

## Farmers' Market Project Summary

The Lane County Farmers' Market operates multiple times per week during the spring, summer and fall on a portion of the Park Blocks on 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The Farmers' Market continues to encounter space and logistical difficulties with that location, such as space limitations, inadequate electrical service, uneven and unpaved surfaces, and lack of a permanent shelter.



After struggling for years with limited space and inadequate infrastructure, the Lane County

Farmers' Market has expressed a need and desire to expand its offerings to maintain financial sustainability and potentially operate year-round. Options include, providing more space for additional vendors to join the market or allowing current vendors to increase their offerings, or building a structure to provide weather protection, especially outside of spring and summer hours. All of these actions would strengthen the presence, impact and financial viability of the Farmers' Market. There are a number of options that would address the farmers' needs as well as create an attractive, inviting downtown destination; each of these options requires collaboration with Lane County and the Farmers' Market. One option would be to reincorporate the Butterfly Parking Lot into the Park Blocks for the Farmers' Market, and re-establish the original Park Blocks. Another option would be to consider a different location for the Farmers' Market, such as to the east of the planned City Hall location. A third option would be to reconsider the existing location and make significant improvements to address the Farmers' needs.

The City and Lane County have begun that process by contracting with the University of Oregon's Community Service Center to analyze the financial feasibility of a public market facility and to identify viable governance models. Based on the outcome of that study and further collaboration with the Farmers' Market, the City and Lane County can help to create an attractive, inviting and highly functional venue for the Lane County Farmers' Market. These improvements will help preserve a cornerstone of downtown activity, support a significant element of the regional economy, and help local farmers provide high quality local food to the community.

### CITY ACTIONS

Build needed infrastructure including a structure for year-round Farmers' Market. The cost would be based on the type of building and the cost of the land and site prep. (See

below for further description.) The estimated project costs range from: A = \$1M, B = \$4M, C = \$6.5M. The A, B, and C amounts are in the urban renewal funding strategy and the alternative to urban renewal funding strategy. Regardless of which strategy is pursued or utilized, the Farmers' Market project is assumed to receive the existing downtown urban renewal funding of \$500,000, which would bring the total available for the project to be between \$1.5M and \$7M.

- **A** – the structure is basic and utilitarian, more of an open air pavilion than a building; and the land is “free,” either because it is already owned by the city, or because it is given to the city as part of an exchange. Despite its modest cost, the building still could be a city landmark, and there is a long tradition of simple, agrarian marketplaces in city centers.
- **B** – has two options depending on what is needed:
  - Option (1) is pay for land – the additional funds allow the basic marketplace described above to be built on land that is not free and/or requires improvement prior to construction.
  - Option (2) is pay for building – the resulting structure would be a full-service building, with conditioned space and options for programing.
- **C** – The structure would be a full-service building; the land requires purchase and/or improvement.

#### NEXT STEP

Continue to work with Lane County and Farmers' Market; review results of the University of Oregon's Community Service Center financial feasibility analysis.