


TO: GENERAL COMMITTEE


SUBJECT: YEAR ROUND DOWNTOWN PUBLIC MARKET – REPORT ON THE FEASIBILITY STUDY

WARD: ALL WARDS

PREPARED BY AND KEY CONTACT: J. FOSTER, RPP, MCIP, SENIOR DEVELOPMENT PLANNER EXT. 4517

SUBMITTED BY: K. BRADLEY, B.A., M.L.A., DIRECTOR OF FACILITIES & TRANSIT 

GENERAL MANAGER APPROVAL: R. FORWARD, MBA, M.Sc., P. ENG. GENERAL MANAGER OF INFRASTRUCTURE & GROWTH MANAGEMENT 

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER APPROVAL: C. LADD, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER 

RECOMMENDED MOTION

1. That the Market Feasibility Study for a Public Market in Downtown Barrie, prepared by the Resource Management Consulting Group, dated February 2015, be received and utilized as a background document.
2. That a Downtown Market Steering/Working Group be formed with a mandate to develop a business plan for site selection, construction, operation and programming of a year round downtown public market.
3. That the Downtown Market Working Group objectives be as follows:
 - a) A locational review analysis to determine the most appropriate location for a year round downtown market;
 - b) A financial analysis for both capital and operating expenditures required to implement and sustain the operations of a year round market; and
 - c) An operational analysis to determine the resource requirements and operational model for a year round market including potential partnership opportunities.
4. That the Working Group be chaired by the General Manager of Infrastructure and Growth Management and include representatives of organizations that would be partners and that would benefit from such a facility and that these organizations be invited to participate in the working group and/or working group meetings on an as required basis, including but not limited to:
 - a) Councillor R. Romita and Councillor B. Ward
 - b) Barrie Farmers' Market
 - c) Downtown BIA including key Downtown Business Owners
 - d) Tourism Barrie
 - e) Chamber of Commerce
 - f) Barrie Arts and Culture Council
 - g) City staff from Facilities and Transit, Invest Barrie, Planning Services

5. That the costs to retain a consultant to support the Working Group in the development of the Business Plan and to complete additional customer survey work in commercial areas outside of the downtown core be funded from the Tax Rate Stabilization Reserve (13-04-0461) up to \$35,000.
6. That staff submit funding applications for grant programs to offset a portion of the costs associated with completing the Business Plan.
7. That the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute any successful funding agreements associated with applications made to partially fund the Downtown Market Business Plan.

PURPOSE & BACKGROUND

Report Overview

8. This Staff Report summarizes the Market Feasibility Study findings and makes recommendation on how to move forward to facilitate a year round market. The Study identified that a Downtown Barrie Market would be feasible if:
 - a) It is grounded in collaborative partnership;
 - b) It is authentic;
 - c) It is based on a concept that fuses food, community and culture; and
 - d) It has a permanent location with flexible indoor and outdoor space.

Background

9. For over 160 years, the Barrie Farmers' Market has been a Saturday morning gathering place for farmers, craftspeople and shoppers. Today it is still the only consistent, weekly event that draws residents from Barrie and region to Downtown Barrie.
10. On December 16, 2013, Council passed Motion 13-G-323, DOWNTOWN MARKET FEASIBILITY STUDY. The Motion authorized staff to conduct a feasibility study for a self-sustainable year round market in the downtown. A budget of \$30,000 was provided to undertake the study and staff were directed to submit applications to funding sources to offset the cost of the study.
11. A Request for Proposals was issued in April 2014; the Resource Management Consulting Group was retained to undertake the feasibility study. The Study examined how collaborative development of a permanent, diversified downtown market, integrating the farmers' market with the cultural sector, could become an important element in a revitalized, vibrant downtown centre by:
 - Providing unique, authentic experiences that appeal to Barrie residents and visitors;
 - Attracting people to Barrie's waterfront and downtown daily, not just for special occasions;
 - Incorporating space for year-round community uses and programming; and
 - Being part of a stronger connection between downtown and the waterfront.
12. The consulting firm has undertaken a review of case studies, City reports, documents and determined market competitors. Consultations have been held in person, by phone, email and through surveys undertaken downtown and at the Saturday morning Barrie Farmers' Market. Consultation has been held with Downtown BIA and downtown business owners, the Farmers' Market Board, vendors, patrons and stakeholders. A SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) was undertaken and a workshop was held with key stakeholders to summarize the findings and brainstorm on ideas for moving forward with a permanent year round market.

13. Staff did make application for funding to 3 government programs:
 - The Rural Economic Development Program (RED) – the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture & Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA);
 - The Tourism Development Fund – the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport; and
 - The Canadian Culture Spaces – the Department of Canadian Heritage.
14. On November 6, 2014, the City was advised by OMAFRA that we were successful in receiving funding under the RED program. The program maximum for funding is 50% of the cost of the project. See Appendix A, News Release dated December 18, 2014, 3rd bullet point.
15. The Feasibility Study outcomes provide new market insight about Downtown Barrie and Farmer's Market patrons that will be useful for businesses, organizations such as the BIA and Tourism Barrie, and City of Barrie Business Development, Culture and Planning Services Departments. The research methodologies used for the Feasibility Study and the research findings are detailed in the Technical Report, entitled Market Feasibility Study for a Public Market in Downtown Barrie, dated February 2015. Copies of the Technical Report will be available in the Councillor's Lounge. The Summary Report is attached as Appendix B. The analysis section of this Staff Report further summarizes the finding of the report and provides supporting information for the recommended motion.

ANALYSIS

16. For over 20 years, the Barrie Farmers' Market has operated on Saturday mornings in the City Hall Courtyard during the summer season and in the City Hall Rotunda during the winter season. It is facilitated by the City of Barrie and run by the Barrie Farmers' Market Vendors' Association, a not-for-profit corporation that operates under the Barrie Farmers' Market Constitution and By-laws. In 2014, 54 vendors comprised the Barrie Farmers' Market and Artisan Market
17. A Downtown Public Market has the potential to become the central indoor/outdoor community gathering place for Barrie and region, while benefiting local small businesses, market vendors and downtown merchants. The market would become an attraction and destination that would bring more visitors and residents to the downtown for longer stays in combination with other shopping, dining, business and the waterfront.
18. Market research and stakeholder consultation was conducted which included:

- a) **Detailed Case Studies**

There are 3 multiple-day public markets (Ottawa, Toronto and London) and over 160 are public and Farmers' Markets. From these, five year-round markets with permanent indoor locations were chosen as case studies to determine how they operate, their successes and their challenges. These included:

- The London Covent Garden Market;
- The City of Kitchener Market;
- The City of St. Catharines Market Square;
- The City of Brantford Farmers' Market; and
- The Stop Community Food Centre, in Wychwood Barns in Toronto.

Markets range from a 7-day per week in an indoor-outdoor dedicated market and cultural space to a one-day per week market in a shared cultural space. Like the Barrie Farmers' Market, four of these markets have deep historical roots, tracing their beginnings to a

Province of Canada land grant for a Public Market Square. In each case, the market and its relationship with the municipality and downtown business community has evolved differently over the past. However, it is fair to say that the most successful markets have found a unique way to invest and work together for the benefit of all. Strong champions, leadership, co-operation, a willingness to commit time and money, hard work and the common belief that a market is an essential part of a successful downtown are the keys to success.

b) Regional Competition Was Assessed

The Study examined year round and seasonal farmers' markets as well as flea markets within Simcoe County. In addition to the Barrie Farmers' Market, there are two year round farmers' markets in Orillia. There are a total of 13 outdoor seasonal farmers' markets, ranging in size and duration, as well as farm gate sales and some year round and seasonal markets. Competition also exists from 15 full service grocery stores and grocery sections of 2 Walmart's, Costco and specialty small and mid-size grocery stores.

c) Meetings Were Conducted

Meetings were held with the Barrie Farmers' Market Board of Directors and market vendors. There are currently 54 vendors, primarily selling food products, with some arts and crafts. All are small businesses that sell through a variety of other channels. 75% of vendors participate 12 months of the year; 40% have been vendors for more than 10 years. Over 75% felt that the City Hall location met their needs for a number of customers, outdoor space, logistics, parking and services; less than half are satisfied with the indoor space at City Hall. However, the vendors were less certain that the City Hall location met their customer's needs for seating, circulation and parking.

All vendors felt that the year round local food producers, outdoor summer farmers' market and indoor winter farmers' market would be important elements of a Downtown Public Market. Over 80% of vendors felt that an outdoor performance area, year round artist/artisans, indoor events space and strong downtown connection would be important. Over half felt that flexible use on non-market days, a strong waterfront connection, staying at City hall and food-resellers year round would be important.

d) Survey Was Conducted

A survey of over 400 Downtown Barrie and Farmers' Market patrons was conducted over 6 Saturdays in August and September 2014. A survey was not conducted in commercial areas outside of the downtown core, in other parts of the City. From those surveyed, over 50% lived in north Barrie with the highest proportion from Wards 1 and 2. The primary patrons were in the age group of 45-54. Patrons came to the market primarily for vegetables and fruit, followed by meat and food products. 60% generally stayed about 30 minutes and 70% only came during the summer months. However, 80% generally stayed downtown and/or the waterfront.

Market and downtown patrons thought that locally grown and produced food would be the most important element of a downtown public market in Barrie (90%), followed by locally made arts and crafts (50%), outdoor entertainment space (40%) and permanent year round vendors (40%).

e) In-person, In-depth Interviews were held with:

- i) The Managing Director of the Downtown Barrie BIA and 7 representative downtown businesses; and
- ii) Representatives of stakeholder organizations including Tourism Barrie, Downtown Barrie Neighbourhood Association, Barrie Arts and Culture Council and City of Barrie staff responsible for cultural and recreation programming and room rentals.

Those interviewed identified the benefits of a downtown public market and commented that it would provide a positive image that was safe. There would be more food vendors with more variety to supply local food to downtown businesses. It could attract more patrons and provide micro and pop-up spaces for new and existing merchants. The space if designed as large and flexible could satisfy the downtown needs for large indoor gatherings, local artist's rehearsals/demonstrations and meeting/office space.

However, concerns raised included that a year round market could create direct, unfair competition to existing businesses especially if vendor fees are subsidized. The market would need to be strong enough to attract shoppers from grocery stores, malls and box stores. A downtown flea market was undesirable. Proper design and security was required to ensure the facility did not become a hangout during inclement weather.

- f) **A Workshop** was held following the consultation process, whereby 24 stakeholders (who had been previously interviewed or surveyed) provided further input to a very preliminary downtown market concept.
19. There is a growing awareness that eating locally grown food is good for nutrition, the environment and the local economy. The demand for local food and a more personal shopping experience has been increasing steadily in Barrie, Canada and throughout North America. This demand is being met through a number of channels: growth in farmers' markets, food box delivery services, farm gate sales, community gardens, local food stores and restaurants featuring local food. Grocery stores have increased efforts to track the food supply chain, and label the origin of fresh produce, often grouping Ontario-grown products in their displays. At the same time, people are busy, and for people convenience and price are the governing factors in their food shopping decisions.
 20. An important recurring challenge for the City of Barrie and Downtown Barrie is how to engage those residents who live south of Kempenfelt Bay with social, cultural, service and shopping opportunities in the Downtown.
 21. The Barrie Farmers' Market and Downtown patron research conducted for this Feasibility Study revealed that although the highest proportion of patrons came from the two Downtown Wards, after that the patrons were spread fairly evenly throughout the other eight wards. Distance to the farmers' market and presence of the Bay did not affect market patronage.

Indoor/Outdoor Space for Events, Functions, Performances, Assemblies

22. The City of Barrie has had the foresight to develop and assemble a continuous public waterfront around Kempenfelt Bay. Current plans to develop Meridian Place into a performance and community gathering area in the heart of downtown, will add a new programmable outdoor space. However, there are no public indoor spaces for large gatherings in Downtown Barrie, and there are no buildings with a continuous flow between indoor and outdoor spaces. The South Shore Community Centre provides rental space for up to 200 people, with a wonderful view of Kempenfelt Bay but without connection to the downtown. It also does not have a flow into an outdoor gathering space.

- 23. City staff noted that demand exceeds supply of free meeting space for not-for-profit organizations, and that arts and performing organizations continuously ask about space availability. During the course of the feasibility study, Downtown business owners have seen these opportunities as well. At least one business (the Creative Space) provides flexible space rental to meet the demand from occasional to permanent space and low-cost meeting space rentals. There is an oversupply of commercial space in Downtown Barrie, and entrepreneurs are developing some unique business models
- 24. Barrie has two community gardens located at Sunnidale Park & Golden Meadow Park. Both have been operating several years and most years all plots are rented. There are many models for community gardens, and developing a downtown community garden in association with a downtown market could make sense, as downtown population increases. Depending on how the market evolves, a community garden could be built as a service to downtown residents or it could be developed as a community service project with an educational component.
- 25. Downtown Barrie and Allandale have an abundance of independent restaurants, and in recent years many owners of businesses along the south side of Dunlop Street, Mulcaster Mews and Lakeshore Drive have capitalized on the lake view by invested in reconfiguring the interior space and adding balconies, patios and entrances to enhance the view. The City of Barrie, BIA and downtown restaurant owners have also invested in seasonal downtown patios. Subsidized restaurant or café uses in a new public market, especially if it had a waterfront view, would compete unfairly with existing downtown businesses.

Patron Thoughts on a Public Market

- 26. From the perspective of patrons to the Barrie Farmers' Market and Downtown Barrie, a successful Barrie Public Market would be based on local food and local products; an expansion to the existing Farmers' Market would provide a greater variety of unique, locally grown or made produce and products, greater choice of healthy competitive vendors, more patron convenience (hours, days and parking), and better utilization of our downtown (free parking, existing building use, complementary to downtown businesses). Any change in the market must be viable for the existing vendors, but patrons did not want their tax dollars being spent on outside vendors who would compete with the Farmers' Market and Downtown businesses or become a flea market.

Made in Barrie Public Market

- 27. Based on the research and stakeholder input, it was determined that a new (separate from the Barrie Farmers' Market), daily downtown public market would jeopardize numerous existing small businesses, both downtown merchants and farmers' market vendors with no guarantee that it would have enough patrons to be successful. Therefore, a general concept for a "Made in Barrie Market" which included the Farmers' Market and expanded programming venue, was developed.
- 28. The "Made in Barrie" concept is based on developing a space somewhere in the downtown that gives the Saturday Farmers' Market a more permanent location and space that is multi-purpose



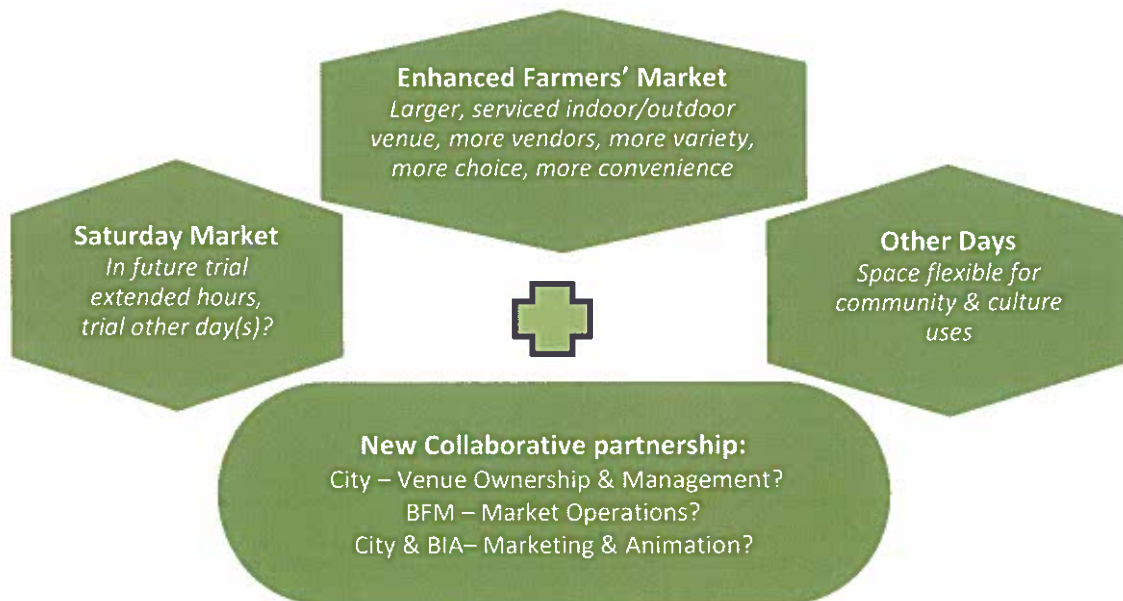
for community and entertainment programming.

29. At the core of the concept is an expanded Barrie Farmers' Market with more and permanent vendors, for more variety, more choice and more convenience for consumers. In addition, the new "Made in Barrie Market" would be a fusion of local food and programming that would align with consumers' desire for local foods and food products with locally-made, authentic products, arts and crafts. Activities, festivals and events would animate the market and during non-market days the flexible venue would be available for community group use such as gatherings, meetings, rehearsals and performances.
30. Such a market would be unique, multi-purposed, providing a more personal shopping experience and act as an attraction, providing a different venue from mall and big box shopping. There is a growing awareness to shop locally for good nutrition, better for the environment and the local economy.
31. To help rationalize the concept of the "Made in Barrie Market", participant stakeholders of the workshop were asked to develop a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis to help rationalize the concept. Many of the workshop participants' ideas were similar to those generated throughout the other research components of the feasibility study.
32. The following table presents the findings of the SWOT analysis:

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plays off successful Barrie Farmers' Market tradition of a weekly, year-round event rather than creating competing market. • Vendor supply is reliable and could be expanded for more variety and choice for consumers. • Opportunity to grow small business entrepreneurs. • Supports Barrie's growing cultural sector. • Builds on consumer trend for authentic local experiences. • Barrie Farmers' Market customers want more choice, more variety and more convenience. • Barrie Farmers' Market has loyal customers, but needs help to expand market and increase frequency of use. • Concept of multi-use shared space meets demand for rental, performance and meeting spaces. • Weekly market would not compete with existing downtown businesses. • Ensures the community has easy access to local food. 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starting from a weak position because consumers, vendors and downtown businesses have been exposed to rumors and misinformation about the future of the Barrie Farmers' Market. • The Barrie Farmers' Market Vendors Association and City of Barrie do not have working relationship, and the vendors are skeptical about a successful collaboration. • There is not a champion for the concept of a Downtown Public Market. • Downtown is not perceived to be safe by some Barrie residents. • A downtown market may not be a strong enough attraction to change their shopping patterns. • It is difficult to promote a new market concept without a location/facility. • Free parking is important, but may not be possible.
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nurture a new collaborative relationship among all stakeholders that would benefit all. • Create a unique, authentic anchor for downtown. • A cultural dimension would add the animation needed to grow market as an attraction. • Combined resources of all stakeholders offers more marketing and programming for the market than currently exists. • Attraction to draw more, new vendors and customers (residents and visitors). • Contributes to multiple use community space. • "Incubator" for Barrie's growing culture and food sectors. 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition from new Sobey's Urban Market • Economic slowdown, less demand for local food, arts, environment etc. • Entrenched patterns of the three primary stakeholders of not working collaboratively.

33. The keys to a successful Market would include:
- Customer-centered market vision essential in decision making when planning, developing and operating the Market;
 - Build on the Success of the Barrie Farmers' Market;
 - Develop strong, lasting relationships among Stakeholders;
 - Complement existing small businesses, enhancing the market experience to align with other downtown offerings;
 - Inclusion of cultural and community components to continually animate the space on non-market days;
 - Select a suitable permanent location that builds on current use patterns, incorporates public gathering spaces, which are not compromised by downtown and waterfront events and provide free parking; and
 - Provision of flexible design space for uses to evolve.
34. The Report recommended that the Farmers' Market could gradually extend the Saturday hours and over time, trial additional times during another day(s) of the week. The Market would evolve as the consumer base grows. It is envisioned that the "Made in Barrie Market" would be a collaborative partnership, including the key stakeholders of the City of Barrie, Barrie Farmer's Market Vendors Association and Downtown Barrie BIA, all working towards a common vision. The BIA has identified that they support a year round market and that in time, it will be successful. To be successful, the market must attract enough regular, satisfied customers, fulfill the market vendors' needs and complement downtown businesses.

"Made in Barrie Market – Local Food and Cultural Fusion"



Recommendations for a Successful Made in Barrie Market

35. Develop a Strong Collaborative Market Partnership - A "Made in Barrie Market" should have its roots in a new collaborative partnership of the City of Barrie, Barrie Farmer's Market Vendor Association and Downtown Barrie BIA working towards a common vision that brings together local food and local culture. A facilitator could help to develop the collective vision, market name, detailed concept, management structure, operation plan and marketing plan needed to benefit the

farmers' market businesses, downtown businesses and residents of Barrie. A solid relationship among the three key stakeholders is essential before other stakeholders are brought in.

36. Nurture and Grow Users of the Market Space - With a larger, serviced permanent space, the Barrie Farmers' Market Vendors Association should be able to recruit more small and micro local and regional vendors to expand the variety and choice of local food and local arts and crafts. Consumers would like to be able to purchase more of their weekly groceries at the market. On non-farmers' market days, the new market space would be a flexible community gathering place for community groups and arts and culture organizations for events and meetings, temporary studio demonstrations and performances. The Market would be seen as a convergence of local food and culture for local residents and visitors to Barrie.
37. Grow the Downtown Market Consumer Base - Collaborative marketing strategies and campaigns to promote "Made in Barrie Market" should be developed by the City of Barrie, Barrie Farmers' Market Vendors Association and Downtown Barrie. It is important to understand that the primary consumer base for the Downtown Market will continue to be residents of adjacent Wards 1&2 because they live within or close to Downtown Barrie. The survey of Farmers' Market and Downtown patrons revealed that the consumer base is spread fairly evenly among the other 8 wards, providing a strong base from which to attract weekly shoppers from all parts of the City in all four seasons.
38. Create the Ideal Downtown Barrie Market Venue - Although a location has yet to be decided, the following venue elements should be considered in the location selection and venue design.

Location Considerations

Lots of available free parking	Safe
Near but not on the waterfront	Good links to adjacent neighbourhoods
Consideration of traffic flow and parking during Waterfront events	Downtown location already patronized by Barrie residents

Building Elements

Flexible indoor and flexible outdoor space with excellent flow between inside and outside	Rentable community kitchen
Inside space for 300+ people Bright (natural light), clean	Space for 60 vendor stalls (some vendors require bigger spaces than others)
Shade and cover outside	Circulation space around stalls for consumers
Space for demonstrations and performances	Storage space for collapsible vendor stalls
Accessible	Water and electrical for stalls
Washroom facilities	Optional storage for permanent refrigeration, freezer units
ATM machines	Easy for loading and unloading for vendors and other building users

39. Development of a successful market will require the collaborative efforts of a number of stakeholders. Stakeholders who participated in the study included, City of Barrie, the Barrie Farmers' Market, the Barrie BIA, key business owners, Barrie Downtown Neighbourhood Association, Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, and Tourism Barrie. All participants indicated they would be pleased to be involved in future working/planning sessions for a downtown market, and many indicated they would like to be part of a working group, if and when it moves forward.

Next Steps

- 40. The Feasibility Study recommends that the Farmers' Market venue be strengthened. In order to accomplish this, a strong collaborative relationship is required in order to work together to diversify and expand the Farmers' Market vendor base. Promotional efforts among stakeholders is recommended and the encouragement of extended hours.
- 41. Staff have initiated discussions with the Farmers' Market for the extension of the hours of operation. The Market Board has agreed to the extension of an additional evening through the week, for example on a Wednesday evening from 4-8pm at City Hall. Further discussion is required between the City and the Market, however the initiative is proposed to begin in the summer 2015 as a pilot.
- 42. Partnership arrangements will require the identification of roles, responsibilities and financial commitments. Site selection, concept plans and cost estimates will be required. Potential funding sources should be explored.
- 43. The Feasibility Study identifies that timelines for the planning, site selection, organization and opening of a year round farmers' market could be feasible by 2017. See timelines proposed in the chart below.

	2015	2016	2017
1. STRENGTHEN THE BARRIE FARMERS' MARKET AT THE EXISTING VENUE			
1.1 Develop a strong collaborative relationship among the 3 Key Partners with facilitator assistance			
1.2 Work together to diversify and expand the Barrie Farmers' Market vendor base			
1.3 Grow the Barrie Farmers' Market consumer base through collaborative promotion efforts of with Barrie Farmer's Market Vendors Association, City of Barrie, BIA, Tourism Barrie, Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, Downtown Residents and other complimentary organizations			
1.4 Encourage Barrie Farmers' Market Vendors Association to test & evaluate extended hours			
2. PLAN THE "MADE IN BARRIE MARKET"			
2.1 Develop a collaborative vision and plan among the 3 Key Partners with assistance from a facilitator			
2.2 Initiate partnership arrangements including roles, responsibilities and financial commitments			
2.3 Evaluate and select a site, prepare building concept and cost estimates			
2.4 Identify potential funding sources including details about project qualifications, funding formulas, timing,			
2.5 Obtain Council approvals and funding			
2.6 Key partners all in agreement, site finalized and all necessary funding in place			

3. DEVELOP THE "MADE IN BARRIE MARKET"	2015	2016	2017
3.1 Finalize agreements with key partners and funders			
3.2 Undertake detailed design and construction			
3.3 Plan and initiate collaborative marketing & programming			
3.4 Agreements with vendors and other users of the site			
3.5 Market Opens			

44. It is therefore recommended that a Market Steering/Working Group be formed that includes key stakeholders in developing a collaborative vision and plan for the future of the year round daily Market. It is proposed that the Working Group be supported with consulting services to develop a Business Plan. The Working Group objectives would include:
- a) A locational review analysis to determine the most appropriate location for a year round downtown market;
 - b) A financial analysis for both capital and operating expenditures required to implement and sustain the operations of a year round market; and
 - c) An operational analysis to determine the resource requirements and operational model, including governance, agreements, marking and space programming, for a year round market including potential partnership opportunities.
45. That the Working Group be chaired by the General Manager of Infrastructure and Growth Management and include representatives of organizations that would be partners and that would benefit from such a facility and that these organizations be invited to participate in the working group and/or working group meetings on an as required basis, including but not limited to:
- a) Councillor R. Romita and Councillor B. Ward
 - b) Barrie Farmers' Market
 - c) Downtown BIA including key Downtown Business Owners
 - d) Tourism Barrie
 - e) Chamber of Commerce
 - f) Barrie Arts and Culture Council
 - g) City staff from Facilities and Transit, Invest Barrie, Planning Services

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

46. There are no environmental matters that result from the recommendation.

ALTERNATIVES

47. The following alternatives are available for consideration by General Committee:

Alternative #1

General Committee could receive the Market Feasibility Report, not initiate a Working Group, but rather allow the expanded hours of the Farmers' Market, determine its success and explore a year round market at a later date.

This alternative is not recommended as the Feasibility Study identified that a year round market was feasible subject to a collaborative effort and further research and exploration of site selection and operation. The stakeholders involved in the development of the Feasibility Study have all identified their encouragement and ongoing participation in the development of a year round market. There is a momentum that has evolved with this initiative.

Alternative #2

General Committee could recommend not retaining a consultant to undertake the work associated with additional research, site selection, operation and programming for a year round market.

This alternative is not recommended as a Made in Barrie Market has been recommended and to be determined by stakeholders. The Working Group would provide guidance and oversee the work of the consulting services and provide the venue for decision making at the local level by participants that would have a vested interest in such a market. In addition, through application to funding program sources, the costs associated with undertaking further study and developing a Business Plan could be offset.

FINANCIAL

48. Staff estimates that the additional consulting and customer survey work could cost up to \$35,000. This amount is being requested to be funded from the Tax Rate Stabilization Reserve (13-04-0461).

LINKAGE TO 2014-2018 STRATEGIC PLAN

49. The recommendation(s) included in this Staff Report support the following goals identified in the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan:
- Vibrant Business Environment
 - Responsible Spending
 - Inclusive Community
50. Moving forward as a Working Group to determine the location, operation and programming of a year round market would promote and strengthen the City of Barrie in the provision of a regional attraction and gathering place. It would retain and attract jobs and local produce. This initiative would embrace innovation to improve how we do business. It would promote and facilitate community connections and provide a great public space.

Attachments: Appendix A: OMAFRA News Release
Appendix B: Market Feasibility Study for a Public Market in Downtown Barrie, Summary Report, Feb. 2015

APPENDIX 'A'

OMAFRA News Release



NEWS

Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Supporting Jobs and Growth in Central Ontario
Province Investing in Local Economic Development
December 18, 2014 10:00 A.M.

Ontario is helping communities in central Ontario boost tourism, attract investment and create jobs.

Projects in central Ontario that have recently been approved for funding from the Rural Economic Development program include:

- The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville will receive up to \$45,000 to create a five-year Economic Development Strategy and action plan to ensure the ongoing competitiveness and success of the community.
- The Ontario Business Improvement Area Association will receive \$6,612 for a new website that will provide better access for BIAs to much-needed resources.
- The City of Barrie will receive up to \$15,000 to determine the viability of a year-round farmer's market in its downtown core.
- The Country Heritage Agricultural Society in Milton will receive up to \$68,245 to develop a range of business, programming, marketing and funding strategies for Country Heritage Park.
- Intellimeter Canada Inc., an innovative metering solutions company in Pickering, will receive up to \$20,642 for equipment upgrades that will increase its potential for research and development, product development, and market expansion.
- MBRP Inc., manufacturers of performance exhaust technology, will receive up to \$42,222 to modernize its business operations. This investment will enable the company to better compete in the global market and bring much needed year-round jobs to the Town of Huntsville.
- The Muskoka Steamship and Historical Society will receive up to \$78,750 to develop a plan for a major building expansion, with the objective of creating a high-impact, experiential and interactive destination for visitors to the Muskoka area.
- The Ontario Water Centre will receive up to \$100,000 to develop a three-year business and implementation plan to launch Clear Water Farm as a centre of excellence for water-related research, learning and innovation.
- The Town of Collingwood will receive up to \$15,000 to complete the first phase of the creation of a Downtown Master Plan.
- The Town of Caledon will receive up to \$50,000 to create a Community Improvement Plan to improve the physical environment of each of the six villages that make up the town.

For a full list of projects supported by Rural Economic Development program, [click here](#).

Supporting rural communities is part of the government's economic plan for Ontario. The four-part plan is strengthening Ontario by investing in people's talents and skills, building new public

infrastructure like roads and transit, creating a dynamic, supportive environment where business thrives and building a secure savings plan so everyone can afford to retire.

QUOTES

" A strong, prosperous Ontario includes vibrant, economically diverse rural communities. Our commitment to rural Ontario is unwavering. By providing economic development support at both the local and regional level, the Rural Economic Development program will help rural Ontario's economy, and its communities, grow stronger."

- Jeff Leal

Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

QUICK FACTS

- Since 2003, Ontario has invested more than \$178 million in 549 Rural Economic Development-related projects, generating more than \$1.2 billion in local economic activity and creating more than 36,000 jobs.
- Since the program re-launch in 2013, 150 Rural Economic Development projects were approved with a provincial investment of over \$21.8 million, generating over \$120 million in new economic activity.
- Ontario has increased its annual commitment to the Rural Economic Development program by \$10 million to \$14.5 million to help rural Ontario generate investment and create jobs.
- The government is also supporting regional economic development through programs such as the Eastern Ontario Development Fund, the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund, and the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation.

LEARN MORE

- [Rural Economic Development Program](#)
- ontario.ca/agriculture-news

Bryan Bossin Minister's Office
416-328-3069
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APPENDIX 'B'

Market Feasibility Study for a Public Market in Downtown Barrie, Summary Report, Feb. 2015

**MARKET FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR A
PUBLIC MARKET IN DOWNTOWN BARRIE 2014**

Summary Report

Prepared for

The City of Barrie

Prepared by

The Resource Management Consulting Group

February 2015



Insights... ideas... innovative strategies

MARKET FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR A PUBLIC MARKET IN DOWNTOWN BARRIE 2014
Summary Report

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

RMCG would like to thank all of the people that graciously gave their time to provide input to this Downtown Public Market Feasibility Study. So many were so passionate about Downtown Barrie and the Barrie Farmers' Market, we can only hope that our recommendations will serve the community well.

We appreciate that time that the Downtown and Farmers' Market patrons took to share their shopping patterns and points of view with our interview team. We also appreciate the time given by all of the volunteers and businesses people that we interviewed and those who took part in the stakeholder workshop. They are listed in Section 8 of the accompanying Technical Report. We would like to thank the representatives of organizations that provided us with information and connected us with their members:

- Barrie Farmers' Market Vendors Association
- Downtown Barrie Business Improvement Area
- Barrie Arts and Culture council
- Barrie Public Library
- Barrie Downtown Neighbourhood Association
- Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit
- Tourism Barrie
- Farmers Markets Ontario

We would also like to recognize Allan Bell and William Leslie, who as community volunteers, visited and interviewed the managers of seven markets in cities throughout Canada between 2011 and 2013. The report they prepared for City of Barrie Mayor and Council provided insight about public market development, marketing and management that significantly broadened our understanding of public markets.

Finally, we would also like to acknowledge the input of the City of Barrie staff who provided assistance, particularly those who comprised the Steering Committee:

- Janet Foster, Project Lead, Senior Development Planner (formerly Downtown Revitalization Coordinator)
- Kevin Bradley, Director of Facilities and Transit
- Peter Dyke, Senior Real Estate Officer
- Rudi Quammie Williams, Director of Culture
- Fred Andrews, Culture Officer

TECHNICAL REPORT

For detailed information about the about the research and findings related to this project, please the *Market Feasibility Study for a Public Market in Downtown Barrie 2014, Technical Report*, provided under separate cover.

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1 BACKGROUND

Downtown Barrie has been challenged since the 1970s: first by anchor businesses moving to new shopping malls on Bayfield Street, and more recently by the migration of commercial development southward down the Highway 400 corridor. At the same time, the downtown population has been growing as residents move into new condominium and apartment complexes in the downtown and along the waterfront. The City of Barrie Official Plan (2010) recognizes the importance of creating and maintaining a strong and vibrant downtown to fulfill its role as an Urban Growth Centre as set out in the Ontario Places to Grow Plan, The density of population and jobs in the Downtown Barrie Urban Intensification Area are planned to double by 2031.

Since 2005, City of Barrie planning reports have pointed out that the Farmers' Market plays an important role in Barrie's Downtown and that a permanent downtown "market hall" would be consistent with the heritage and current culture of the City. For over 160 years, the Barrie Farmers' Market has been a Saturday morning gathering place for farmers, craftspeople and shoppers. This group of small business owners comes together sell high quality local products, in a friendly environments, creating a sense of community in the City Hall Rotunda. The Barrie Farmers' Market is the only consistent, weekly event that draws residents from Barrie and region to Downtown Barrie.

This Feasibility Study examines how collaborative development of a permanent, diversified downtown market, integrating the farmers' market with the cultural sector, could become an important element in a revitalized, vibrant downtown centre by:

- Providing unique, authentic experiences that appeal to Barrie residents and visitors,
- Attracting people to Barrie's waterfront and downtown daily, not just for special occasions,
- Incorporating space for year-round cultural and community uses, and
- Being part of a stronger connection between downtown and the waterfront.

In addition, the study outcomes provide new market insight about Downtown Barrie and Farmer's Market patrons that will be useful for businesses, organizations such as the BIA and Tourism Barrie, and City of Barrie Business Development, Culture and Planning Departments. The research methodologies used for this Feasibility Study and the research findings are detailed in the accompanying Technical Report.

Recommending a site for a public market in Downtown Barrie was not part of the terms of reference for this market feasibility study.

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2 RESEARCH AND CONSULTATION APPROACH

Market research and stakeholder consultation form the foundation of this feasibility report:

- Detailed case studies of 5 Ontario indoor markets were developed. Markets range from a 7-day per week in an indoor-outdoor dedicated market and cultural space to a one-day per week market in a shared cultural space. The case studies were selected in consultation with the Executive Director of Farmers' Markets Ontario.
- Regional competition was assessed by examining year round and seasonal farmers markets as well as flea markets within Simcoe County.
- Meetings were held with the Barrie Farmers' Market Board of Directors and market vendors to explain and answer questions about the Feasibility Study, and all vendors were given the opportunity to provide input through an online or paper survey (depending on their preference).
- An intercept survey of over 400 Downtown Barrie and Farmers' Market patrons was conducted over 6 Saturdays in August and September 2014.
- In-person, in-depth interviews were held with
 - The Managing Director of the Downtown Barrie BIA and 7 representative downtown businesses,
 - Representatives of stakeholder organizations including Tourism Barrie, Downtown Barrie Neighbourhood Association, Barrie Arts and Culture Council and City of Barrie staff responsible for cultural and recreation programming and room rentals.
- A workshop was held following this consultation process, whereby 24 stakeholders (who had been previously interviewed or surveyed) provided further input to a very preliminary downtown market concept.

Everyone that was consulted as part of the Feasibility Study was advised that the concept of a downtown public market was being explored and that no location had been chosen. All workshop participants indicated they would be pleased to be involved in future working/planning sessions for a downtown market, and many indicated they would like to be part of a working group, if and when it moves forward.

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3 RESULTS

3.1 Markets in Other Ontario Cities

Throughout Ontario, there are three multiple-day public markets (Ottawa, Toronto and London) and over 160 Public and Farmers' Markets. From these, five year-round markets with permanent indoor locations were chosen as case studies to determine how they operate, their successes and their challenges. Similar to Barrie, four have operated in downtown locations for over 160 years, and cover the range from a 7-day per week public market (London) to a one-day per week farmers' market with complimentary community programming (Kitchener). The Wychwood Barns market (Toronto) is an integral part of an Innovative Artscape/City of Toronto project that nurtures the community through innovative food, arts and environmental programming on a previous brownfields site.

- The London Covent Garden Market is successful today because: it has been built on a very firm financial foundation; it is an independent not-for-profit corporation that owns the market building and parking garage; it has a strong manager and board of directors; it has a sound business plan; and it has a history of working in partnership with the City of London, the BIA, nearby residents and the cultural community. The market building and surrounding courtyard include: main floor permanent market, mezzanine level (large & small rental spaces, community kitchen, children's theatre, London Community Foundation offices, rental stalls for non-profit organizations), outdoor market square (seasonal farmer' market, ice rink, rental opportunities) and 4-level parking facility.
- The City of Kitchener Market has been unable to operate a multiple day downtown multicultural market despite investing over \$20 million in market development as part of a 2004 downtown revitalization project. (Previously, the city had operated a Saturday market in a different location.) Upon opening, the daily market did not attract enough patrons to sustain the new businesses, and the merchants pulled out after six weeks. Currently, the City owns the building and operates a year-round Saturday Farmers' market using the main floor permanent stalls; on other days the space is unused. The second floor includes open space and a commercial kitchen, programmed by the City on market days and rented on other days. It also includes a 5-day per week International Food Court, with City subsidized rents.
- The City of St. Catharines Market Square has a successful 3-day per week market in a multi-purpose building constructed on the historical outdoor market site for a cost of \$1.8 million in 2003. It is a functional, yet elegant, structure that includes skylights, glass garage doors, heating, water and power services for vendors. The City owns the building, the vendors manage the market. The city rents the building to businesses, groups and individuals on non-market days. The City is currently considering expansion opportunities meet demand for a "community kitchen" for cooking lessons and rental for commercial food preparation by market vendors and others.
- The City of Brantford Farmers' Market operates two days per week in a previous, windowless, bus repair facility. The City owns the building and operates the market. Recent renovations to the building, (including lighting and painting) combined with an enthusiastic market manager have revived a failing market, increased traffic and resulted in a long waiting list for vendors. The building is unused 5 days per week because vendor stalls are permanent. The part-time market manager works full time to ensure market success, and recognizes that this is not a sustainable model.
- The Stop Community Food Centre operates a popular Saturday Farmer's Market at Wychwood Barns in Toronto. The market is located in the *Covered Street Barn*, a 7,600 square foot economic hub that is also used for art markets, conferences and events. The Wychwood Barns project demonstrates that it is possible to achieve a vibrant community centre through co-operative/collaborative efforts, a process that took 5 years. Artscape, a not-for-profit corporation that specializes in community building in unique spaces, developed and manages the project on behalf of the City of Toronto. It includes arts live and work

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spaces, affordable rental spaces for artists and the community, The Stop green barn and outdoor rental, education and garden spaces. After initial capital investment, raised through City of Toronto support, government grants and private donations, Wychwood Barns has been - self-sustaining since 2008.

3.2 Regional and Local Competition

Vendors have many markets to choose from in our region. In addition to the Barrie's Farmers' Market, there are two year-round farmers' markets in Orillia: the Orillia Farmers' Market and Orillia Fairgrounds Market. Both had about 40 vendors in 2014. Aside from Orillia, other year-round markets are at a greater distance in Toronto and the GTA. There are 13 outdoor, seasonal farmers' markets in Simcoe County, ranging in size from 10-40 vendors. All are open for several hours one day per week: half on Saturday mornings and the others on week days/evenings. Throughout the county, there are also farm gate sales and some year round and seasonal country markets (re-sellers of local and regional products).

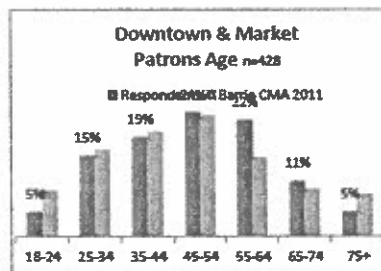
From a consumers' point of view, there is plenty of competition for grocery dollars. Throughout the City of Barrie, there are at least 15 full-service grocery stores, the grocery sections of two Walmarts and Costco and a variety of specialty small and mid-size grocery stores, particularly in the south end. Each store targets different consumer markets through quality and price points, and all position produce as local and fresh, particularly during harvest season. For over 60 years, there has been a grocery store in Downtown Barrie, and the new Sobeys' Urban Market will open in 2015/2016. Two Downtown Barrie merchants sell local food: Local Food Mart and Nutrition Plus.

3.3 Patrons of Barrie Farmers' Market and Downtown Barrie

To learn more about people who choose to shop at Barrie Farmers' Market and Downtown Barrie, 432 patrons were interviewed over 6 Saturdays from August to October, 2014 as part of Market Feasibility Study. A systematic sampling procedure ensured that the results of the intercept interviews were representative of the shoppers.

Demographic Trends

- Just over half lived in North Barrie, a quarter lived in South Barrie and the remainder came from the surrounding region.
- As expected, the highest proportion came from Wards 1 and 2 (oldest neighborhoods, closest to the market), but other Barrie patrons were well distributed across the other 8 City Wards, with 4-7% coming from each.
- The customers' age reflects the Barrie population as well, a little lower for the <35 and 75+ cohorts and a little higher in the 45-74 cohorts.



Market Use Patterns

- Market customers came primarily for vegetables and fruit followed by meat and food products.
- Most (60%) generally stay about half an hour and 70% come only in the summer.
- Only a small proportion come to the market every Saturday (16% in the summer/9% in the winter), more come twice a month (26% summer/16% winter) and half come a couple times a year
- As part of their market visit, 80% of Market Patrons generally go Downtown and/or to the Waterfront: stop for coffee and tea (62%), visit the waterfront (48%), go for a meal (32%), visit the bank (27%), do other food shopping (16%) and shop for clothes (10%).

Patrons Thoughts About a Downtown Public Market

- Market and downtown patrons thought that locally grown and produced food would be the most important element of a downtown public market in Barrie (90%), followed by locally made arts and crafts (50%), outdoor entertainment space (40%) and permanent year round vendors (40%).

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- They also thought it should offer a wide variety of high quality food products, be open all day Saturday and have plenty of free parking
- They DON'T want a flea market or unfair competition for local vendors from new outside vendors, and
- They DON'T want the Barrie Farmers' Market to move unless the new location is better for both vendors and customers

3.4 Barrie Farmers' Market Vendors

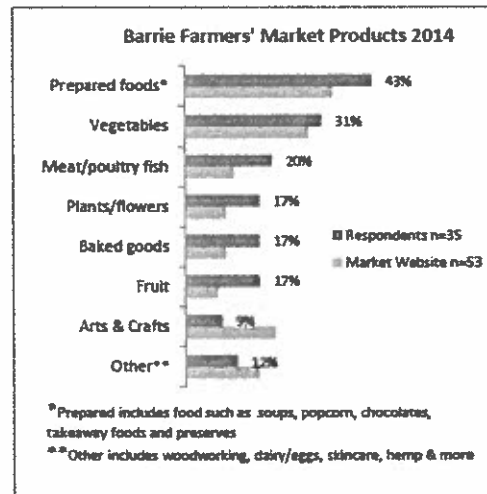
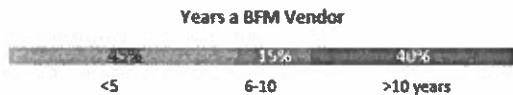
Market vendors have been selling local produce and products in Downtown Barrie since 1846, when the Province of Canada gave 3.5 acres to Simcoe District farmers for a Market House and Square. The Barrie Market Square building was built with the farmer's market on the main floor and Town of Barrie administration on the second floor. In 1952, the Ontario Town of Barrie Act awarded the land to the Town of Barrie, and obligated the Town to provide the market vendors with a building and place of operation. The market moved to the armories building on Mulcaster Street (now the Grey and Simcoe Foresters Museum).

For over 20 years, the Barrie Farmers' Market has operated in the City Hall Courtyard during the summer season and in the City Hall Rotunda during the winter season on Saturday mornings. It is run by the Barrie Farmers' Market Vendors' Association, a not-for-profit corporation that operates under the Barrie Farmers' Market Constitution and By-laws and directed by a 7-person Board of Directors elected by the vendors. In 2014, 54 vendors comprised the Barrie Farmers' Market and Artisan Market. Vendors provide their own temporary stalls, and there is weekly musical programming as well as seasonal celebrations.

To help gain a better understanding of market vendors, they were invited to complete an online/paper survey as part of Market Feasibility Study. The survey questions were reviewed by the Barrie Farmers' Market Board, and the results will be shared with the Board. Two-thirds of the market vendors responded to the survey.

Vendor Characteristics

- Respondents provided good representation of the products sold at the market
- They are all small businesses that sell through a variety of other channels, including farm gate, wholesale, 3rd party retail, other markets, online and food box;
- Three quarters participate in the Barrie Farmers' Market for 12 months of the year;
- 55% have been Barrie Farmers' Market vendors for over 5 years, and 40% for over 10 years.



Current City Hall Location

- Over three quarters of the vendors felt that the City Hall location meets their own needs for number of customers, outdoor space, logistics, parking and services. However, less than half are satisfied with the indoor space of the City Hall Rotunda.
- Interestingly, they were less certain that this location meets their customers' needs for seating, circulation and parking.

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Vendors' Thoughts About a Downtown Public Market

- All vendors felt that the year round local food producers, outdoor summer farmers' market and indoor winter farmers' market would be important elements of a Downtown Public Market.
- Over 80% of vendors felt that an outdoor performance area, year round artist/artisans, indoor events space and strong downtown connection would be important.
- Over half felt that flexible use on non-market days, a strong waterfront connection, staying at City hall and food-resellers year round would be important.

3.5 Downtown Barrie Stakeholders

To gain an understanding about what Downtown Barrie stakeholders think about a possible Downtown Public Market, in-depth Interviews were conducted with the Downtown Barrie Business Improvement Area (BIA) Managing Director, the Tourism Barrie Executive Director, Barrie Arts and Culture Council Board member, Downtown Neighbourhood Association Board member and City staff of the Departments of Culture and Recreation. In addition, the owners of 7 downtown businesses were interviewed, representing local food retailers, restaurants, galleries and creative space rental. The outcomes of these conversations are summarized as follows:

Benefits Of A Downtown Public Market

- A market has a positive image, and it would be safe.
- There would be more food vendors with more variety to provide local food needed by restaurants and merchants.
- It could attract new patrons Downtown with one stop shopping for everything local: food and locally made items.
- Depending on programming, it could provide affordable micro & pop-up spaces for new & existing downtown merchants.
- If designed as a large, flexible space, it could meet the current needs for space in Downtown Barrie for large indoor gatherings, for local artists to rehearse/ demonstrate/perform, for not-for profit meeting/office space, rehearsal, many more creative uses.
- It could become a cultural incubator for Barrie.

Concerns About A Downtown Public Market

- Depending on vendors, location, size and days per week, a Downtown Public Market could be direct, unfair competition to business owners who have invested in Downtown Barrie, especially if vendor fees are subsidized.
- A new multiple day market may not be a strong enough attractor to change the regular shopping patterns of Barrie residents who are used to shopping at neighbourhood grocery stores, shopping malls and box stores.
- Downtown parking fees would be a deterrent to people used to not paying for parking at grocery stores, shopping malls and box stores.
- Failure of a multiple day with permanent vendor stalls could lead to a downtown flea market.
- Without proper design and security, the market building could become a hangout for people looking for protection from the weather.

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4 KEYS TO SUCCESS

A Downtown Public Market has the potential to become the central indoor/outdoor community gathering place for Barrie and region, while benefiting local small businesses, market vendors and downtown merchants. The following keys to success have been identified based on the research summarized in the previous section of this report and described in more detail in the Technical Report.

- **Customer-Centered Market Vision**

When planning, developing and operating the market, the focus must be on developing a high quality product that will attract local consumers as part of their regular weekly routines. Customers will be essential to the success of the market, and attracting them must drive every decision. The farmers' market component must serve a strong core of frequent customers who will shop at the market and extend their experience to the downtown. Consumers want more local food, more authentic/local products, more variety, more choice and more convenience. The core customer base should live or work downtown. Positive experiences and targeted marketing will bring more customers, who will continue to patronize the market if the experience exceeds the convenience of opportunities closer to home.

- **Build On The Success of The Barrie Farmers' Market**

The Barrie Farmers' Market must be the foundation for the new market. Comprised of small business owners from Barrie and region, the Barrie Farmers' Market is the only weekly, year-round event in Downtown Barrie. This market has many of the key elements of business success: brand recognition, vendor collaboration, a working business model and programs that have evolved to meet patrons' needs. An expanded market would have the opportunity to build on the customers who already patronize the Saturday morning market regularly. The new market should be flexible enough to grow and evolve as demand grows.

- **Develop Strong, Lasting Relationships Among Stakeholders**

It is absolutely essential to develop strong relationships among the three key stakeholders before choosing a location and constructing/renovating a market building. This includes the City of Barrie, Barrie Farmers' Market Vendors Association and Downtown Barrie BIA, as well as the businesses that comprise the two associations. This will take time and commitment by these organizations and their members. It would be valuable to work with an external facilitator who is familiar with these organizations to help them find new ways of building trust and working together. Once there is a strong relationship among the three key stakeholders, other partners, such as the Health Unit, Downtown residents, Tourism Barrie and individual business owners, can be brought in.

- **Complement Existing Small Businesses**

The market must complement, not compete with, downtown merchants and farmers' market vendors. Enhancing the existing market experience to align with the downtown offerings would help create the critical mass needed to attract more customers and extend their stay downtown. A new daily market comprised of 20 to 40 small businesses selling local food and other products would compete with the Barrie Farmers' Market on Saturdays and daily with many Downtown Barrie businesses that have been developed through the owners' private investments. Subsidizing market vendor fees should be considered carefully because the market should not compete with Downtown business owners who pay fair market value for rent or property purchase. On the other hand, a market environment can serve as an incubator for small businesses to test their products and grow their customer bases.

- **Cultural and Community Components**

Early in the market planning process, it will be important to identify and start working with community stakeholders who are looking for performance, display, gathering and meeting spaces in the downtown, as they

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will have a strong influence on how the market space is designed, and they will ensure that the space is continually animated on non-market days. It will be important to nurture organizations and individuals that align with market vision, such as healthy food, environment, history, arts and culture. They could potentially rent space in the building and become an integral part in marketing it. Their members would become downtown and market patrons.

- Suitable Permanent Location

The location choice will make or break the market and downtown businesses. Aside from the bars and night clubs, even the busiest blocks of Downtown Barrie have been struggling to attract retail customers for the past 25 years. The market location should: build on and strengthen residents' current patterns of downtown use, incorporate existing or planned public gathering spaces (eg Meridan Square), work well with existing storefronts and pedestrian circulation, and have adjacent in and out parking. It will be impossible to build a strong, loyal customer base if market parking is compromised by downtown and waterfront events. Paying for parking would be another barrier to success.

- Flexible Design

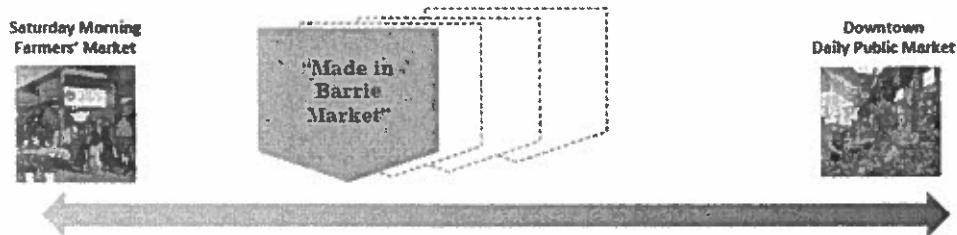
The market can be located in a new or renovated building. The key is for the indoor space to be flexible enough for uses to grow and evolve. There must also be excellent flow from the inside to an outside courtyard. Other key important features include, lots of natural light, gathering space for over 300 people, suitable loading space for market vendors and other building users, built-in water and power services for vendors, community kitchen, washrooms and storage space for the market and other building users. The space should be welcoming with amenities needed for families, and it should celebrate our local culture by incorporating space for changing cultural presentations within the design.

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5 DOWNTOWN BARRIE PUBLIC MARKET FEASIBILITY

A Downtown Barrie Market would be feasible...

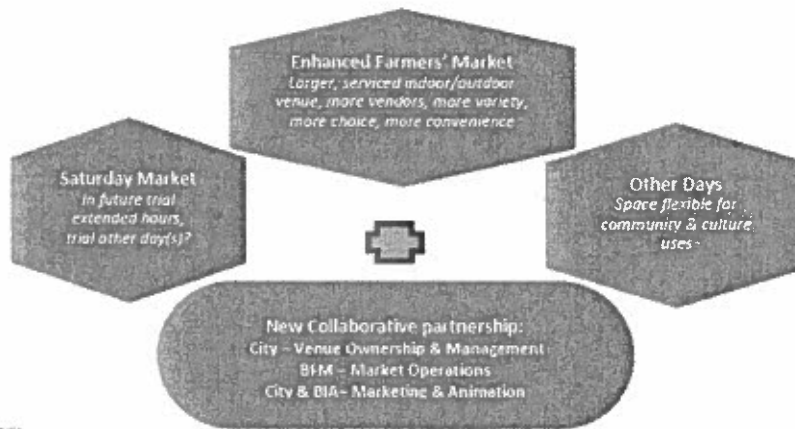
- If it is grounded in collaborative partnership of the City of Barrie, Barrie Farmer's Market Vendor Association and Downtown Barrie BIA working towards a common vision. For example, the Barrie Farmers' Market Vendors Association could manage the Farmers' Market, the Downtown Barrie BIA and City of Barrie collaborate on marketing efforts, and the City of Barrie could be responsible for space animation, including space rental during non-market days.
- If it is an authentic, "Made in Barrie Market" that offers more local food and cultural components than the current pop-up Saturday morning Farmers' Market.



- If the expanded market does not introduce ongoing, daily competition to Barrie's downtown merchants or the Farmers' Market vendors. It must complement and add to the current mix of goods and services.
- If it is based on a concept that fuses food, community and culture to meet the demand for local food, authentic products and safe community gathering places. To be successful, it should become part of residents' daily and weekly routines. The focus should be about engagement, not entertainment.

If it has a permanent location with a flexible indoor and outdoor space in Downtown Barrie. The core business should be based on the existing Barrie Farmers' Market with more vendors, for more variety, more choice and more convenience for consumers. The Farmers' Market component would operate outdoors during the summer and move inside for the winter. The Saturday hours could be extended over time, and additional days could be trialed as the consumer base grows. During non-market days the flexible venue could be rented for events, meetings, rehearsals and performances.

"Made in Barrie Market – Local Food and Cultural Fusion"



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6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A SUCCESSFUL “MADE IN BARRIE MARKET”

1. Develop a Strong Collaborative Market Partnership

A “Made in Barrie Market” should have its roots in a new collaborative partnership of the City of Barrie, Barrie Farmer’s Market Vendor Association and Downtown Barrie BIA working towards a common vision that brings together local food and local culture. A third-party professional facilitator should be retained to help these organizations develop the collective vision, market name, detailed concept, management structure, operation plan and marketing plan needed to benefit the farmers’ market businesses, downtown businesses and residents of Barrie. A solid relationship among the three key stakeholders is essential before other stakeholders are brought in.

2. Nurture and Grow Users of the Market Space

With a larger, serviced permanent space, the Barrie Farmers’ Market Vendors Association should be able to recruit more small and micro local and regional vendors to expand the variety and choice of local food and local arts and crafts. Consumers would like to be able to purchase more of their weekly groceries at the market. On non-farmers’ market days, the new market space would be a flexible community gathering place for community groups and arts and culture organizations for events and meetings, temporary studio demonstrations and performances. The Market would be seen as a convergence of local food and culture for local residents and visitors to Barrie.

3. Grow the Downtown Market Consumer Base

Collaborative marketing strategies and campaigns to promote “Made in Barrie Market” should be developed by the City of Barrie, Barrie Farmers’ Market Vendors Association and Downtown Barrie. It is important to understand that the primary consumer base for the Downtown Market will continue to be residents of adjacent Wards 1&2 because they live within or close to Downtown Barrie. The survey of Farmers’ Market and Downtown patrons revealed that the consumer base is spread fairly evenly among the other 8 wards, providing a strong base from which to attract weekly shoppers from all parts of the City in all four seasons. A targeted approach could be developed by using the Environics Analytics PRIZM segmentation tool to understand the profile and behaviour (City of Barrie, in conjunction with the Barrie Public Library holds a license to use this analytical tool).

4. Create the ideal Downtown Barrie Market Venue

Although a location has yet to be decided, the following venue elements should be considered in the location selection and venue design.

Location Considerations

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lots of available free parking - Near but not on the waterfront - Consideration of traffic flow and parking during Waterfront events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good links to adjacent neighbourhoods - Safe - Downtown location already patronized by Barrie residents |
|--|---|

Building Elements

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flexible indoor and flexible outdoor space with excellent flow between inside and outside - Inside space for 300+ people - Bright (natural light), clean - Shade and cover outside - Space for demonstrations and performances - Accessible - Washroom facilities - ATM machines - Rentable community kitchen | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Space for 60 vendor stalls (some vendors require bigger spaces than others) - Circulation space around stalls for consumers - Storage space for collapsible vendor stalls - Water and electrical for stalls - Optional storage for permanent refrigeration, freezer units - Easy for loading and unloading for vendors and other building users |
|---|--|

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7 NEXT STEPS

The following are next broad steps to bring the Barrie Public Market to fruition. The process would start with the three key partners finding ways to work together and solidify relationships as they work together to help Barrie Farmers' Market grow a larger customer base in the downtown and from across the city. This important work would continue while the "Made in Barrie Market" is planned and developed. By the second year, the partners should have a proven working relationship and be ready to develop a collaborative vision and long range plan for the "Made in Barrie Market". Once this is in place, partners can be sought, location, construction and funding details worked out. In the third year, the space for the "Made in Barrie Market" would be built and programmed, agreements would be put in place with vendors and other users, marketing and advertising plans would be planned and initiated, and the market would open.

	2015	2016	2017
1. STRENGTHEN THE BARRIE FARMERS' MARKET AT THE EXISTING VENUE			
1.1 Develop a strong collaborative relationship among the 3 Key Partners with facilitator assistance			
1.2 Work together to diversify and expand the Barrie Farmers' Market vendor base			
1.3 Grow the Barrie Farmers' Market consumer base through collaborative promotion efforts of with Barrie Farmer's Market Vendors Association, City of Barrie, BIA, Tourism Barrie, Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, Downtown Residents and other complimentary organizations			
1.4 Encourage Barrie Farmers' Market Vendors Association to test & evaluate extended hours			
2. PLAN THE "MADE IN BARRIE MARKET"			
2.1 Develop a collaborative vision and plan among the 3 Key Partners with assistance from a facilitator			
2.2 Initiate partnership arrangements including roles, responsibilities and financial commitments			
2.3 Evaluate and select a site, prepare building concept and cost estimates			
2.4 Identify potential funding sources including details about project qualifications, funding formulas, timing,			
2.5 Obtain Council approvals and funding			
2.6 Key partners all in agreement, site finalized and all necessary funding in place			
3. DEVELOP THE "MADE IN BARRIE MARKET"			
3.1 Finalize agreements with key partners and funders			
3.2 Undertake detailed design and construction			
3.3 Plan and initiate collaborative marketing & programming			
3.4 Agreements with vendors and other users of the site			
3.5 Market Opens			