

West Side Market
Revitalization Plan

DRAFT – D8

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Submitted by:

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Executive Summary

Cleveland's West Side Market resounds with stories of struggle, competition and success. The West Side Market is one of the greatest public markets in America, has a brilliant future and as a place that brings Cleveland together, satisfying the hunger of the soul and the health of the body. The next few years will be quite challenging – to simultaneously rebuild the strength of the market during an unpredictable global pandemic and maintain continuous operations while it undergoes its largest ever capital improvement program as the city makes a \$12M investment in the market's future, scheduled to begin later this year.

In February 2021, the City of Cleveland awarded a contract to public markets consultant, David O'Neil and local partner FARE, Food Access Raises Everyone, to assess market operations and develop an action plan and a new scorecard to drive change and track progress at the market. The goal of this assessment, process and report is to position the City of Cleveland and the West Side Market to 'to provide a world class customer experience through a diverse vendor pool, with superior products and services supported by strong management of the market.'

The City asked for actionable, specific recommendations in the following areas:

- **Administrative**
 - Build the management capacity
 - Create processes and tools to evaluate vendor performance and receive customer feedback
- **Entrepreneurial Growth and Recruitment**
 - Strengthen existing vendors and develop a more diverse community of vendors
 - Expand mix of products and services available at the market
 - Identify creative revenue streams
- **Facilities Management and Capital Planning**
 - Caring for the building through improved maintenance practices and capital investment to improve the 'market experience'
- **Community Engagement, Outreach and Bridge Building**
 - Broadening the market community, partners and resources

Based on research and outreach over the last eight months, this study provides comprehensive and specific recommendations for each of these four elements to attract new assets and create opportunities that can help the Market reach its potential.

APPROACH AND PROCESS

The engagement process for this plan was designed to hear and learn from perspectives, voices, and experiences that have not been a part of other West Side Market planning and engagement efforts or the current conversations about the Market. Over 70 interviews were conducted, four community conversations hosted with Cleveland residents, and two surveys distributed to current vendors and potential vendors. The process was developed to provide opportunities for feedback throughout the process through a new group, West Side Market Friends and Stakeholders that represent a broad cross-

section of organizations, community leaders, local businesses, city staff, foundations, and elected officials. (Add ref to Appendix) Friends and Stakeholders reviewed the themes emerging from the surveys, interviews and community conversations and provided feedback on the recommendations as they began to take shape. The consultant team, led by FARE, worked with the City and Management to pilot some of the recommendations including, a new day stall program and a community event at the market, Summerfest, to test some of these concepts, learn from experience during the study period, and incorporate this into the recommendations in the final report.

KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

ADMINISTRATION

Findings

- Market management is severely understaffed with limited resources to address marketing, new vendor recruitment, programs and events and potential partnerships
- Maintenance of plumbing and electrical infrastructure has not kept up with the demands of the building, but will be addressed with the scheduled capital improvements.
- Tenants are frustrated with slow response times to make regular repairs and to initiate capital improvements.
- The United West Side Market Tenants Association (UWSMTA) is less active than it was, experiences low participation from current vendors, especially those in the produce arcade, and has fallen short with many of its responsibilities, including quality enforcement, which contributes to unsatisfactory experiences for some shoppers and limited feedback from vendors in city decisions about the market including capital investments
- Quality of some products is low, and standards are not being enforced by Management or UWSMTA
- The current lease needs to be updated and re-evaluated to offer more options to tenants including daystall and seasonal uses for new vendors and multi-year agreement for current vendors.

Key Recommendations

- Invest in management and expand the management team's staff and capacity to build the market's potential through partnerships, new vendor recruitment and marketing
- UWSMTA should reengage current vendors to build more active membership and reestablish the Vendors Operations and Disciplinary Committees to work with Management
- Work with UWSMTA to ensure and enforce quality and overall performance.
- Allocate additional funds to perform 'catch-up' maintenance and deep cleaning
- Establish a set of standards for scheduled cleaning and maintenance
- Establish mechanisms for Vendors to report and track maintenance requests

ENTREPRENEURIAL GROWTH AND RECRUITMENT

Findings

- The Market is an incredible place to launch and expand a business in Cleveland. It's located in a thriving, dense urban neighborhood close to downtown with high foot traffic and access to a diverse customers base from throughout the city and the region.
- Current vacancies in the Market are an opportunity to bring in new vendors, diversifying the vendor community and the merchandising.
- The Market has limited resources currently allocated to fulfill its potential. New income streams are possible if the Market increases its management capacity to engage new resources and invests in public spaces that will bring new customers to the market and create opportunities for rentals and events

Key Recommendations

- Create a new management position to cultivate partnerships, sponsors and potential resources.
- Develop partnerships with small business support organizations and local lenders to offer business incubation services and access to capital to new and current vendors.
- Recruit and attract new vendors with short-term leases (daystall opportunities) in the Arcades and Alleys.
- Add more local produce, international foods, ready-to-eat options, vegan and organic value-added products and other locally produced goods
- Tap into new sources of income with higher occupancy levels, fundraising, rentals and events.
- Launch market-wide online ordering and delivery service.

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT AND CAPITAL PLANNING

Findings

- The city is embarking on a major capital reinvestment totaling \$14.7M for the West Side Market over the next three years, based on an update of the Market's capital needs assessment in 2019.
- . These investments will address upgrades to plumbing and electrical systems and vendor booths, renovation of basement storage and systems, repair of masonry on the clock tower, and address heating and cooling systems at the market.
- Only 15-20% of all vendors responded to opportunities to provide feedback on capital improvements through online surveys and in-person meetings during this process. Some of this feedback has been incorporated by the City into changes to the stall prototype.
- The vendors who participated in this process are not in agreement about the timing or the need for renovating all the stalls among other reservations.
- There are no intentional public spaces at the market for seating, socializing or events, one of the most valuable assets for any market.

Key Recommendations

- Open the capital planning process to include more vendor representation for non-emergency capital planning.
- Hire a Tenant Coordinator to facilitate planning, communication, mitigation and vendor needs.

- Complete a cost-benefit analysis of City ownership and renovation of basement refrigerated and dry storage systems and consider vendor ownership options.
- Make immediate repairs to the elevators
- Plan for and invest in the creation of public spaces in any or all of these locations: 2nd floor, Arcades, Alleys and Market Hall. Engage the public, stakeholders, vendors and partners in a community-based master planning process for the market.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, OUTREACH & BRIDGE BUILDING

Findings

- While many citizens of Cleveland and within Northeast Ohio love the market, others do not see their community reflected in the vendors or products sold there.
- There are many potential partners interested in supporting the market. The Market currently lacks capacity and staff to build productive relationships that can bring new resources to the market and support new vendors, events, and programs.
- A “Friends and Stakeholders” group was formed by the consultants to share ideas and priorities that could help support and guide the Market’s future.

Recommendations

- Build relationships with community-based organizations and cultural associations to assist Management with vendor and customer recruitment.
- Create and activate public spaces for programming, events and seating.
- Increase management staffing to build new partnerships that can provide new programs from business incubation services to nutrition incentive programs for SNAP/EBT customers.
- Continue convening the Friends and Stakeholders in partnership with a neutral party that will build a diverse coalition to help implement recommendations in this report.

ACTION PLAN

The action plan at the end of the report recommends a series of mostly low-cost options and critical steps the City, Management, UWSMTA, vendors and community can take in the next two to three years. Implementing these recommendations in addition to the capital improvements already in progress, will improve the image and experience of the Market, decrease vendor vacancies, bring new customers to the market, build credibility and goodwill, create new partnerships, boost its overall performance and create a Master Plan for the long-term sustainability of the market. These action steps include creating flexible public spaces, organizing seasonal events, giving the market a deep clean and bringing new vendors and products to the market.

Overall, the most important change needed is to build the capacity of management, so it can implement positive changes and move the Market forward. However, the City cannot and should not do it alone. The best future for the market will be achievable with the efforts of many including UWSMTA and the vendors, neighborhood stakeholders, funders, and community partners. Implementing these action steps provide an opportunity to rebuild relationships and work together to successfully navigate the period of construction and capital improvements and create new opportunities for vendors and

community events that will engage a diverse network of partners that represent all of Cleveland. It will also help build a new narrative around the Market and will make it easier to begin discussions with future partners and organizations that want to help and need to see that they can build productive partnerships on a strong foundation where the Market's basic needs and core functions are met. The City has many opportunities to magnify the strength and reach of the West Side Market through exchange and collaboration with key stakeholders. This process uncovered many hidden and potential assets, partners who are ready to help and be active participants and contributors to the conversation that will shape and energize the Market's next chapters.

TIMELINE

February

- Site Visit | David O'Neil
- Vendor meeting
- Tour and meeting with MOCAP

March

- Interviews, Research

April

- Interviews, Research

May

- Interviews, Research
- Potential Vendor Survey
- Presentation to Mayor Jackson and City Team

June

- Site Visit | David O'Neil
- Vendor Meeting
- Friends and Stakeholders Meeting
- Potential Vendor Meeting at the Market
- Community Conversation | Clark-Fulton

July

- Site Visit | David O'Neil and Bill McKinney
- Vendor Meeting with MOCAP
- Friends and Stakeholders Meeting
- Common Ground Conversation | Central-Kinsman Neighborhood
- Common Ground Conversation | Clark-Fulton, Brooklyn Centre, Stockyards
- Common Ground Conversation | Buckeye – Mt Pleasant
- Planning for Summerfest Event in August
- Develop Day Stall Program

August

- Launch Day Stall Program
- Host Summerfest Event

September

- Final Presentation to Mayor Jackson and City Team
- Site Visit | David O'Neil
- Friends and Stakeholders Meeting
- Vendor Meeting

ADMINISTRATIVE | Management Culture and Staffing

Findings:

- The Market is experiencing its highest levels ever of vacant stalls after experiencing near total occupancy for most of its history. A certain number of vendors leave the market naturally through attrition or retirement, but they have not been replaced as quickly. There have also been major shifts in the food retail industry in the last decade with a growing segment of the market focused on the production of convenience foods prepared outside of the home.
- Market staff works closely with the Department of Public Works regarding maintenance issues which are handled by a Service Request Form that goes initially to the Market office. If the matter cannot be handled internally at the Market level, the Service Request Form is forwarded to the Deputy Commissioner who has limited tradespeople on staff. If that staff is not available or able to handle the matter, the Service Request Form is then forwarded to the Commissioner of Property Management which oversees nearly 200 properties for the City. With such a large portfolio of properties, the Department of Property Management does not always have personnel who are able to respond immediately.
- Coupled with stall vacancies, there is next to zero marketing and promotion. The responsibility for marketing has shuffled from the United West Side Market Tenants Association (UWSMTA) to Ohio City, Inc. (OCI), a local community development corporation, which was operating under a fiscal agent agreement with the City of Cleveland going back to 2011 that has not continued. OCI currently controls access to the West Side Market branding, previous marketing campaigns, website and official social media channels. UWSMTA dues have declined with increasing vacancies and there is only enough money to pay for security, not marketing and security.
- The lusciously beautiful market hall could use a deep cleaning in selected areas and increased maintenance to keep it operating at a higher level of sanitation, safety and appearance.
- The City's current management team onsite at the market in 2.5 staff. While a small staff can take care of the most rudimentary aspects of operating the market, it is unable to effectively undertake any strategic initiatives to grow. As evidenced in this report, tremendous resources, will and opportunities are there for the Market. West Side Market's potential to grow is limited by low management capacity, not enough resources and decentralized decision making. With limited staffing and operating resources, little is possible.

Recommendations:

- Streamline internal management culture and decision making. Shift to more autonomous management with a full staff that can operate the market and make decisions without having to navigate through and wait for the bureaucracy to respond. This would be most helpful with operational issues such as maintenance and hiring of staff. Policy decisions and budgetary actions would still be made in collaboration with the City staff.

- Increase management staff, over time, to eight positions, including several which may be funded with outside resources and others that can be revenue generating and self-funding. An increase in management capacity will address stall vacancies by recruiting new vendors and cultivate partnerships that will leverage and justify the City's investment in these new positions.
- Address and resolve the remaining issues with the Market and Ohio City, Inc. and regain control of the Market's website and any funds remaining in the advertising and marketing account.

STAFFING

While additional staff will require an investment by the City, the results should more than justify the cost with increased communication, new vendors, more customers, addressing inequities of opportunity, new partners, increased sales, more promotions and events, more resources, more innovation, restoration of trust and a revitalization of one of Cleveland's true gems.

Findings:

- With historically high vacancies, aging infrastructure, no marketing, and poor Management/Vendor relations, the market is either in crisis or pre-crisis and the time to act is now. The city can continue to be sincere about its desire to change the culture by acting and working with the potential partners that this consulting process has brought to the table. Together, the resources are there to make a difference but there will need to be dedicated staff at the market to develop these partnerships.
- The possibility of outside funding and partnerships require the repair of trust between the City, the market and philanthropic community. The first steps need to be taken by the City to demonstrate a cultural change and ability to act while partnerships with local foundations are rebuilt.
- Several of the recommended new positions have potential to be funded by outside sources while others can generate additional revenue for the market. Others may be short-term positions e.g., Tenant Coordinator that should be funded by the city and can be eliminated once capital improvements are complete.
- Many of these staffing positions have responsibilities that are to some degree, fulfilled by personnel in the Department of Public Works within the city, such as billing, administration, maintenance and communications. It is our recommendation that the Market consolidate these responsibilities into the on-site Market office to enable the Market to operate more efficiently, independently and responsively so the Market can have more control and do what is best for the Market

Recommendations:

Based on the assessment and interviews with City staff and stakeholders, the following positions will provide the capacity the market management team needs to build new partnerships, seek funding and resources, address maintenance issues, manage the capital improvement, monitor vendor performance

and customer satisfaction, and develop marketing and events to promote the market. The positions, in order of priority are:

1) **Market Manager** – Lead and coordinate market staff and develop strong working relationships with city departments, vendors and the public. The Market Manager now reports to the Deputy Commissioner who also has the responsibility for the Public Auditorium and Stadium. Upgrade role to report directly to the Director of Public Works. This higher status will give the Manager more authority and ability operate the market effectively.

2) **Tenant Coordinator** – Coordinate pending stall reconstruction with vendors and provide constant, consistent communication about construction activities timelines to mitigate impact on vendors and the market.

3) **Facilities Manager** - Increase overall maintenance and cleaning, standards and responsiveness.

4) **Leasing** – Develop new leasing program and recruit new vendors to fill vacancies in the arcade and after construction is complete, the market hall. There is tremendous interest from new vendors who are ready and excited about the opportunity to sell at the market. This is a revenue generating position and could also attract support from local foundations.

5) **Marketing and Communications** – Promote the Market at this critical time to regain customers. This position is also potentially fundable.

6) **Partnership, Development and Fundraising** – Develop new partnerships and cultivate relationships with local funders to capture the resources available to help the city with the market.

7) **Administration** – This position has always been at the market until recently. This person could have responsibility for billings, payments, lease maintenance and office management.

8) **Finance** – As the Market grows and attracts more funds from sponsors, grants and other new resources, it will be necessary to establish and track various accounts. This position would also have the responsibility to oversee any tax filing and related issues to these funds.

Market Manager

Responsibilities:

- The role of the West Side Market Manager needs to be upgraded to a higher level and invested with more authority and autonomy, so they do not have to send things up the chain of command in the Department of Public Works and wait for a decision. While the Director of the Department of Public Works can still exert final authority with things like policies and capital improvements, decisions should be made in consultation with the Manager who can save face and be seen as the true Manager of the Market. A fully authorized Market Manager can also

shield the Department from grievances and time-consuming issues that should be handled at the Market level. The chain of command from the Manager to the Director of Public Works is too long, there are too many decision makers. The Manager's position should be elevated so they report directly to the Director.

- The core functions of running a market are a given – smooth operations, getting things done on time, keeping good records, paying bills, lease maintenance, overseeing employees, helping with fundraising, encouraging vendors, making the market a hospitable place and promoting the market are all expected. Managers who go beyond the expected are what make the difference, grow a market and create that great, best place in a city where everyone comes together and feels welcome.
- The manager should spend a considerable amount of time on the market floor. Being accessible and interacting with vendors is an important role that builds trust. It is also a way to stay in touch with each vendor, talk about their business, check out their products, and brainstorm ideas to improve it. Time on the floor is also a good way to get to know customers. The manager is the public face of the market and needs to 'see and be seen'. There is an element of hospitality to managing a market. Being on the floor, working the crowd and having an eagle eye for things that need attention are all part of the job.

Market Manager job descriptions from Findlay Market in Cincinnati and Reading Terminal Market in Philadelphia are provided in the Appendix.

A list of "Attributes of Outstanding Market Managers" is also in the Appendix

Tenant and Construction Coordinator

Temporary Position: This can be a 2-3 year assignment funded by the City and can be phased out at the end of construction.

Responsibilities:

- Interface with the Mayor's Office of Capital Projects (MOCAP) and the selected contractor to coordinate overall tenant impacts and mitigation. Work with each tenant to come to an agreement of how their stall and business will be affected during the renovations and develop a plan and schedule for each vendor detailing all costs, upgrades, timing and final drawings for the renovated stall.
- Serve as the management interface on the market floor, being available to help all vendors on an as needed basis during construction. Develop a communication strategy with management to inform customers about the construction, vendor relocations and timing.
- Begin the process of rebuilding trust with the tenants by establishing good working relationships with each vendor.
- Help new vendors navigate their way through the application process of planning, leasing and opening a market stall.

Additional details for this job are in the Capital Improvements section of this report under 'Vendor Prototype' (pg #).

Facilities Manager

Responsibilities:

- Oversee all aspects of building operations including maintenance, janitorial, security, outside contractors, utilities, capital project oversight and protecting the historic integrity of the building.
- Revive the UWSMTA's Operations Committee to deepen the collaboration between management and tenants.
- Oversee the needs of the vendors stalls (and planned renovations) as the majority of the equipment is owned by the City. Work with the Tenant Coordinator to help address the many needs of market operations with the upcoming capital improvements.
- This position is currently filled and should be given greater responsibility to operate with more autonomy so they have the authority to direct the in-house laborers and engineers, expedite service requests from the City and hire and manage outside contractors.

Leasing Coordinator

POSITIVE REVENUE GENERATION- New vendors generate more rent. Renting out the market for special events and 'markets within the market' also brings in new income.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY – Opening the doors to new vendors and diversifying the vendor pool aligns with local foundations' goals that see new economic opportunities and community wealth building as critical components to addressing racial and social disparities.

Responsibilities:

- Getting the right vendors in the Market with the right products is one of the most important jobs of managing any public market.
- Identify and recruit new vendors to fill vacancies in the Arcade and continue with the successful Daystall Pilot Program (pg #). This is a tremendous opportunity for the Market to build positive momentum and work towards diversifying the products and vendors.
- Develop partnerships with small business development organizations, community development corporations, and cultural associations to develop wide and deep social networks to recruit new vendors to the market.
- Work with new vendors to identify resources and support needed to make their business successful at the market including assistance with their product line, paperwork, stall layout, marketing or business plan and connect tenants with local organizations that can provide technical assistance, advising and capital to vendors.

Marketing and Communications

POSITIVE REVENUE GENERATION: This position has the potential to bring in more customers to spend more money and will cultivate partnerships and create fundable programming opportunities.

Responsibilities:

- Lead internal market management team, coordinate with UWSMTA and cultivate outside partnerships to help fund, plan and implement programming and events. Start to schedule market-wide quarterly events and add in smaller events to move the Market towards a year-round schedule of programs and promotions.
- Communicate with customers during planned capital improvements and construction through carefully planned events, incentives and programming. The Market cannot afford to lose any more shoppers due to disruption or perceptions that the market is becoming a difficult place to shop.
- Coordinate with UWSMTA and Ohio City, Inc. and create a new agreement that will reactivate the market website, give the City access to branding standards and develop new, interactive content for the market's social media accounts that highlights the stories of market, vendors and customers on a daily basis
- Develop marketing and communication strategy for the Market that is available in multiple languages, promotes and highlights the diversity of customers and vendors at the market, and builds strategic local partnerships to expand the market's customer base.

Partnerships, Development and Fundraising

POSITIVE REVENUE GENERATION: This position will bring in new resources, partners and funding. This could start as one position and grow into two positions.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY: This is another position with the potential to be funded by an outside party that sees the benefit of the West Side Market being more self-sufficient through the development and partnerships.

Responsibilities

- Build relationships with community partners that have expressed an interest in working with and supporting the market during this process and establish pilot programs that will elevate the social mission of the market that provides all Cleveland residents with access to the Market's economic opportunities, healthy foods, and programming.
- Reach out to underrepresented communities, build bridges that support new vendors, programming and customer development, and manage nutrition incentive programs (i.e., Produce Perks, TANF Fruit and Vegetable Program, Produce Prescription, etc.)
- Work with the market management team and vendors, begin to develop and integrate relevant programming to enhance the market experience, build community health, celebrate the city's rich cultures, and increase loyalty to the Market as a resource for all of Cleveland and beyond.
- Help identify potential new vendors and programs to support their needs as new tenants and entrepreneurs.

- Work with city planners, local developers, community development corporations and neighborhood stakeholders to increase access and connectivity, improve the streetscape and public transportation options near the Market.

Administration

A full-time administrative position will enable the Market to be more self-sufficient and responsive. This position was recently vacated and was always a part of the management team and should be filled.

Responsibilities:

- Assists the Market Manager with office coordination, file management, lease maintenance, invoicing and bill paying
- Acts as an additional point of communication for the market by answering the phone and email and responding to simple customer inquiries which establishes a responsive, positive relationship with the public

Finance

Responsibilities:

- Works with Market Manager on budgeting, forecasting, tracking income and expenses, contract evaluation.
- Coordinates internal staff on fundraising, sponsorships and cash flow.
- Work with the Market Manager and the UWSMTA’s Budget Committee to develop annual revenue forecasts and rental rates.
- This position does not need to start immediately and could initially be combined with the Administration position.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

These principles are primarily directed at the Manager, but can certainly be applied to general manner in which the entire staff approaches the job.

Findings:

- Managing a public market has evolved. It has become more entrepreneurial and creative.
- In the past, managing a market was more about operating a facility that needed maintenance, rents collected, and bills paid in a clean, safe and wholesome environment. Today, it is much more demanding and requires a new attitude and culture to keep up with changing customer demands and an increasingly competitive food retail marketplace.

Recommendations:

- Adapt to Changing Competition – Keep an eye on the changing competitive landscape both in food retail and in the neighborhoods adjacent to the market and work with existing vendors to

innovate and anticipate new opportunities. Work with new vendors to show the customers new life and new ideas. Stay abreast of new ways to communicate.

- Fiscal and Economic Strength – The market is the foundation upon which the vendors rely for their wellbeing. Applying vigilance to the market’s short term and long-term financial needs and opportunities is paramount.
- Ongoing Planning – People don’t like the market to change – but they do. Management needs to stay abreast of and respond to opportunities. This applies to merchandising, cost savings, infrastructure, programming and community outreach.
- Community Representation – It is a ‘public’ market and needs that strong relationship with the community who supports it as customers and taxpayers and who can play an active role in determining the market’s future. The Friends and Stakeholders are a good example of this. When the Market tackles a Master Plan, the benefits of reaching out and engaging with the community will be very evident.
- Vendor Involvement – Vendors are on the front line and get daily feedback about how the market is doing. Establishing trust through sincere communication will bring cooperation and better overall results for market operations.
- Health and Sanitation – The market is selling people food they put into their bodies to live. Upkeep should be at the highest levels – with things that are visible in the market as well as in the support areas behind the scenes.
- Outreach and Programming – This is an area that has seen dramatic growth in public markets. People want a place to learn about food, health, cooking, cultures and how they can be integrated into their purchases to live a better life. This effort builds loyalty, good word of mouth (which is the best type of advertising) and brings in partners and new resources, including funding.
- New Vendor Opportunities – As a civic place, the Market is perhaps the best and most affordable place to start a business. This is a profound thing, for without it, the steppingstones to success are too far apart and inaccessible – so business dreams die with no place to start. It is incumbent upon Management to keep the doors of economic opportunity wide open to preserve this function.
- Eco-sensible – The opportunities to innovate are not with products alone. The Market should take a leadership position with green technology, waste reduction, walkable access, bike access, reduced, reusable or recyclable packaging, gleaning, encouraging public transportation, energy use reduction and responsible infrastructure advancements. The market can demonstrate the possibility of change and influence others to follow.
- Building and Infrastructure Modernization – West Side Market was a marvel in 1912. In 2021, with new capital investments on the horizon, many of its current systems should be reevaluated including the basement, display cases in the market hall, the passive chimney system to circulate air, etc. Multiple perspectives and stakeholders should be engaged and inform planning and decision making at the market.

ADMINISTRATIVE | Operations

West Side Market is one of the most elaborate market buildings in the country, demanding high levels of care and attention at all levels, from the clock tower to the basement. With over a million visitors per year – double the traffic of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame – the Market needs constant attention to provide a wholesome, safe and sanitary business environment.

A critical area to be considered is how the financial model for the Market, operating as an Enterprise Fund, can be strengthened so the building is adequately preserved and maintained. Vendor rents alone are not enough to do what is best for the market.

The maintenance of the market is decentralized with general oversight under the direction of the Facilities Manager in the Market office. The maintenance staff is a hybrid of on-site market staff (two engineers and two laborers), Department of Public Works employees (on an as needed basis through service and special requests submitted to the Deputy Commissioner and/or the Commissioner of Public Works), scheduled contracted labor (cleaning/janitorial, pest control and security) and on-call contracted labor (EMC, Energy Mechanical Corporation – refrigeration) .

Many maintenance issues are the result of aging infrastructure, particularly electrical and plumbing, and are not the fault of market management or due to lack of proper maintenance. Many of the service requests for plumbing and electrical issues are because the systems are outdated and need to be replaced. The planned capital improvements, especially those slated for electrical and plumbing systems will help tremendously to alleviate these problems. Another common service request is for the elevators, which are not slated for the next round of capital improvements and should be reevaluated to identify the key, fundamental issues that lead to frequent disruptions in service.

Maintenance problems that cannot be handled by market staff require issuing service requests up the chain of command through the Department of Public Works. This can result in longer waits as the Department of Public Works has the responsibility to maintain over 200 properties throughout the City. The Market should work with the Department of Public Works to establish a rating system to establish 'emergency' priority to expedite processing and resolution of service requests that directly impact the daily operations and functions of the market and its tenants.

The Market Hall generally looks good – as clean as any other public market, most vendor stalls are well kept and a source of pride for the families that operate them. The basement and tile walls in the Market Hall are not as clean as they were during the Market Centennial in 2012 and would benefit from a cleaning.

As is true with any public market, there is room for improvement, to step up and reestablish higher standards and move from what is mostly reactive maintenance (mostly due to plumbing and electrical problems) to preventative maintenance. This can be facilitated by creating a series of trackable checklists, maintenance standards, and timelines that can be tracked by the Department of Public Works, Market Management, and vendors.

Additionally, the vendors need to revive their Operations Committee to work with Market Management and the City to provide more guidance. No one knows the building better than the vendors and their knowledge needs to be tapped.

Maintenance Objectives

- Operate at a high standard of maintenance and cleanliness
- Have centralized control over all aspects of the market in the Market Office.
- Move the market from reactive maintenance to preventive maintenance.
- Establish and follow a predictive and preventative maintenance checklist
- Assign status, accountability and timing of completion for service requests

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. Establish mechanisms for vendors to report and track maintenance requests
- B. Establish a Market maintenance fund for emergencies and special projects. Emergencies costs are handled by the Department of Public Works.
- C. Perform deep cleaning of the basement, walls of the Market Hall, and the vacant stalls in the Arcade.
- D. Critically evaluate the basement storage system and the market floor display cases and consider alternatives
- E. Establish a set of standards for scheduled cleaning and maintenance
- F. Revive the UWSMTA Operations Committee

A. Establish mechanisms for vendors to track and expedite service requests

FINDINGS

- As problems arise, vendors fill out a handwritten 'service request' and deliver it to the Market Office. Some Vendors prefer sending an email to create a traceable paper trail. Approximately 50 service requests are submitted per year.
- Service requests that cannot be handled by market staff – and there are no plumbers or electricians in the market – are initially forwarded to the Executive Commissioner that oversees the West Side Market, Public Auditorium and FirstEnergy Stadium. The Executive Commissioner is next in command after the Market Manager.
- The Executive Commissioner has one electrician, one plumber and one engineer on staff, all of whom are union employees, and who can be dispatched to address issues at the market.
- If the Executive Commissioner is unable to handle the service request – the next step is to forward the request to the Commissioner of Property Management for the City of Cleveland, who oversees 190 municipal facilities including recreation centers and City Hall. The Commissioner of Property Management uses a maintenance tracking system called City Works. This system is not currently accessible to market vendors.
- While help is generally available for the Market through this process, sometimes it is not. For instance, when 22 indoor and 24 outdoor pools are being serviced, it may be hard to get a plumber.

- If no help is available, the service request pends, and the Market must wait. There is no alternative unless requests are made verbally to the Director of Public Works who oversees the Office of Property Management and seven other divisions in the City.
- Vendors have learned the system and appeal directly to the Director of Public Works or go to the very top of the chain of command and appeal to the Chief Operating Officer of the City. This is not appropriate but illustrates the level of frustration experienced by some vendors.
- The majority of service requests are for electrical and plumbing issues. Elevator issues are another common service request.
- Electrical issues are mostly due to inadequate power at vendor stalls resulting in overloads or shortages that trigger a service request. Electric problems in the basement are often caused by leaks from the market floor that cause shortages.
- Plumbing issues are primarily backups. The drains cannot handle the volume and often debris or food waste from vendors gets mixed into the floor drains and creates a backup. Other times, drainpipes break, causing water to leak into basement storage areas leading to electrical shortages as mentioned above.
- The good news is planned capital improvements will address the plumbing and electric issues which are the source of most service requests.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The first recommendation is to implement an electronic tracking system, accessible to vendors, so they can track the status of their service requests. Having some information is better than no information, even when there is a delay. This could be done by tying the Market into the City Works system and allowing vendors to track to their service requests.
- There are many easy-to-use, easy to set-up online systems if the Market wanted their own system – a popular system at other public markets such as Pike Place Market in Seattle is the commercial property management software from Yardi. <https://www.yardi.com/products/yardi-commercial-suite/> Yardi provides a simple grid for each job showing description of job status, whether job has been assigned, completed or not completed with a reason why. This is a transparent and easy to access system.
- UWSMTA should reestablish their Operations Committee, review the effectiveness of Yardi or the City Works the system annually and make appropriate adjustments to the system based on those meetings.
- Prioritize West Side Market ‘emergency’ service requests. Create a rating system to define an emergency based on immediate safety, health risk, scale of problem, loss of product, loss of ability to operate the market or part of the market, and level of activity i.e. is the problem getting worse quickly.
- The rating system should be devised by the Executive Commissioner of Markets, the Commissioner of Property Management, Market Management staff and UWSMTA Operations Committee to agree on what constitutes an ‘emergency’ that can lead to expediting a service request and help the market get immediate attention.

- If minimum time frames are not met for emergencies, allow Market Management to address the problem with a list of pre-approved contractors, paid from a pre-approved maintenance fund described in the next section.
- Maintain an accessible, electronic record of all past service requests and resolutions. This will help to understand when problems are recurring and to investigate why.

B. Establish a maintenance fund for emergencies and special projects

FINDINGS

- Today, the main source of funds for maintaining the Market, which operates as an Enterprise Fund, are vendor rents which are not adequate to fully address the needs of the 109-year-old building with aging infrastructure.
- In a large, historic building like West Side Market, there is often a fine line between what can be repaired as part of the maintenance budget, and what needs to be replaced as a capital expense. Deferred, reactive maintenance and inadequate or delayed capital funding adds to the operational difficulties of the Market.
- The Market has no ability to promptly take care of problems that require funds in excess of what has been budgeted for the year. They are at the mercy of the City which often entails long waits, burdening the vendors with prolonged operational difficulties. If the Market had its own funds for emergencies, they would not have to wait for a response from the City.
- Some problems are not an emergency per se, but prevent the market from operating at full efficiency such as a broken elevator or a small roof leak.
- Sometimes the waiting period for non-emergencies, like a broken elevator or roof leak, is prolonged until the problem can be addressed in the capital budget. This can take years and puts the market in a tough position as it cannot operate at full efficiency.
- The West Side Market facility assessment conducted in 2012 and updated in 2019 documented over 100 items 'to be replaced, fixed or improved upon'. While some of these 100 items are being addressed, many others are not. The capital priorities of the Market need to be expedited.
- To help the Market in the interim, it would benefit with the establishment of a trust fund for emergencies and for problems that cannot wait to be classified and funded as a capital improvement.
- Many public markets are now recipients of funds for operations and maintenance that are in addition to vendor rents. In some cases, the additional funds exceed the rent funds. This shows that most public markets cannot be supported by rents alone, and that the external financial support exists for public markets.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Provide a funding mechanism that allows the Market to maintain the building and provide a safe shopping and work environment when other avenues of support within the Department of Property Management have been exhausted or exceed reasonable waiting times.

- Provide initial financial support for the trust that is not billed back to the vendors as rent. Other possible sources for the future are included in the ‘New Income Sources and Opportunities’ section of this report.
- Enlist a group of volunteer advisors with a variety of technical, preservation and political skills to help determine a responsible amount of money for the fund and to determine how and when the funds can be spent. Suggestions for the advisors include a member from each of the following: Department of Public Works, representative of the UWSMTA Operations Committee, historic preservation organization, Cleveland City Council (representative from Ohio City), property management professional (private sector) and the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects.
- Design a public master planning process for the West Side Market that includes discussions about the long-term financial strategy to support the Market and its ongoing maintenance and capital needs.

C. Perform ‘catch-up’ maintenance and cleaning

FINDINGS

- From a customer’s point of view the market is generally clean and provides a pleasant shopping experience.
- Certain areas of the market need to be cleaned and painted and selected areas of the market need deep cleaning.
- Income from Market rents is the only source of funds for cleaning and maintenance and is not adequate to perform the necessary maintenance of the market. This current model of financial support can lead to an overall decline of the facility.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The market needs selective and occasional deep cleaning and maintenance.
- Areas recommended for an initial round of restorative cleaning/maintenance include:
 - 2nd floor offices and meeting rooms – cleaning and painting throughout, including windows. This is in process; the Market offices are being painted.
 - Market Hall tile walls and columns – overall cleaning to remove built up dust and grime.
 - Tops of Market Hall vendor stalls – cleaning (vendors should assist with this)
 - Market alleys and sidewalks – power washing
 - Basement – major, deep cleaning and power washing of ceiling, walls, rooms, floor
 - Elevators – fix and resume operability for vendors
- The city should undertake these tasks and not rebill the cost to vendors as part of their rent

D. Critically evaluate Market systems and consider alternatives

FINDINGS

- The Market has changed the display cases on the market floor and the refrigeration and storage system in the basement over time, they are not original. These are owned by the Market, not the vendors. Maintenance and replacement costs are the responsibility of the Market, not the vendors.
- As there have been advances in technology, the Market should consider whether the current refrigeration system in the basement and display cases in the Market Hall should be restored or whether other systems would be more efficient and economical. West Side Market is one of, if not the only remaining market in the US that still operates with these types of display cases on the market floor. While this was once common in markets, it is no longer true and markets have changed to a system where the vendors own and maintain their own equipment and display cases.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- It would be prudent to look at all systems currently used in the market to evaluate alternative ways forward that are more energy efficient, cost efficient and better suited for modern merchandising needs and tenant customization. The obvious areas that would benefit from a critical look include:
 - The Basement – Essential to safe and sanitary operations at the market, the basement is scheduled for renovation. The city should consider whether renovating the current system is the best investment. The basement is owned by the city and is expensive to operate, maintain and cyclically replace. Maintenance issues are an ongoing headache with breakdowns and loss of products. If vendors owned their refrigerated units, they would be responsible for the maintenance and replacement costs. If the current system was switched to vendor-owned refrigerated units, the cost savings could be reallocated to other areas of maintenance and cleaning in the Market.
 - Display Cases - The city should consider if an ongoing investment in the uniform display cases is the best use of capital and maintenance dollars. These cases are owned by the City, and are a high-ticket item to maintain and replace. They are not original, the most recent ones are replacements of cases from 1954. Display methods and equipment have changed over time at West Side Market and at all markets. The current cases are not ideal; there is too much condensation and limited display capability for limited products. They also encroach into the aisles, narrowing the areas of customer circulation. There is interest among some vendors to purchase and customize fixtures to maximize their displays and improve sales. Experimenting with a select group of vendors to customize their stalls would be a good next step, especially as the stalls are rebuilt with the planned prototype program.
 - The Elevators – Essential to safe and sanitary handling of food products, the elevators frequently break down. The 2019 Facility Assessment of West Side Market prepared for the City indicates the “freight elevators are beyond their useful life.” The elevators were not designed for daily use by heavy pallet jacks. Rather than continually replacing and repairing the elevators and the doors, perhaps there is a better system designed to withstand the rigorous pummeling of market commerce. It is unfortunate that replacement of the

elevators was not included in the capital plan and they should be reconsidered as a critical addition to that project.

D. Establish a set of standards and checklists for maintenance

FINDINGS

- A multi-faceted market maintenance and cleaning staff of city employees and contractors is overseen by the Facilities Manager.
- Staffing is composed of five full time City employees, supplemented with multiple outside contractors for cleaning, security, pest control, loading dock supervision and refrigeration. Additional part-time personnel such as plumbers and electricians are employees of the Department of Public Works and respond on an as-needed basis.
- This decentralized approach highlights the need to establish a transparent, coordinated, preventative and regular maintenance schedule to ensure the Market is cleaned and maintained at the highest levels.
- Automated sensors to monitor refrigeration are in place but do not always function properly.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Work with the Food Safety Division of the Cleveland Department of Public Health and the UWSMTA to establish cleaning protocols for general food safety and sanitation. They know the market and have the knowledge to inspect, evaluate and make recommendations for food safety, cleaning practices, safe storage (refrigeration and basement) and handling (vendor stalls) of all foods.
- Establish a prioritized cleaning schedule, enlisting the assistance of the Food Safety Division that applies to every area of the market. Create a checklist for each area that can be tracked by each employee and the supervising Facilities Manager.
 - Have the Facilities Manager assign specific employees the responsibility for each area and break down each area by component.
 - For instance, the bathrooms need to be cleaned multiple times a day on busy market days. A checklist should be composed of each component of the bathroom (sinks, stalls, floor, counters, mirrors, etc.) and 'checked' off once completed. This will create a record and accountability.
 - Establish the frequency of each area – whether daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually or even longer such every five years to clean the tiled ceiling and walls.
- Conduct a thorough building safety inspection to evaluate the electrical and plumbing systems and provide an analysis and report for any needed repairs that can be done now to preserve a safe working and shopping environment.

- Provide more training to onsite maintenance staff so they can address mechanical and refrigeration problems and give more authority to the Facilities Manager to be able to operate with more autonomy and shorten response times.
- Establish a maintenance schedule that applies to every area of the market. Create a checklist with frequencies to provide a record of when things were done and by whom. For instance, the display cases on the Market floor need to be recalibrated based on the seasons to lessen the condensation on the glass. Examples are provided in this how-to guide published by the General Services Administration:
 - https://www.gsa.gov/cdnstatic/2018_GSA_PM_Guide_FINAL.pdf
- Upgrade to automated systems, where possible, to alert the proper maintenance staff. For instance, temperature sensors monitoring the refrigeration system can be tied into an alert system that does not require an on site inspection. This should be included with the scheduled capital improvements.
- Provide regular training of maintenance staff to raise their skill levels and understanding of market operations and equipment. Send market staff on learning trips to other buildings and markets.

See Appendix for General Services Administration's Preventative Maintenance Guide

E. Reestablish the Vendors Operations Committee

FINDINGS

- There was an Operations Committee of UWSMTA that met regularly with Management that is written into Article XXI of the West Side Market lease agreement to discuss main
- The success of any Market is largely dependent on the collaboration of Management and Vendors. While this was once the norm at West Side Market, it is in everyone's interest to revive this core partnership to ensure the Market operates with the highest standards of cleanliness, sanitation and safety.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Reestablish the UWSMTA Operations Committee to work with management and address annual maintenance and long term capital planning.
- Include a senior representative from the Department of Public Works to be a member of the Operations Committee who can help the Market get more prioritized attention.
- Analyze the ongoing costs for maintenance/cleaning and evaluate all service contracts and allow vendors to formally submit recommendations for changes.
- Allow vendors to access cleaning and maintenance checklists and records.
- Have the Operations Committee submit capital requests by July 1, to the Department of Public Works and the Mayor's Office of Capital Improvements to be considered for the following year.

ADMINISTRATIVE | Supporting Good Vendors and Enforcing Quality Controls

Improving Vendor Relations

West Side Market is a ‘people’ business. Customers and vendors, buying and selling is the public side of the market. The other most important relationship in the market is between vendors and the management. This is more than a relationship; it is a partnership. This partnership is essential to conducting market operations that benefit everyone, including the customers.

This partnership between management and the tenants was solid for many decades. The vendors spoke with a collective voice and full participation. Today, this is not the case. Only a small number of vendors are active in UWSMTA. Many feel it is not worth their time since little gets done. But this becomes self-fulfilling and adds to the problem of poor communication.

The lack of participation by vendors, particularly with quality enforcement, capital investments, and planning for the future make it difficult for the City to solicit input from market tenants and leads to frustration. The new stall prototype was presented to the vendors for review and feedback. Only 13 out of the 45 vendors in the Market Hall responded to a survey requesting feedback. Management feels like they are trying – and the City is spending millions to improve the market – and the voices of the vendors are mostly silent. Vendors complain privately and publicly about recurring plumbing and electric problems, broken elevators and question why they should go to meetings if nothing gets done. Vendors have not received their lease renewals for 2021 and the year is more than half over. During conversations and interviews with community members it became clear that as this broken partnership plays out in the media, it casts a pall over the market that discourages people from coming to and shopping at the market.

Everyone understands the market is a partnership between vendors and management. Everyone also understands that it is not an easy fix to get things back on track. The natural starting point has presented itself with the planned renovations of the market which will require an enormous amount of working together to achieve the best possible outcome.

One of the key recommendations in this report is to hire a Tenant Coordinator who will take the lead working individually with vendors to address specific needs for their stalls during the renovation. The stall renovations will require a lot of coordination and is a good starting place to get things back on track with specific needs, timeframes and details for every vendor being essential. Participation is not optional, it is required. With additional staffing for marketing, events and partnership development, the market has an opportunity to shift the narrative. This positive activity should spur more vendors to participate as they will see things getting done and time being used constructively.

FINDINGS

- The purpose of the UWSMTA is to “provide advice on how to promote the market, perform self-policing and provide advice concerning management and operations” through the creation of three advisory committees: Budget Committee, Operations Committee and a Disciplinary Committee.

- UWSMTA is not nearly as active as it once was. They still collect dues, hold meetings, pay for security and confer with Management to go over the budget and others issues as they arise during the year. They still act as a clearinghouse for information and listen to vendor complaints and suggestions. The vendors are not as cohesive, socially or professionally, as they once were. While all tenants continue to pay monthly dues, most do not participate in any of the committees or attend regular meetings. This lack of participation not only dilutes the tenant's voices, it places unfair demands on those vendors who do participate and also means that UWSMTA does not represent the voices of all the tenants in the Market Hall and Arcade.
- Vendors who do not participate in UWSMTA say they do not have the time or interest to do so. Others indicate a loss of faith in the management and in the association's ability to influence management. There also seems to be a divide and lack of partnership between the Arcade and Market Hall vendors that carries over into UWSMTA. Only two arcade vendors attended any meetings during this process and assessment and the needs and concerns of the Market Hall vendors seems to dominate discussions with management, the city and in the media.
- UWSMTA's office and meeting rooms on the second floor typify the dissolution of this group. The rooms are in poor shape, with peeling paint and a general air of disuse and abandonment. On the other side of the second floor, above the loading docks, the vendor's locker rooms and bathrooms are also abandoned and unkempt.
- The Market Manager may exercise their 'sole discretion' when to inform and consult with the Operations and Disciplinary Committees. The Manager is only obligated, by the lease, to inform and consult with the Budget Committee, which is the only active committee of the three mentioned in the lease.
- While most vendors are upstanding, some have poor practices which reflect badly on the entire Market and the vendor community. Customer complaints often center on the issue of quality, particularly with produce in the Arcade. If a customer has a bad market experience with one vendor, it reflects badly on the entire market. Customers have stopped shopping at the market due to this bad experience which seems to persist today.
- Vendors complain about the difficulty of operating with only a one-year lease. They say this prevents them from investing in or getting a loan to improve their business.
- There is a lack of Management enforcement with quality, although the Lease is quite clear about what is and is not permissible, including the selling of low-grade produce.
- There is also a lack of vendor-to-vendor enforcement, especially with matters of quality.
- There are other chronic problems among the vendors that are not enforced such as cleanliness of their stands and storage areas and absenteeism.
- With the impending reconstruction of all vendor stalls in the Market Hall, it is imperative to rebuild relationships as soon as possible to prepare a plan for every vendor so the process goes smoothly.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Market Management

- Vendor relations need to be rebuilt one vendor at a time. This will take a combination of formal and informal methods. Hiring the Tenant Coordinator (recommended in the Staffing section of this report pg #) will provide the key person to take on this undertaking.
- Market management should spend more time on the market floor, communicating one-on-one, listening to vendors, and getting to know their businesses. Memos, email, and surveys should be used sparingly until relationships and trust are re-established.
- Management should follow up on everything; service requests, repairs, leasing issues, whatever has been discussed that has a 'next step' needs to be tracked and communicated with the vendor until it is resolved. This will rebuild trust and respect with vendors.
- Regular communication and prompt follow up is also important. Keep tenants in the loop, even if it is just getting back to them and giving them a progress report, or a sense of when something might get resolved.
- Management should work with UWSMTA to reactivate the Disciplinary Committee (Article XXI of the Lease) to help uphold the high standards and good reputation of the Market.
- Enforcement of the Lease by Management needs to be a priority. Enforcement should be done daily, formally and informally as management staff is in the market observing the stalls and vendors. Depending on the type of violation, the first strike is a verbal warning. The second is in writing and the third is the last warning, which if unheeded, can lead to an eviction.
- Issue annual vendor evaluations based on a Vendor Scorecard
- Provide options for leases longer than one year. This will need to work its way through legislatively and will require a change in the City Ordinance. It is reasonable to provide longer terms for tenants to make an investment in their business and to get a bank loan. Longer term leases should not be provided so tenants can 'sell' their lease.
- Management should invite all members of UWSMTA to be briefed and provide input for any future capital investments or master planning in partnership with MOCAP.

United West Side Market Tenants Association

- REBUILD RELATIONSHIPS ONE BY ONE?
- Restart the Operations and Disciplinary Committees. This may take quite a while to make any progress, but there must be some vendors willing to give it a try. If there is a sincere effort from both management and vendors, more progress will be made, and more vendors will get on board.
- The Disciplinary Committee needs to be reactivated to address customer complaints and review results of the customer satisfaction survey, particularly with quality enforcement issues. It is in the vendors self-interest to intervene with this issue as it reflects poorly on all of them.

- The Budget Committee needs to work with Management to revisit the rent clauses in the lease and discuss how tenants are charged for operating expenses. This is described in more detail in the Lease section of the report. This committee can also be a forum to discuss and resolve the need for longer lease terms.
- The Budget Committee should also be a forum to discuss capital needs with Management. This is where vendors can play a big role and establish a strong voice to help direct the future of the market.
- With the impending capital improvements, the Association and individual vendors can play a big role in the refinement, coordination and scheduling of the project. The Tenant Coordinator can take the lead on the Management side working with UWSMTA to make this a much smoother and efficient process.
- Meet with MOCAP to review and provide feedback for the planned capital improvements.
- Continue to assist management with promotional events and marketing, as many did with the recent Summerfest event
- Continue to have UWSMTA representatives participate with the West Side Market Friends and Stakeholders group

Evaluating Vendor Performance and Enforcement

West Side Market has a variety of vendors – from the very best to those who have opportunities for improvement. While most vendors are quite good at self-evaluation, others may benefit from some help. The relationship between management and vendors should be primarily constructive. Management should do what it can to help vendors grow their businesses and vendors should be willing to make changes that will benefit their businesses and the market overall. It is a partnership.

Most management and vendor communication can be done informally, in the market, on a regular basis. In addition to regular feedback, annual reviews by market management, using a vendor scorecard (below) with measurable results, are a way to show vendors where they are doing well and where they need to improve.

Enforcement

BY MANAGEMENT

Managing a market is demanding on many levels, and one of the most important things is working closely with vendors to keep their businesses healthy. It is good management practice to work sincerely with every vendor to correct problems if there is a reasonable effort made by the vendor. If a manager sees something good – they should let the vendor know and reward their efforts with kind words. If a manager sees something slipping, they should also tell the vendor and follow up to see that it is being addressed.

One of the more delicate issues of managing a market is addressing vendor problems which are seemingly unsolvable. If a vendor’s business is problematic based on the scorecard, feedback from

customers, management or UWSMTA members, and no effort is made to turn things around, then it is time to provide the vendor with a timeline to improve. If a vendor shows little willingness to make improvements and the problem or problems continue, it may be time to terminate their lease and make room for someone else who is eager for an opportunity to sell at the Market. The West Side Market Lease and the Rules and Regulations are clear about acceptable vendor practices and the consequences of not performing up to standards. This entire process should be in writing from the beginning and additional documentation can be provided by the vendor scorecard.

Enforcement is also a two-way street. Management must adhere to high standards of conduct and take action in response to feedback from market customers and other vendors. If that is not being done to acceptable standards, the ability to enforce matters with vendors is jeopardized becomes difficult.

BY VENDORS

UWSMTA cannot rely entirely upon Management to address vendor issues, it must also take action. UWSMTA's Disciplinary Committee has been one of the historic tools used to enforce issues of quality and intervene when there are disagreements between vendors. The role of this committee has largely been dormant and its powers of enforcement have diminished because of the general dissolution of UWSMTA and lack of any meaningful participation, save for a handful of vendors.

Formally or informally, the vendors need to self-police, especially with respect to product quality. If the vendors are unable to make any progress, they can solicit help from the management which has the legal ability and obligation to enforce matters of quality and safety.

Vendor Scorecard

The vendor scorecard is composed of important elements that contribute to a successful business and collectively to the success of the entire market. The list of elements was shared with eight vendors who attended an open in-person meeting during this process in July 2021. Those in attendance agreed these categories represent what it takes to operate a successful market business and would provide a reasonable basis for a vendor review.

This scorecard should be completed by Management once per year before leases are renewed.

Once the checklist is reviewed and discussed to come to an agreement about practical approaches to make improvements, give the vendor some time to act. If things are getting better, let them know how great it is to see them get back on their feet. If things are not improving, they should be made aware of the lack of progress and that it will lead to a more stringent approach that could result in termination.

Using a system of 1-10, with 1 being the lowest grade and 10 the highest, these are recommended categories to be graded for a vendor scorecard:

High Product Quality – Evaluation of overall level of product quality.

Cleanliness – Graded by the overall cleanliness of the complete stall: counters, walls, fixtures, roof, sign fascia and floor. If the vendor rents storage space in the basement, this area should also be reviewed and graded.

Friendliness – How approachable, friendly and receptive is the vendor and their employees?

Consistency – How consistent is the overall experience, quality and reputation?

Customer Service – How well do the vendor and employees greet and treat customers? This includes an overall attitude of gentle friendliness and always putting your best foot forward to accommodate customers.

Owner on Site – Customers like to see the owner behind the counter attending to all the details and making sure everything is running smoothly.

Competitive Prices – How competitive – relative to quality – are the vendor’s prices both within the market and in the general area?

Good Promotional Skills – How well does the vendor promote and advertise their stall through traditional and social media and word of mouth?

Innovation – Does the vendor strive to make improvements to current products, adding new products, online ordering and other new technology such as new payment methods?

Attracts New Customers – How good is the vendor at attracting new customers?

Attendance – Stall is open consistently during market days and hours

Payments and Financial History - Vendor makes payments in full and on time.

Customer Feedback - Review any feedback about the vendor provided by the customer survey (pg #) and any comments or complaints received by Market Management or UWSMTA’s Disciplinary Committee.

Market Awards

To further the constructive approach, the Management could initiate a series of annual Vendor Awards. This will incentivize vendors to do well and be recognized for their efforts. The awards can be promoted in the media for further recognition. Customers could also be invited to ‘vote’ for the awards on the Market’s website and through social media.

Possible Vendor Award Categories:

- Most Improved Market Business
- Employee of the Year
- Best New Product(s)
- Best Displays

- West Side Market – Stall of Fame

ADMINISTRATIVE | The West Side Market Lease

The West Side Market lease document is fundamentally sound. As with all Market leases, they need to be reviewed and updated to address new issues, strengthen certain clauses and provide more clarification in other areas.

As such, there are some steps to make it a better lease and to clarify certain processes.

Changes and Recommendations

Overall Language

Finding: Tenants are referred to as 'he'.

Recommendation: Use 'they' instead.

Overall Enforcement

Finding: There are numerous instances of clauses throughout the document that are unenforced. This proliferation undermines the validity of all the clauses.

Recommendation: If things are not going to be enforced, lease language needs to be modified or removed.

Overall Square Foot Calculations

Finding: Square foot measurements need updating and validation.

Recommendation: All square foot measurements need to be audited – including the market floor and basement.

Article II. Premises

Finding: In Article II, section B. submissions are made to the Director of Public Works and approvals are granted by the same Director. This procedure undermines the authority of the Market Manager.

Recommendation: Request Tenants to make submissions and receive approvals from the Market Manager. Internally, the Manager can discuss and get approval from the Director. It is essential to preserve the authority of the Manager to allow them to be effective on a day-to-day basis.

Additionally, in Article II, section C. the submission of written plans is undefined. The process of what gets submitted and in what form needs more clarification.

Article III. Use of Premises

Finding: In section A. the description of what is permitted to be sold needs to be fully detailed. As written, there is a single blank to fill in. This is then used to determine the rent classification in Article V.

Recommendation: Each tenant should submit in writing the proposed products they wish to sell. The manager will determine what is approved and what is not. The full details of the permitted products should be included in the lease. If a Tenant wishes to amend the product list, they must first do so in writing to the Manager to seek approval. Any approvals would be added to the lease. This is an extremely important clause that allows the Manager to control the overall merchandising, product mix and internal competition. It also allows the Manager to adjudicate disputes among Tenants.

Finding: Section E. refers to the Tenant being responsible for the operation of the Premises. It does not specify the amount of time they are on site. If the intent of this clause is to ensure that the Tenant is on site, it does not do so.

Recommendation: Specify a minimum amount of time for the Tenant/Owner to be on site while the market is open. The amount of time should be decided upon by the UWSMTA.

Article IV. Term

Finding: While a one-year term (renewable) may be satisfactory for some Tenants, it will be problematic for others, such as those needing longer-term leases to apply for a loan to make improvements to their stall or market business or those seeking temporary or seasonal use of stalls (daystalls) that fits their business model. Also, all leases do not need the same beginning and expiration dates. This creates a contentiousness with the Landlord and Tenant, with Tenants banding together to fight against the Landlord. The stall renovation period is an ideal time to begin staggering lease dates. As Vendors go back into their rebuilt stalls – a new lease term could begin.

Recommendations: Lease terms should be negotiated individually and customized for each Tenant. Longer term leases should be made available for Tenants making substantive improvements or investments. It is typical in other Markets to offer longer term leases (3 to 5 years and in some cases longer) with renewal clauses if there have been no serious infractions.

Article V. Rent

Rent calculations are outdated and inequitable. There are many options to move forward. The current forms of calculating rent will generally lead to ongoing budget deficits. The Market's operating budget is largely comprised of Vendor fees. If the Market is to increase Management staffing, outreach, events and so forth – there has to be outside sources (non-Vendor fees) to cover these costs. As specified in this report, these sources are available and need to be cultivated.

Finding: Section A. Categorization of Tenants is outdated as there are many hybrid operations that do not fit into one category. Furthermore, the multiplier calculations determining rent levels are also outdated and need to be revisited and more equitable.

Recommendations: Option #1 – Base rents could be negotiated individually with Tenants factoring not just the product being sold, but other components such as investments to the stall, profitability of items being sold, amount of square footage devoted to certain items, etc.

Option #2 – Move to a triple net system, whereby Tenants pay a base rent, a portion of common area maintenance (CAM) and metered utilities.

Finding: Section B. – Rent collections are cumbersome and time consuming.

Recommendation: There are modern options available such as electronic payments or sending rent checks to a bank lockbox.

Finding: Section G - The lease does not specify how gas fees are assessed.

Recommendation: Initiate a more transparent system.

Article VIII. Casualty to Premises

Finding: The language is unclear as to who is responsible for damages to the cold cases caused by the Tenant.

Recommendation: Clarify the language to address more clearly how to determine how damages were caused and who is responsible.

Article X. Assumption and Assignment

TYPO – Section A, first sentence ‘may sale’ should read ‘may sell’.

Article XV. Default; Remedies

RECOMMENDATION: Corporate Tenants should be required to personally sign the Lease.

TYPO: Section A, paragraph 8., line 2 – ‘within ten (1) days’ should read ‘within ten (10) days’.

Article XXI. Tenant’s Association

RECOMMENDATION: This section is outdated and needs to be reworked cooperatively with Management and Tenants. For instance: listed subcommittees no longer operate, parking references are obsolete, Association dues are collected through the Market Office, and so forth.

ENTREPRENEURIAL GROWTH AND RECRUITMENT | Merchandising Mix

The products and vendors of West Side Market have changed constantly, yet carefully over time responding to new desires, demographics and opportunities. Many markets are fully occupied, with little ability to bring in new vendors and products. Current vacancies in the Market, while unfortunate, are also a terrific opportunity to refresh the Market with products that existing customers want and products that potential customers have said will bring them to the market in the future, creating a whole new wave of interest. Customer preferences were based on a review of the results of the West Side Market Customer Survey in 2019 completed by 1,361 respondents, in-depth interviews with current and potential customers in April through June 2021, and four community conversations with Cleveland residents in three neighborhoods in partnership with Cleveland Foundation's Common Ground initiative in July 2021.

FINDINGS

- Meat vendors are still the most popular in West Side Market, according to customer surveys—but their numbers of stalls are declining. Changing diets, suburbanization, attrition and consolidation in the meat industry are some of the contributing factors to this trend.
- Produce stalls in the Arcade are also experiencing a decline with record vacancies currently. This can be attributed to attrition, competition from farmers markets, complaints about quality and an increasing desire for locally grown products.
- Most market vendors were of European origin for many decades and the current vendors do not represent the racial, ethnic and cultural diversity of Cleveland today.
- Covid saw an increase in sales for basic, fresh food commodities as more people prepared and ate foods at home and some vendors at the Market have benefitted from this trend.

Relevant Trends in Food Retail and Other Public Markets

- In 2016, for the first time, US consumers spent more money on prepared foods than fresh foods for the first time. This trend has continued to grow.
- More competition from grocery stores returning to and investing in urban locations.
- Many farmers markets have opened in urban and suburban neighborhoods. There is a shortage of farmers available to sell at traditional, historic market halls.
- Customers' purchases are more frequent and they are spending less per visit.
- More preparation and selling of ready-to-eat foods on site with in-market seating options.
- An increase in leisure and tourist visitors/shoppers.
- More specialty and ethnic vendors.
- Continuing demand for local products, organics, vegan and gluten free options.
- More lease options for short term rentals and daystalls.

Customer Preferences

FINDINGS

- Based on previous West Side Market Customer Surveys in 2011 and 2019
 - Current customers are drawn to the market mostly for meat (86%) followed by baked goods (77%) produce (74 %) and cheese (69%) with the lowest percentage being those who come to the market for a meal (13%).
 - In the 2107 survey, the Arcade produce also ranked low in terms of quality and satisfaction.
 - Regular shoppers' number one desire was to see more local produce and other locally produced food products. The list of desires also included more places to eat and sit. Both of these were also ranked higher by 'special occasion' (i.e., not weekly) shoppers.
- Customers who do not currently shop at the market were interviewed and engaged in community conversations. In addition the first meeting of the Friends and Stakeholders group was in part dedicated to discussing merchandise mix at the Market. These are the types of products these stakeholders are looking for:
 - Fresh, Local Produce
 - International and ethnic foods, flavors, customs, and cultures e.g. Jamaican, Latin, Japanese, Korean, Bhutanese, Nepali, Central American, Puerto Rican, Nigerian, Soul Food
 - BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color), Latin American, Refugee and Immigrant, LGBTQ+ -owner operators
 - Gluten-free, Vegan and Organic products
 - Producer and artisan products made onsite at the market
 - More prepared foods for lunch options during the week
 - Tasting events – wine, cheese, meats, desserts

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Preserve core merchandising mission of Market for fresh foods – meat/poultry, produce, dairy, fish, baked goods, etc.
- More businesses owned and operated by people of color, refugees and immigrants, LGBTQ+
- More local produce and local farmers as vendors
- More locally raised and/or produced products.
- Freshly prepared and ready to eat foods
- More international foods – prepared products and fresh ingredients
- Cut flowers and seasonal products
- Specialty and Seasonal Markets
 - Garden and Outdoor Market – plants, flowers, saplings, seedlings, equipment
 - Holiday Markets – foods, toys, gifts, international selection
 - Winter Market - celebrate the season, hot chocolate, ice sculptures, bonfire
 - Pet Market – pet foods, toys, accessories,
 - Night Market – food, entertainment, beer and wine,

Prepared Foods

FINDINGS

- The core business of the Market has always been fresh foods sold to local residents and to a lesser degree tourists, most of whom live within a few hours of the Market.
- Prepared foods has been the fastest growing product category in public markets for over 20 years.
- There are many potential vendors who have expressed interest in cooking at the market and selling prepared foods. This is also an easy and effective way to diversify the Vendor community and open the doors of economic opportunity to better reflect the citizens of Cleveland.
- Adding prepared foods will broaden the overall Market experience, attract more customers during the week, and bring in new vendors, not to alter its core mission.
- West Side Market has limited capacity for indoor cooking as there are only three exhaust hoods currently in the market and limited places to install additional hoods without compromising the aesthetics of the interior.
- The alley between the Market Hall and the Alley can be activated as space for prepared food vendors. Summerfest, a community event at the Market, hosted a few prepared food vendors in the Alley who made homemade tortillas and tacos, wood-fired pizza, and grilled fruit and created a space for cooking demonstrations
- Certain forms of cooking are permitted indoors without exhaust hoods if no oil, fat or grease is used. Baking, mixing, tossing, cutting and boiling are all acceptable and open opportunities for some ready to eat salads, sushi, soups, sandwiches and raw foods, representing a wide array of prepared foods that should be perfectly acceptable inside the Market Hall.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Add one to three more prepared food vendors by building out spaces in the old fish market section within the northeast corner of the Market Hall, which is one of the few places that has potential to vent cooking exhaust.
- Activate the Alley between the Arcade and Market Hall for outdoor cooking to provide at least a temporary way to satisfy this customer desire. Many farmers markets operate in this fashion, providing a way to showcase the fresh food vendors' ingredients.
- Work with the Food Safety Division of the Cleveland Department of Public Health to assess current market facilities and individual vacant stalls and create a list of potential ready to eat foods that can be prepared onsite at the market. Actively recruit these types of vendors to lease space at the market for daystall or annual use.

The Arcade and The Alley

FINDINGS

- The Arcade and the Alley are great public spaces that can be activated to bring in new vendors and products and create social spaces that current and potential customers want.
- There are currently **XX number of vacant stalls** in the Arcade available for lease.

- Based on the outcomes from the Daystall Pilot Program (Page #) and Summerfest (page #), there are many food and food-related businesses who would take advantage of the opportunity to lease space and sell their products at the Market.
- The Alley has great potential as a revenue-generating, public space and can be activated for short-term daystalls, cooking, events and programming.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Create a simple agreement and application process for stalls that can be rented on a daily or weekly basis.
- Add moveable tables and chairs to the Alley and create new spaces for seating
- Allow open air cooking, grills, propane, and charcoal in the Alley.
- Create opportunities in the Alley and Arcade for flexible uses such as market day stalls, programs and after hour events.
- *OPTION: Arcade Alterations – Consider removing some of the built-in counters at the 25th St. entrance to allow for flexible vendor layouts, seating, programming and after-hours rentals.*

Market Hall

FINDINGS

- There are limited opportunities in the Market Hall for new vendors with the impending renovation of every stall which will require short term relocation of every vendor. Stalls which are currently vacant will be used as temporary locations for vendors.
- The period of construction is scheduled to take close to two years. It is still to be determined if current vendors want to expand or permanently relocate, so plans for new vendors in the Market Hall will not be possible for a couple of years.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue core merchandising of fresh foods in the Market Hall.
- Assess capital costs and potential timeline to develop up to three new prepared foods stalls may be added in the old Fish Market
- Explore opportunity to reserve a few stalls for short term uses and allow potential vendors to showcase products, chefs to highlight specialties and communities to share cultural cuisines
- Create another flexible public space by converting stalls to an open space in the Market Hall that can be used for temporary vending, programs, events and seating.

LAYOUTS – see graphic illustrations

The Arcade and Alleys have tremendous potential to provide more activity and revenue for the Market. These layouts are provided to show the flexibility of uses as well as ‘markets within the market- such as a holiday market or night market.

Temporary Arcade Stalls

Markets within the Market

Night Market

Holiday and Winter Market

ENTREPRENEURIAL GROWTH AND RECRUITMENT | New Vendors

One of the themes that emerged from interviews with key stakeholders and community residents is the opportunity to recruit new vendors to fill some of the vacancies at the market to bring new products and reflect the diversity and cultural communities of the city. Cleveland residents and customers would like to see more local produce, ethnic foods, prepared and ready-to-eat foods, and vegan and gluten-free products. Working with strategic partners, interviews and surveys were conducted primarily with businesses owned by women, people of color, refugees and immigrants and other underrepresented groups at the market. These conversations sought to understand the current landscape of these food-based businesses and their level of interest, availability, and readiness to sell at the market. The potential vendor survey was available in English, Spanish, Arabic, Mandarin, and French.

The following are some the key themes that emerged from the interviews and surveys conducted with over 30 business owners interested in being a vendor at the market:

- There is high interest from start-ups and new businesses (< 5 years) in selling at the market
- Majority of these businesses have less than 3 employees
- Prepared foods, bakery, value-added products and produce were the top items these business offer
- Over 60% of survey respondents are not currently selling at another market
- Most want to sell at the market 1-2 days a week, year round
- Electricity, storage, refrigeration, and sinks were the most requested needs onsite at the market
- 77% of respondents would be ready to sell at the market within three months
- 42% of survey participants preferred language is Spanish

The survey results demonstrate high interest from a diverse community of business owners with the products that residents and customers are looking for at the West Side Market.

Market's Role as a Business Incubator

Cleveland has an ecosystem of organizations available to support and provide resources to small businesses and entrepreneurs. During this process interviews were conducted with several of these organizations including Building Hope in the City, Burten Bell Carr Development, City of Cleveland Small Business Development, Hebrew Free Loan Association, Hispanic Business Center, Jumpstart, Latino Cleveland, Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC), Metro West Community Development Organization, Ohio City Inc., Ohio State University Extension, and Young Latino Network. Interviews were also conducted with entrepreneurs and small business owners who had used these services, participated in their training programs and workshops, or been a part of a business incubation program.

FINDINGS

- Each of these organizations provide different types of support for small business owners and some provide services to businesses that meet specific criteria which could be location of the business to businesses owned by refugees and immigrants to the type of businesses or product produced.
- Many of these organizations were more than willing to partner with the West Side Market and provide support services and access to capital for current and potential new vendors.
- Small business owners find that the quality of these support services these organizations offer varies widely and it is difficult to navigate all the options to find one that can provide what the business owner needs.
- Most business owners interviewed found the majority of the current training and business incubator programs to be limited in their effectiveness to start or grow their businesses. The three key services and support entrepreneurs found to be most helpful are individual advising and mentoring, training and technical assistance with marketing and branding, and access to capital to expand their business.
- Commercial leases and retail rents have been increasing dramatically the last several years on the near west side of Cleveland, making it difficult for new, local businesses to find affordable space that meets their business needs and gives them access to customers and good foot traffic.
- The Market provides a unique and unparalleled space to launch a food or food-related business in Cleveland with built-in foot traffic and customers, opportunities to diversity vendors and products, and relatively affordable spaces.
- Most if not all organizations that were interviewed did not refer their business clients to the Market as a good place to start a business or think about it as an option for the entrepreneurs they work with through their training programs and services.
- The Daystall Pilot Program demonstrated that the temporary spaces in the Arcade have great potential as a good place to launch new products and gain access to customers to help grow a business. Current and new vendors also informally shared experiences and traded advice about their products, customers, and other markets.
- There are opportunities to build value-chain partnerships between current vendors who sell ingredients used by new vendors as they scale their businesses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Build relationships with a few key organizations who can provide support in the areas where new business owners identified they need the most support:
 - Advising and Mentoring: JumpStart
 - Marketing: Hispanic Business Center, JumpStart
 - Access to Capital: City of Cleveland, Department of Economic Development and Hebrew Free Loan Association
 - Technical Assistance for Food Businesses: Cleveland Central Kitchen
- Market Management and the future Leasing Coordinator should work together to have regular conversations with new and daystall vendors about their business, identify emerging needs, and

match those with organizations, partners, and mentors within the vendor community that can provide support and resources.

- Create multiple options for leasing spaces at the Market, an accessible application available in multiple languages, and a transparent process and timeline that can be shared with community development corporations, small business development organizations, and cultural associations to help recruit new vendors.
- Explore partnership with the UWSMTA to identify mentors within the current vendor community that could work with new vendors.

DAY STALL PILOT PROGRAM

In partnership with the City of Cleveland, FARE developed a Daystall Pilot Program that invited local entrepreneurs engaged during this planning process and other food and artisan businesses to activate stalls in the Produce Arcade on weekends in August. Four stalls were open for four vendors to sell every Saturday and Sunday from 10 am - 3 pm. Using a simple intake form and a vendor packet that provided basic guidelines for selling at market, 21 businesses applied (11 participated) participated in the pilot program.

FINDINGS

- New vendor recruitment, especially businesses owners that are currently underrepresented at the market, requires time and capacity to build ongoing, trusting and sustainable relationships with grassroots organizations, entrepreneurial networks and community groups.
- The businesses ranged from start-ups who used the market as the launch of their products to well-established businesses. 88% of the businesses that participated in the Daystall pilot program were minority-owned or women-owned enterprises.
- These vendors brought a variety of new products to the market from vegan baked goods and tropical ice cream to locally grown and heirloom varieties of produce and bonsai trees.
- Response from market customers was overwhelmingly positive and the new vendors received strong support from current vendors.
- Sales and revenue exceeded vendors' expectations and the majority of vendors would return and love to see the program continue.
- As word of the program spread, several other food businesses and entrepreneurs reached out to learn how to apply to the program and get a space at the Market.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Work with the City's Law Department and Cleveland City Council to develop legislation that will create multiple leasing options for market stands including a day stall program that removes barriers to entry for new businesses to sell at the market
- Continue the momentum of the Daystall Pilot Program and work with an organization like FARE that has the networks and partnerships to recruit new vendors and manage the daystall program during a transitional period until Market Management can add new staff e.g. Leasing Coordinator.

- Develop strategic community partnerships with organizations and associations that are connected to the diverse, cultural communities in Cleveland to identify and recruit new vendors for the market on an ongoing basis.
- Develop applications, recruitment, and marketing materials in multiple languages to create an inclusive, welcoming environment for new and potential vendors.
- Based on the successes and lessons learned from the pilot, design a day stall program that offers vacant stalls in the produce arcade to food and agriculture-based businesses on weekends, year-round with technical support and capital from small business development organizations.
- Hire a Leasing/New Vendor Coordinator to oversee and implement this effort long-term.

SUMMERFEST

The West Side Market is a beautiful, historic market, home to incredible food vendors and also a gathering space for Cleveland residents to come together. One of the recommendations that began to emerge from this process is the opportunity for the Market to host regular or seasonal community events that would highlight current vendors, engage community partners and new vendors that reflect the diversity of Cleveland and bring new customers to the market. As a part of this planning process, FARE with support from the City of Cleveland, Market management, Friends and Stakeholders, and the United West Side Market Tenants Association (UWSMTA), worked together to create the Market's first public event since the centennial celebration in 2012, Summerfest. This event was based on the vision, ideas, and possibilities that have come from community conversations and interviews throughout the duration of this consulting project.

The goal and purpose of the event was to:

- Find new ways to activate the market's latent public spaces including the alley, arcade, and entrances, support current vendors, and bring new customers to the Market
- Host pop-up vendors, including those from the day stall pilot program, that would bring new products to the market and represent the racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity of Cleveland
- Use the Market as a place to highlight the programming, resources, gifts and talents of community partners, health and wellness practitioners, artists, music and performers who reflect the city of Cleveland and who don't usually get the opportunity to highlight their work in public spaces like the West Side Market.
- Create a welcoming, inclusive community event where all Clevelanders see themselves and feel like they are a part of the Market's future
- Understand how to use the Market as a community event space to host various types of programming and what the impact an event like this could have on market operations and current vendors.

Summerfest was held on Saturday, August 28th from 10am-3pm during regular market hours and hosted pop-up vendors, live music, food, health screenings, art, kids' activities that brought community together and life to the market. Over 60 community partners were engaged in the organizing of this

event including Friends and Stakeholders, food businesses and pop-up vendors, local artists and musicians, neighborhood businesses, local chefs and city residents serving as volunteers at the event.

FINDINGS

Site and Market Operations

- Activating the alley, arcades and entrances with music, programming, prepared food vendors and artist-led activities worked very well within the space and additional seating in the alley was used by market customers within minutes of being set-up. Activities were confined within the alley up until the dock stairs/ramp and this seemed to minimize impact on produce vendors in the arcade who needed to restock their stands.
- Clear, timely communication in advance and in person is essential to make sure all market stakeholders are aware of the layout and schedule for the event and how it will impact regular operations. This includes the market management team, engineers, maintenance, security and janitorial staff, all of the vendors, and community partners.
- Current vendors were key partners in working through everything from setting up the logistics of accessing electricity for programming partners, minimizing impact on operations particularly for vendors in the Arcade, and identifying musicians within the vendor community and prepared food vendors who purchase from current vendors at the market.
- Access to electricity and power was an issue in common areas and public spaces. The arcade booths are set-up to have metered electricity paid for by the vendor leasing the space and there are no 'official electrical sources' for community or public use that were accessible within the alley, arcade or any of the other public spaces activated during the event.

Partners

- There was high, overwhelming interest from community partners, artists and musicians and potential vendors who wanted to be a part of this first community event at the Market in almost a decade. FARE reached out to 75 different partners during the planning for this event, had 45 local businesses apply to be pop-up vendors and were able to confirm the participation of over 60 event partners who would provide active programming or sell their products as a vendor at Summerfest.
- FARE received lots of unsolicited, positive feedback about the event from residents, volunteers, customers, partners, pop-up vendors, and current vendors at the market both in person and through social media demonstrating the demand and interest for future events.
- Community partners, chefs, and pop-up vendors had a great experience at the Market and would like to continue coming to the market as day stall vendors or be a partner at future events and promotions at the Market.

Marketing

- Marketing the event was somewhat challenging due to the short timeline to organize the event and the need to work with two different entities with responsibility for marketing and communications, both the City and UWSMTA (through WSM social media channels). Each has different design guidelines, approval processes, and timelines for creating content.
- Pop-up vendors and chefs deeply appreciated efforts made by FARE and their partners to promote their businesses and their demonstrations prior to and at the event through opportunities for free professional photography, promotion on West Side Market social media channels, and creation of Summerfest branded signage for their businesses at the event.
- FARE worked with UWSMTA to create Summerfest marketing materials in English and Spanish. These bilingual materials and social media posts were distributed to all partners supporting the event to share with their networks and were very well received and connected the market to new audiences.

Recommendations

- Community events that are intentionally planned to be inclusive and welcoming have the potential to bring positive energy, new customers and vendors to the Market, engage new audiences and community members, and help create a new narrative about the Market and its relationship with the city/City.
- The City, market management and its partners, including the Friends and Stakeholders group, should organize community events quarterly or seasonally to bring new people and pop-up vendors to the market and encourage the use of the Market as a gathering space for the community.
- City should make some investments in seating and social spaces, signage and wayfinding (e.g. restrooms, ADA-accessible), and utilities (e.g. electrical, water in arcade, alley, and entrances) to ensure the market has basic infrastructure to support community events and regular programming.
- Arcades, the alley and market entrances are full of potential for activation by pop-up vendors, performances, and programming with very little additional investment.
- Vacant arcade stalls and the alley need to be added to the list of spaces that need a deep clean and then ongoing regular maintenance and cleaning. FARE prepared and cleaned all vacant arcade stalls in advance of Summerfest and this should continue so the space is ready for use.
- The City, Ohio City Inc. and UWSMTA should work together to develop a more cohesive marketing strategy that is collaborative, responsive, and available in multiple languages. Marketing materials for events and programs should have the ability to be creative, colorful and vibrant and social media content should be created during the events itself to expand the Market's audience and document these activities at the market.

Getting the right vendors is one of the most important jobs of managing any market. Proactive, customer focused, leasing efforts set the vision and tone for the market experience.

Our community outreach has discovered a robust, diverse community of budding entrepreneurs in and around Cleveland, many of whom have expressed a desire to become part of the West Side Market and organizations who support small business development and provide capital/funding for entrepreneurs willing to help and partner

FINDINGS:

- The market is understaffed and unable to devote the time and resources to this effort. Applications move slowly through a process that is not transparent and needs streamlining.
- The Vendor prototype rebuilding program has created uncertainties in terms of timing and how much space is available for lease inside the market hall over the next two years.
- Increased vacancies are adding to the cost of operating the market and present an image of stagnation.

RECOMMENDATION: Vacancies = Opportunities

- Record high vacancy levels in the arcade offer a tremendous opportunity for piloting new vendors. The arcade offers an ideal environment to begin recruiting and welcoming new vendors and products.
- Our outreach has found a deep pool of interested new, diverse vendors who can offer new products, adding value and expanding the current merchandise mix, and attract additional customers to West Side Market.
- The arcade, with most of the market's vacancies, is an ideal starting place for expanding the vendor pool and merchandise offering.
- Working with potential partners, the Market can begin this recruiting process immediately, in fact FARE has already started this process with a pilot vendor program.
- This is a low capital, high impact project that can invigorate the vacant stalls, increase vendor diversity, and bring new products to the Market that customers have requested.
- Empower the recommended staffing position of Leasing/New Vendor Coordinator to oversee and implement this effort.

MERCHANDISING OPPORTUNITIES

FINDINGS

The BIG question: What do customers want? Based on past Market surveys and our research, consumers want more:

- ethnic foods and ready to eat options
- variety
- local produce
- diversity in the vendor community

- While stalls in the Market Hall are not fully occupied, the limited vacancies are going to be tough to fill in the short term due to the reconstruction of vendor stalls and the need to relocate existing tenants.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Arcade however has a lot of opportunities and vacancies that can be filled right away with temporary 'pop up' vendors as well as permanent and semi-permanent vendors.
- This requires a new, simplified agreement to allow vendors to try the market without having to go through a lot of paperwork and time waiting for approvals and onsite support at the market for new vendors on market days.
- Create a series of agreements (these do not have to be leases) allowing vendors to rent space by the day, week, month or season.
- Create a list of enforceable rules and regulations that would be part of the agreement. These rules can be developed from the lessons learned from the daystall pilot program.
- Keep the merchandising focus on food with exceptions for limited numbers of specialty markets like a holiday market or a night market.
- Showcase local vendors

LEASING STRATEGY

FINDINGS:

- Recruiting and launching new vendors needs to be paired with an equally robust promotional effort to get the word out and build momentum to attract new customers. At this time, West Side Market has neither an active leasing strategy nor any promotional dollars.
- Indoor stalls (Market Hall) which are vacant may be temporarily needed as 'swing spaces' to relocate existing vendors while their stalls are being renovated.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Hire the recommended position for Leasing/New Vendor Coordinator and/or establish a partnership with an independent operator(s) who can recruit and manage the arcade spaces for temporary market vendors. This is done successfully at other large markets such as the Eastern Market in Washington DC where the independent operator provides a percentage of the rental income to market management.
- Apply for a grant to launch the overall leasing effort as a way to diversify the West Side Market vendor pool and merchandising. The funds would be used to hire someone to initiate and manage this program.
- Develop a timeline, plan and merchandising strategy to use as a selling and recruitment tool.
- Develop a leasing package to include temporary stall use agreement, rent and other fees, design and layout criteria and a transparent, responsive application review process.
- Apply for a grant (or use City funds) to develop a new vendor recruitment and training program. Potential vendors could start in a training program, developed in collaboration with community partners, to help them develop their product line and opening business strategy. This program

could possibly be expanded to include apprenticeships working alongside existing market business owners. This would provide an excellent hands on learning program exposing potential vendors to the realities of the day to day realities of what it takes. Classroom learning could also be provided to work on logistics such as business planning, cash flow and concept development.

ENTREPRENEURIAL GROWTH AND RECRUITMENT | Potential Income Sources

New income sources are essential to the growth and future stability of the market.

Today, West Side Market operates as an Enterprise Fund with operating revenue from vendor rents. The City funds capital improvements and West Side Market is fortunate to have this financial support. Other markets have to fundraise independently to raise capital dollars.

To fully reach its potential, West Side Market needs to generate more non-rental income to increase staff, improve operations, provide programming and entrepreneurial development and to achieve the many recommendations in this ambitious report.

This is an achievable goal; many markets are now generating significant income support from non-market rents – some markets even generate a majority of their income from non-vendor sources. Examples of this are provided in the Best Practices section of this report.

FINDINGS

- West Side Market’s annual budget consists of income from Vendor fees and is roughly one million dollars/year. This is enough to cover basic services to operate the Market. Other markets receive a significant percentage of their operating income from sources other than rent. West Side Market needs to do the same.
- Eastern Market in Detroit and Findlay Market in Cincinnati annually raise two or three times their rental income from outside sources, enabling those markets to do so much more. (Details in the Best Practices section in Appendix.)
- West Side Market is well positioned to do the same with a newly invigorated management culture leading the way, initiating discussions for change and cultivating new support.
- This is a golden opportunity waiting to happen.
- The resources are there, ready to make it happen when the time is right.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Rentals and Events

Findings:

- Many Markets have discovered a lucrative source of income by renting the market for events such as: private parties, fundraisers, weddings, corporate events, educational events and more. These events can range from smaller events in flexible areas or can be market wide in the aisles and public spaces.

- In some Markets, such as Eastern Market in DC, income from event rentals exceeds rental income from Vendors. (See detailed rates below.)

Recommendations:

- Investing in the ability to do this – such as creating flexible spaces in the arcade, adding WiFi and common electrical infrastructure, and renovating the 2nd floor above the loading docks are an excellent investment in the Market’s future.
- The renovation and creation of the 2nd floor meeting and event spaces is also a sponsorship opportunity. Some or all of the costs to create this facility can possibly be raised from outside sources.
- The city also needs to create a transparent and responsive special event rental application process and streamlined events permitting process with other city departments so that partners and groups interested in renting special event space at the market can do so in a timely manner.
- This potential was demonstrated by the successful Hunger Network event held at the Market.

Example – Eastern Market, Washington DC, North Hall

The 4,000 square foot North Hall was renovated in 2009 as part of the \$22 million dollar renovation of the market after it was gutted by a fire. Rates are variable by time of day and type of event.

Private Events • Mon-Fri Days | \$2800 • Mon-Fri Nights | \$4600 • Sat Night | \$5400

Public Events • Days | \$1500 • Nights| \$2500

Public Arts Events, Public Events Hosted by Military Affiliates, DC Charter Schools, Community Organizations, and Events Hosted by DC Government Agencies • Sun, Tues-Fri | \$500 • Sat | \$700.00

Arts & Craft Fairs and Fashion Shows (open to the public) • Sat-Sun Nights | \$2400

Vendor Development and Training

- Many organizations in Cleveland support the growth of economic opportunities and launching new entrepreneurs. West Side Market is an ideal place to do this with its affordability and built-in customer flow. As such, this is a potential funding opportunity with the right partner.
- Partnering with local business development organizations (see Partnership section of this report) can bring outside financial support to help new vendors get ready and launch their businesses at the Market.
 - *Example: Findlay Kitchen at Findlay Market, [Findlay Kitchen](#)*
 - *Mission: To build and enable a thriving community of food entrepreneurs, who in turn will be ripe to contribute local food innovation, representative of our dynamic and diverse neighborhoods, and equipped to start, grow and scale profitable businesses.*

Markets within the Market

- The Arcade is an ideal place to not only launch new vendors, but is ideal for ‘markets within the market’.
- Specially themed markets can attract new vendors and new customers. These specialty markets can be operated in-house and/or in partnerships with outside operators who recruit vendors, manage and help promote the seasonal and themed markets. This is done successfully at the Eastern Market in Washington DC, where outside operators create the ‘markets’ and pay rent to Market management.
- West Side Market can set up these ‘markets’ in vacant stalls in the Arcade and also in the Alleys.
- The 2nd floor would also be an ideal place to do these themed markets.
- Markets are having a lot of fun bringing in new revenue, customers and vendors with themed markets such as: Night Markets, Farmers Markets, Flower and Garden Markets, Holiday Markets, International Markets, Pet Markets and Winter Markets.
- Some of these markets even have their own sponsors, such as Night Market at the North Market in Columbus (see below)

Examples:

Flower Day at Eastern Market in Detroit (MI)

Flower Day takes place every year on the Sunday after Mother’s Day and has been a time-honored tradition of Eastern Market since 1967. Growers offer a wide variety of flowers at a great value so we recommend you come early for the best selection!

This special day is made possible through our partnership with the Metropolitan Detroit Flower Growers Association. MDFGA members arrive every year from Michigan, Ontario, and neighboring states.

Holidays at the Market, Rochester City Market (NY)

A Rochester holiday tradition for over 25 years, Holidays at the Market features dozens of holiday-focused vendors (fresh-cut trees and wreaths, decorations, specialty foods and beverage products, hand craft items, and much more!) The Market will be decked out in holiday lights, festive music, and have limitless local shopping and unique gift items. This year, Santa and the horse-drawn carriage rides are BACK from 9 AM -2 PM. We will feature a virtual holiday scavenger hunt, and have fun for the whole family!

Night Market, North Market, Columbus (OH)

Night Market is a once-a-month, outdoor open-air market, held at North Market Downtown every third Friday, June – October. Inspired by traditional outdoor markets, Night Markets provide an opportunity for customers to purchase directly from local entrepreneurs.

Independent makers offering hand-made and locally grown products for sale

Live Music, Sip and Stroll with drinks from The Barrel & Bottle

Partnerships and Sponsors – see list in the Appendix

As part of our outreach for this report, we spoke with many potential partners for the Market. In nearly every case, these partners are just waiting for the right time and the right climate to work with the Market.

These partners provide an opportunity to create an endless array of programming and events. Organizations and health care institutions like MetroHealth that are focused on improving community health are enthusiastic about the opportunity to support the market through nutrition education and healthy cooking demonstrations and offer onsite health screenings at the market. Other organizations like Produce Perks Midwest and OSU Extension can help expand nutrition incentive programs like TANF funded market coupons for fresh produce and Produce Perks to the West Side Market, making produce more affordable and increasing vendor revenue.

Cleveland's cultural associations and arts institutions would welcome the opportunity to bring art, music, dance performances, and food demonstrations to the market and add events that draw community residents and tourists interested in celebrating Cleveland's rich, diverse culture and history.

Philanthropic Support

The ability of West Side Market to address many of today's pressing needs such as entrepreneurial growth, economic development, community health and nutrition are all selling points to the philanthropic community.

Government Grants

This is an area that will require research to find the latest opportunities within federal agencies.

One example that has been a good source for public markets recently is the Economic Development Administration within the Department of Commerce.

<https://www.grants.gov/learn-grants/grant-making-agencies/department-of-commerce.html>

Support for these grants is generally available in the office of the US Congressional Representative.

Rentals and Events

Findings:

- Many Markets have discovered a lucrative source of income by renting the market for events such as: private parties, fundraisers, weddings, corporate events, educational events and more. These events can range from smaller events in flexible areas or can be market wide in the aisles and public spaces.
- In some Markets, such as Eastern Market in DC, income from event rentals exceeds rental income from Vendors. (See detailed rates below.)

Recommendations:

- Investing in the ability to do this – such as creating flexible spaces in the arcade, adding WiFi and common electrical infrastructure, and renovating the 2nd floor above the loading docks are an excellent investment in the Market’s future.
- The renovation and creation of the 2nd floor meeting and event spaces is also a sponsorship opportunity. Some or all of the costs to create this facility can possibly be raised from outside sources.
- The city also needs to create a transparent and responsive special event rental application process and streamlined events permitting process with other city departments so that partners and groups interested in renting special event space at the market can do so in a timely manner.
- This potential was demonstrated by the successful Hunger Network event held at the Market.

Example – Eastern Market, Washington DC, North Hall

The 4,000 square foot North Hall was renovated in 2009 as part of the \$22 million dollar renovation of the market after it was gutted by a fire. Rates are variable by time of day and type of event.

Private Events • Mon-Fri Days | \$2800 • Mon-Fri Nights | \$4600 • Sat Night | \$5400

Public Events • Days | \$1500 • Nights| \$2500

Public Arts Events, Public Events Hosted by Military Affiliates, DC Charter Schools, Community Organizations, and Events Hosted by DC Government Agencies • Sun, Tues-Fri | \$500 • Sat | \$700.00

Arts & Craft Fairs and Fashion Shows (open to the public) • Sat-Sun Nights | \$2400

American Rescue Plan Act

The City of Cleveland received \$511 million dollars and the West Side Market, as a small business stronghold that was adversely affected by Covid, should be seriously considered as a recipient. Plans to increase women and minority owned businesses at the Market could also benefit from these funds.

Online Ordering and Delivery

Findings:

The onset of Covid saw a big shift to online ordering and delivery. Findlay Market experienced a 5% to 10% increase in overall market sales from the online orders. If West Side Market’s annual sales are in the \$20 million dollar range (based on a guesstimate of 1 million annual shoppers spending \$20 per visit) it is possible to see an increase of \$1 to \$2 million in additional sales from an online system.

While some vendors are doing this on their own, there is no market-wide system.

Recommendations:

This system could be launched in partnership with an independent operator or by working with a larger national operator such as Mercato.

Either way, online ordering seems like it is the future and can serve multiple customer groups from new residents renting new market rate and luxury apartments at INTRO or Waterford Bluffs adjacent to the market to homebound seniors at CMHA's Riverview Tower.

West Side Market can realize big sales increases over time by launching this system.

Preliminary discussions have been ongoing with the same individual who helped Findlay Market launch their system and he is very interested in doing the same for the West Side Market.

- Fundraising

Public Markets have found that annual in-market fundraisers can bring in big revenue – hundreds of thousands of dollars are being raised at some Markets.

These fundraisers are generally held after hours as a market wide event, similar to the Hunger Network fundraiser at West Side Market. Vendor stalls remain open and serve up a wide array of fare highlighting the foods and products of the market.

Example: Reading Terminal Market

Delicious food & desserts from more than 50 of your favorite Market merchants

Open Bars featuring specialty cocktails, beer & wine

Live Bands and Dancing

Silent Auction, Casino Games, and Live Entertainment

TICKET PRICING \$200. Proceeds help support the Market's capital improvement program to ensure that the 19th century building can meet the needs of the 21st century and to help chart our course for the next 100 years.

- Friends of the Market

Another common way to bring in new revenue and resources is through "Friends" groups. Many markets have done this and all operate somewhat uniquely. Typically they provide volunteer support with fundraising, helping out at the market with things like an information booth and providing EBT/SNAP support. Most 'Friends' groups are organized as 501 (c)3 Charitable Organizations and able to accept tax-deductible donations from market supporters to support programs and investments at the market.

Example: [Friends of the Rochester Public Market \(marketfriends.org\)](http://marketfriends.org)

The Friends of the Market welcome donations to support their work on behalf of the Market. All donations directly support programs such as the Market SNAP Token program - so that everyone in our community has access to fresh local foods. Plus free educational Market tours, and Taste of the Market nutrition education.

The Friends is a 501(c)3 Charitable Organization, Donations are tax deductible and you will receive an acknowledgment of your donation

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT AND CAPITAL PLANNING | Capital Plan Review and Comments

Since 2012, the Jackson administration has invested \$5.5 million in the Market including the parking lot, elevator repairs, interior and exterior system repairs, refrigeration system improvements, boiler replacement and repairing damage from the fire in 2013. These were emergency repairs for the operation of the building and were not the result of outreach or planning with the vendors.

Based on comprehensive planning and facility assessments going back to 2012 and updated in 2019, City Council approved a major round of improvements that will begin this year. These improvements address general building issues such as repairing the clock tower, which is scheduled to start later this year, as well as specific vendor upgrades to plumbing and electric that will address the root causes of recurring maintenance problems due to limited electric power and inadequate drainage. Improvements to the basement will add immeasurably to the overall operations. conditions and sanitation of the market. The project components, estimates and status are:

- Arcade entrance improvements - \$243,000 – Under contract
- Transformer and electrical service upgrades - \$231,000 – Under contract
- Meat preparation room upgrades - \$477,000 – Bids under review
- Clock tower and stone masonry repair \$1,900,000 – Contracting in process
- Vendor stall prototype and upgrades \$2,800,000 – Prototype complete, stall upgrades preparing to bid
- Cooler and food preparation upgrades \$5,455,000 – Scheduled to go to bid in 2022
- Mechanical and building enclosure upgrades (includes improving thermal comfort inside the market hall) \$3,700,000 – Scheduled to go to bid in 2023

The Facilities Assessment included over 100 items that needed to be fixed, replaced or improved upon. Many of these recommendations go back 10 years or more and remain to be addressed. It would be advisable to not only accelerate some of these improvements, but to take an even broader look at the potential needs and opportunities to truly raise the level of the market building and operations. This should be done with a Master Planning process including voices from within the City and from the public.

Not included in the next round of capital improvements are:

ELEVATORS The freight elevators in the market need replacement and are not included in the above list. This is unfortunate as they are critical to the operations of the market and according to the Facility Assessment ‘are beyond their useful life’.

2nd FLOOR SPACE Renovation of the 2nd floor space above the loading docks is also not part of the current capital plan. This space has major potential to be an asset for the market in many ways; as an

event space, public space for education and programming, rental space to provide income for the Market and so on. It has been discussed for many years with near universal enthusiasm for the idea. While this is not critical for life safety, it would add immeasurably to the experience of the market – and unlike many of the planned improvements, has great income potential as shown in examples from other public markets in the Entrepreneurial Growth/Potential Income Sources section of this report.

ADA ACCESSIBILITY Another opportunity recommended in the Facility Assessment is to ‘revise display cabinets to provide lower counters for ADA accessibility’. This should be incorporated into the vendor stall upgrade plans. The need to make the Market more ADA accessible was raised at the first Friends and Stakeholders meeting.

The Consultants are not engineers and did not evaluate technical aspects of the plan but did get a walk-through of the market hall and 2nd floor spaces with MOCAP.

The BASEMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE were inspected independently by consultants without accompaniment or explanation from the City or Architectural/Engineering firm.

Comments and recommendations for the following components are provided:

- 1) STALL PROTOTYPE
- 2) BASEMENT and PLUMBING
- 3) GUASTAVINO ‘Chimney System’

RECOMMENDATIONS

Improve the Process – Facilitate More Vendor and Public Engagement

Open up the planning process to include more engagement with the Vendors. Their knowledge can be very helpful. Their cooperation is essential and will lead to a smoother process. The vendors need to engage more fully in participatory processes when they are organized – meetings, surveys, tours etc – it is a two-way street.

The Market would benefit from a larger, public planning process to create a vision to guide a master plan and to help refine planned but not fully finalized improvements.

The capital plan needs to align with an operating cost plan to understand how expenses of the Market, and rents, are going to be impacted by the capital investments being made. This is a good discussion to have with the Vendors.

Mitigate Business Disruption

A market undergoing significant construction needs to be carefully planned to minimize business disruption for vendors and customers. With several years of construction projects in the Market’s immediate future there is work to do to ensure smooth and continuous operations. This report contains

many recommendations to grow the business of the market with new vendors and products during this period and underscores the need to carefully plan mitigation measures.

A strategy and plan to mitigate business disruption should be budgeted and funded as part of the capital improvement plan. It is essential to keep the day-to-day business of the market running smoothly for vendors and all their servicing and storage needs. Customer access, amenities, circulation and 'experience' also need to be considered and addressed. This should include a comprehensive communication and continuous use plan to let customers know what is happening, when it is happening and where so they can plan their market visits accordingly and continue to patronize the market during construction in relative comfort and ease. If this is not done, there is an unaffordable danger that customers will stop shopping at the market until the dust settles, literally.

There is actually an opportunity to engage customer's interest in the project to help maintain their loyalty. The website can be used, newsletters printed and available in the market with helpful updates and news about the capital plan can help educate the public. The more they know, the more likely they are to keep shopping during construction. If they don't know what is going on, it leads to subconscious stress and a lower level of satisfaction that could lead to less loyalty.

The market cannot afford to experience any significant loss of business as the result of construction, especially if it is avoidable through careful and thoughtful planning.

The mitigation plan should be made with full vendor knowledge and participation.

Hire a Tenant Coordinator

To help orchestrate the project for vendors, the full-time Tenant Coordinator recommended in the Staffing section of this report should take the lead and be the contact point between the vendors and contractors working on the capital improvements. This new position is a priority in the Action Plan at the conclusion of this report and will also be responsible to help develop a better working relationship with vendors and Market management.

1) STALL PROTOTYPE

Findings:

- While the prototype evolves, we recommend continued, regular and meaningful engagement between tenants and all city departments involved in this process including Mayor's Office of Capital Projects, Public Works, Operations, Public Health, and Market Management.
- Current staff do not have the capacity to manage this process. A successful renovation will need to mitigate the impacts on vendors, customers and will require additional labor to ensure timely and successful results.
- Customization of individual stalls should be allowed and any upgrades over the norm should be paid for by the vendor.

Recommendations:

Hire a Full Time Tenant Coordinator to orchestrate the project for vendors, management, and public

Responsibilities:

Develop Vendor Agreements to include:

Completed Stall Plan and Agreement for every Tenant

Discuss and resolve customizations and upgrades (see VENDOR STALL OPTIONS below)

Detailed Costs of full responsibilities of Vendors

Decide on potential customization, upgrades, lighting, storage, etc.

Create Final Plan drawn to scale showing all approvals and included as Lease Exhibit.

Coordinate Temporary Moving Plan

Working with Tenants, architects and contractors, develop an overall schedule with timing of moves to 1) temporary location 2) return to a permanent location and understanding of all expenses

Define responsibilities of vendor, management and contractors

Define rent rates during and after move

Lease Agreements – review and revise all leases as follows:

Clarify all individual vendor lease terms, rents and expenses during and after relocation

Add approved 'new' Stall Plan as a Lease exhibit

Develop Business Continuity and Mitigation Plan

Develop budget and plan to ensure business continuity, minimizing disruptions

Create Communication and Outreach strategy to vendors, customers and community

Consider and develop options for: Newsletter, APP, social media, advertising, signage

Increase customer amenities during construction such as seating and free parking

Two other issues related to stall renovations that need resolution:

TILE WALLS

Findings:

- It is widely agreed that the West Side Market is one of the most beautiful interiors of any market. The stall prototype has mostly covered the tile walls with stainless-steel.
- This alteration undermines the historic integrity and aesthetic of the interior.
- Stainless steel is notoriously difficult to keep clean.
- A stainless-steel covering also creates a harborage area for insects, dirt and mold that cannot be seen or addressed.

Recommendation:

- The tiles should be repaired and preserved.

WHITE CERAMIC SCULPTURES IN MARKET INTERIOR

Finding:

- The series of white ceramic sculptures of food and animals decorating many of the columns in the Market are largely obscured from view by sign bands above the display counters.
- These are an extraordinary form of art and decoration, unrivalled in almost any market and add enormously to the beauty, character and legacy of West Side Market.

Recommendation:

- As the prototypes are being renovated it would add greatly to the Market's overall experience and historic integrity if these sculptures were more visible to the public to enjoy as was the original intent of the City, architects and artists.

2) BASEMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Findings:

Based on our limited visual inspection, it is abundantly clear that the West Side Market needs major repairs and improvements to the basement, utilities, elevators, office areas, plumbing, floors and other areas outlined in the Facility Assessment reports.

Recommendations:

BASEMENT –

Findings:

- The basement is in deplorable condition – with leaks, rust, mold, rodents and decay evident throughout. As this is a place for the storage and preparation of food, these conditions should not have been allowed to deteriorate to this level.
- The planned improvements in the basement are critical as vendors are experiencing continuing product losses due to leaks and power outages. If there is any way to accelerate the planned improvements, it would be advisable to do so.
- Furthermore, the centralized glycol cooling system needs to be evaluated. Is this still the best system? Would the market be better off with more efficient individually controlled cold and dry storage rooms? Would operating expenses be lower? Is it fair to divide operating expenses among all the tenants equally on a square foot basis?
- There are no apparent floor drains in the market’s cold storage spaces. How can these spaces be properly cleaned for the safe and sanitary storage and preparation of food?

Recommendations:

- Assess vendor needs and develop a temporary storage plan if the basement needs to be closed or partially closed during construction.
- Investigate alternate ownership options for cold boxes and maintenance
- Visit other Markets with basement storage to better understand available options for WSM

PLUMBING –

Finding:

- The market’s floor drains regularly overflow onto the market floor and there are many leaks into the basement. This is well known and a critical element to fix.
- The capital plan includes repairs that will address these problems.

Recommendation:

- First, this repair needs a high priority.
- Second, determine the phasing of plumbing repairs with the stall renovations. For instance, should the plumbing be fixed before the stalls are renovated?
- Install grease traps and clean outs as needed.

3) GUASTAVINO CHIMNEY SYSTEM

Findings:

- Another distinctive feature of West Side Market is the chimney system that Guastavino designed into the Market Hall. This simple, ingenious system allowed for a modicum of natural air circulation to refresh the interior by pulling in outside air through the market doors upwards

and through perforations in the tiled market ceiling. Above the ceiling is a crawl space with fans that assisted the air circulation and pushed the air back out of the building.

- Previous Market managers have memories about this system and how it worked. George Bradac, longtime Market manager was very helpful describing how the chimney system operated and also how it demised
- This system was not maintained or cleaned regularly, fell into disrepair and was gradually let go. A series of small, neglected repairs have made this once effective system largely inoperable.
- Passive air handling systems are being revived as ways to reduce energy consumption and pollution.

Recommendations: :

- Preserving the integrity of this system, as well as the overall historic integrity of the building would save energy costs. New buildings are once again incorporating these passive systems as a way to not only reduce costs but as a way to address larger issues of climate change and global warming.
- While the West Side Market considers the addition of a mechanical HVAC system, it's worth exploring how the chimney system could operate in tandem with the mechanical system.
- Repairing the system should be investigated. It would be a shame to lose this aspect of the building, one that could provide great comfort to the market on many spring and fall days that are not too hot and would not require mechanical air conditioning.

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT AND CAPITAL PLANNING | The Importance of Public Spaces

FINDINGS

- West Side Market lacks one of the best amenities for any market. There are no intentionally designed or activated public spaces.
- Public spaces where people gather, meet, sit, eat, drink and learn would be of great benefit.
- They provide a place for informal social interactions which builds relationships.
- Simply designed, they can be used for temporary vendors, programming and special events.
- Public spaces are one of the most valuable parts of a market for their flexibility and sociability.
- They showcase new ideas, partners and resources.
- People in Cleveland say the 'experience' is what they like most about West Side Market.
- Public spaces embody the spirit of the shared experience.

RECOMMENDATIONS

West Side Market has terrific opportunities to create public spaces.

- **2nd Floor** – this is so obvious and has been requested for many years. The space can be used for simple seating when there is nothing special planned. And it is ideal for events and programming, many of which can produce revenue for the market. On the opposite

side of the market, adjacent to the public balcony is a series of meeting rooms and offices which have potential for public gatherings and meetings.

- **The Alleys** -this is also obvious and has been talked about for years. There are two alleys, one on each side of the Arcade on the 25th Street side of the Market. These can be activated in many ways with stalls, tables of pop-up tents for vendors; for events and festivals; demonstrations and are also ideal for tables and chairs.
- **The Arcade** – the design of the arcade with a central aisle and tall counters was designed for selling only. With all of the current vacancies in the section closest to 25th Street, imagine if the tall counters were removed and an open, flexible space was created that could still be used for vendors, but could also be used for many other purposes. It would be a great place to do programming, cooking demonstrations and have exhibits. The opened-up space would be much more conducive for vendors with the ability to layout vending tables with more circulation and better customer interaction.
- **The Market Hall** – There is a possibility to create a small, flexible public space in the Market Hall. As there are now vacancies, now is the time to do this. Market stalls in the central part of the Hall are grouped in series of four 116 SF stalls = total of 464 SF; some Vendors renting one, two, three or all four. If one of these stall groupings were removed, an open area of 464 SF can become a public space for seating, temporary vendors, events and so forth. When you factor in the surrounding aisles, the new space will actually be closer to 1200 SF. One area where this might work well is E2,3 and D2,3 – the quadrant of stalls between the Coffee and Pasta stalls.

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT AND CAPITAL PLANNING | Summary Budget Comparison

This section is provided for informational and background purposes only. A financial/budget analysis or cost estimates were not part of the scope of work for this job.

This comparative chart was pieced together using old data from the consultant's Market files. Historic budgets were not provided by the City, and these are not audited figures. Costs were not always accounted for in the same way each year.

Market budgets collapse a lot of expenses into single line items, so many of the details are unknown.

The intent of this chart is merely to provide a 25-year snapshot into larger trends.

Any future planning for the Market will need to delve more deeply into all of the Market's income and expenses to fully understand the obligations and shortfalls. It would be a good exercise to construct a Market budget that fully accounted for all expenses, some of which may be spread through various departments of the City.

Observations and Trends

Market operating expenses have gone up much more than Labor. Even so, Labor still accounts for about half the Market's expense budget.

Market rents (Charge for Services) have not kept pace with Market expenses and have increased 25% with overall expenses increasing 76%. Rents include charges for the Basement, which is very expensive to operate, and rental rates in the basement are much lower than the Market trading floor and Arcade.

The basement, as a standalone operation, is a big money loser.

This chart is not meant to indicate that rents should be increased to cover all expenses.

	<u>1996</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>% increase</u>
Expenses (000's)					
Salaries and Wages	344	302	297	340	
Benefits		120	142	165	
<i>Subtotal Labor</i>	<i>344</i>	<i>422</i>	<i>439</i>	<i>505</i>	<i>47%</i>
Utilities	88	183	289	267	
Contractual Services	104	322	575	752	
Materials and Supplies	20	37	37	18	
Maintenance	102	28	34	21	
Interdepartmental Service Charges	167	57	109	56	
Claims, Refunds, Maintenance	96	31	157	n/a	
<i>Subtotal Operations</i>	<i>577</i>	<i>658</i>	<i>1,201</i>	<i>1,114</i>	<i>93%</i>
<i>Subtotal Labor/Ops.</i>	<i>921</i>	<i>1,080</i>	<i>1,640</i>	<i>1,619</i>	<i>76%</i>
Revenues (000's)					
Charge for Services*	734	1,287	1,356	922	25%
Transfers In			0	250	
<i>Subtotal Revenues</i>	<i>734</i>	<i>1,287</i>	<i>1,380</i>	<i>1,182</i>	<i>61%</i>
Grand Total	(187)	207	(260)	(437)	

Charge for Services = Stand Base rent + Locker rent + Refrigeration Maintenance Fee

WSM Square Foot (SF) and Gross Leasable Area (GLA) Summary

To gain more insight into the financials of West Side Market an understanding of the total and rentable square footage is helpful. Again, this is not a part of the scope of services but is an important piece to understand when looking at how the Market can position itself as a more self-sustaining operation in the future.

Overall, what stands out is the low ratio of square footage available for rent against the total square footage of the market (the efficiency ratio). Many markets have an efficiency ratio of 50% to 55%. That is, the market can rent half or more of its total space. As we know, the common space in markets – entrances, aisles, loading areas, bathrooms, etc. – take up a big chunk of the overall square footage.

West Side Market has an overall efficiency ratio of 37%. This is comparatively low for a market and pushes rent levels up, at least on a square foot basis.

A low efficiency means that market rents, on a square foot basis, are generally going to be higher than a market with a higher efficiency ratio. There is simply less square footage to rent to recover expenses.

Comparing Market rents to storefront rents or other conventional retail is not a fair comparison. Market rents are always going to be higher (often twice as high due to the average efficiency ratio of 50% in a market) when compared to traditional retail rents on a square foot basis due to the high percentage of space at a market that is devoted to entrances, aisles and the like which are included in the square foot calculations of traditional retail rents.

The following square foot measurements are approximate and are provided for comparison and discussion only. Actual measurements need to be verified.

GLA = Gross Leasable Area

Location	Total SF	(GLA)	GLA %	Efficiency %	Income % (2018)
Market Hall					
(241' x 124')	29,884 SF	12,960 SF	40%	43%	
Market Basement					
(241' x 124' +)	31,720 SF	8,341 SF	26%	26%	13%
Market Arcade (est)					
A) 124' x 45' =	5,580 SF				

B)	360' x 45' =	16,200 SF			
	Subtotal	21,780 SF	10,960 SF	34%	34%
Mezzanines, offices, meeting rooms					
	Estimate	4,000 SF			
WSM Totals		85,548 SF	32,261 SF	100%	37%

West Side Market is an expensive Market to maintain.

It was an expensive Market to build, the high cost was debated by the citizens of the day. We should all be glad it was built. But we should also remember that for all the beauty and accolades – there is a cost and a responsibility to maintain it properly, and the cost to do so should not be on the back of the Vendors as outlined elsewhere in this report.

Basement is a money loser

Finding:

The leasable percentage of the basement's total square feet is only 26%. The rents in the basement are low and the expenses are high.

Recommendations:

This indicates a need to reevaluate the basement rent structure and the costs of operating the electrical and cooling systems that support it.

The overall operating costs of the market should not be borne fully by the tenants.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OUTREACH & BRIDGE BUILDING

Multiple opportunities for community engagement from a diverse set of stakeholders was a key part of this process and essential to understanding the market's history and culture and identifying opportunities for change and growth. Over 70 interviews were conducted with neighborhood residents, foundations, community development corporations, local developers, healthcare partners, community-based organizations, and small business development agencies during this process. All share a love and commitment to the Market, would like to support its growth and help it reach its full potential and want the best for its future.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS | PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE CUSTOMERS

Findings

The Market is often seen as an asset that benefits the Ohio City neighborhood and the region. Through interviews with residents and community conversations in different Cleveland neighborhoods, a more comprehensive picture emerges. The focus of the community engagement was to engage Cleveland residents whose voices are not often a part of the conversations about the West Side Market. FARE conducted interviews with residents and hosted Common Ground conversations in partnership with community leaders in the Brooklyn Centre, Buckeye-Mt Pleasant, Central-Kinsman, Clark-Fulton, and Stockyards neighborhoods.

Many residents in neighborhoods outside of Ohio City see the market as expensive and exclusive. They don't see themselves reflected in the current vendor community or in the products sold at the market and haven't for much of the market's history. They would like to see new opportunities for more vendors and products from Cleveland's Black, Hispanic/Latin, Asian and refugee and immigrant communities.

They shared concerns that the new market-rate residential development in Ohio City was going to make it more exclusive and unwelcoming to Cleveland residents from all walks of life. They worried that prices and products would change to meet these new customers' needs and become even less affordable for them and their families.

Cleveland residents also see tremendous opportunity for the market to create a community space to highlight and celebrate the cultural diversity of this city through arts, music, educational programming, performances, food, and events for families to enjoy.

Recommendations

- Build relationships with community based organizations, cultural associations and small business support organizations to recruit vendors and products that represent and reflect the diversity of the city of Cleveland.
- Create transparent, accessible opportunities for new vendors to sell at the market through a day stall program and offer multiple leasing options for food-based and related businesses.

- Work in partnership with Produce Perks Midwest and OSU Extension to offer nutrition incentive programs at the Market including TANF Fruit and Vegetable Coupons and Produce Perks to help reduce the cost of fresh foods for low-income families.
- Develop a series of programs, tours and events at the Market that highlight and celebrate food, art and culture of Cleveland that engage residents and families from across the city.
- Add tables and chairs to create social spaces and meeting spaces within the market so groups and neighbors can use the market as a meeting space to talk about community issues, plan events and forge new partnerships.
- Be accessible to the customers and vendors on a daily basis to talk with people, build trust and relationships, get feedback, and discover small problems before they become bigger issues.
- Develop customer feedback tools that can be used to get information directly from customers and community members both online, in-person at the market, and out in the community.
- Ensure customer-facing infrastructure i.e. market spaces, restrooms, alleys are maintained and cleaned regularly and develop a schedule for deep cleaning these spaces regularly.

FRIENDS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Findings

Through interviews and conversations with key market stakeholders, vendors, community organizations, and residents it became clear that one of the Market's key challenges was the absence of a coalition of partners with diverse perspectives and experiences with the market to help support and guide its future.

As a part of this process, a Friends and Stakeholders group was formed by the consultant team. Members were invited that represented multiple neighborhoods and communities and brought different skills, resources, and expertise.

Over the course of three meetings, they learned more about the current needs of the market, shared their ideas and priorities, and identified partners and resources that could support its future. They are beginning to coalesce around a common mission and purpose and are invested in the market's future.

Recommendations

- Identify a neutral, independent convener to continue bringing the Friends and Stakeholders together to implement the recommendations within this report in partnership with the City, Market management, and the West Side Market Tenants Association.
- Convene the Friends and Stakeholders group monthly to help the City and Market management identify resources and partnerships that can help set priorities from the recommendations and continue to build the momentum generated by this process.
- Secure funding to organize a trip to another public market (Eastern Market in Detroit, Findlay Market in Cincinnati, etc.) for the Friends and Stakeholders group.

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

Findings

Greater Cleveland has a strong network of organizations that provide support for small businesses and entrepreneurs in all stages of development. Several of these organizations emerged willing to support the needs of current and new vendors in different ways including training, technical assistance, networking, business incubation, and grants and loan programs.

Past, current and potential vendors identified their key needs to be mentoring and advising, branding and marketing, and access to capital to start and expand their businesses.

The market has a tremendous opportunity to serve as a business incubator – providing affordable rents and access to a high volume of customers. Building partnerships with small business support organizations identified to provide key services – mentoring, marketing and capital – will help provide new and current vendors the things they need to be successful at the Market.

Recommendations

- Develop partnerships with small businesses development organizations, microenterprise development funds, and other lenders to create a portfolio of support services and capital options for vendors at the market to support businesses from start-up to growth and expansion.
- Build partnerships with commercial kitchen incubators to provide the facilities, training, and support needed for start-up food businesses that test products through the day stall program.

NEIGHBORHOOD STAKEHOLDERS

Findings

- Cleveland's near west side has been undergoing rapid change in the past several years. Rapid development in Ohio City, Tremont, and Detroit-Shoreway has brought new market rate and luxury apartments and townhomes to these neighborhoods as well as new residents, shifting the demographics and socioeconomic characteristics of these communities.
- New development directly adjacent to the Market on Lorain Avenue with INTRO and Waterford Bluffs will bring an additional 529 market rate apartment units to the blocks immediately adjacent to the market within the next year. This recent development trend has been increasing commercial rents, making the Market an even more affordable location to start and launch a business.
- The neighborhoods immediately south of Ohio City including Clark-Fulton, Brooklyn Centre, and Stockyards are incredibly diverse and home to a majority of Cleveland's Hispanic/Latinx community and refugee and immigrant communities. These neighborhoods are home to a diverse network of food-based entrepreneurs and small businesses who craft and create artisan products that could bring welcome diversity to the market in both vendors and products. The residents of these communities feel disconnected from the market and are not regular

customers at the market despite living a mile away in a neighborhood with very limited options for fresh, healthy, affordable food.

Recommendations

- Build and engage a broad, diverse coalition of stakeholders invested in the Market's future that recognizes the market's impact beyond Ohio City. Members of the West Side Market Friends and Stakeholders group were intentionally selected to represent multiple Cleveland neighborhoods (Brooklyn Centre, Buckeye, Central, Clark-Fulton, Ohio City, and Stockyards) and bring a diversity of voices and perspectives about the Market into this process. The Friends and Stakeholders group should continue to meet and expand this coalition invested in the Market's future.
- Create partnerships with small business development organizations (e.g. ECDI, Hebrew Free Loan Association, Hispanic Business Center, Urban League, US Together,) that support entrepreneurs from a variety of backgrounds and communities to recruit a more diverse group of vendors to the market.
- Work in partnership with Produce Perks Midwest and OSU Extension to offer nutrition incentive programs at the Market including TANF Fruit and Vegetable Coupons and Produce Perks to help reduce the cost of fresh foods for low-income families.

Programming and Community Events

Findings

- The West Side Market has the potential to be an important gathering place and social space in Cleveland. In interviews with arts organizations, residents, musicians, cultural associations, local schools, chefs, and health and wellness initiatives, many see the Market's future as a place to not only celebrate Cleveland's food culture but as a place to celebrate arts and culture, meet neighbors, and learn new things.
- When asked about their vision for what the West Side market could be, people mentioned music, arts, cooking demonstrations, health screenings, activities for kids and families, food tastings, culture nights, and vendors with foods representing many different cultural groups in Cleveland.
- There are organizations, community groups and current vendors at the market ready and willing to partner with the West Side Market to develop regular programming and events for the community.
- The City of Cleveland in collaboration with FARE and West Side Market Tenants Association organized, Summerfest, to highlight the potential of events at the market to engage new partners, support current vendors, attract new customers, and activate the market as a thriving, inclusive, social space welcome to all residents of Cleveland.

Recommendations

- Assess the potential social spaces at the market (e.g. arcade, alleys, and entrances) for use for programming, events, and seating. Identify any infrastructure needed (utilities, seating, storage,

etc.) and develop alternate plans to modify operations of city staff and vendors to activate these spaces regularly.

- Build the capacity of the current management team through strategic partnerships and/or additional staff to host programs and events at the market.
- Work with the Market's Friends and Stakeholders group and other community partners to develop a series of seasonal events at the market that reflect the diversity of the city of Cleveland, support health and wellness, and celebrate arts and culture.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, OUTREACH, and BRIDGE BUILDING | Measuring Customer Satisfaction

FINDINGS

- The City of Cleveland and West Side Market launched an online survey in 2019 to receive feedback from customers about the Market. Over 1360 people completed the survey over the course of four weeks in October and November in 2019.
- The survey provided feedback on customer demographics, shopping and purchasing patterns, market amenities and services. These results provided a snapshot of general community perceptions around the market as well as those of regular shoppers.
- The 2019 online survey did not appear to reach a cross-section of Market customers and skewed towards a younger, white, non-Hispanic demographic than is usually seen shopping at the market.
- FARE hosted four community conversations in four Cleveland neighborhoods in partnership with Common Ground and community leaders as a part of this process to have deeper conversations about the market with residents whose perspectives aren't often captured by online surveys.
- The information, ideas and feedback gleaned from community members from these conversations was instrumental in identifying barriers and perceptions that prevent people from shopping at the Market and helped develop the amenities, programming, cooking demonstrations, music and performances and select vendors for the Summerfest event in August 2021.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- In order to receive customer feedback on a more regular basis, a simple online survey should be developed to capture information in real time from shoppers at the market. The West Side Market online survey from 2019 was streamlined and adapted to create a customer satisfaction tool to gather feedback on customers' market experience and provide optional feedback on their experience with specific vendors. Open ended questions were modified to multiple choice to allow for easy analysis of results in real time. (WSM Customer Satisfaction Tool in Appendix)
- This customer survey tool can be uploaded directly into an online platform (i.e. Survey Monkey) for ease of use and analysis and a QR code could be created to provide an easy way to link customers to the survey. The code could be printed and distributed as a window cling for display

on vendor cases or posted near vendor booths in the Market Hall or Arcade. Vendors could be incentivized to encourage their customers to take the survey, driving participation and feedback.

- Market management with support from the Friends and Stakeholders and other community partners should host four community conversations a year in different Cleveland neighborhoods to have more in depth conversations with residents about their market experience, what new things would bring them to the market, and make connections to entrepreneurs and potential vendors - continuing to build a strong, diverse network of stakeholders who are engaged in supporting the market's future. (Sample Community Conversation Questions are provided in the Appendix from the Common Ground Conversations hosted during this process.)
- As the capacity of the Market management team expands, additional feedback could be gained from informal customer intercept surveys and casual conversations between market management and customers shopping at the market in real time. This creates opportunities for market management to better understand certain customers needs and builds a market culture whose management team is accessible to the public and welcomes ideas, comments, and feedback from customers on a regular basis.

6. ACTION PLAN

The West Side Market is at a critical yet exciting crossroads with major capital improvements, high levels of interest from new vendors and an auspicious beginning with the convening of the Friends and Stakeholders group broadening the voices that can make a difference and help the Market reach new levels of success.

Opportunity is at the Market's door and now is the time to move forward and build momentum with a series of strategic steps to thoughtfully orchestrate these positive changes and set the course for a healthy future.

This report contains nearly two hundred recommendations. Given finite resources and the number of recommendations contained within this report, the following actions are recommended to address key opportunities to rebuild the infrastructure, build management capacity and return the market to full occupancy.

Over the past six months, the City in partnership with the consultants have started making small changes to the management culture and demonstrated how the additional, appropriate capacity could help the market move closer to realizing its potential. Some of these changes include:

- Added part-time communications staff to the Market office
- Launched in Day Stall Pilot Program for new vendors in the produce arcade highlighting tremendous interest, diversity and talent
- Organized Summerfest to demonstrate the potential of events at the Market to showcase vendors, food demonstrations, music, arts programming, health and wellness activities, partnerships and more.
- Facilitated meeting between WSM Tenants Association and Mayor's Office of Capital Projects about planned capital improvements
- Hosted community conversations in several Cleveland neighborhoods about the Market
- Convened Friends and Stakeholders group

Building on this positive momentum, the following is a series of options and action steps the city and its partners can take in the next 2 - 3 years that will improve the image and experience of the Market, build credibility and goodwill, and boost its overall performance. These actions include rebuilding relationships with vendors and cultivating relationships and discussions with future partners and organizations that want to help but are wary about working with the City.

NEXT STEPS

STRATEGIC OPTION – PROJECT MANAGER - Highly Recommended – Hire or appoint an interim Market 'Project Manager' to spearhead and coordinate this initial action plan through the completion of the capital improvements. The implementation of the action plan needs a leader with the authority and resources to make this happen more quickly and to oversee and work through the complexities. The ideal person would be able to navigate among the various City departments such as Public Works,

Mayor's Office of Capital Projects, Finance, Law, Economic Development and Communications. Hiring someone with the ability to coordinate these departments with partners, vendors and market management is the essential piece to create a team that can get this effort launched and completed.

The Project Manager should participate in the convening of the Friends and Stakeholders and working with the market staff, City.

Initial Staff Positions The following positions are recommended as the first steps towards building up to a larger staff as detailed in the Administrative section.

- **Tenant Coordinator** Rebuild relationships and communication with the Vendors and be the liaison between management and all capital improvement construction related issues such as stall renovations, basement storage, plumbing, electric and so on. This is an important new function that is necessary to work individually with vendors making sure that the process is understandable, detail oriented, transparent, clearly communicated and has a positive result for everyone. Details and responsibilities for this position are provided in the Administrative section of this report titled Supporting Good Vendors and Enforcing Quality Controls.

COST: Labor through the period of construction, estimated at 2 years.

RESPONSIBILITIES

City – Hire Coordinator and investigate whether this position can be partially funded through the capital budget to cover time and costs related to capital construction.

Market Management – Work with the Coordinator to address all tenant coordination issues and general communications.

Vendors – Work closely, on an individual basis with the Tenant Coordinator to address all needs related to stall improvements, basement storage and all other capital improvement and construction issues.

Leasing/New Vendor Coordinator Manage and grow the day stall program with a goal to achieve full occupancy in the arcade, diversify the vendor pool and products, and build relationships with community partners to continue the initial vendor recruitment FARE began as a part of this process. It is essential to grow the market's core shopping business during the construction period. Activating the arcade and alleys with new vendors is the best way to do this. If funding is an issue, this could start out as a part time position. Details and job responsibilities for the position are in the Administrative section and Entrepreneurial Growth and Recruitment section of this report.

COST:

Option #1 – Hire a part-time, in-house staff person. Option #2 – Hire an outside contractor.

OUTSIDE FUNDING POTENTIAL Economic development opportunities for start-up businesses in the day stalls may appeal to an outside funder who could underwrite or help supplement this position and initiative. Day stalls are a revenue generating program with rents from vendors.

RESPONSIBILITIES

City – Hire Leasing/New Vendor Coordinator

City Legal Department – Provide written agreement for vendors to rent space on a short-term basis.

Market Management – Assist with overall needs.

- Marketing and Partnership Development. While this should eventually become two positions, as recommended in the Administrative section of this report, this can initially be combined into one position. Marketing and developing partnerships are both essential to access new resources and help implement recommendations. Job responsibilities for this position are detailed in the Administrative section of this report. Responsibilities will include assisting with the convening of the Friends and Stakeholders.

COST: Labor, full time position.

RESPONSIBILITIES

City – Hire person for this position.

Vendors – Assist with marketing and execution of events.

Continue Convening Friends and Stakeholders

OPPORTUNITY: The Friends and Stakeholders represent a cross section of brains, eyes and ears, perspectives and experiences who can be very helpful in multiple areas. This group provides a forum to address a range of Market issues and opportunities now and in the future. The Market will be going into a transition period with a change of city administration and there needs to be a forum that will move this plan and roadmap into action. This coalition could bring all the Market communities together to discuss things in a non-threatening, constructive environment where everyone has something to contribute.

COST: Low. Support and expenses for convening and meetings.

RESPONSIBILITIES and IMPLEMENTATION:

The responsibility for convening this group should be done initially by the Project Manager but should be handed over to the members of the Friends and Stakeholders when and if that is their wish.

The City, City Council, Market Management, Vendors and Partners should continue to participate with the group. Additional vendors should be considered beyond just the President of the Tenant's Association. Other new members should also be considered and invited with the approval of the group.

Address long term financial sustainability of the Market

OPPORTUNITY: The Market operates as an Enterprise Fund with a budget that is not adequate to fully maintain the historic property. Inadequate operating funds prevent the Market from reaching its potential and doing what is best for the Market. Many public markets are now receiving financial support to supplement vendor rents enabling these markets to do so much more. West Side Market's potential is hampered with its current financial model and would benefit from a discussion about ways to bring new revenue to the Market.

Cost – Low. Meetings and convening.

RESPONSIBILITIES and IMPLEMENTATION

City – Initiate a discussion with internal staff and outside advisors to address the potential and the legal methods by which the Market can increase its financial support.

Market Management – Provide support and insights about what the market needs to fully reach its potential.

Vendors – Participation in this discussion would not only provide valuable information, it would be the beginning of creating a lifeline to increase support for operations and preservation of the building.

Partners – Solicit volunteers from the community to help advise and broaden the technical and political support to achieve a new model of financial support for the Market.

Make the Day Stall Program Permanent

OPPORTUNITY: Incorporating the lessons learned from the Day Stall Pilot Program launched by FARE in August 2021, create an ongoing, permanent day stall program that creates opportunities for existing and startup ventures to rent stands in the produce arcade. Build partnerships with local organizations that can provide technical assistance and capital to these businesses.

COST: Low. High potential for external funding to support a new vendor program that focuses on minority and women-owned businesses. Revenue from day stall vendor fees will help cover a portion of the costs.

RESPONSIBILITIES and IMPLEMENTATION:

City – Legal Department to provide simple agreement and develops legislation approving short term rentals for arcade stalls from one-day to one year.

Market Management – Leasing Coordinator responsible for vendor recruitment, oversight and operation of this program. For additional details see Day Stall Pilot Program in the Entrepreneurial Growth and Retention section of this report (p.)

Partners – If an outside contractor is hired with partner funding, the contractor can take responsibility to recruit, schedule and mentor vendors

Vendors – Assist with the marketing and promotion of the day stalls on the market’s website and social media.

Markets within the Market

OPPORTUNITY: Identify and work with partners to plan and launch themed markets to bring new life, vendors and customers to West Side Market.

COST: Low. Opportunity for sponsorship and revenue from stall fees.

RESPONSIBILITIES and IMPLEMENTATION

- City - These markets-within-the-market can proceed using the same short-term agreement used for the day stalls. Provides approvals, application process and guidelines for vendors to set up in the Arcade and Alleys.
- Market Management - Leasing Coordinator and Marketing/Partnership Development person responsible for this program with full staff support.
- Market Management - Provide cleaning and set-up support.
- Partners - Can be approached to be sponsors and possibly funders for an outside contractor/operator.
- Vendors – Can participate as vendors in the arcade and alleys and specialty markets. Help to promote these events on the website and through social media.

Create a low-cost, flexible public space in the Arcade

The need for public spaces at West Side Market is clear.

An easy thing to do now, is to create a public space in the Arcade as outlined in this report on p. --- in the Facilities Management Section.

The section of the Arcade from 25th Street to the first set of pedestrian doors is an ideal opportunity to create a public space by removing the tall counters. This area could still be used for vending but could also be used as an event space, seating, cooking demonstrations and so forth. It could also be used at

night and rented to a vendor or vendors who could set up a pop-up restaurant that would tie into the growing street life in the evening on 25th Street and in Ohio City.

This public space could generate income and add a lot more flexibility to the market and showcase the importance and popularity of public spaces. It is an ideal place to begin to engage with partners and sponsors to help activate and program the space.

COST: It would be a very low cost to do this – removal of the counters and cleaning up the space. This will also create new revenue opportunities for the Market.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

Market management - Remove counters and clean up the space.

Market Management – Leasing Coordinator and

Start a Modest Calendar of Promotions and Events

OPPORTUNITY: Building momentum coming off the Summerfest event, the Market should continue with a series of 4 annual events and some smaller events throughout the year. Vendors are willing to contribute, and this is a good way to reach out to new partners, attract and engage customers, highlight and reflect the diversity of the city and do something positive and low cost that will rebuild relationships.

COST: Low. Good opportunity for sponsorship from community partners and assistance from vendors.

RESPONSIBILITIES and IMPLEMENTATION

Market Management – Solicit interest and sponsorship from a Partner, as current Management does not have the capacity. Access remaining funds in the Ohio City, Inc. account to use as seed money for promotions and events. Solicit outside funds, partners and support for events.

Partners - Opportunity to provide funds to support this event and hire an outside contractor to produce the promotions and events.

Vendors – Provide support in terms of programming, participation, execution and funding.

Activate Website, Build Social Media, and Manage Branding

OPPORTUNITY: Social media and an updated website are critical channels for communication with customers and the greater community. The Market's website is not up to date and needs to be reactivated.

COST: Low.

RESPONSIBILITIES and IMPLEMENTATION

Market Management – Access funds remaining in the promotional account with Ohio City, Inc. and bring the market website under the control of Market Management.

City – Work with Market staff to broadcast market news through city communication channels.

Vendors – Coordinate with Market Management to update and provide content for website.

Ohio City, Inc. – Allow the Market to have control of their website and provide full access to remaining funds in the marketing account.

Activate Alley

OPPORTUNITY: The Market needs more public spaces that provide flexible uses. The Alley between the Arcade and Market Hall is a natural starting place with some simple tables/chairs and programming. If the public space is created in the Arcade the two areas will be synergistic creating even more possibilities for programming and vending.

COST: Low

RESPONSIBILITIES and IMPLEMENTATION

City, Market Management, Partners – this should be a cooperative effort as outlined above in ‘Markets within the Market’

Provide tables and chairs

OPPORTUNITY: The Market would greatly benefit from some social spaces. This is an easy win and both customers and vendors want this to happen. These amenities are often requested by customers.

COST: Low (City can purchase these items or they can be sponsored.)

RESPONSIBILITIES and IMPLEMENTATION

City or Partner - Purchase comfortable, vibrant, easily stored, seating options to activate the alley. This is another potential funding opportunity for a partner.

Market Management - Develop maintenance and operations plan to accommodate seating in the alley between the Market Hall and the Arcade that includes regular cleaning, trash collection, and storage of seating between uses.

Build EBT/SNAP Sales

OPPORTUNITY: State of Ohio recently approved \$1M in TANF funding to support fruit and vegetable coupon programs at markets across Ohio in partnership with Produce Perks Midwest.

COST: Low. Produce Perks Midwest would provide voucher costs. Resources for program administration costs at the Market would be needed and could be provided by local foundations or sponsorships.

RESPONSIBILITIES and IMPLEMENTATION

Market Management and Partners - Establish partnership with Produce Perks Midwest and Ohio State University Extension to explore opportunities to bring the TANF-funded Fruit and Vegetable program and Produce Perks retail program to the West Side Market making produce purchases more affordable for low-income customers and bring new revenue for market vendors.

Vendors - Coordinate implementation and operation with Partners.

Market Learning Trips

OPPORTUNITY: Many markets have successfully evolved management into more effective operations. It would be worth taking a group of people to visit other markets and meet their counterparts to learn firsthand how they shifted the market into a higher gear. Detroit, Cincinnati, Philadelphia and Rochester have good market stories and would be worth a trip.

COST: Low. High potential for outside funding from local foundations.

RESPONSIBILITIES and IMPLEMENTATION:

The Friends and Stakeholders could organize this and seek funding from one of the foundations or other members of the group.

Deep Clean/Power Wash Selected Areas the Market

OPPORTUNITY: The Market would benefit from a cleaning of the market hall's tile walls, columns, tops of vendor stalls, arcade, and perimeter alleys. The basement needs a deep cleaning as well. The full list of recommended areas is in the Administrative/Operations section of the report.

COST: TBD, but necessary.

RESPONSIBILITIES and IMPLEMENTATION

City and Market Management - Supplement and oversee the regular maintenance and cleaning crew on Market staff. The market hall was beautifully cleaned after the fire in 2012 and looked spectacular.

Vendors – Clean the tops of their stalls.

Initiate a Forum to Discuss a Long-Term Plan for the Market's fiscal sustainability.

OPPORTUNITY: The market, operating as an Enterprise Fund, is self-limiting with operating support coming solely from vendor rents. (The City has been generous, often providing support without seeking payment in additional rent.) This economic foundation is not sustainable and prevents the full potential of the Market from being reached. Many public markets have expanded their outcomes and performance by accessing other forms of income.

COST – Low. Meeting and convening costs.

RESPONSIBILITIES and IMPLEMENTATION

Vendors – The role of the vendors is very important to establishing this dialogue. They know the market better than anyone and can publicly articulate how rents can only do so much.

Community, Partners, Friends and Stakeholders – This is a public market, and the voices of the public can be very powerful to help the market become more sustainable.

City and City Council – Also critical to the conversation, public officials are the legal gatekeepers of the Market and need to be integral in any conversation as they have the final power to make any changes to the Market.

Initiate a Master Planning Process with Public Participation

OPPORTUNITY: There are many interesting ways to grow the West Side Market. Not only does the building itself have potential to evolve as a more ‘public’ public market, such as with the redevelopment of the 2nd floor as a flexible, community space. But other opportunities need to be considered, such as the public land and parking lots around the market. Is a single use, parking lot the best use of that asset? Imagine what a conversation with the community might produce.

This is exactly the type of conversation that will raise interest levels of potential funders and supporters of the market.

COST – Low. Meeting and convening expenses.

RESPONSIBILITIES and IMPLEMENTATION

City – Kick this off and start the conversation.

Market Management – Their knowledge and insights can add a lot to the process.

Vendors – Their ideas and participation can help preserve and grow the core values of the market.

Community – Everyone likes to talk about the market, now they can participate.

Friends and Stakeholders – This diverse group has many voices that can add a lot of dimension and direction to the planning process.

Trademark Filing

OPPORTUNITY: The West Side Market is a well-known, iconic market and outside entities – businesses and organizations – have used its likeness and brand for their own benefit. File and protect the trademark for West Side Market. It is cheaper to do this than wage a trademark battle in the future.

COST: Low

RESPONSIBILITIES and IMPLEMENTATION

City Legal Department – Trademark filing, usage and protection is a City responsibility.

Dress Up Outside of Market: Add Banners, Flags, Color

OPPORTUNITY: Community members often mention that the outside of the market could use some life and color to make it look more welcoming, show that something positive is happening and help new customers find and navigate the market. With the clock tower about to be encased in scaffolding, this is an opportunity to attach some attractive banners or signage to present a welcoming and friendly appearance.

COST: Low. Purchase and install banners and flags. These may also be sponsored by a funder who could put a small logo on the banner or sign.

RESPONSIBILITIES and IMPLEMENTATION –

Option # 1 City, Market Management and Vendors - Purchase and installation can be done by the City and Management with possible financial support from the Vendors.

Option # 2 Market Management – Banners and flags are another sponsorship opportunity. Donor's names could be tastefully put on the flags and banners. Management can investigate potential interest among funders.

Repair and Replace Security Cameras

OPPORTUNITY: Provide round-the-clock security for the market.

RESPONSIBILITIES and IMPLEMENTATION

City and Market Management have this responsibility.

Optional recommendation: Launch Online Ordering and Delivery Service

OPPORTUNITY: COVID accelerated a major shift in food retail with more widespread adoption of online grocery ordering and delivery. This would bring a new revenue stream to the market and increase access to market vendors and products to new customers. This is a ready-to-go project, an operator (Food Forest) has been identified who is open to working with Market Management and the Vendors or possibly operating it independently. The market is well positioned for this business with open space in the arcade (Lorain Avenue side), easily accessible to service vehicles and storage in the basement.

COST: tbd. An investment will be needed. According to Food Forest (see Option # 3 below) there are multiple ways to start this with varying levels of investment. It is also possible to open this service up to more businesses in Ohio City and expand the offerings available for purchase online. This has the potential to be profitable, so an initial investment could be repaid.

RESPONSIBILITIES and IMPLEMENTATION

Option #1 – Market Management/Vendors/Independent Operator - Create a partnership between the vendors, the City and an outside operator to launch this operation at the market.

Option # 2 – Vendors - Investigate whether the Vendors want to take this on as a project for the Tenants Association.

Option # 3 – Independent Operator – Lease the space to an independent outside operator to run the service as an independent business. This could also be done in a partnership with the Vendors. Food Forest, an independent operator, has already expressed interest in launching this effort and already set up a similar program at Findlay Market.

APPENDIX DRAFT NOTE: This is incomplete. Content to be added including surveys, etc. Included in this draft are:

Stakeholder Interviews

Market Manager Job Descriptions

Attributes of Outstanding Market Managers

West Side Market Vendor Survey

West Side Market Customer Survey Template

General Services Administration Guidebook to help WSM establish maintenance standards

Stakeholder Interviews

- Amanda Dempsey, Former Manager, West Side Market
- Building Hope in the City
- Burten Bell Carr Development
- City of Cleveland, Department of Economic Development
- City Fresh
- City Life Center
- Cleveland City Councilmember McCormack
- Cleveland Foundation
- Cleveland Fresh
- Cleveland Metroparks
- Cleveland Restoration Society
- Destination Cleveland
- West Side Market Management, City of Cleveland
 - Susie Claytor, Deputy Commissioner
 - Felicia Hall, Manager of Markets
 - Ray Lozada, Facilities Manager
- Findlay Market
- Flying Fig
- Food Strong
- Food Forest
- Former West Side Market Vendors
- George Bradac, Former Manager, West Side Market
- GRAMMAR Properties
- George Gund Foundation
- Harbor Bay Real Estate Advisors
- Hebrew Free Loan Association
- Hispanic Business Center
- Hunger Network
- Jukebox
- JumpStart
- Latino Cleveland
- Lincoln-West High School
- Local Initiatives Support Corporation
- The MetroHealth System
- MetroWest Community Development Organization
- New Era Young Lords
- Night Markets Cleveland
- NOLA Movement
- John Ochsendorfer, Massachusetts Institute of Technology | Guastavino expert
- Ohio City Merchants Association
- Ohio City Inc.
- OSU Extension
- Perfectly Imperfect Produce
- Produce Perks Midwest
- Slavic Village Development
- West Side Market Vendors
 - Beth Bowman, Beth's Bakery

- Tom McIntyre, Kate's Fish
- Roberto Rodriguez, Oracle
- Narrin Carlberg, Narrin's Spices
- Jeremiah Wiencek, Wienceks' Meats and Poultry
- Gary Thomas, Ohio City Pasta
- Don Whitaker, Whitaker's Meats
- Diane Dever, Irene Dever
- Robert Holcepl, City Roast
- Amanda Czuchraj, Czuchraj Meats
- Young Latino Network

SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTIONS

President and CEO The Corporation for Findlay Market Cincinnati, Ohio

Findlay Market in Cincinnati, one of the nation's oldest and most vibrant public markets, seeks an experienced professional to serve as President and CEO of The Corporation for Findlay Market (CFFM). The non-profit corporation was founded 12 years ago to manage the market and grow its capacity as a primary source of fresh food, a vital public space, and an anchor for revitalization in Cincinnati's historic Over-the-Rhine neighborhood.

Background

Since 2004, when a major expansion of the market was completed, Findlay Market has experienced significant growth. In 2012, all available space managed by CFFM is leased. The market operates six days a week and visits to the market this year are approaching the one million mark. Merchants report increased sales year over year. A growing farmers' market and seasonal offerings complement the year-round merchants, providing a rich product mix. Since the corporation assumed responsibility for the market, 20 new full-time businesses have been established at the market, many merchants now have more than one location, and many long-time merchants have expanded their space in response to rising demand. Customers for Findlay Market come from throughout the Tri-State region and beyond.

The corporation has a five-year renewable contract with the City of Cincinnati to manage the market and related retail space in the market district, all public assets. Through this contract, the city provides a portion of annual operating revenue to CFFM, as well as periodic capital projects funding. Other significant sources of revenue are merchant rents and CAM charges, parking (new in 2012), and grants from public and private sources. The corporation's annual operating budget is approximately \$1.6 million. A primary focus of the new executive will be increasing earned and contributed revenue to the corporation in order to continue positive growth for the market.

Additional opportunities ahead include continuing to improve the customer experience, maintaining value for customers across the price spectrum, attracting new businesses to fill gaps in the product mix, supporting growth for existing businesses, and supporting the activation of more real estate in the market district.

Position

The President and CEO of The Corporation for Findlay Market will provide executive leadership and strategic direction for the next phase of the market's rich history. Projecting a shared vision for the market's future and engaging all stakeholders in the implementation of that vision will be a primary responsibility. Creating and managing a dynamic budget, ensuring strong fiscal accountability and solvency, and developing new sources of revenue are all critical functions of this role.

The President and CEO is responsible for leading a staff of fourteen, senior staff management and development, oversight of market operations and management of leases with market merchants, and development of relationships essential to the market's success, including market merchants, key partners, neighborhood organizations, and potential tenants. The CEO will foster CFFM's ongoing

relationship with the City of Cincinnati and City Council. The CEO will work with community partners to continue real estate development in the market district, but will not serve as lead developer.

The CEO is accountable to the Board of Directors of CFFM and will collaborate with the board in creation of the strategic direction for the market's next phase of growth. The CEO will personally engage in fund-raising and other activities that build unearned revenue for the market, and will also engage the board in the process. The President and CEO will also maintain a balance of products and services that will sustain the market's unique character, will extend its value to Greater Cincinnati from all socio-economic levels and will ensure its overall operational excellence.

Qualifications

The successful candidate will have executive leadership experience in a non-profit or related setting and a track record in successful financial management of a budget in excess of \$1 million.

A proven track record in increasing revenue through social enterprise, grants and contracts, philanthropy, or related methods is critical. An entrepreneurial approach and ability to support the growth of small businesses is desired, as is experience in developing a managed environment responsive to customers' needs.

Prior experience in leading a small team of professionals and engaging and effectively utilizing a volunteer board of directors is also essential, as is the ability to set strategic direction for an organization and implement on that direction. Candidates should demonstrate an understanding of the unique role of public markets in a community and familiarity with Findlay Market and Over-the-Rhine is desired.

Candidates should have exceptional ability to work across a wide range of stakeholders with divergent needs and expectations.

Minimum qualifications: A bachelor's degree and 7-10 years of experience or the equivalent.

**General Manager
Reading Terminal Market Corporation
Philadelphia, PA**

The Reading Terminal Market is a civic institution that, since 1892, has sustained a unique blend of merchants offering food and food products to people throughout the Philadelphia region. The Reading Terminal Market Corporation, a non-profit corporation created in 1995, is committed to preserving the Market's traditions and managing the Market's affairs. Thanks to unwavering support from the City of Philadelphia, key stakeholders, world-class merchants and loyal customers, this historic landmark has grown and prospered. Today the Reading Terminal Market is one of the nation's most successful public markets with more than 75 independent, predominantly owner operated businesses that offer an array of diverse fresh and prepared foods, lunch counters, and places to eat and shop and is more important than ever to Philadelphia and the Delaware Valley.

Based in Philadelphia, PA, the Market is on the web at: www.readingterminalmarket.org.

This is an exciting role requiring a passion for this institution and its history, as the General Manager (GM) is responsible for continuing to preserve and realize the Market's mission. The GM also will oversee the function of the Reading Terminal Market as an urban farmers' market. To this end, the GM is responsible for all facets of the Market, managing a professional team, working closely with the Merchants' Association, and reporting to a Board of Directors. The GM will represent the Market and ensure the effectiveness of marketing and promotions. S/he also will oversee facilities, leasing and operations, manage tenant and customer relations and ensure sound fiscal performance.

To be successful in this role, the following experience is required:

- 5 - 7 years managing operations for facilities serving the public.
- Interface with diverse internal and external stakeholders, public and private business leaders and civic groups.
- Ability to manage leasing and facilities as well as anticipate issues and propose solutions.
- Demonstrated knowledge of contracts, budget projections and operating costs.
- Comfort in communicating with various audiences including federal, state and local governments, customers and merchants.
- Prior experience managing staff and reporting to a Board of Directors

Attributes of Outstanding Market Managers

Market managers come from varied backgrounds: writing, supermarkets, bartending, amusement parks, market vending, real estate and so on. It is not a skill taught in school. The common threads of managers are personality traits.

First, someone who shares and believes in the power or magic of the market to do things that no other civic institution can do. You need to have the vision of what the market can be and instill and share that vision and grow that vision with the many, many people who think it is 'their' market. The customers, the vendors, the neighbors, the partners, the pundits, the media, the old timers and young dreamers all have a large, shared vision and an intimate personal vision.

Second, someone who can bring people together. This is so important today and markets are that original gathering place where people come together to satisfy different tastes, budgets, agendas and hopes. This is what markets have been doing forever. So a good manager is very non-threatening, fair-minded and able to establish common ground and respond to the common good where everyone gets, for the most part, what they want in a wholesome, transparent way.

Third, a good manager keeps one eye on the practical side of things and holds all to a high standard of performance, encouraging those who need an extra boost and patting those on the back who have done well. The manager must uphold standards and knows the fine line between a social experiment and a successful business. Sometimes a market does well with a bit of both.

Fourth, a good manager is balanced and equitable. The Market arena one of individual performances, with highly independent business people who need to take risks and innovate. The manager needs to manage competition and always be fair, never giving one person a good deal and shafting another who is equally worthy.

Fifth, a good manager is true to their word. One must never say or promise to do something and not follow through. If circumstances beyond their control prevent them from following through, they must follow up and get back to the person and explain what happened.

Sixth, a good manager inspires. The success of a market is an accumulation of a million little things; a ripe tomato put gently into a bag, a quick smile when there is no time to chat, getting that last slab of bacon even though you were late to the Market the weekend before New Years Eve, observing those unplanned social interaction of old friends in the aisle, vendors sweeping out their stalls and cleaning the glass display windows. A good manager creates an environment based on good feelings, trust and the importance of the little things. If people feel good they do better, they are more aware of customer needs, ways to improve, innovate and add to the overall betterment of the life of the market.

Seventh, a good manager knows that business is business. They don't get overly distracted with the social niceties and chit chat. They are not abrupt about it, but they know there is never enough time to get everything done, you have to prioritize and practice time management to keep the engines of commerce running above all else.

Eighth, a good manager seeks expertise and builds productive, sustainable working relationships with community partners. There is no such thing as a manager who can actually do everything, in spite of their prowess with rodenticide. Knowing when to ask for help and where to look are another indicator of someone that is suited for the job. Being honest with ones own limitations is not a weakness but a strength, and knowing that Cleveland is rife with experts who can and will bring their talents to the market, make this an easy thing to do.

West Side Market Vendor Survey and Results

A three-question survey was given to all Vendors in July 2021. 21 vendors returned the surveys.

Multiple responses shown in parentheses, i.e. (4) = 4 responses.

Question #1) To help your business reach its potential, what are the three positive changes you would personally make?

Responses:

More use of tech, online ordering, stay open until 7pm, change the rent structure, use more social media, have an email chain between vendors, increase electric capacity, more advertising and possible more cooperative advertising among vendors, expand product line, install refrigerated display cases in the Arcade

Q2) To help the West Side Market reach its potential, what three changes or improvement to the market would produce the best incomes?

Responses:

Longer leases (3), more maintenance ((6) better management (6), add HVAC (6), more advertising (4), fix plumbing (2), fix electric, fix elevators (5), add tables and chairs (4), increase hours that market is open, capital improvements (2), more signage, quality enforcement (4), add non food vendors, better bathrooms, better vendor stalls, streamline repairs, customer hub with cold and dry storage, preventative maintenance, better sanitation

Q3) If the market were to engage more with the larger Cleveland community, what potential partners or sponsors could help the market grow and attract new customers and resources?

Responses:

Metroparks (7), Cleveland Clinic (4), sports teams, Cuyahoga County, Farm Bureau, car dealers, Foundations (3) Cleveland Restoration Society, local restaurants, website

West Side Market Customer Survey*

*Adapted from the 2019 West Side Market Customer Survey

1. How often do you come to the West Side Market?
 - Daily
 - Weekly
 - Twice a month
 - Monthly
 - Every 3 months
 - Every six months
 - Yearly
 - Less than once a year

2. How long have you been coming to the West Side Market?
 - Less than 1 year
 - 1-2 years
 - 3-5 years
 - 5-10 years
 - 10-20 years
 - 20+ years

3. What did you or do you plan to buy at the Market today? (Check all that apply.)
 - Vegetables
 - Fruit
 - Meat
 - Poultry
 - Fish
 - Dairy
 - Cheese
 - Bread and/or baked goods
 - Value-added products (jams, pickles, preserves, etc.)
 - Flowers and/or bedding plants
 - Vinegars, oils and/or spices
 - Candy and/or chocolate
 - Coffee and/or tea
 - Prepared foods/ready to eat
 - Other

4. How much do you estimate you'll spend at the market today?
 - Less than \$5
 - \$5-10
 - \$11-20
 - \$21-40
 - \$41-60
 - \$60+

5. How many vendors did you purchase from today?
 - 1
 - 2-3
 - 4-5
 - More than 5

6. What types of activities did you participate in at the market today? (Check all the apply)
 - Grocery shopping
 - Eating
 - Browsing
 - People watching/Sitting
 - Buying gifts
 - Listening to music
 - Visiting Cleveland/Touring
 - Other (open ended)

7. What activities and amenities would bring you to the market more often? (Rank)
 - Health and Wellness Programs
 - Food Demonstrations
 - Seasonal or themed events
 - Music and Performances
 - Pop-up Vendors
 - Activities for families
 - Seating
 - More prepared foods
 - More local produce
 - More diverse foods and products

8. What additional services would you like to see? (Check all that apply)
 - Expanded hours
 - Online Ordering

- Gift Cards
- Home Deliveries
- Welcome and Information Booth
- Phone Orders
- Market Information available in other languages
- Other

9. On a scale of 1-5 (1 being lowest and 5 being highest), how would you rate the following services in the market?

- Customer service from vendors
- Customer service from Market employees
- Vendors had the products I wanted to buy
- Vendors were available during market hours
- Cleanliness of the Market
- Product quality in the Outdoor Arcade
- Product quality in the Market Hall
- Signage/Wayfinding
- Welcoming and Inclusive Environment
- Opportunities for Customer Feedback
- Parking

10. Where are you visiting from? (Zipcode)

11. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other (Please describe) _____

12. What is your age?

- Less than 18 years old
- 18-25 years old
- 26-40 years old
- 41-65 years old
- 66 years old or older

13. How would you describe yourself? (Check all that apply.)

- Black or African-American
- Asian
- Hispanic or Latino/a/x

- Middle Eastern or North African
- White
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- Other (Please describe)_____

14. What is your first language?

- English
- Spanish
- Arabic
- Other

15. How do you keep up with news about the West Side Market? (Check all that apply)

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter
- West Side Market website
- Don't follow news about the West Side Market

16. Please share any other comments and/or suggestions you have regarding your West Side Market experience today.

17. Optional: Do you want to provide any feedback about any specific vendors you purchased from today?

a. If yes, please select the vendor from the drop down list.

b. On a scale of 1-5 (1 being lowest and 5 being highest), how would you rate the following

- Product Quality
- Product Availability
- Customer Service
- Pricing
- Other

c. Please feel free to share any additional comments about your experience with this vendor today.

Example: GUIDEBOOK TO HELP WSM ESTABLISH MAINTENANCE SYSTEMS AND STANDARDS

There are no established standards for maintaining public market facilities. Each market is different in terms of size, layout, building type, infrastructure and age. Market standards evolve based on current conditions, infrastructure upgrades and available resources.

One of the best how-to guides for maintaining public buildings is published by the General Services Administration and linked below. It is a comprehensive and useful resource, providing a basis to customize a system suitable for West Side Market.

General Services Administration Preventive Maintenance Guide

https://www.gsa.gov/cdnstatic/GSA_PM_Guide_Final_07152013.pdf

‘The objective of these maintenance standards is to provide helpful instruction in the performance of preventive and predictive maintenance techniques, in order to maximize the efficiency of operation and the useful life of equipment, systems, and structures, and to provide reliable and suitable conditions for market vendors. They are generic in nature and not intended to substitute for manufacturer’s instructions or to apply uniformly across all types of equipment and systems.’ The guide also includes a useful tool list for each job.

The guide provides detailed steps and instructions for maintaining (and the frequency of maintaining) nearly every piece of equipment in the West Side Market such as:

- Electrical, Control Panels, Transformers, Circuit Breakers, Emergency Generators, Lighting
- Plumbing
- Elevators, Doors, Roofs
- Scrubbing Machines, Trash Compactor, Balers
- Metering Devices, Transformers, Smoke Alarms and Detectors, Fire Alarms,
- Glycol cooling systems, chiller controls, condensers, refrigerant monitors,
- Walk-in refrigerators/freezers

Example: Semi-annual checklist for Walk –In Refrigerators/ Freezers

1. Check with operating or area personnel for any deficiencies; verify cleaning program.
2. Verify indicator light on; check compartment temperature.
3. Examine evaporator for proper clearances/slope and air flow.
4. Examine handles, hinges and tightness of door closure.
5. Examine safety door release and fan shut down safety switch.
6. Inspect lighting for burnt out lamps.
7. Check starter panels and controls for proper operation, burned or loose contacts, and loose connections.
8. Clean evaporator coil, evaporator drain pan, blowers, fans, motors, and drain piping as required; lubricate motor(s).
9. Inspect defrost systems for proper operation, including timer; adjust as required. Have automatic defrosters adjusted as required so freezer will defrost during "Off Peak" hours
10. Check operation of thermostats; calibrated as required.
11. Check coil superheat and adjust to manufacturers recommendations.
12. Inspect and service all electric motors.
13. Inspect door gaskets for damage and proper fit; adjust gaskets as required and lubricate hinges with food grade oil.
14. Check door gasket heater.
15. Check box floor for water or ice accumulation.
16. Check box for excessive ice build- up and open seams.