

Vision and Guiding Principles for the Future of the Hamilton Farmers' Market **(May 2023)**

Vision Statement

That the Hamilton Farmers' Market continue its long-standing role of supporting local farmers, producers, and businesses while providing a reliable source of fresh food and creating a community gathering destination for downtown residents and all Hamiltonians.

The Market:

- Provides a wide range of fresh food and grocery options for downtown residents and all Hamiltonians;
- Serves as a social and cultural focal point of Downtown Hamilton;
- Provides economic opportunities, including business incubation, for rural and urban producers and entrepreneurs; and,
- Celebrates the agricultural tradition and strong rural/urban connections of the region.

Guiding Principles

Physical Design / Infrastructure:

a) Address the physical limitations of the Market:

Upgrade the infrastructure (plumbing, electric, storage, exhaust, etc.); improve circulation; explore zoned areas to allow for varied market hours; create more inviting entrances; and modify the façade to provide for a more seamless indoor/outdoor experience.

b) Provide for more public spaces that are flexible to accommodate a variety of uses:

Provide for greater opportunities for seating, pop-up vending, events, and programming.

c) Strengthen connections to outdoor spaces and neighbours:

Let the market spill outdoors; better connect to its surroundings (e.g. Library, City Centre, etc.); and coordinate on efforts to improve neighbourhood safety.

Program / Mix

- d) More local farmers, local producers, and pop-up vendors:

Reflect and celebrate the Market's strong agricultural traditions as well as support and attract new entrepreneurs and meet the needs of the Market's local and City-wide customers. Consider flexible/shorter lease term options, a weekly local vendors day, and regular seasonal street closures to accommodate additional vendors.

- e) More programs, events, and education (in collaboration with local partners):

The Market should be the centre of the local food movement for Hamilton and serve as a cultural hub and gathering point for the Hamilton community.

- f) After hours and expanded culinary offerings:

Seed more culinary activity at the Market, including after hours, through offerings such as a market café, prepared food vendors, and licensed establishments.

Operations

- g) Increase management capacity and funding sources:

Provide senior-level staffing resources and operating funding to better reflect the role of the Market as a community hub.

- h) Expand hours (for at least parts of the Market):

Provide for expanded and regularized hours, that better meet the needs of the Market's customers.

- i) Strengthen the Market's marketing, advertising and promotion:

Create more "buzz" about the Market and get the word out about market hours, special events, and vendors.

- j) Provide for multi-modal access, including adequate parking:

Ensure the Market is easily accessible by pedestrians, cyclists, transit users and drivers. With most current market customers arriving by car, ensure that adequate parking is available.