

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Economic Development Division

memorandum

TO: Urbana's Market at the Square Advisory Board

FROM: Natalie Kenny Marquez, Director, Market at the Square

DATE: July 28, 2016

SUBJECT: 2016 Market at the Square Strategic Plan Update - Continued

Background

The Community Development Services Department completed a strategic planning process for the Market in 2011. This effort was in response to the Urbana City Council's goals to incorporate the Market as part of the City's environmental sustainability and economic development goals and in response to community interest in the future of the Market. A Steering Committee of stakeholders was recruited to help guide the planning process. As part of the effort of the data gathering stage, the City conducted extensive outreach, including several public meetings, a survey, and an open house. The Steering Committee studied the history of the Market as well as recent trends and issues. From this information, a mission statement for the Market was developed and a set of goals and implementation strategies were formulated. The Market at the Square Strategic Plan was approved in late 2011 and many of its recommendations have been implemented, including the formation of the Market at the Square Advisory Board.

Update

Now at the five-year mark, it is an appropriate time to undertake a review and update of the goals and implementation strategies as outlined in the 2011 Market at the Square Strategic Plan. A survey was implemented the first full week of January 2016 in order to gain feedback on the Market's current strategic goals and to determine if they are still relevant and whether there are new goals that should be pursued. The survey was directed to past and present Market at the Square vendors, community groups, and patrons. The survey closed on January 28, 2016 and over 300 responses were received. The survey results were shared with the Market at the Square Advisory Board and discussed at the February 18, 2016 special meeting.

At the March 17, 2016 Special Meeting, the Market at the Square Advisory Board was joined a facilitator, Deborah Cavanaugh-Grant of New Leaf Consulting, to review the current Market at the Square mission statement and goals. The Market at the Square Advisory Board members affirmed the Market at the Square mission at this meeting, and proceeded to refine the 10 goals from the 2011 Strategic Plan into seven, new draft priorities.

At the March 17, 2016 Special Meeting, staff asked that the Market at the Square Advisory Board members review the seven new draft priorities and those priorities were then affirmed at the April 28, 2016 meeting. A copy of the affirmed priorities is attached.

At the April 28, 2016 meeting, the Market at the Square Advisory Board began to draft a series of initiatives or action steps as the means to work towards achieving the seven priorities. To continue the process of drafting these initiatives, the attached draft document outlines the seven priorities, notes the initiative discussed by the board at the April 28th meeting, and offers additional space to add initiatives as they are discussed at the July 28th meeting.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the following timeline to complete the Strategic Plan Update:

- March 2016: Affirmed mission
- April 2016: Affirmed strategic priorities
- July 2016: Continue discussion of initiatives with input provided to Market at the Square Advisory Board members by fellow Market at the Square vendors.
- October 2016: Affirm Market at the Square Strategic Plan 2016 Update