establishment and administration of the Guelph Farmers' Market Advisory Committee. The Committee has no real authority and acts as a grievance body for vendor concerns. The City needs to acknowledge the importance of the vendors' role as Market tenants and key Market stakeholders, while recognizing that the City operates the Market for its citizens. Vendors have been encouraged to organize an independent organization that can serve as their collective voice with the City and other stakeholders while undertaking their own promotional initiatives.

The City's management staff responsible for the Market do their best with the resources they have. The majority of their time allocated to the Market is taken up with operational and vendor issues. There is little or no time for planning. A strategic planning initiative was undertaken with vendors in 2012. Neither the City nor the vendors had the time or resources to act on any of the strategic action items that were identified as priorities.

As successful as the Saturday farmers' market is there is no way to make it operationally or financially viable. Adding additional market days is likely to spread sales out over a longer period of time while increasing operating costs. Vendors and farmers have other retail outlets, and they are not likely to participate at the Market on other days of the week. Other municipalities including Kitchener, Cambridge and Welland, struggle with the same operating reality. A dedicated building used only one day a week has significant fixed operating costs that cannot be recovered.

## 7.0 Exploring Options: What are Other Cities/Markets Doing?

Historically, Ontario's large public markets were established and operated by municipalities. Today, seasonal farmers' markets are being operated by business improvement areas, community groups and organizations, vendor associations and non-profit corporations. They are seen as important community development initiatives and economic generators.

Many cities are facing operational and governance issues with their public markets. Over the years their markets have shrunk in size and contribution to the local economy. In many cases, they have been over-regulated and under-managed - losing sight of their mission to serve their communities. Market vendors have become the only stakeholders involved in decisions with seniority, quotas and low rent as their priorities.

In the last twenty years municipalities have been exploring other governance models that provide more responsive, innovative and entrepreneurial management for their markets. Options include public-private partnerships, municipal service corporations and non-profit corporations.

### [Montreal](#) and [Ottawa markets](#)

Large public markets that are or have the potential to be financially viable have been the

most likely to see a change in governance. In 1993, the City of Montreal entered into a lease with a private, non-profit corporation to operate its four historic indoor markets and eleven open-air neighbourhood markets. In 2017, the City of Ottawa turned over the operation of its ByWard and Parkdale Markets to a municipal service corporation. In both cases the municipalities maintained ownership of the land and buildings and the board of directors assumed responsibility to operate the Markets.

Other public markets in Ontario, including Cambridge, Hamilton and Kitchener (refer to Comparison of Farmers' and Public Market Operations [Appendix 3]) face the same operating and financial challenges Guelph does. The large and historic market buildings have significant operating costs regardless of the number of days the market operates.

### [Cambridge Farmers' Market](#)

The City of Cambridge manages its year-round Saturday (7am-1pm) farmers' market with the input of a council-appointed Market Advisory Committee. The market was established in 1830 and still operates from its historic 1887 market hall. The building is relatively small with a ground floor of 4565 square feet accommodating 26 vendors. There are approximately 30 vendors that operate outdoors seasonally. The Market's 2021 budget is projecting an operating loss of \$192,400. Cambridge has not considered market governance. The City recognizes the traditional use of its historic market building in its prominent downtown location.

### [Hamilton Farmers' Market](#)

The Hamilton Farmers' Market was established in 1837. It operates from a modern building four days a week (Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 8am-6pm and Saturday 7am-5pm). In 1917 a fire destroyed the very fine market hall (c. 1885) and saw the market operate outdoors until more permanent sheds were built in 1922. In 1958, after eight years of debate, city council voted to clear the market square and build a multi-level parking garage to service downtown. The farmers' market operated in and around the ground floor of the garage. In 1980 the market moved to its current location, sharing a building with the Hamilton Public Library. In 2015, the City set up a not-for-profit Market Corporation with a community and vendor-based board of directors. It was intended that the board would set policy and leave its implementation and the operation of the market to management. That has not been the case. A governance review undertaken by consultants in 2020 identified that the board is ineffective as they have become bogged down with operational issues. The review recommends that the board composition be changed, and two advisory committees be added; a vendor advisory and a customer service/customer focussed advisory committee. The Market's 2019 financials show an operating loss of \$58,000.

### [The Kitchener Market](#)

The Kitchener Market has a history similar to Hamilton's. From its founding in 1869 the market grew and expanded, operating from a number of buildings. In 1974, the market

building and city hall were demolished, and the Market Square Shopping Centre was built in their place as an urban renewal project. The farmers' market operated in the mall's indoor parking lot. In 2004 the market moved into a large, new \$24 million building. The Saturday farmers' market (7am-2pm) occupies the majority of the building's 65,000 square feet. A food hall on the building's mezzanine operates Tuesday to Friday (8am-3pm) in addition to Saturday. The market has posted an annual operating loss of approximately \$250,000 in recent years. The city has not reviewed the Market's governance and intends to expand programming in and around the Market going forward.

The other municipally operated markets in the Province are smaller outdoor seasonal (May-October) markets. They do not have the operating and financial issues that the larger markets with dedicated market buildings have.

In North America, the trend in public market governance is having non-profit corporations assume responsibility for the operation of the market while the municipality maintains the land and building structure. This is essentially a partnership that brings more responsive, innovative and entrepreneurial management to the Market while ensuring the facilities are maintained.

## 8.0 Moving Forward: Opportunities and Recommendations

The City of Guelph should be commended for its dedication to the farmers' market tradition. And the citizens of Guelph are to be credited for their strong support of the Market and its vendors. Market research indicates that 46% of Market shoppers come every week, year-round. The Market's total sales are estimated at between \$4.5 and \$5 million with an economic impact of between \$13.5 and \$15 million. The Market has a very good mix of vendors with 39 (35%) identified as farmers.

Overall, the Saturday Market is successful. However, as this report has identified, it is not operationally or financially viable. Unless the City is prepared to subsidize the Market operation to a much greater degree it is not possible to implement the goals of the Business Plan. Even if more money and staff time were allocated to the Market it would have the same result: a dedicated building operating one day a week.

There is an opportunity to expand on the success of the Saturday Market. The Building and grounds hold tremendous potential to be the focus of local food and business incubation for Guelph-Wellington on multiple days of the week. Small business is being devastated by Covid-19 and main streets are going to require re-building. The Market Building could be a catalyst to make that happen.

Local production and buying supports local economies and has a positive impact on the environment. Covid-19 identified issues in global supply chains that drove shoppers to search for locally produced food. Guelph Farmers' Market shoppers said buying fresh local food was the main reason they come to the Market. Ninety-three (93%) of shoppers said it is important to buy fruit and vegetables directly from the farmer that

grew them. These same shoppers would be interested in other local food-related activities and events at and around the Market.

***It is recommended that:***

- 1. the City approve the Market's refreshed Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives to ensure the continued success of the Saturday farmers' market, and***
- 2. explore opportunities with the Our Food Future project collaborators to identify an existing or new non-profit corporation to operate the Market and program the Building and grounds on other days of the week with a focus on local food and business incubation for Guelph-Wellington.***

The non-profit corporation's vision and mission would have to align with the Market's. The City would continue to own and maintain the historic Building's structure and the non-profit would enter into a head lease to undertake management and operation of the Market and the Building. It would also be able to program the area around the Market and the length of Freshfield Street. The non-profit would establish, collect and keep all fees, revenues and recoveries, using them to cover all direct operating costs (utilities, garbage removal, staffing, etc.) and reinvest in the programming. It would operate the Saturday farmers' market based on the Market's refreshed Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives and be guided by the draft Policy Direction and Procedures (Appendix #4) developed as part of the *Refreshing Our Local Tradition* initiative.

This arrangement has the potential to be a win-win for the City of Guelph, the Guelph Farmers' Market, the local food movement and the economy of Guelph-Wellington. It would also ensure the continuation of the Market's almost 200-year tradition of being a community gathering place.

**Benefits of a non-profit corporation managing the Market:**

- More responsive, innovative and entrepreneurial management
- Increased scope to include and promote all aspects of local food and local products from Guelph-Wellington
- Networking opportunities with all local food, business and community organizations
- Support for organizing a Market vendors association
- Operating efficiencies with more revenue-generating activities to offset fixed costs
- Operating from the Building to eliminating rent costs and increasing staffing efficiency
- Opportunities for funding from foundations and Provincial and Federal Grants
- Opportunities to attract more volunteers

**Opportunities to be explored for the Market Building & Freshfield Street:**

- Recruit more farmers and artists to expand the size of the outdoor Saturday farmers' market down Freshfield and onto Gordon
- Add other outdoor market days and activities: a Sunday flower, art and craft

market, night market with street food, etc.

- Add other indoor and outdoor local food and beverage related activities: harvest dinners, food and beverage festivals; street food night
- Reach out to community groups and invite them to promote and host events
- Make the Building a launchpad for all types of local food businesses. Add a commercial kitchen for Market Day food demonstrations, for rental to vendors at other times, and for special events.
- Add an evening curb-side market where pre-ordered and prepaid products are ready for customers to drive through and collect. This increases sales for existing vendors and provides an opportunity for farmers to have customers do a drive-by pick-up of their community supported agriculture (CSA) subscriptions.
- A new vendor layout that places the prepared food stands at the Gordon Street end of the Building as a zone that operates with extended hours on a Saturday and open on other day(s) for lunch with outdoor seating to animate the streetscape
- Generate new revenues and explore sponsorships, partnerships and grants.

### **Economic & Social and Benefits**

- Ensuring the long-term success of the Guelph Farmers' Market
- Animating the Market Building area other days and times
- Supporting downtown businesses by attracting more customers
- Cross-promoting and raising awareness of the Guelph Farmers' Market
- Supporting local farmers with more exposure and vending opportunities
- Supporting local food entrepreneurs with a commercial kitchen and vendor space
- Supporting local artists and craftpersons
- Expanding the regional customer base for downtown
- Attracting tourists to Guelph
- Continuing the of the Market's almost 200-year tradition of being a community gathering place

# Guelph Farmers' Market: Refreshing our local tradition



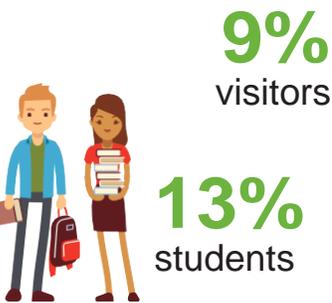
We're refreshing the Guelph Farmers' Market by engaging with our vendors and shoppers to learn what's loved about the market and what we can improve. This work will ensure the market's success as an important community gathering place and source of fresh, local, healthy food.

In November, 2018, we surveyed nearly 400 market shoppers as a part of our refresh. This information will help us learn who shops at our market, how they get here, what they love about the market and what things could improve it.

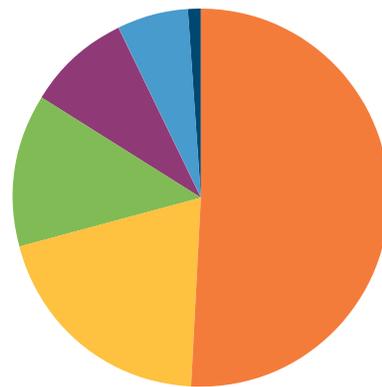
**Who shops at the market?** Knowing who shops at the market helps us serve our customers better, but also shows us who and what we can do to identify new shoppers.



**46%**  
come every week!



**How long have they been coming to the market?**

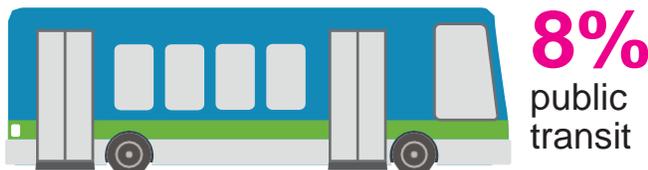


**51%** 1-10 years  
**20%** 10-20 years  
**13%** 20-30 years  
**9%** 30-40 years  
**6%** 40-50 years  
**1%** 50+ years

**How shoppers get to the market?** Location and convenience are important for shoppers. It's important to know where our shoppers are coming from so we can accommodate their needs better. For instance, if we have lots of customers that travel by car, close parking and carry out service may be important to them.



**63%**  
drive



**What shoppers buy at the market?** There are a lot of food choices in this 24/7 world. What motivates a shopper to come to the market? Knowing what shoppers buy helps us understand what kinds of products are important to our shoppers that keep them coming back.

Top 3 reasons why shoppers come to the market.

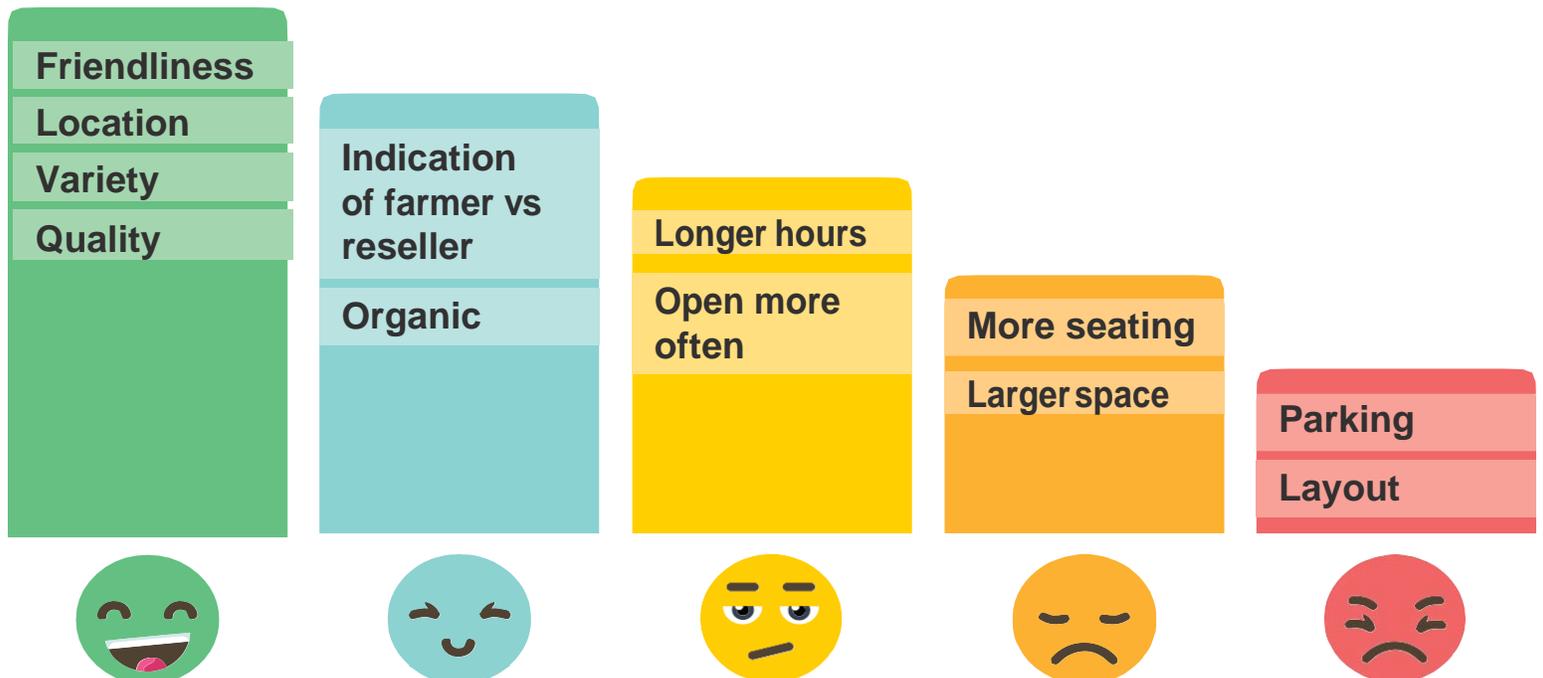


**\$30.63**  
average spent



**What shoppers are happy with and what they would change?**

There is always room for improvements. It's important to ask our shoppers what they like and where they seem room to improve their shopping experience.



Appendix 2 – Guelph Farmers’ Market 2019 Operating Revenue and Expense Statement

## Guelph Farmers’ Market 2019 Revenue & Expenses Statement

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<b>Revenue and Recoveries</b>	
Vendor fees indoor	117,354
Vendor fees outdoor	20,709
Subtotal of vendor fees	138,063
Electricity recoveries	2,006
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$140,069</b>

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<b>Expenses</b>	
Staffing (salaries, wages, benefits) + \$8K & \$4K chargeback	56,166
Utilities (electricity, gas & water)	16,265
Materials & Supplies (admin & operating)	5,308
Repairs & Maintenance	32,846
Advertising	4,769
Consulting	11,925
Insurance	2,327
Other (phone, bank charges, associations)	4,238
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$133,844</b>

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<b>Operating Surplus</b>	<b>(\$6,225.00)</b>
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Appendix 3 – Comparison of Farmers’ and Public Market Operations

<b>Comparison of Farmers’ and Public Market Operations</b>				
<b>Similar size city/market operation in SW Ontario</b>				
<b>Market</b>	<b>Governance &amp; # of vendors</b>	<b>Days &amp; hours</b>	<b>Vendor Categories</b>	<b>Fee Structure 2020 (including HST unless identified) &amp; Financials</b>
<b>Guelph Farmers’ Market</b> Est. 1827	City of Guelph (pop 135,000) Indoors & Outdoors <b>112 vendors</b>	<b>Saturday 7am-12noon</b> year-round indoor & outdoor April 1– Nov 30	1 Farmers 65%+ grown by farmer 2 Food Reseller - 65% grown & other reseller 3 Prepared Food Vendor 4 Arts & Crafts Vendor 5 Other – not-for-profit/organizations	<b>12’ booth average \$50.23/day + utilities</b> <b>6’ indoor table space \$23.19 + electrical</b> <b>Outdoor stand 10’X10’ \$36.42/day</b> Total Revenue 2019 <b>\$140,069</b> Total Expenses 2019 <b>\$133,844</b> Operating surplus 2019 <b>\$6,225</b>
<b>Cambridge Farmers’ Market</b> Est. 1830 Building 1887	City of Cambridge (pop 130,000) Indoors & Outdoors 60 vendors	<b>Saturday 7am-1pm</b> Year round	1 Produce/Fruit 2 Meat/Poultry/Fish 3 Baking/Preserves 4 Dairy 5 Prepared Foods 6 Non-Food/Service 7 Crafts/Artisan	<b>12’ booth \$91.00*/day – includes cooler</b> <b>6’ table (no utilities) \$42.70/day</b> <b>Outdoor stand 10’X10’ \$44.33/day</b> Total Revenue projection 2021 <b>\$96,500</b> Total Expenses projection 2021 <b>\$288,900</b> Operating loss projection <b>\$192,400</b>
<b>Hamilton Farmers’ Market</b> Est. 1837	City of Hamilton 580,000 <b>Indoors 55 vendors</b>	<b>Tuesday, Thursday &amp; Friday 8am-6pm</b> <b>Saturday 7am- 5pm</b> year-round	1 Produce/Fruit 2 Meat/Poultry/Eggs 3 Cheese/Deli 4 Seafood 5 Bakeries & Coffee 6 Grocery/Prepared foods 7 Florists 8 Artisans 9 VQA Wine Sales	<b>Annual charge based on square footage of stall. Avg of \$26.66 per sq. ft. for avg 300sq. ft. stall = \$9037 including HST or \$753/month or \$44.30/day</b> Total Revenue 2019 <b>\$801,000</b> Total Expenses 2019 <b>\$859,000</b> Operating loss 2019 <b>\$58,000</b>
<b>Kitchener Market</b> Est. 1869	City of Kitchener (pop 242,000) Indoors & Outdoors <b>75 vendors</b>	<b>Saturday 7am-2pm</b> Indoor farmers & food hall Tuesday- Friday 8am-3pm food hall only Closed Sun & Mon	1 Produce & Flowers* 2 Deli, Dairy & Seafood 3 Bakeries 4 Prepared Foods 5 Pantry Items *25% discount for verified farmers	<b>12’ booth \$174.79/day*</b> <b>6’ table \$70.53/day*</b> <b>Outdoor stand 9’ \$65.10/day*</b> Until March 31/20 <b>*25% discount verified farmers</b> <b>Average Operating loss approximately \$250,000</b>

Market	Governance & # of vendors	Days & hours	Vendor Categories		Fee Structure 2020 (including HST unless identified) & Financials
<b>St. Catharines Farmers' Market</b> Est. 1860s	City of St. Catharines (pop 133,000) Enclosed pavilion <b>60 vendors</b>	<b>Thursday &amp; Saturday 7am- 1pm</b> year-round Indoor pavilion	Meat, Eggs, Cheese, Fruits, Vegetables, Flowers, Baked Goods, Prepared Foods, Handcrafts, Other <b>Vendor Types:</b> Verified Farmer, Certified Organic, Grower, Reseller, Producer, Other		<u>Covered Pavilion</u> <b>8'X8' stand \$27.00/Saturday*</b> <b>+ hydro fee \$3.50/day</b> <b>+ Annual vendor assoc. fee \$25.00</b> <b>*45% discount for verified farmers</b> Total Revenue 2019 <b>\$83,000</b> Total Expenses 2019 <b>\$182,000</b> Operating loss 2019 <b>\$99,000</b>
<b>St. Jacobs Farmers' Market</b> Est. 1975	Privately owned (Population of St. Jacobs - 2000) Indoors & Outdoors <b>300+ vendors</b>	<b>Thursdays &amp; Saturdays 7am- 3:30pm</b> year-round <b>Tuesdays</b> (June – August) 8am-3pm	<u>Indoor</u> Food related <u>Outdoors</u> <b>1 Grower</b> – sell only what they grow <b>2 Grower/Buyer</b> – resell up to 50% of same products they grow <b>3 Co-op Grower</b> – farmers work together to sell only what they grow <b>4 Reseller</b> -buys & resells produce not in season in Ontario <b>5 Outdoor Fast Food Busker</b>		<u>Indoor 2019</u> <b>10' stand \$116.00 +sink &amp; utilities</b> <u>Outdoors 2019</u> <b>1) 10'X10' stand \$79/day*</b> <b>2) 10'X10' stand \$92/day</b> <b>3) 10'X10' stand \$98/day</b> <b>4) 10'X10' stand \$103.00/day</b> <b>5) 10'X10' stand \$137.50/day</b> <b>* 23% discount for grower</b> <b>Busker - \$10/2hours</b> <b>Financials not public</b>
<b>Welland Farmers' Market</b> Est.1907 Building 1919	City of Welland (pop 50,600) Indoors & Outdoors <b>Summer 40</b> <b>Winter 10</b>	<b>Saturday 6am – 12noon</b> Year-round	1 Vegetables/Fruit 2 Eggs & Meat 3 Cheese 4 Baked Goods	5 Prepared Food 6 Flowers 7 Handcrafts	<u>Indoor</u> <b>10'X10' stand \$944.95 annually</b> (includes insurance, hydro & HST) or \$18.17/day <u>Outdoor</u> <b>8'X4 1/2 'table \$350.57 annually</b> (includes insurance, hydro & HST) or \$6.75/day <b>Daily fee \$38 + HST= 42.94/day</b> Total Revenue 2019 <b>\$41,000</b> Total Expenses 2019 <b>\$96,000</b> Operating Loss <b>\$55,000</b>

## Comparison of Farmers' and Public Market Operations

### Other Wellington County Farmers' Markets

#	Market	Governance, operation & # vendors	Days & hours	Vendor Categories	Fee Structure – for outdoor uncovered space
1	<b>Aberfoyle Farmers' Market</b> Est. 2011	Aberfoyle Farmers' Market Assoc. Outdoors only 30 vendors	Saturday 8am-1pm Late May – Late Oct (23wks)	Only farmers selling what they grow & bakers & other producers. Register buskers	Annual registration fee of \$39 <b>10'X10' stand \$23/day</b>
2	<b>Elora Farmers' Market</b> Est. 2005	Elora Farmers' Market Assoc. Outdoors & Indoor 24 vendors	May – Dec 9am-1pm Outdoors May-Oct Indoors Nov/Dec (34wks)	Produce/Fruit, Meat/Poultry/Fish Baking/Preserves, Dairy Prepared Foods Non-Food/Service Crafts/Artisan	Annual Member fee \$15 <b>10'X10' stand \$18/day for season or \$30/day daily rate</b>
3	<b>Erin Farmers' Market</b> Est. 2011	Village of Erin Outdoors only 24 vendors	Friday 3-7pm Late June- Late Sept. (14wks)	Local food, artisans and farmers	<b>10'X10' stand \$25/day for season \$30/day daily rate \$35 with electricity</b>
5	<b>Minto Farmers' Market</b> Est. 2009	Town of Minto Outdoors only 15 vendors	Saturday 9-12noon Early June – late August (13wks)	Locally grown within 50km of Minto & farmers must sell 75% of products they grow	<b>10'X10' stand \$10/day</b>
6	<b>Rockwood Farmers' Market</b> Est. 2015	Volunteer Committee Outdoors only 25 vendors	Wednesday 4-7pm Mid-June to Mid-Oct (18wks)	Locally grown/produced - farmers must sell 65%+ of products they grow	<b>10'X10' stand \$20/day for season \$30/day daily rate</b>
7	<b>Wellington North Farmers' Market</b> Est. 2013	Township of Wellington North Outdoors only 10 vendors	Friday 3-6:30pm Late May – early Oct (19wks)	Locally grown within 50km of Wellington N.& farmers must sell 75%+ of products they grow	<b>10'X10' stand \$15/day</b>

# Guelph Farmers’ Market: Draft Policy Direction and Procedures

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## 1.0 Introduction/Background

The Guelph Farmers’ Market Vision and Mission and five goals provide a policy direction and framework for action. The first and most important goal is maintaining “**a diverse range of quality, local and farm-fresh foods and unique art & craft**”. The Market’s draft business plan identified the following Strategies and Objectives to meet that goal:

### Strategies

- Ensure a diversity of products is maintained
- Recruit new farmers
- Identify and promote existing farmers and vendors

### Objectives

- Ensure policy and procedures support product diversity with a focus on local farmers and producers and local artists and craftspeople
- Undertake a detailed review of the vendor product mix to establish clear targets
- Create a criteria-based application process with reviews by impartial and qualified selection panels
- Reach out to the local farming and buy-local communities to find new products and to recruit new vendors
- Undertake a branding initiative to identify and promote the Market’s local and farm-fresh product diversity, friendly personal service (Goal 2), importance as a community cornerstone (Goal 3), and how the Market supports sustainability and healthy living (Goal 5)

Market stakeholders were engaged in reviewing policies and procedures that would implement the objectives. This document summarizes that policy direction.

## 2.0 Vendor Eligibility

Vendors shall reside in Ontario, with preference for Guelph and Wellington County residents.

## 3.0 Vendor and Activity Categories (including definitions)

### 3.1 Definitions

1. **Agrifood** means fruits, vegetables, plants, roots, mushrooms, seeds, cereals, honey products, maple products, horticultural and floricultural products, and when

sold by a licensed **Farmer or Farmer-Vendor** includes cereal products, eggs, fish, meat, poultry, game, dairy products and ancillary products.

2. **Arts & Crafts** means handmade goods produced or created by the vendor from raw or basic materials that are changed into a significantly different shape, design, form or function using a special skill or manual act.
3. **Busker** means a person or group of persons who plays musical instruments, sings, dances, acts or otherwise provides entertainment in the Market and who may or may not seek or receive payment or donations for such performances.
4. **Local Specialty Food** means unique food products made in small quantities from high quality local ingredients intended for at-home consumption as part of a meal. The products include cheese, deli meat & products, jams & preserves, oils, grains, baked goods, mustards, sauces, chocolate and candies, etc.
5. **Stand** means a specific area designated by the Market Lead as a vending location or performance space shown on the Market Map posted in the Market Building and may be referred to as a booth, table, stall, or pitch.
6. **Value-added product** means a product in which the first ingredient on the label, or a minimum of fifty one percent (51%) of the product by weight measured prior to processing, is an **Agrifood** grown or produced by the **Farmer** or the **Farmer-Vendor**, but such product shall not be considered value added products when sold by a vendor other than a **Farmer** or **Farmer-Vendor** in accordance with applicable regulations and inspections.

The **bolding** of words in the text below indicates there is a specific definition, listed above, for the word.

### 3.2 Vendor Categories

1. **Farmer** means a **person** actively and directly engaged in the production of 100% of all **Agrifood** and **Value-added products** sold or offered for sale from a **Stand** on the Market.
2. **Farmer-vendor** means a **person** actively and directly engaged in the production of **Agrifood** totaling 65% or more of all **Agrifood** and **Value-added Products** sold or offered for sale from a **Stand** on the Market.
3. **Fruit & Vegetable Reseller** means a **person** who is actively and directly engaged in the production of **Agrifood** totaling less than 65% of all **Agrifood** to be sold or offered for sale and who may purchase and resell up to one hundred percent (100%) of the fruit and vegetables to be sold or offered for sale from a **Stand** on the Market.

4. **Local Specialty Food Vendor** means a **person** who is actively and directly engaged in the production of **Local Specialty Food** for at-home consumption as part of a meal, with a target of 15% of inputs being local ingredients, to be sold or offered for sale from a **Stand** on the Market.
5. **Prepared Food Vendor** means a **person** who is actively and directly engaged in the production or preparation of prepared food and beverages for immediate consumption, with a target of 15% of inputs being local ingredients, to be sold or offered for sale from a **Stand** in the Market
6. **Artist or Craftsperson** means a **person** who is actively and directly engaged in the production of 100% of all of the art and craft to be sold or offered for sale from a **Stand** in the Market.

### Activity Permit Categories

7. **Busker** means a **person** or group of **persons** who plays musical instruments, sings, dances, acts or otherwise provides entertainment in the Market and who may or may not seek or receive payment or donations for such performances.
8. **Charities & non-profit groups** means fundraising or community enhancement initiatives for any purpose except profit, by registered charities, charitable organizations and non-profit groups that have provided proof of their charitable or non-profit status and Canada Customs and Revenue Agency registration number.

### 3.3 Vendor and Product Mix

The product and vendor mix will be determined by impartial and knowledgeable selection panels. There are three product specific selection panels: **Agri-food Selection Panel, Local Specialty and Prepared Foods Selection Panel** and an **Art & Craft Selection Panel**.

The Selection Panels are responsible for maintaining an appropriate mix within each category, with a priority given to local farmers. When reviewing **farmer** and **farmer-vendor** license applications they will approve vendors and allocate stands based on the following preference: Guelph & Wellington County residents, residents from the adjoining nine (9) counties and then exceptions for elsewhere in Ontario.

Outdoor stands shall be allocated with priority for **farmers** and if there are available stands, they may be allocated to **farmer-vendors** and then to other categories based on availability. Outdoor stands cannot be allocated to **fruit & vegetable resellers**.

### 3.4 Activity Application and Allocation Process

**Buskers** are required to complete the Busker Registration Form online or in person at the Market Office. Busker pitches will be assigned in one-hour blocks based on a rotation and there will be a daily permit fee charged.

**Charities and non-profit groups** are encouraged to come to the Market to inform, fundraise and engage with the community. **Charities and non-profit groups are** required to complete the Community Group Request for Space Form online or in person at the Market Office. There is no charge for space, and it is allocated on a first-come-first-served basis. Each organization may attend the Market up to 5 times a calendar year based on availability.

## **Philip Powell**

### **Management Consultant**

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Philip Powell brings 30 years of public sector experience to management and communications consulting. In his career with the City of Ottawa, Philip handled some of the City’s most complex and high-profile programs including managing the ByWard Market, reforming taxi regulation to include UBER and lifting a street food moratorium to encourage new and exciting food options. As a program manager, Philip led staff teams of over 60 people and oversaw capital, operating and project budgets.

Philip is an expert in farmers’ and public markets. He managed Ottawa’s ByWard and Parkdale for 30 years. He was a founding board member (1991) and served as Chair (8 years) of Farmers’ Markets Ontario, the provincial association that represents Ontario’s 180 farmers’ and public markets. Philip has undertaken operational and governance reviews of markets in Canada and internationally.

Philip served as a volunteer advisor on five market-related projects in the Caribbean (Belize, Grenada (2), Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago). In 2016, Philip received the Federation of Canadian Municipalities’ Outstanding International Volunteer Award for demonstrated innovation, creativity, engagement and leadership.

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