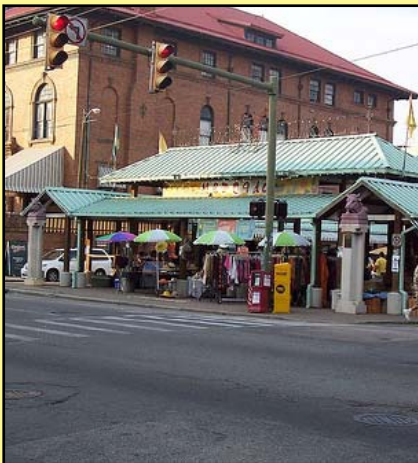


THE 17th STREET FARMERS' MARKET

Revitalization Plan



Prepared for the City of Richmond

By the Fall 2006 Urban Commercial Revitalization Class
Master of Urban and Regional Planning Program
L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs
Virginia Commonwealth University

December 2006

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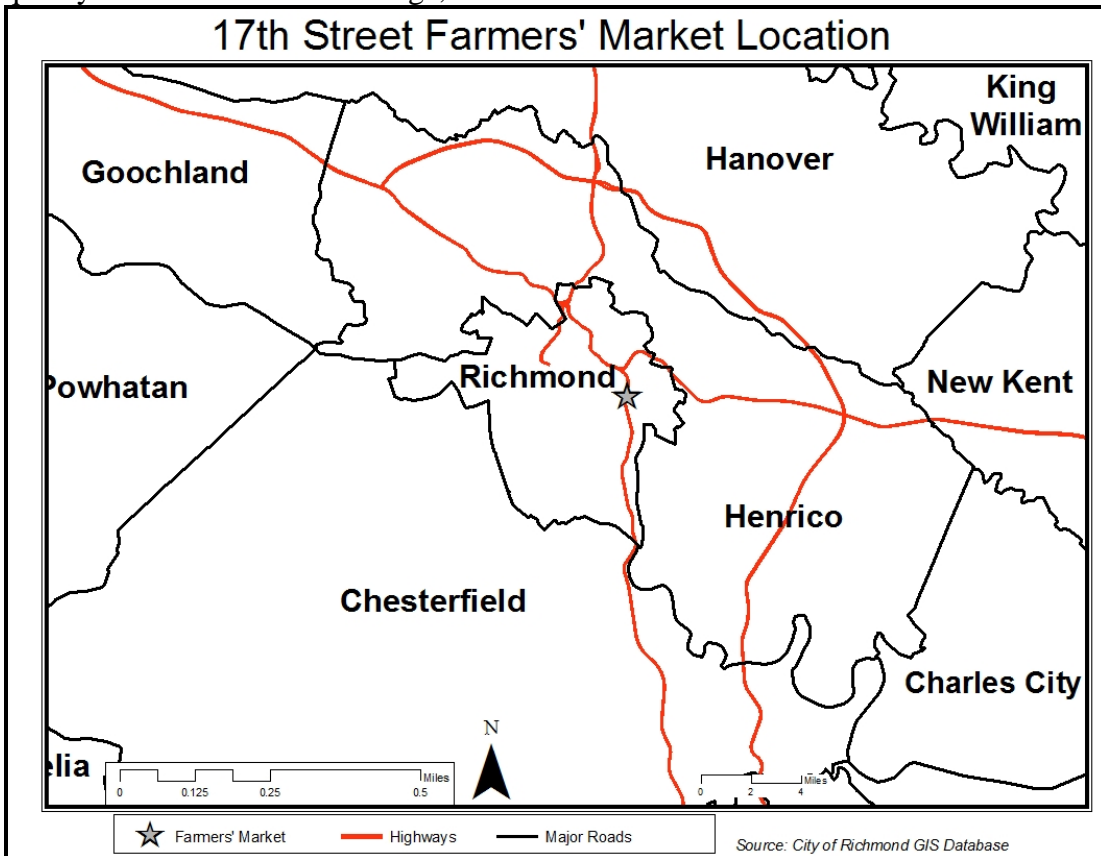
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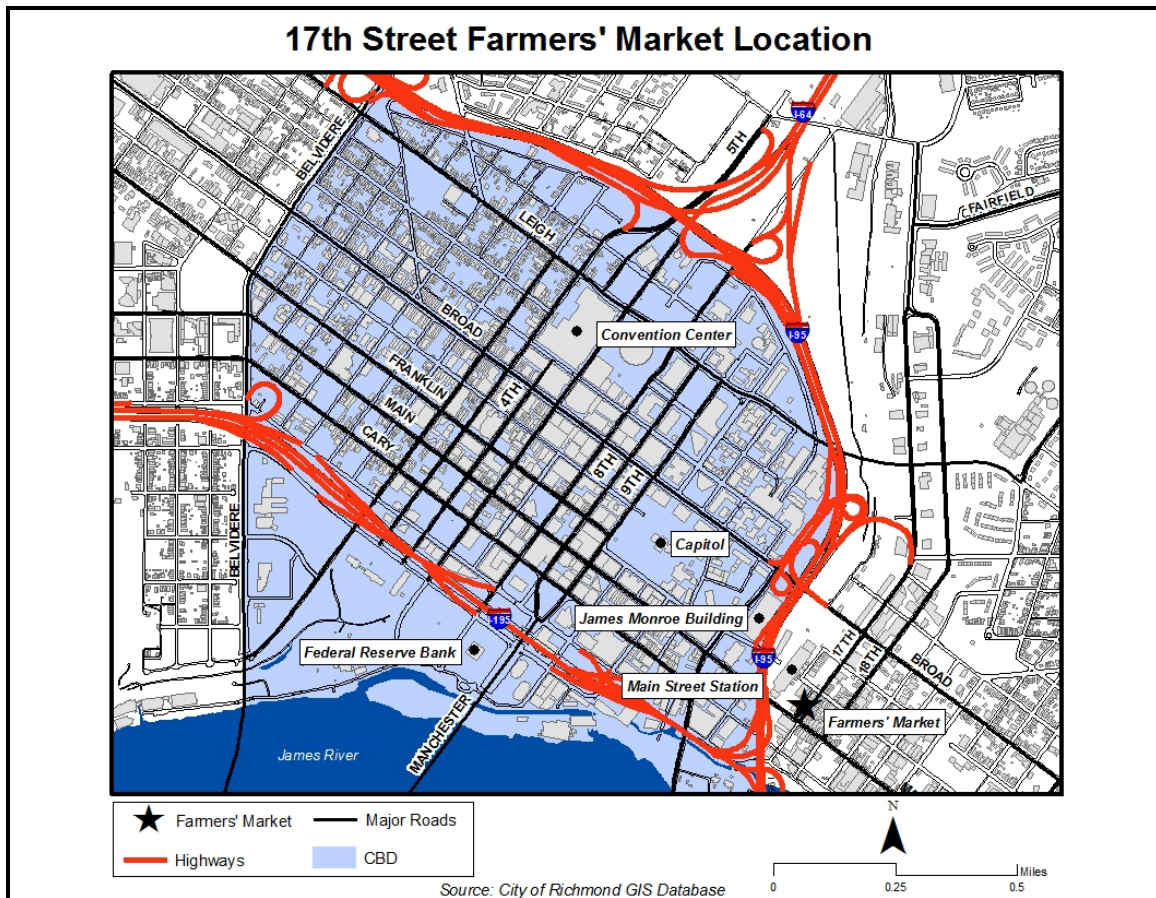
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 17th Street Farmers' Market (the Market) has the potential of becoming a thriving market that is a focal point for the Shockoe Bottom community. At present, however, the Market finds itself in a downward spiral of decreasing numbers of customers and vendors. The Market is surrounded by several vacant buildings creating an unattractive atmosphere for residents and Market patrons. The large number of vacant buildings helps to foster a high perception of crime in the Bottom. The repeated flooding of the Bottom also raises concerns of crime, property value, and safety. The overall perception of the Bottom is one of neglect and abandonment, and this perception deters potential customers from visiting the Market.

However, there is a reason for optimism about Shockoe Bottom and the Market. The Bottom is an area in transition with new housing developments, such as Tobacco Row, and new restaurants opening in the community. The Bottom has become known for its variety of restaurants and bars. Real estate values within the neighborhood are steadily increasing. The 17th Street Market is located near several office buildings, such as the James Monroe Building and the VCU Medical Campus. The Market is located next door to the soon-to-be-renovated Main Street Station. Main Street Station will serve as a transportation center for the city and house a variety of commercial units. In order to benefit from and, ultimately, contribute to these positive changes, the Market must make changes in its operations, design, and marketing so that it can build a larger pool of high-quality vendors and attract a large, consistent customer base.





Specifically, this plan recommends the following steps:

- **Economic Restructuring: Strengthen the Economic Viability of the 17th Street Farmers' Market**
 - Increase the number of produce vendors and seek to attract downtown residents and local workers to shop at the Market.
 - Help current vendors improve their operations.
 - Establish an incubator for vendors and create partnerships between the Market and area businesses.
 - Encourage a diverse mix of complementary businesses to locate near the Market.
 - Recruit a small specialty grocery store to the area that can work with and complement the Market.
- **Organization: Establish an organization that fosters a successful, thriving market**
 - Schedule the Market days and times to attract a higher number of potential customers, especially neighborhood residents and workers.
 - Establish an annual fee to create an incentive for vendors to sell consistently at the Market from week to week.

- Create a productive relationship between Market management and Market vendors.
- Improve the content of the vendor contract and enforce it.
- Establish a Market Association to foster communication between vendors and Market management.
- Establish three to five trial stalls allowing potential vendors to “try out” the Market before obligating themselves to an annual contract.
- **Design: Make the Market a more attractive and enjoyable public place for customers and passers-by.**
 - Create a sense of place by improving the existing Market area and creating pedestrian-friendly open spaces that can be enjoyed by different groups.
 - Locate a specialty grocer (e.g. Trader Joe’s) near the Market.
 - Locate a business incubator near the Market site.
 - Create a new design for the Market that maximizes its economic viability as well as its potential for use and enjoyment by the public. The suggested new designs are a public plaza in which the Market is one of many possible activities, and a new Market shelter with a landscaped entryway.
 - Introduce a community park within the Shockoe Bottom district that is adjacent to the Market, between Franklin and Grace Streets, and 17th North and 17th South Streets.
- **Promotion and Marketing: Establish an effective and aggressive marketing and promotion program to educate and inform potential and current customers about the Market.**
 - Increase signage for the Market and devise more effective advertising events and activities in order to make customers aware of the variety of high-quality produce that will be offered at the Market.
 - Improve community perceptions and exposure toward the Farmers’ Market brand.
 - Offer discount coupons as incentives for customers to visit the Market.

INTRODUCTION¹



The 17th Street Farmers' Market is one of the oldest public markets in the United States. Since 1737, the market has served as a center for local commerce in Shockoe Bottom and the City of Richmond. Shockoe Bottom was founded in 1701 by Colonel William Byrd and was named for Shockoe Creek, which runs underneath the city. Shockoe Bottom was the center of the city's economic activity due to its close proximity to the James River. The Bottom became the city's center for manufacturing and commercial trade. During the 1700s and 1800s, the Bottom was lined with tobacco warehouses, candle manufacturers, and breweries. Another critical element to the economy during this period was the slave trade.

The current Market site has served a number of purposes and undergone several physical changes throughout its existence. The Scott Family donated the current location to the City in 1789 with the condition that a public market be housed on the site in perpetuity. In 1794, the First Market also became the location for a City Council meeting room, courtroom, community hall, and theater. In 1854, the First Market House was constructed to meet growth needs. The first floor served as retail and the second floor served a variety of public uses. The current structure we see today was constructed in 1985 and cost an estimated \$600,000.



The First Market House ca.1900

Today, residents have more options than ever to purchase fresh produce. The automobile has made it possible to travel to commercial corridors outside the city to purchase produce and food products.



The Current 17th Street Farmers' Market

The 17th Street Farmers' Market has lost out to this competition. The Market's lack of vendors deters potential customers from visiting the Market, and the lack of customers deters vendors from selling at the Market. This cycle must be broken.

¹ General sources for this section: The 17th Farmers' Market History Website found at <http://www.17thstreetfarmersmarket.com/history.php>; The City of Richmond Website found at <http://www.ci.richmond.va.us/>

The City of Richmond's Economic Development Office approached Dr. John Accordino's Urban Commercial Revitalization Class to help the City break this cycle by developing a revitalization plan for the 17th Street Farmers' Market. The class researched the following issues to assess the liabilities and assets of the Market:

- Relevant Plans, Programs, and Zoning
- The Market Organization
- Surrounding Area Influences
- Future Projects and Influences
- Trends in Real Estate: Assessed Values and Sales
- Public Safety
- Building Size, Conditions, and Use
- Urban Design, Streetscape, and Infrastructure
- Circulation and Parking
- Consumer Market Analysis
- Consumer Market Segment Surveys
- Market Stakeholder Surveys
- Other Farmers' Markets

Based on the findings of this research the class recommends:

- *Economic Restructuring*: Create a self-sufficient Farmers' Market.
- *Organization*: Establish a Market organizational scheme that lays the foundation for a self-sufficient market that is convenient for the largest base of customers, create a 501 (c)(3) organization to manage the Market, and increase the customer and vendor base to self-sustaining levels
- *Design*: Create a layout design for the 17th Street Farmers' Market and surrounding area that maximizes the Market's economic viability and potential for use and enjoyment by the Shockoe Bottom community.
- *Promotion and Marketing*: Heighten the public's awareness of the Market and increase patronage during market hours and special events.

The 17th Street Farmers' Market has the potential of becoming a thriving market, once again serving the Shockoe Bottom neighborhood and the City of Richmond. With commitment from the City of Richmond, Market management, and the surrounding neighborhood this potential can be realized. Section I of this plan discusses the Shockoe Bottom neighborhood and its relevance to the Market. Similarly, Section II describes the existing conditions of the 17th Street Market. Next, the Consumer Market Study in Section III analyzes the demand for grocery items in convenience and trade markets and concludes that demand will support up to two additional grocery stores within a one-mile radius of the Market. Section IV discusses findings of survey research in order to determine why the Market is not meeting existing demand. Finally, Section V sets forth recommendations to improve the Market's economic structure, organization, design, and promotion in the Revitalization Plan.

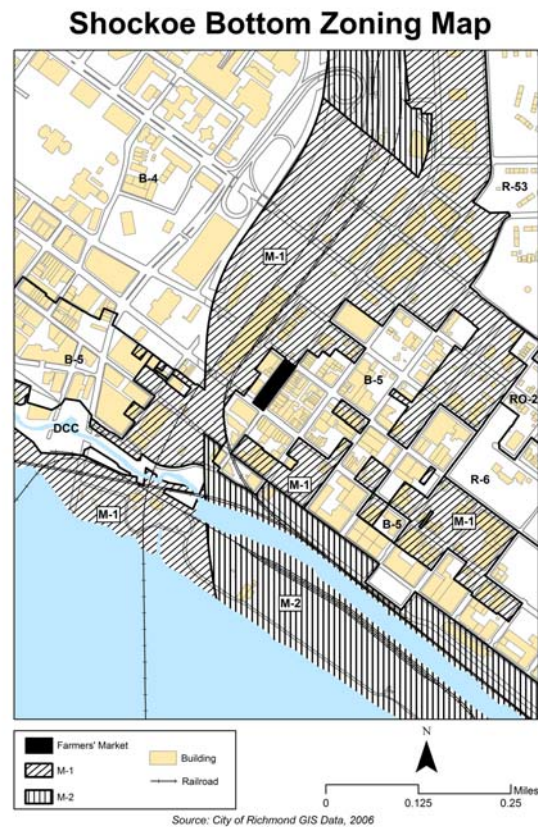
I. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES: SHOCKOE BOTTOM

Relevant Plans, Programs, and Zoning¹

Reviewing previous plans is necessary in order to build upon earlier successes and avoid repeating past mistakes. It helps to determine what elements of previous plans have been implemented and which ones need more work.

The most recent *City of Richmond Master Plan* (1997) called for a more specific land-use and design plan for Shockoe Bottom since the Master Plan does not go into detail on these matters. Accordingly, City Council approved the *Shockoe Bottom Land Use and Development Strategy Plan* (2000), which states three main goals: retain Shockoe Bottom as a mixed-use area, maintain elements of the historic character of the Bottom, and enhance street-level pedestrian activity, vehicle movement, and parking.

The City has since amended the zoning ordinance to include urban business (UB) districts, in which off-street parking requirements are deleted and allowances are made for changes to permitted mixed-uses and site design standards. However, it has not yet rezoned any of the parcels surrounding the Market to UB. The zoning map shows that currently the Market is surrounded by business (B-5) and manufacturing/industrial (M-1) districts.

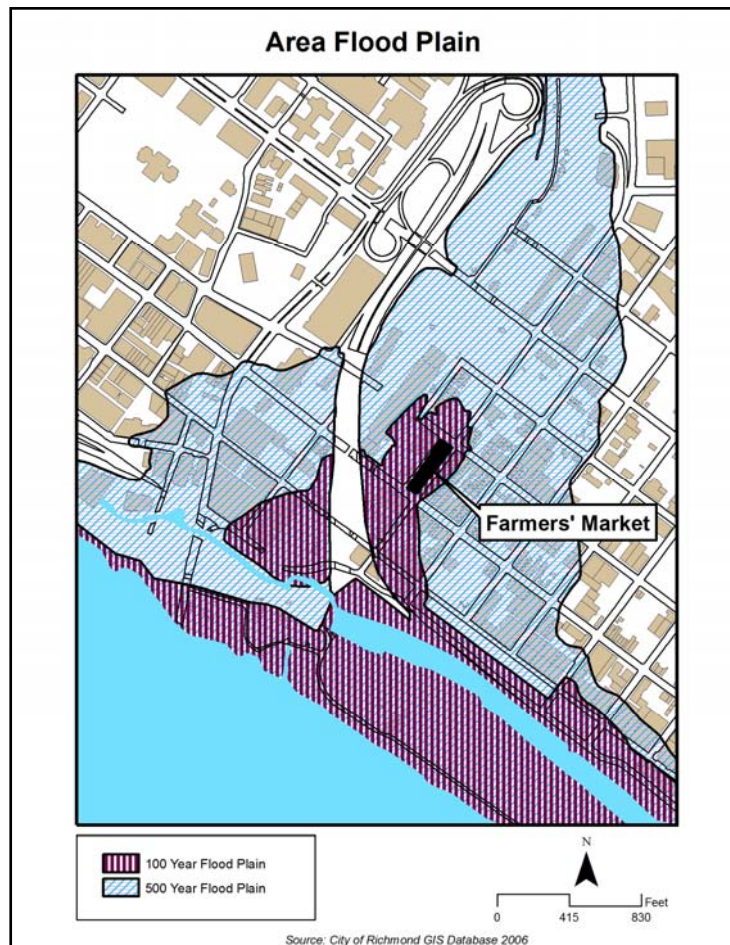


¹ Sources for this section include: *A 10 Point Plan for Re-Investment in Shockoe Bottom*, Shockoe Bottom Business and Property Owners, 2004, *Shockoe Bottom Transportation Plan 2020*, Department of Public Works, City of Richmond, Virginia, 2004 found at: <http://www.ci.richmond.va.us/departments/publicworks/shockoetranspplan2020.aspx> and *Shockoe Bottom Land Use and Development Strategy Plan*, City of Richmond, Virginia, 2000, found at: <http://www.ci.richmond.va.us/forms/shockoebottomplan.aspx>.

In 2004, the City and a group of Shockoe Bottom residents, business owners, and developers released the *Shockoe Bottom Transportation Plan 2020*, and an *ad hoc* group of Shockoe Bottom business and property owners produced *A 10 Point Plan for Re-Investment in Shockoe Bottom*. These plans call for the enforcement of property owner maintenance standards and parking, streetscape, and pedestrian access improvements. Improved lighting, a recurring theme in plans for Shockoe Bottom, was also suggested.

The *10 Point Plan* also suggests that the Market could be more successful if it were enclosed for year-round use. Key alterations recommended by the plan include revisions and improvement of Market layout, research of demographics and preferences of Market vendors, customers, and the community, expansion of community programming, and creation of a comprehensive, community-inclusive marketing plan. The present Revitalization Plan includes many of these suggested elements.

Finally, as a result of the flooding following tropical storm Gaston, FEMA is reconsidering the official floodplain map which lies in Shockoe Bottom. As of yet the final map is under negotiation. The final decision could have major consequences for development potential in Shockoe Bottom because some land uses, especially residential, are not permitted within a floodplain. A final decision has not been reached as of this writing. The map below illustrates both the current 100-year and 500-year flood plains.



Surrounding Area Influences²



Church Hill Neighborhood

The Market's location provides a mix of opportunities and challenges for the Market. The surrounding neighborhoods present a large potential customer base for the Market.

Regionally, the 17th Street Farmers' Market is in the core of a metropolitan area of 996,512 people (Census 2000), with 719,913 people living within Richmond City or one of the two surrounding counties, Chesterfield and Henrico. Richmond serves as the center city in this region, and is also Virginia's State Capital.

Surrounding Neighborhoods

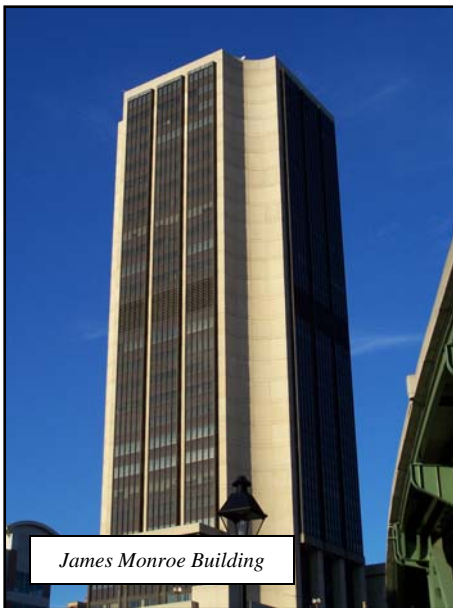


² General source used for this section: *Shockoe Bottom-Land Use and Development Strategy*, City of Richmond Department of Community Development, Comprehensive Planning Division.

The Market is part of Shockoe Bottom, a neighborhood known mostly for shops, bars, restaurants, and vacant manufacturing buildings. The Bottom is beginning to see a change as prospectors and developers convert many of the vacant manufacturing plants and warehouses into apartments and condominiums.

To the east of Shockoe Bottom is the neighborhood known as Church Hill. The neighborhood is in transition, and after undergoing many years of neglect, large amounts of reinvestment have occurred in recent years. As residential infill development continues to grow, Church Hill has great potential to be a large customer base for the Market.

To the north and northwest of the Market is Virginia Commonwealth University Medical Campus and Hospitals, which serves as a place of education, employment, and housing to thousands of people each day. Currently the school and hospital have little interaction with the Market area except for some parking for students; however, an opportunity may exist if the workers and students can be enticed to visit the Market and if the Campus Connector GRTC bus route is extended into the Bottom.



West of the Market and south of the medical campus is the central business district of Richmond. This area may possibly possess the largest potential for future Market customers during the weekdays if a lunch-time or after-work crowd can be generated.

The James Monroe Building sits on the corner of Franklin and 14th Streets, just three blocks west of the Market. Located within 25 occupied floors (four floors are reserved for mechanical purposes) are over 16 State agencies and more than 1,600 employees.

South of the central business district and west of Shockoe Bottom is Shockoe Slip. Warehouses and cobblestone-paved streets define this old business district which has recently become revitalized as Richmond's restaurant, entertainment, and nightlife center.

South of the Market and on the other side of the James River is historic Manchester. Similar to Church Hill, this is an area that has been in decline for many years, but it is being redeveloped as property values begin to rise. New residential development in Manchester will create another potential consumer segment for the Market.

Future Projects & Influences

In addition to the Market's existing area influences, there are several significant projects in the planning or development stages that are expected to have a significant presence and influence in Shockoe Bottom. Also, future improvements are planned for currently existing developments such as Tobacco Row and the Canal Walk.

The Multi-Modal Transportation Center at Main Street Station

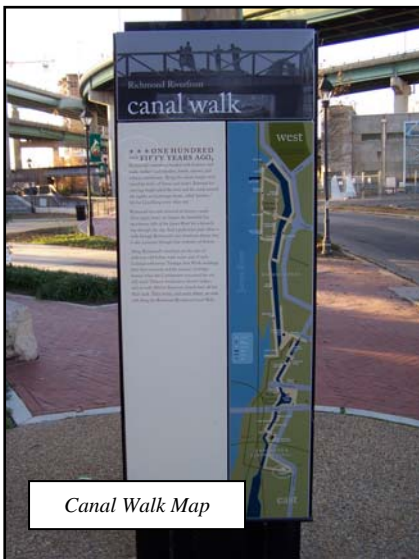


Main Street Station

Within the near future, Richmond's historic Main Street Station is expected to become a regional transportation center, providing passenger rail service, high speed rail, and eventually, intercity bus service. The development plans for Main Street Station provide for most of the primary vehicular traffic and parking requirements, interstate bus service, and a main pedestrian entrance on the west side of the station. These improvements should increase the number of visitors passing through Shockoe Bottom, and they provide another opportunity for the Market to capture a new segment of consumers.

Canal Walk

The Canal Walk Project includes 17th Street as a major pedestrian link to the canal that flows adjacent to the central business district and the Bottom. Activity and development along the canal is expected to increase pedestrian traffic to the area, yet it will also require additional parking. The Canal Walk Project is planned to extend east towards Great Ship Lock Park, along the edge of the James River to the city limits.



Canal Walk Map



Canal Walk

Tobacco Row

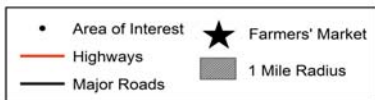
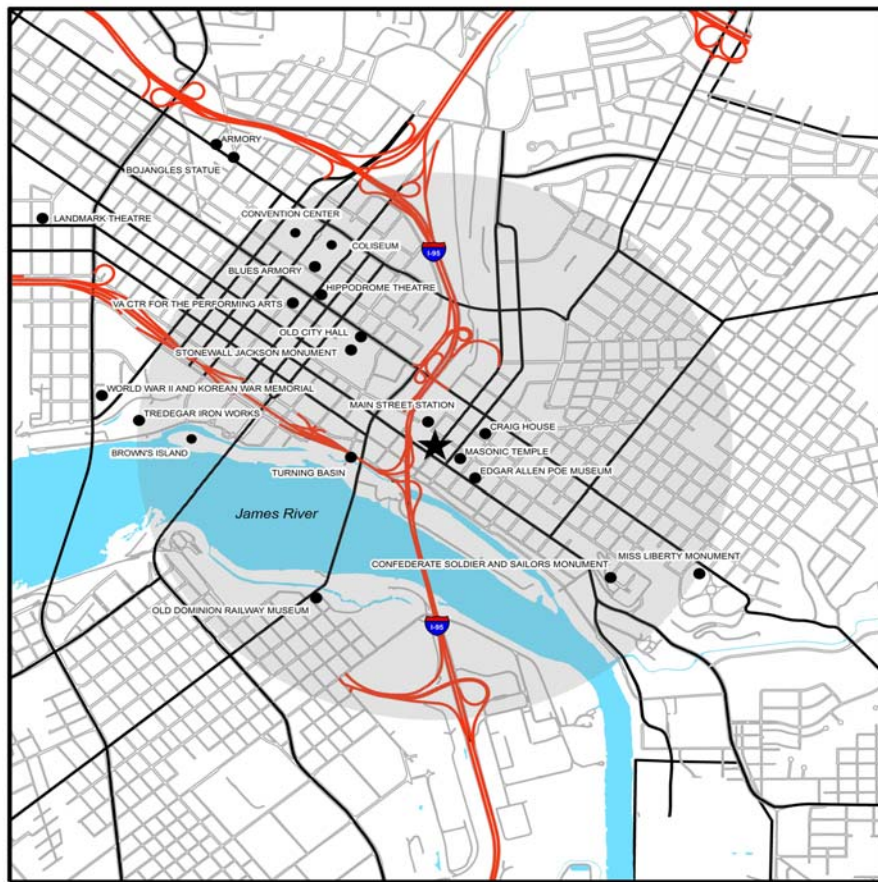


The River Lofts at Tobacco Row

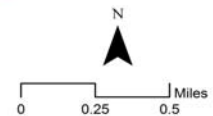
The projects of Tobacco Row are some of the most influential improvements in Shockoe Bottom. Beginning in 1988, the project has already created more than 600 additional housing units to the area. The Tobacco Row housing units are anticipated to create more than 1,000 residents in the next five to six years. Some of the existing floor space of the redeveloped buildings is anticipated to be developed for office and commercial uses. It is likely that the Tobacco Row development will also include a

substantial retail component on the north side of Main Street to serve the growing residential markets of Shockoe Bottom and Church Hill.

Cultural Interest Areas



Source: City of Richmond 2006 GIS Database



Trends in Assessed Values and Sales for Shockoe Bottom



For many years after the decline of the tobacco industry in Shockoe Bottom, the neighborhood was nearly bereft of people and there were few remaining businesses to serve them. However, since the construction of the floodwall in 1995 and conversion of old tobacco warehouses into loft residences, Shockoe Bottom has been reborn.

Table 1 shows the average sales prices and square footages of properties sold between 1991 and 2005 within a three-block radius of the Market and within Richmond as a whole. A clear trend of increasing property values both in Shockoe Bottom and across the City of Richmond can be interpreted from the data. The increase in value may be a plus for the 17th Street Market because property owners may begin investing money in the neighborhood and transform it into a safe and attractive destination. In the future, increased property values may also negatively impact the Market if smaller businesses that support the Market are priced out of the neighborhood.

	3-Block Radius	City-Wide
Period	Median Sales Price	
1991-1995	\$63,950	\$38,000
1996-2000	\$68,000	\$80,000
2001-2005	\$114,500	\$113,500
	Median Sq. Ft.	
1991-1995	4,293	3,817
1996-2000	4,424	5,094
2001-2005	3,023	3,205
	Median Price/ Sq. Ft.	
1991-1995	\$14.81	\$9.96
1996-2000	\$13.79	\$22.75
2001-2005	\$31.91	\$35.41

Public Safety Trends

Public safety is major concern at the Market and in Shockoe Bottom. Shockoe Bottom is often perceived as a “high crime” area. This perception has increased since the devastating flooding from Tropical Storm Gaston. Even though crime remains a critical issue, the majority of criminal activity has declined over the 2000-2005 period. Despite the decline in criminal activity, the probability for crime is higher in the area due to poor lighting, confusing circulation patterns, poor sight lines at many intersections, and a lack of safe, off-street parking.³

³ See, City of Richmond Master Plan, Land Use and Development Strategy.

Table 2: Shockoe Bottom (Census Tract 205) and City of Richmond Crime Data 2000-2005					
Type of Crime	# of Crimes: Shockoe Bottom	% Change from 2000-2005	# Crimes: Richmond City	% Change from 2000-2005	Ratio (%Change Shockoe Bottom/ %Change Richmond)
Homicide	7	33%	489	88.4%	0.38
Sex Offense	25	-200%	2,116	-144.1%	1.39
Robbery	176	57%	7,393	-103.5%	-0.55
Assault	691	-104%	35,623	-125.3%	0.83
Burglary	202	-174%	16,687	-136.0%	1.28
Vice	295	-158%	12,562	-101.8%	1.55
Theft	1,909	99%	56,920	-154.9%	-0.64
Vehicle Theft	502	-123%	14,942	-132.2%	0.93
Other	2,943	-160%	103,892	-147.4%	1.09

Sources: Richmond Police Department (www.ci.richmond.va.us) and Unites States Census (www.census.gov)

Table 2 displays the crime statistics from 2000-2005 for the Shockoe Bottom Neighborhood (Census Tract 205) and the City of Richmond. The data illustrates overall criminal activity declining from 2000-2005; however, the city saw a larger decline in criminal activity over the 2000-2005 period than did Shockoe Bottom. Robberies and thefts increased in Shockoe Bottom, yet these crimes declined in the city as a whole. Police records indicate that Grace, Main, Franklin, Broad, and 18th Streets have more reported incidents than other streets in the 205 Census Tract. It is important to note that Shockoe Bottom's active nightlife may contribute to some of the criminal activity, especially petty violence and theft.

Building Size, Condition, and Use

Building uses in Shockoe Bottom help determine how land-use components within the area conflict with or compliment each other. Building conditions can improve or damage revitalization efforts and pedestrian circulation patterns as well as determine the urban scale of the neighborhood. All of these factors influence public perceptions about the area's safety, vibrancy, and function.

Building Size

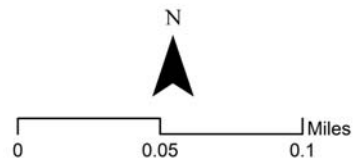
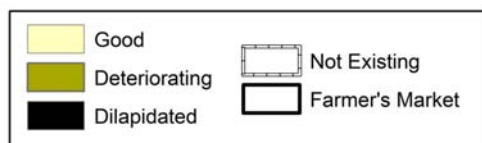
The buildings in Shockoe Bottom are generally attached structures that rise two to three stories high. The buildings directly east and south of the Market are roughly uniform in size, with square footages of less than 10,000 square feet. The largest buildings lie to the west and north of the Market, including Main Street Station and its vacant train shed as well as the Loving's Produce



properties. Adaptive reuse or redevelopment of these parcels is currently in the planning stages by the City of Richmond. The plans tentatively call for retail, hospitality, and residential uses which could enhance the economic vitality of the area surrounding the Market.

Building Condition

Shockoe Bottom Building Conditions



Mapped utilizing Richmond Redevelopment & Housing Authority's Building Conditions Rating Scale



Shockoe Bottom Building

The previous map shows the physical condition of buildings surrounding the 17th Street Farmers' Market ascertained through visual survey in October, 2006. Utilizing the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority's building conditions rating scale, buildings within a three-block radius received a rating of good, deteriorating, or dilapidated. Buildings that received a rating of dilapidated have several structural problems such as cracked and/or sinking foundations, cracked and/or damaged walls, missing and/or loose material on the roof, and/or rotted trims. The buildings northwest of the Market are poorly maintained and in much need of repair and reuse, as evident by their deteriorating or dilapidated rating. Other buildings fronting the Market on all other sides are in good or deteriorating condition.

Building Use

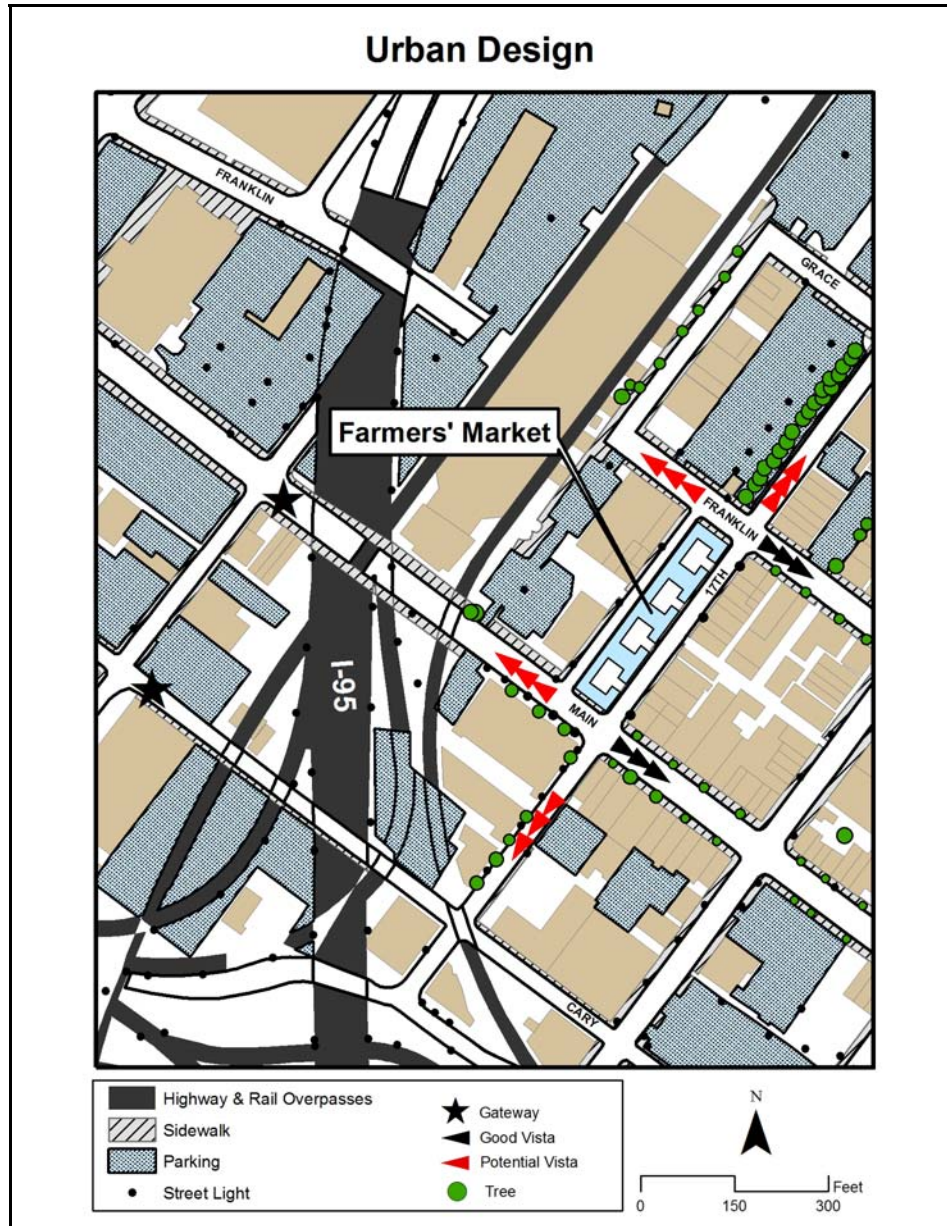


17th Street features typical Shockoe Bottom building composition

The diverse building uses in Shockoe Bottom offer street activity at varying times throughout the day. Several buildings surrounding the Market contain restaurants and bars with a variety of culinary offerings. To the south of the Market are commercial services and offices for realty and construction firms. To the north of the Farmers' Market, the building uses are industrial in nature and do not complement the Market.

Urban Design, Streetscape, and Infrastructure Condition⁴

Urban design elements are important determinants of the quality and success of neighborhoods and commercial districts. The 17th Street Farmers' Market is both enhanced and hurt by the urban design of the Shockoe Bottom district through its extensive, yet inadequate utilization of these principles.



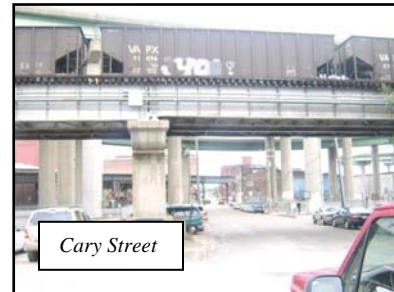
⁴ General sources used for this section: [Shockoe Bottom: The Urban Design Plan](#). Richmond Revitalization, Virginia Commonwealth University. Jeannie Welliver, Project Development Manger, City of Richmond Department of Economic Development.



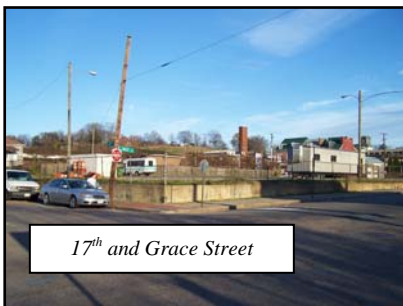
Main Street provides the primary eastern and western gateways into the Shockoe Bottom neighborhood.⁵ The western Main Street gateway is a hindrance to the overall appeal and accessibility of the Shockoe Bottom area due to the I-95 and railroad overpasses and poorly-maintained surrounding buildings. However, this gateway will be significantly improved by the City's dedication of a new plaza across Main Street from Main Street Station and a small park west of the overpasses.

Richmond is also exploring the creation of a second gateway into the Shockoe Bottom area by extending East Franklin Street through the train shed of Main Street Station. Such an entrance would provide much needed pedestrian access from Downtown and VCU's medical campus to Shockoe Bottom.

Cary Street carries traffic from Shockoe Slip to Shockoe Bottom, but is currently a poorly defined gateway. There is great potential, however, to create a proper gateway at the Cary Street entrance to Shockoe Bottom by linking the Canal Walk with Main Street Station, the Market, and other destination points in the area.



Buildings immediately surrounding the Market are predominantly two to three stories in height (Main Street Station with its clock tower is one notable exception). Most of the buildings in this area are designed for first-floor retail use with upper floors as offices or residential apartments. Brick is the building material of choice. The Market structure's exposed wooden beams and sheet metal roofing, however, detract from the architectural continuity of the area.



Vistas, the linear views that reinforce a neighborhood's sense of place, lack visual interest in Shockoe Bottom. To the north, vistas are hindered by parking lots, vacant dirt lots, and a warehouse loading dock. Southern vistas include either storefronts lining Main Street or the flood wall and highway overpass. Western vistas are dominated by the interstate and railroad overpasses, which block any potential view of or association with the Downtown skyline. Main Street Station does serve

⁵ See, Appendix: Map 1.

as a focal point in this area, however. The northern vista along Main Street is strong in that the street trees along Main Street provide a strong linearity that draws the eye eastward to the monumental statue atop Libby Hill Park.⁶



Cobblestone Street Pavement

The streets of Shockoe Bottom adhere to a modified grid layout. Many are paved with asphalt, though some are made of original cobblestone.⁷ Shockoe Bottom's sidewalks are adequate for pedestrian use, however many are not broad enough to accommodate sidewalk dining. They also lack street furniture such as trashcans and benches.

Lighting is varied throughout the district as well. Cobra-head lighting fronts the Market and southbound 17th Street while old-fashioned, pedestrian scale lampposts exist on the northbound side and along Main Street. Streets north of the Farmers' Market lack lighting altogether and increase the perception of an unsafe environment. There is a general lack of signage throughout the area, with the exception of Market signage, which is limited and easily overlooked.

Frequent inconsistencies in sidewalk paving, lighting, tree plantings, and handicap-accessible curbs are prevalent in the area and create barriers to pedestrian flow and access. This conflict is illustrated at the Farmers' Market where 17th Street sidewalks are constructed of brick pavers on one side of the Market and sidewalks are paved with concrete on the other. Overall, Shockoe Bottom does exhibit admirable urban design elements, but the haphazard manner in which they have been implemented creates an environment that is disjointed and unsettling rather than cohesive and soothing.

Infrastructure



17th and Franklin Street

The infrastructure of Shockoe Bottom is in fair condition, though in many areas it is obvious that significant repairs are in order. This is particularly true for parking lots and vacant buildings. Overhead power lines and street lighting appear functional, though the power lines and utilitarian lighting detract from the historic ambiance of Shockoe Bottom. The main sewer lines that run beneath the area are aging, though plans have been made to conduct needed repairs. Similarly, the City is working to streamline the drainage system in Shockoe Bottom as part of a major flood mitigation project.

⁶ See, Appendix: Map 2.

⁷ See, Appendix: Map 2.

Circulation and Parking

Efficient circulation of vehicular and pedestrian traffic throughout Shockoe Bottom is necessary to provide Market customers and vendors with convenient access to the Market. Likewise, sufficient parking capacity is necessary for shoppers who are driving to Shockoe Bottom.

Traffic Circulation

In June 2003, RK & K Engineering Consultants conducted a traffic study for the City that indicated the peak hours of traffic for Shockoe Bottom were between the hours of 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Traffic conditions for 2003 are relatively good with only a few intersections with a level of service (LOS) in the C or D range. However, conditions degrade by the year 2013 with a LOS of E at 14th Street & Franklin Street, 14th Street & Deck Street, 15th Street & Main Street. Traffic congestion at these intersections may create a disincentive for customers to drive to Shockoe Bottom and the Market. Moreover, the 2013 scenario does not take into account any of the new developments that will generate more traffic in the area, such as Rockett's Landing or the Fulton Gas Works site (See the Appendix for a full table describing circulation LOS).

Parking⁸

According to the Shockoe Bottom Transportation Plan 2020 Transportation Advisory Committee, parking conditions and availability are two major concerns voiced by residents and business owners. However, considering the current demand within the Shockoe Bottom neighborhood, it appears that the amount of available parking is sufficient.⁹ There are two parking decks in the area: one is located at 14th and Main Streets, and another is at 14th and Cary Streets. These parking decks serve state office employees, and consequently the decks are underutilized on weekends.



⁹ See, City of Richmond. (2006). Parking Information. Retrieved September 19, 2006 from <http://www.richmondgov.com/departments/publicworks/>

¹⁰ See, City of Richmond. *Shockoe Bottom Transportation Plan 2020: Draft Report May 2004*. Retrieved September 17, 2006 from <http://www.richmondgov.com/departments/publicworks/shockoetranspplan2020.aspx>

II.BACKGROUND AND ISSUES: 17TH STREET FARMERS' MARKET

Previous Plans for the 17th Street Farmers' Market

In addition to the plans for Shockoe Bottom mentioned above, two plans were created for the Market within the past 20 years. In 1985, the Richmond Revitalization Program of Virginia Commonwealth University produced the *17th Street Farmers' Market Plan*. The recommendations for physical alterations were designed in order to promote safety and a coherent sense of place. A new organizational structure was proposed in which the City collaborated with a legislative



The 17th Street Farmers' Market

committee of representatives from Market vendors, area businesses, and the Virginia Department of Agriculture. The City was also advised to hire a market manager to oversee daily Market duties and operation.

A new shelter was built, and more recently the orientation of the vendors in the Market was altered from an “outward orientation” to an “inward orientation.” Presently, most of the vendors face inward toward the center of the Market, though some persist in facing outward. (Although these changes were not recommended in the 1985 plan, they were made to improve safety and in hopes of creating a stronger sense of place inside the Market.) The position of market master has also been established.

In 1997, the Project for Public Space and Public Market Collaborative produced A *Business Plan for the 17th Street Farmers' Market*. This business plan focused on the changing nature of Shockoe Bottom and its status in the Richmond area as an entertainment and restaurant district. The Plan called for the creation of a weekend Night Art Market with live entertainment. On Sundays, the Market was to become an antiques and collectibles market. This aspect of the plan was implemented through the Shockoe Flea and Antique Market on Sundays. The business plan also recommended an increase in safe parking, especially for the suggested night market.

The plan recommended that, overall, one of the most important aspects of the Market to be stressed in all promotional activities is the social nature of the Market's atmosphere. Currently, the Market does advertise in various print media within the city. However, the reach and effectiveness of this promotion is highly questionable due to the lack of customers who frequent the Market.

Market Organization and Design

Understanding how the 17th Street Farmers' Market is organized and managed helps define opportunities and constraints related to the Market's functionality. The Market offers three weekly events (Table 3). The Market also annually features several special events including: theme markets (e.g., Mercado, the Haunted Market); festivals (Shockoe Tomato, Brunswick Stew, and Virginia Gay Pride); educational, charitable, and community events (e.g., Animalia, Growing Communities Workshop, Shockoe Bottom Cleanup); and live music events.

Name	Day	Time	Season	Theme
Grower's Market	Thursday	8:30-2:00	4/1-10/31	Homegrown or homemade products
Bohemian Market	Thursday	9:00-2:00	11/1-11/31	
Eclectic Market	Saturday	9:00-3:00	4/1-12/1	Mix of vendors including farmers, crafters, and peddlers
Shockoe Flea and Antique Market	Sunday	9:00-4:00	4/1-12/1	Flea items and antiques

Source: www.17thstreetfarmersmarket.com

The Market is owned by the City of Richmond, and it is operated by the City's Department of Economic Development.¹⁰ The Market's hierarchy of management from top to bottom is as follows: City Council, the Mayor, the Chief Administrative Officer, the Director of Economic Development, the Neighborhood Development Manager, and the Market Manager. An Administrative Project Analyst and a Maintenance Worker assist the Market Manager. In the past, an Advisory Board of citizen stakeholders has given guidance to the Market; the Board is currently inactive.

The Director of Economic Development is responsible for adopting the Market's rules and regulations.¹¹ The rules cover policies and procedures for the operation of the Market, the Market's operating schedule, restrictions on the type and quantity of products sold, and the creation and issuance of vendor permits.¹²



The Market Manager administers the operation of the Market and is responsible for advertising, marketing, general public relations, and management of the budget. The Market Manager also tracks the Market's performance and sets goals. On market day, the Market Manager maintains a detailed spreadsheet of vendors to keep track of who is exhibiting.¹³ The Market Manager also tracks the frequency of exhibitions, which

¹¹ See, the Code of the City of Richmond, Virginia, 2004, as amended, § 2-301 *et seq.* (Municode 2006).

¹² See, the Code of the City of Richmond, Virginia, 2004, as amended, § 26-524 (a) (Municode 2006).

¹³ *Id.* §§ 26-524 (d) and 26-526 (Municode 2006).

¹⁴ Examples of these spreadsheets are available.

vendors use electricity or water, and the days/times when vendors exhibit. However to date, the market has not tracked total sales.

The City Council determines the amount of funding that the Market receives from the General Fund, and money allocated through this source does not carry over into the next fiscal year. Money from the General Fund is primarily used to pay staff salaries.¹⁴ The City allocates additional money into the Special Fund, the remainder of which carries over into the next fiscal year.¹⁵ In addition to funding from the City treasury, the Special Fund receives revenue from vendor fees, parking fees, and the Market's ATM machine rental fee. The Special Fund is used to cover marketing, advertising, maintenance, and operational costs. Finally, the RRP Fund receives revenue through charitable donations.¹⁶ The RRP Fund is used for music, children's activities, and most other special events.¹⁷

The Administrative Project Analyst is responsible for vendor recruitment and management. Vendors are recruited through word of mouth, the market's website, and advertising in 35 local and statewide information outlets (e.g., *Style Weekly*, *Farm Bureau News*, *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, *Henrico Leader*, Virginia Food and Beverage Expo, Virginia Grown Conference). Vendors are required to pay the \$10/day market fee upon arrival



and prior to setting up their products; vendors who require electricity must pay an additional \$10/day fee. Maximum fees are set by act of the Richmond City Council.¹⁸

Vendors may also enter into annual contracts to reserve the use of specific stalls for a full calendar year. Each vendor is required to sign a participation contract including legal disclaimers and an indemnification clause, vendor contact information, and vendor product information.



Certain Market events are sponsored by a number of state and local corporations, associations, and agencies. Some of these sponsors include: Ukrop's Supermarkets, First Market Bank, Tec-Head, Venture Richmond (formerly Renaissance Partners), Dominion Virginia Power, City Edition, Philip Morris USA, Commonwealth Event Company, and the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Service.¹⁹

¹⁵ See, Appendix, General Fund Allocation for FY07.

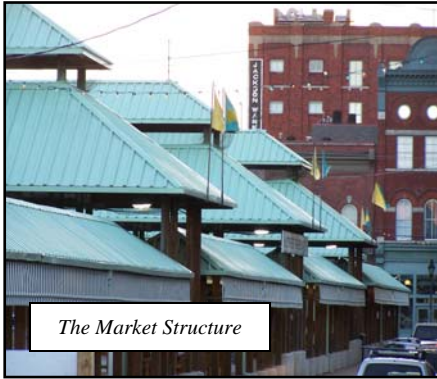
¹⁶ See, Appendix, Special Funds.

¹⁷ RRP is a registered non-profit organization authorized to receive charitable, tax-deductible contributions.

¹⁸ See, Appendix, Richmond Recreation and Parks Foundation Fund.

¹⁹ See, the Code of the City of Richmond, Virginia, 2004, as amended, Appendix A, Fee Schedule, § 26-522 (Municode 2006).

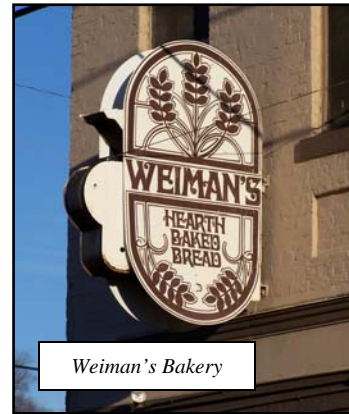
²⁰ See, Appendix, Sponsor/In-Kind Partners and Nonprofit groups/Civic groups/Government Agency Partners.



The 17th Street Farmers' Market is a partially-covered structure that lends a feeling of enclosure. The covered section of the structure and its arrangement prevent the Market from fully integrating into the surrounding urban landscape by blocking views of surrounding buildings and vistas. Few portions of the market square allow a person to feel exposure to or experience an open environment. However, this enclosure also increases the functionality of the Market during inclement weather events and also provides shade during hot summer days.

Surrounding Business and Property Owners

There are numerous owners currently holding property around the 17th Street Farmers' Market. Of the property facing the Market on each side of 17th Street, there are seven different owners. Of these seven, four own many properties on this street as well as other properties on the surrounding streets. These major owners include: the City of Richmond, Weimans Bakery Inc, Mrs. Betty Loving, and Land 1701 LLC. Out of the 19 properties on 17th Street, 15 are owned by member of this group. The remaining four properties are owned by Shockoprops LLC, John Brayley, and Phil Cronein. The map below illustrates ownership of the property surrounding the market.



Looking at the larger area, consisting of 1600 E. Franklin St. to the northwest, 219 N. 18th St. to the northeast, 100 N. 17th St. to the southwest, and 101 N. 18th St. to the southeast, the pattern of a small number of owners holding most of the property is consistent. In this area, there are seven owners who own four or more properties each. Out of the 83 properties, these seven owners own 51 properties (61%). In addition, out of the 30 total property owners in this area, only one owner is from outside the Richmond metropolitan area. This owner, Louise Larus, is from Bennington, VT. If the City wishes to revitalize the neighborhood by renting the vacant buildings, it will be simpler to negotiate with only a few multiple-property owners rather than numerous single-property owners.

Area Property Owners



Source: City of Richmond GIS Database

Consumer Market Analysis



The 17th Street Farmers' Market's economic difficulties could be related to a lack of demand for fresh produce in the surrounding trade area. On the other hand, if the supply of area grocers and produce vendors is not meeting demand, changes must be made to the Farmers' Market to help it maximize market penetration. Also, even if one or two area grocers are meeting demand in some market segments, the Farmers' Market must identify niches of unmet demand and look for opportunities to cooperate with specialty grocers.

The purpose of performing the following consumer market study was to analyze the Market trade area in order to estimate how much money households spend on food goods and more importantly, the amount of those expenditures that current businesses capture.

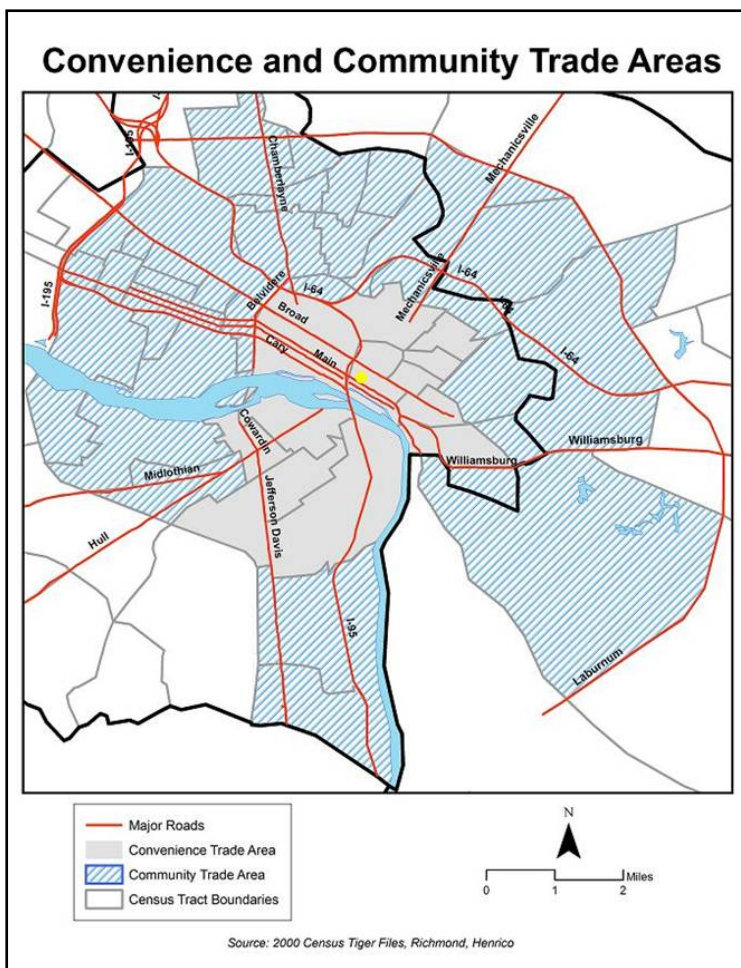
In order to do so, the convenience trade area and community trade area were first defined as follows: Convenience Trade Area: 1 mile radius of census tracts around the Market (Table 4) and Community Trade Area: 3 mile radius of tracts (Table 5)

Table 4: Convenience (1-Mile) Trade Area 17th St. Farmers' Market 2006									
Item		Potential Expenditure ¹	Median GLA ²	Median Sales / Sq Ft	Existing Stores ³	Supportable Sq Ft	Existing Sq Ft	Unmet Demand in Sq Ft	Potential New Units
Food at Home	total	\$48,992,269							
Grocery	75%	\$36,744,202	34,187	354	1	103,797	34,187	69,610	2
Convenience	15%	\$7,348,840	2,023	245	19	29,995	38,437	-8,442	-4
Specialty (Deli, Bakery...)	10%	\$4,899,227	1,650	313	9	15,652	14,850	802	0
Food away from home	total	\$18,065,855							
Sit Down Restaurants	60%	\$10,839,513	2,750	273	38	39,705	104,500	-64,795	-24
Fast Food	40%	\$7,226,342	2,015	143	18	50,534	36,270	14,264	7

Table 5: Convenience (3-Mile) Trade Area 17th St. Farmers' Market 2006									
Item		Potential Expenditure ¹	Median GLA ²	Median Sales / Sq Ft	Existing Stores ³	Supportable Sq Ft	Existing Sq Ft	Unmet Demand in Sq Ft	Potential New Units
Food at Home	Total	\$290,165,170							
Grocery	75%	\$217,165,170	34,187	354	7	613,461	239,309	374,152	11
Convenience	15%	\$43,524,776	2,023	245	63	177,652	127,449	50,203	25
Specialty (Deli, Bakery...)	10%	\$29,016,517	1,650	313	138	92,705	227,700	-134,995	-82
Food away from home	Total	\$109,762,038							
Sit Down Restaurants	60%	\$65,857,223	2,750	273	136	241,235	374,000	-132,765	-48
Fast Food	40%	\$43,904,815	2,015	143	34	307,027	68,510	238,517	118

1 Total Annual Expenditure for item. 2 GLA = Gross Leasable Area
3 Existing stores were counted by students doing a walking window survey on 10/2006

Second, census data was used to calculate the total number of households and the total income of households living in each tract based on pre-determined income ranges. Finally, the researchers determined the amount of demand relative to the percentage of household income dedicated to food purchases and the number of businesses currently operating in the convenience and community trade areas.



The study of the convenience trade area shows an unmet demand for new grocery stores, specialty stores, and fast food restaurants. The analysis of the community trade area demonstrates an unmet demand for new grocery stores, specialty stores, and fast food restaurants. However, there is also a demand for more convenience stores in the trade area.

The convenience trade area around the 17th Street Farmers' Market contains one full-service grocery store and many convenience stores. The market analysis revealed that up to two additional grocery stores could be supported within a one-mile radius of the Market. Based on the calculated number of unmet demand in square feet and given the current grocery store's size, it is reasonable to assume that this existing demand could support the introduction of more grocery stores to the area. Moreover, this existing demand for more grocery stores suggests that such a demand could be met in part by produce and value-added food items sold at the Farmers' Market.

Consumer Market Segment Surveys

The market analysis above shows that there is significant demand for food products in the 17th Street Farmers' Markets area, yet the Market struggles to attract customers. In order to determine the cause of this problem and how to correct it, a variety of surveys were developed to study consumer market segments of the Market. The consumer market segments include current consumers (i.e. current Market customers and visitors of special Market events such as the Haunted Market and Virginia Gay Pride Festival) and groups that are potential consumers (i.e. downtown workers, Shockoe Bottom residents, and potential regional customers).



Festivities at the Gay Pride Festival

The Southeastern Institute of Research (SIR) conducted a survey about the Market on March 10, 2005. The SIR survey was reviewed prior to conducting the surveys discussed in this report in order to avoid redundancies and to better address the issues of why consumers are not coming to the Market and what the Market could do to attract them. See the Appendix for the survey methodologies and detailed analyses of the consumer market segment surveys.

Summary of Results



View from inside the Farmers' Market

Richmonders know about the Market. For all the consumer surveys combined, 95% of potential and current customers have been to the Shockoe Bottom area of Richmond before. Even 80% of the potential regional customers have been to the Market in the past. Out of the nearby residents surveyed, all respondents had visited either the Market or Shockoe Bottom. It is important to note the location of current customers of the Market. About half of the customers travel five miles or less to the Market, and almost all of the customers travel less than ten miles.

A large majority of consumers heard about the Market either through word-of-mouth, by driving by the Market, or other non-promotional means. Word-of-mouth advertising accounts for 45% of the current and potential customers' Market knowledge. Thirty-five percent of the residents of Shockoe Bottom learned about the Market through word-of-mouth advertising. Driving by the Market is the main way residents heard about the

Market, accounting for 55%. Other non-promotional means account for 40% of the current and potential customers.

The results indicate that marketing and promotion are problems for the Market. However, the Market does take part in promotional activities such as newspaper and Internet advertisements for special events. Of the current and potential customers, and the residents of Shockoe Bottom, 10% have heard about the Market through these means of advertising. About 25% of visitors to the special Market events heard about the event through these means as well.

Even though they know about it, very few of the customers surveyed visit the Market frequently. Only current customers visit the Market frequently on a weekly or monthly basis. A few people surveyed at the Haunted Market visit the Market frequently; however, even more of these people visit rarely. The remainder of the consumers surveyed visit the regular market rarely. As far as the Market's schedule is concerned, there is a mismatch between when the Market is open and when the largest number of customers (potential or current) would like to shop there. Only current customers are pleased with the Market's current hours of operation. Residents and regional potential customers prefer the idea of weekend and weekday evening Market hours. Workers in the area are more likely to visit the Market on workdays implying that a weekday afternoon Market would be ideal for them.



Produce at the Market

The most popular items purchased at the Market are produce items. Residents surveyed showed the greatest interest in the availability of produce at the Market. In fact, some people in each consumer group expressed interest in a wider selection of produce at the Market. In general, following fresh produce, the next most sought items are prepared foods. Flowers are also popular items among all consumers surveyed. Crafts are popular but more so among nearby workers. These purchasing-habit findings

correspond with the SIR survey results; respondents to the SIR survey expressed a strong interest in increased produce selection, especially on Saturdays, and the availability of prepared foods or lunch foods at the Market. Respondents also expressed interest in additional craft offerings at the Market.

The surveys also revealed consumer perceptions of the Market's design and ambiance as well as its relationship to Shockoe Bottom. All consumers are interested in the history of the Market and the Bottom. The Market customers are pleased with the outdoor arrangement and open-air feeling of the Market. All consumers indicated that they see a lot of potential for



View of the Farmers' Market from Franklin St.

interaction between surrounding businesses and the Market. In fact, many consumers said that they are likely to visit other businesses in the area or that when they visit Shockoe Bottom they are more likely to visit businesses other than the Market. Some consumers responded that they are appreciative of the friendliness of the vendors at the Market.



However, not all consumer perceptions of the Market are positive. Some consumers reported that they find the vendors reclusive and unfriendly. They also noted the inconsistency in vendor turn-out as a negative characteristic. In reference to craft vendors, consumers find some to be unprofessional and are displeased with the quality of crafts offered. Similarly, consumers reported displeasure with the variety of produce available at the Market. In fact, consumers are displeased with the general variety of items being offered at the Market. Many consumers expressed concern over the perception of crime in the area and said it deters them from visiting the Market. Other deterrents include the perception of a lack of parking close to the Market, especially immediately adjoining the Market. Also, consumers are displeased with the area's appearance; a general perception became evident that the Shockoe Bottom neighborhood was "dirty and run-down." Consumers also indicated that they are displeased with the Market's promotion. They rarely hear about special events and other occurrences at the Market.

Finally, consumers were asked to suggest improvements for the Market. One frequent suggestion is to increase available parking near the Market. Two other common suggestions focus on the neighborhood of Shockoe Bottom. Respondents think that the area needs to be revitalized to make it a better destination; the number of abandoned buildings needs to be reduced and the area needs to be generally cleaner and better lit. Also, increased police presence or the creation of a Market security team is recommended. Survey respondents suggested increasing the number of vendors in general; they want more produce vendors and think that the number of craft vendors could be reduced, at least in relation to produce vendors.



Market Stakeholders Surveys

In a similar fashion to the consumer market analysis discussed above, surveys of Market stakeholders were also conducted. Market stakeholders are those individuals that have, or could potentially have, a significant interest in the success of the 17th Street Farmers' Market and the greater Shockoe Bottom community. The stakeholder groups surveyed include inactive and active market vendors, Shockoe Bottom business owners, and owners of vacant property in Shockoe Bottom.

The intent of the inactive vendor survey was to determine why the vendors are no longer selling at the Market and what can be done to the Market in order to encourage them to sell there on a weekly basis. The active vendor survey was implemented to gain a better understanding of the vendors' needs and their satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) with the Market. The Shockoe Bottom business owner survey was designed to assess the impact the 17th Street Farmers' Market is having on area businesses and to gain a greater sense of the potential the Market has for contributing to the economic prosperity of Shockoe Bottom. Finally, the vacant property owner survey was implemented to explore the potential synergy that could be created between the Market and surrounding properties.

Inactive Market Vendors



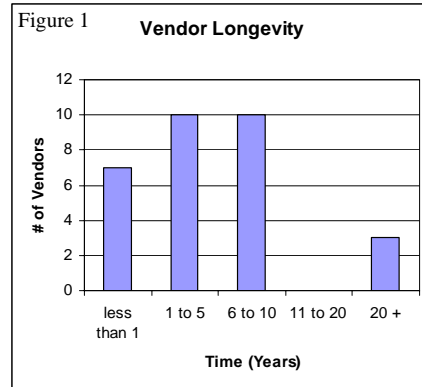
Survey results show that inactive vendors are not currently selling at the Market because there not enough customers for the vendors to break even. Another common complaint was the lack of produce vendors and the presence of too many craft vendors, as well as insufficient advertising. Inactive vendors also expressed a desire for better communication between vendors and staff, as well as between staff and City management. Inactive vendors also wanted management to follow through on agreed-upon policies and enforce Market rules.

Several of the inactive market vendors currently sell at other farmers' markets in Williamsburg, Spotsylvania County, Fredericksburg, and Goochland County. Once again, the issue of the proportion of produce to craft vendors was raised, this time as a primary reason for selling at these other farmers' markets.

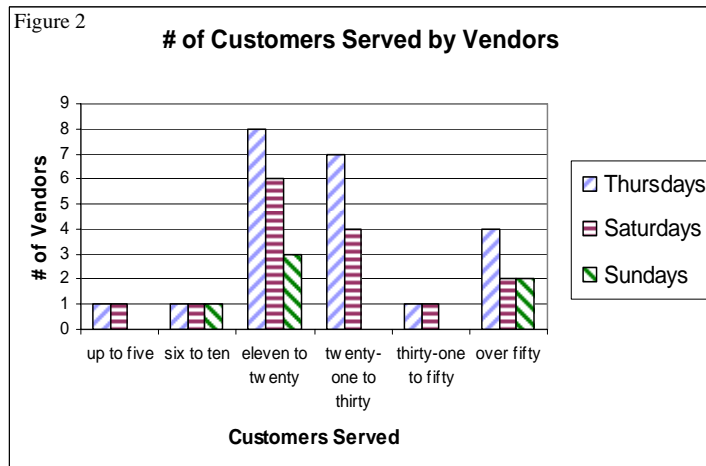
Active Market Vendors

The majority of surveyed vendors sell at the Market on a weekly basis. As previously confirmed by the SIR study, Thursday is the most popular market day at which 83% of vendors sell. Fifty-seven percent sell on Saturdays and only 23% sell on Sundays. Half

of the vendors sell produce, 20% sell prepared foods, 17% sell crafts, and 13% sell antiques and collectibles.²⁰ Vendor longevity is shown in Figure 1.



Fewer than 1% travel less than five miles to sell at the Market, 33% travel five to ten miles, 33% travel 11-50 miles, 20% travel 51-100 miles, and 3% travel over 100 miles. Figure 2 shows the number of customers vendors serve on typical market days. Almost half of the vendors sell their produce to local businesses or restaurants.



Fifty percent of vendors participate in special market events, namely (see Figure 3). Nevertheless, very few noticed an increase in sales on regular market days following the special market day events. Vendors that will no longer participate in future special events were dissatisfied with higher fees at special events and a loss of sales because people came to the special events to listen to the band and socialize rather than to buy their products.



²⁰ This is the ratio for vendors who sell at the Thursday Growers' Market. Though the Thursday ratio of produce vendors to non-produce vendors is close to the 60:40 ratio recommended in the Revitalization Plan, only a small number of customers visit the Market on Thursdays. When the majority of customers visit the Market on weekends more non-produce vendors are present, creating the perception that the Market has too many non-produce vendors.

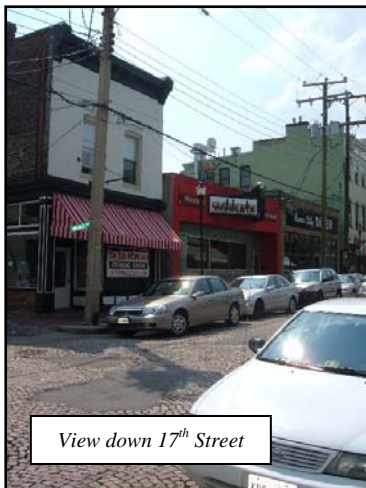
Vendors believe that Market advertisement needs great improvement. Other issues vendors would like to have addressed include flooding, safety, and appearance. Vendors would also prefer a greater variety of produce and lunch items offered at the Market, strictly categorized market days (e.g. the Thursday Growers' Market should be growers-only) and involvement in the decision-making process. Some vendors would prefer an annual fee to the current fee structure.

Overall, active vendors are fairly satisfied with the 17th Street Market, with the exception of the lack of customers and a lack of advertising, which are interrelated issues from the vendors' perspective. Almost half of active vendors sell at other Virginia farmers' markets including Williamsburg, Lynchburg, Goochland, Irvington, Lovettsville, Ashland, Alexandria, Charlottesville, Spotsylvania, and Arlington. Vendors sell at these markets because of the large customer base, the annual or flat fee, indoor market structures, cleanliness, support from the local government, numerous sponsors, a safe location, and produce-only policies (natural and locally grown). Many of these reasons further illustrate the deficiencies of the 17th Street Farmers' Market.



Active Vendor

Shockoe Bottom Business Owners



View down 17th Street

More than half of the surveyed business owners operate food establishments or closely related businesses. The rest consist of men's and women's apparel, legal services, real estate, a barber shop, and a variety store. All of these businesses are locally owned and operated. The business owners have a vested interest in the Market because a successful farmers' market that attracts people to the area would increase their potential customer base.

Business owners mentioned infrastructure as the main area needing improvement in Shockoe Bottom. Business owners also want to see more retail establishments, restaurants, bars, and comedy clubs in the area.



River City Diner

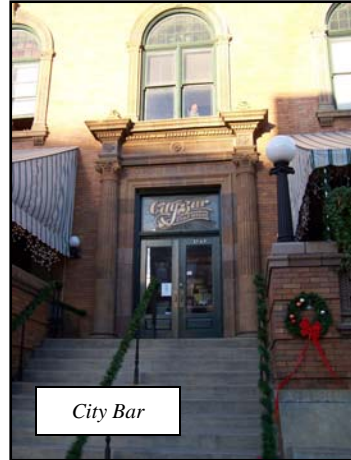
Regarding the Farmers' Market, many business owners cited weaknesses such as the limited variety of produce, lack of effective advertising, and the Sunday Shockoe Flea and Antique Market. General suggestions for improvement include increasing the number of weekly Market days, diversifying the types of vendors and the products they sell, and centering the Market around family-oriented activities.



Café Gutenberg

A focus group conducted with selected business owners offered more specific suggestions for improvement. One is to eliminate the Sunday Shockoe Flea and Antique Market. Another is to modify the Market hours to overlap with evening hours when area restaurants and bars begin to open. Additionally, owners suggested an indoor component to the Market and having the vendors face out towards the street.

The group is amenable to the suggestion of a joint advertising venture with the Market as it would defray their advertising costs and associate successful businesses with the Market. The suggestion of a cooperative sales effort between businesses and the Market was not as well received. Business owners expressed an interest in partnering with the Market in the future once the Market has become reliable in terms of produce volume and variety. A few of the businesses are interested in selling their prepared food at the Market, but are concerned by the added costs of selling at the Market and the lack of profits to be made due to Market's small customer base.



City Bar



Vacant Property on 17th Street

Vacant-Property Owners

Surveyed vacant-property owners mentioned that it is difficult to lease their properties due to infrastructure problems and negative perceptions of Shockoe Bottom. The owners are unsure how the Farmers' Market would benefit their buildings since they rent the properties to a variety of commercial tenants.



Vacant Property on 17th Street

One owner commented that in previous market seasons the Farmers' Market served as a business incubator for new businesses in the Bottom. Another commented that current products or events, such as the Sunday Shockoe Flea and Antique Market, now are of poorer quality than they were during previous market seasons.

III. OTHER FARMERS' MARKETS

The survey research identified a number of problems with the Market, so nine other farmers' markets were researched to generate ideas for reforms in the 17th Street Farmers' Market's economic structure, operations, promotion, and design. This research included observations of the markets during market days as well as interviews with vendors, market managers, and customers. The observed markets are divided into two categories based on the size of the metropolitan area in which they are located. The first-tier markets are located in larger metropolitan areas and include Baltimore, Alexandria, Cincinnati, and Washington, D.C. The second-tier markets function in smaller metropolitan areas and include Roanoke, Charlottesville, Fredericksburg, Ashland, and Williamsburg. Detailed information on the individual markets is provided in the Appendix.



It should be noted that the Richmond Department of Economic Development staff specifically requested a study of the widely-acclaimed Findlay Market in Cincinnati to provide lessons for the 17th Street Farmers' Market. The Findlay Market's success has helped revitalize an historic urban neighborhood, and thus Findlay provides a good example for Richmond.

Farmers' Markets in the Mid-Atlantic Region

Organization

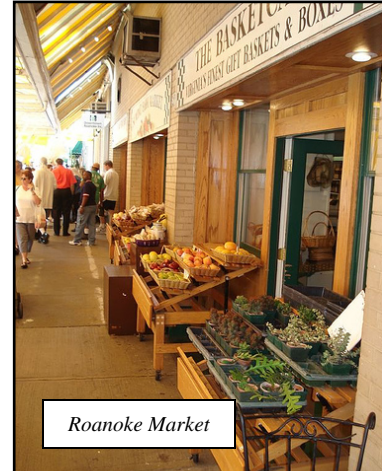


The organizational structure of a farmers' market is the foundation of a vibrant and successful market. The market manager's enforcement of the market's organizational policies determines the approaches that are taken towards such issues as vendor recruitment, vendor stall layout, and permitted product types. If properly implemented, the rules and regulations of a farmers' market will maintain vendor attendance and fees, hours of

operation, and the very character of the market. The organizational structure of a farmers' market can also have a great effect on the economic structure and the promotion efforts of the market. Table 6 below gives details about days of operation, fee structure, months of the market season, and the physical market layout of each regional market that has been examined.

Table 6: Comparison of Farmers' Markets						
Name	Ownership	Number of Staff	Fee Structure	Market Layout	Days of the Week	Season
Alexandria	City Dept. of General Services	Part-time manager & assistant	\$15/mo. (free in Jan. & Feb).	Open Air	Sat. 5:30am-10:30am	All Year
Ashland	Operated by Town & governed by vendors	Part time volunteer	\$25/year	Open Air	Sat. 9am-12pm	May - November
Baltimore	City of Baltimore Non-Profit	n/a	Varied by vendor type	Open Air	Sun. 8am - 12pm	May – December 24th
Charlottesville	City owned & operated	Part time manager & assistant	\$20/year + 8.5% of gross food producer sales or 11% of gross non-food producer sales	Open Air	Sat. 7am-12pm	April - October
Fredericksburg	City of Fredericksburg	n/a	n/a	Open Air	Mon. – Sat. 6am – 6pm	All Year
Roanoke	Downtown Roanoke Inc. Private	4 Full time, 1 part time, 1 contactor	\$10 Sun-Thurs \$15 Fri-Sat <u>6 mo.:</u> \$35/mo. <u>1 mo.:</u> \$40 <u>Monthly</u> <u>Saturday:</u> \$40 <u>Holiday Season:</u> \$75/mo.	Indoor/ Outdoor	Daily M-Sat: 8-5 Sun: 10-4	All Year
Washington D.C.	City owned	4 staff	<u>Indoor:</u> \$25/day <u>Farmers' Line:</u> \$20-\$35 by area/day <u>Flea Market:</u> \$25/8x4 space \$35/two 6ft tables \$50/four 6ft tables \$80/200ft of space \$30/additional 100ft	Indoor/ Outdoor	Tues.-Sat: 7am-6pm Sun: 9-4 <u>Flea Market:</u> Sat & Sun 9-6	All Year
Williamsburg	City owned & operated	n/a	\$35/year + 6% of gross sales	Open Air	Sat. 8am-12pm (8:30am start during Winter Market)	May – October + Winter & Holiday Markets

With the exception of the Roanoke farmers' market, all of the markets that were visited are owned by their respective cities. The only difference in this ownership structure is the city department that oversees each market. The Eastern Market in Washington, D.C., for instance, is operated by the Office of Promotions and Arts, as opposed to the Alexandria farmers' market, which is operated by the Department of General Services. Roanoke's market is owned and operated by a private non-profit entity. It is also involved in partnerships with the local television and radio stations, Roanoke Parks and Recreation, and the Wake Forest MBA program.



None of the markets are served by a large staff. Roanoke (with six) and Washington's Eastern Market (with four) have the largest number of hired employees. The other five markets have on average two regular workers, typically the market manager and an assistant. The manager or assistant are usually the ones that handle any vendor disputes that may arise. Ashland, however, allows the governing vendors' association to handle the disputes.

Every market that was visited holds a Saturday market, with half of the markets limiting market activities to this day. Five of the eight markets limit market activity to five hours or less during market days. The fee structure varies with each market, some charging annual fees, while others calculate fees on a sliding scale based on the size and location of the vendor space or on the type of products being sold (i.e. produce or non-produce). The first-tier markets of Washington, D.C. and Baltimore maintain the most detailed fee structure for vendors. The Charlottesville and Williamsburg markets take a percentage of the gross sales from vendors at the end of each day.

Economic Structure



The economic structure of a farmers' market is determined by the type of vendors that sell on market days. The vendors at both the first- and second-tier markets offer a diverse combination of produce, prepared foods, and crafts. The market management regulates a diversity of product offerings by maintaining a 6:4 or 7:3 ratio of produce to non-produce vendors. These ratios help to maintain the markets' emphasis on local farmers and their products. The larger the metropolitan area the market serves, the greater the distance farmers

are willing to travel to sell their produce at the market. Several farmers selling at first-tier markets travel up to two hours to sell on market days, while second-tier markets attract local farmers. Several markets feature vendor products in cooking demonstrations performed by the chefs of local restaurants.

Promotion & Marketing



Promotion and marketing efforts are important for attracting new customers to the farmers' markets and for increasing awareness of special events that occur on market days. The established nature of the first- and second-tier markets' customer bases allows for minimal promotion and marketing investments through television, radio, or newspaper advertisements during the season. These markets limit marketing through such media to grand reopening and season-ending events. Other promotional efforts employed by both first- and second-tier markets are less costly. Banners and

signs detailing market locations, activities, and events are placed in strategic locations throughout the city to promote market activities and events. Parking signs help direct and welcome market customers to the market sites.

Design

The other farmers' markets vary in the physical design of their sites. Some are open-air markets, yet others are located in permanent structures. While the design of some markets enhances the aesthetics and atmosphere of the space, design is not an integral factor in determining the economic success of these markets. The Alexandria and Fredericksburg markets are situated within the pleasant atmosphere of a plaza or park, but the Baltimore farmers' market is located beneath an interstate highway overpass. Others are located in parking lots.



Cincinnati's Findlay Market

Organization

Findlay Market has been open since 1852 and is Ohio's oldest continuously-operated public market and one of the City's most cherished historical sites. The City of Cincinnati owns Findlay Market. It is built on land donated to the City in 1851 by the

estate of General James Findlay for the specific purpose of providing space for a public market. Until recently, the City of Cincinnati owned and was wholly responsible for running Findlay Market. At present, there are plans to transfer the management of the market to the Corporation for Findlay Market, a private non-profit organization that is a current partner of the market.

Findlay Market is open Wednesday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Saturday from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. year-round. It hosts approximately 24 indoor vendors selling meat, fish, poultry, produce, flowers, cheese, and deli and ethnic foods. It also hosts a thriving farmers' market with dozens of outdoor vendors, numerous street performers, and special events from March to December on Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Economic Structure



Inside the Findlay Market

Findlay Market is not only a place where people can buy fresh produce. It also serves as a gathering place for local residents. It regularly attracts crowds of varying social, economic, and ethnic backgrounds from the entire Cincinnati area. Customers like the old-fashioned public market for its great variety of fresh foods, bargains, diversity of people, and for the quintessentially-urban shopping experience it provides.

Findlay Market offers a variety of fresh produce, which is usually brought in directly from local farms. This market is famous for its authentic German sausage, European-style meats and cheeses, hearty breads, Irish, Italian, African-American, Latino, Lebanese, East Asian, Vietnamese, and other cuisines.

Quality retail space is available for rent, both indoors and outdoors. Indoor vending stands are more expensive than outdoor stands and are generally leased to merchants on a long-term basis as indoor vending is a full-time occupation.

Outdoor vending space is available year-round on Elder and Pleasant Streets adjacent to the market house. Qualifying growers and cottage producers usually rent space for the season and currently sell only on Saturdays.



Findlay Market



Findlay Farmers' Market

Space in the farmers' market is reserved only for producer-only vendors. Stalls can be rented at \$12/day and consist of nine-foot wide parking spots adjacent to an open-sided shed. Growers can back their vehicles up to the market structure, which provides some shelter from the elements.

Promotion & Marketing

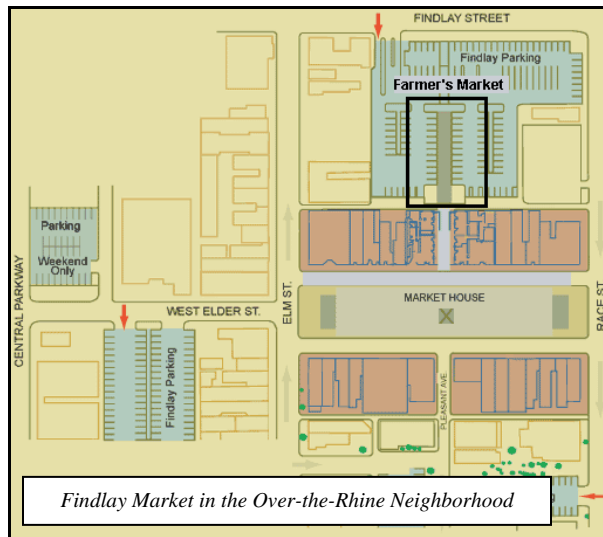


Advertising the Market

Findlay Market is a well-known destination point that needs little advertisement. However, Findlay Market offers gift certificates. Each gift certificate is worth \$5.00 and can be redeemed with any market vendor.

Design

Findlay Market is located just a few blocks from downtown Cincinnati in the Over-the-Rhine National Historic District which was established in 2001 and is rich in 19th century architecture. Findlay Market utilizes an enclosed market house as well as open-air elements. The map below shows the Over-the-Rhine streetscape, the Findlay Market House, the farmers' market, and convenient parking areas.



Findlay Market in the Over-the-Rhine Neighborhood

IV. Summary of Findings

Assets



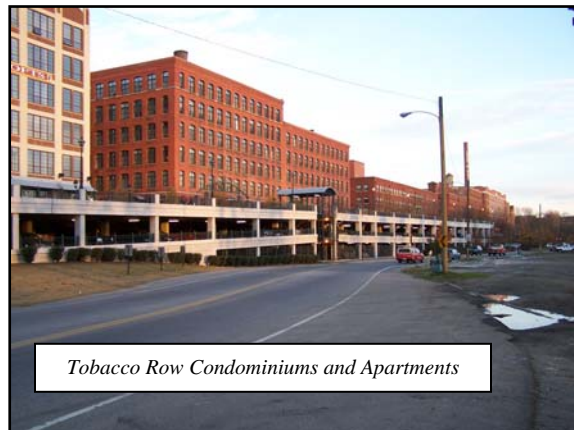
Statue at the front of the Market

The 17th Street Farmers' market has many assets upon which it can build. The Market is one of the oldest farmers' markets in the United States, and it is located in an historic area of Richmond. For many years, neighborhoods around this area were neglected, but today they are slowly being revitalized into a vibrant part of the community.

Recently, new residential units in Tobacco Row underwent vigorous renovation efforts creating hundreds of residential units. Historic Shockoe Slip has recently become revitalized as Richmond's restaurant, entertainment, and nightlife center. Nearby Church Hill is also in transition and has great potential to serve as a large customer base for the Market. Population growth is likely to continue as a result of adaptive reuse and in-fill construction

over the next ten to twenty years. Historic Shockoe Bottom is becoming a famous tourist spot. Surrounding bars and restaurants also help attract customers to the area.

Revitalization of the Market's surrounding businesses is a strong sign of the rising property values in the area. The average sale prices per square foot of properties within a three-block radius of the Market increased by 56.8% from 2001 to 2005. The citywide average price per square foot increased by 35.8% during the same period. This increase can be attributed to the fast population growth in the Census tract surrounding the Market and the redevelopment of the nearby tobacco warehouses into condominiums and apartments.



Tobacco Row Condominiums and Apartments

In addition to the Market's existing assets, several significant projects in the planning or development stages could have a considerable positive impact on the Market and Shockoe Bottom area as a whole. Historic Main Street station located next to the Market is expected to become a regional transportation hub, attracting thousands of passengers every day. The transformation of the station has a potential to generate a number of customers for the Market.

The Canal Walk Project includes 17th Street as a major pedestrian link to the Canal. Activity and development along the canal is expected to increase pedestrian traffic to the area.

Liabilities

The 17th Street Farmers' Market faces many challenges, particularly the lack of customers and produce vendors. Customers do not come because there are not enough vendors, and vendors do not come because there are no customers. It also lacks a clear objective: that is, whether it should be growers-only or mixed market. According to the potential customer surveys, a majority of the people would like to see more produce vendors selling at the Market. The produce vendors that currently sell at the Market are inconsistent and provide poor produce quality and variety, according to potential customers. Also, the Market significantly lacks a greater variety of prepared and specialty foods (i.e. meats, cheeses). Current hours of operation are not suitable for the majority of potential customers. At present, the Growers' Market is open on Thursday mornings, which is an inconvenient time for residents and workers, the largest group of potential customers. Most people want to shop on weekends or weekday evenings.



Signage is another important issue that needs to be addressed. The Market lacks defined gateways and formal access points. There is no adequate signage leading to the market and no entrance point signs that would notify passers by of the Market's location.

Shockoe Bottom faces a number of issues as well. The biggest problem is the perception of the area as a run-down place with high crime rates. Even though overall crime rates in Shockoe Bottom have declined, the perception of crime is high due to poor lighting, confusing circulation patterns, and poor sight lines at many intersections. However, the majority of criminal activities have declined over the 2000-2005 period in the Shockoe Bottom Neighborhood, so the perception of high crime needs to be addressed.

The study of the building conditions within a three-block radius showed that buildings northwest of the market are poorly maintained and much in need of repair and reuse. Buildings fronting the Market are in fairly good condition but most of them are vacant.

Further, the historical landscape around the Market is undermined by the industrial buildings located to the north. The partially covered structure of the 17th Street Farmers' Market prevents the Market from fully integrating into the surrounding urban landscape by blocking views of the surrounding buildings and vistas.

The streetscape design around the Market creates an environment that is disjointed and inconsistent. Frequent variation in sidewalk paving, lighting, tree plantings, and handicap-accessible curbs creates barriers to pedestrian flows and access.



Traffic circulation throughout Shockoe Bottom is perceived by many as a challenge. Confusing circulation patterns and a perceived lack of parking space prevent potential customers from coming to the Market.

Probably one of the biggest threats the Market faces is the impending Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplain map amendments. If the floodplain boundaries are amended to include many of the buildings near the Market, the amendments could have major consequences for Shockoe Bottom if they prohibit redevelopment around the Market (i.e. some land uses, especially residential, are not permitted within a floodplain).

V. REVITALIZATION PLAN

The key problem plaguing the 17th Street Farmers' Market is the lack of customers and vendors. This lack of customers is caused by an insufficient number of consistent, high-quality vendors. Conversely, many vendors are not selling at the Market due to the lack of customers. The purpose of the following revitalization plan is to break this cycle through recommendations that produce a self-sustaining farmers' market that attracts a vibrant and loyal customer base and a consistent group of vendors who offer a variety of high-quality products. The four recommendation goals are presented according to the Market's economic restructuring, organization, design, and promotion and marketing. An implementation timeline follows the recommendations.



The economic restructuring recommendations address inadequate vendor turnout and recommend local business partnerships, a business incubator, and specialty grocers. Organization recommendations suggest changes to the operational and management structure of the Market in order to create a more productive relationship between management and vendors and to establish a time schedule that is convenient to potential Market customers. Design recommendations address the physical layout of the Market and offer visions of the Market as an attractive public place that contributes to the historic ambiance of Shockoe Bottom. Finally and perhaps most importantly, the promotion and marketing recommendations offer suggestions to establish an effective campaign that will regaining a strong market customer base and improve public perceptions and awareness of the Market.

Economic Restructuring

GOAL 1: Create a self-sufficient farmers' market.



The following objectives provide the framework to establish a loyal customer base and a beneficial variety of reliable, high-quality vendors.

Objective 1.A: Increase the ratio of produce vendors to craft vendors in order to target downtown residents and local workers who expressed a demand for more vendors selling fresh produce, prepared foods, and flowers.

Strategy 1.A.1: Encourage produce vendors at other farmers' markets to also sell at the 17th Street Farmers' Market.

Strategy 1.A.2: Utilize the farmer directories of the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to recruit growers to sell at the Market.

Strategy 1.A.3: A representative from the Market should personally call and/or meet with potential new vendors.

Strategy 1.A.4: Require an initial mandatory 60:40 ratio of produce to craft vendors on Market days that will eventually change to a 70:30 ratio as more produce vendors are recruited.

Objective 1.B: Assist current vendors in order to improve their business practices, especially product displays and providing high-quality products on a consistent basis.

Research shows that consumers are dissatisfied with the quality and quantity of products sold at the Market. Just like traditional small businesses owners, farmers' market vendors would benefit from various forms of business assistance.

Strategy 1.B.1: Surrounding businesses and the Shockoe Bottom Neighborhood Association can serve as resources for vendors on how to improve their businesses.

Strategy 1.B.2: Provide opportunities for Market vendors to network with other farmers' market vendors in the region.

Strategy 1.B.3: Work with the Virginia Department of Business Assistance to provide assistance resources for vendors.

Objective 1.C: Create partnerships between the 17th Street Farmers' Market and local businesses.

Relationships between the Market and local businesses will create a new dynamic in the way these currently independent groups operate. Local businesses could feature fresh Market vendor products in their establishments and Market vendors could be given new, reliable sources of income.



Strategy 1.C.1: Encourage local restaurants to purchase products sold at the Market for use in their menus.

Strategy 1.C.2: Encourage local retail establishments to sell Market products such as handmade crafts and artwork produced by the craft vendors. This will increase the exposure of the vendors' products and allow local businesses to receive a share of the profits.

Objective 1.D: Attract a regionally-known specialty grocery store that complements a farmers' market, such as Trader Joe's or Dean & DeLuca, to the Market area.



Such a retail establishment would attract more shoppers to the area and could further assist the Market by providing a spotlight for both fledgling and top-selling vendors. It is imperative, however, that a special agreement be made between the grocery store and the Market to ensure the store works as a complement to the Market and not a competitor.

Strategy 1.D.1: Work with the City's Department of Economic Development and the Shockoe Bottom Neighborhood Association to attract a specialty grocery store that will foster the 17th Street Farmers' Market rather than compete with it.

Strategy 1.D.2: The City should require that the specialty grocery store products be complementary to the products already being sold by Market vendors. Most importantly, the grocery store should only carry a limited selection of produce that can not be grown locally or that is not in season.

Strategy 1.D.3: Market staff should encourage the grocery store to have a special section featuring value-added products produced by Market vendors.

Strategy 1.D.4: The front sidewalk and foyer of the specialty grocery store should be used to advertise upcoming special Market events and as a location during the special events to spotlight new or top-selling vendors and new products being offered at the Market.

Objective 1.E: Establish a business incubator in the Market area to assist new and current vendors with improving and expanding their small businesses.

The Market incubator should feature a community kitchen with full commercial preparation facilities, cold and dry storage, and a small packaging facility. The Market office, classrooms, and other media rooms should also be located in the incubator building.



Having a business incubator associated with the Market would be a great vendor recruitment and retention tool as it would serve as a location in which to prepare and package value-added products (such as jam made from homegrown fruit) and to sell them.

As businesses graduate from the incubator, they could set up shop in the many available storefronts in

Shockoe Bottom, further encouraging revitalization in the area. The Market incubator can be managed by local government personnel or by a non-profit organization.

Strategy 1.E.1: Develop a City-run task force that will establish the Market incubator. Once the incubator is operational the City can transition ownership of the incubator to a non-profit group that is run by Market vendors.

Strategy 1.E.2: Occupy an existing building or store site near the Market and renovate it for use as the Market incubator.

Strategy 1.E.3: A farmers' market product line can be created for products that are made in the Market incubator. Vendors can advertise their products under this product line while using the incubator.

Objective 1.F: Diversify the mix of businesses in Shockoe Bottom, particularly in the area surrounding the Market, in order to occupy vacant properties and increase the number of customers coming to the area.

Strategy 1.F.1: The City of Richmond's Department of Economic Development should recruit businesses such as sandwich shops, butcher shops, seafood markets, specialty shops, boutiques, and gift shops.

Strategy 1.F.2: The Market vendors should work with the City of Richmond's Department of Economic Development to establish a Commercial Area Revitalization Effort (CARE) neighborhood for Shockoe Bottom.

Organization

GOAL 2: Establish a Market organization that lays the foundation for a self-sufficient Market

Objective 2.A: Establish a vendor fee of \$500.00 per season to encourage a high-quality vendor base and consistent vendor turnout.

Strategy 2.A.1: Half of the fee should be paid at the signing of the annual contract prior to the opening of the Market for the season. The remaining half will be due on opening day. This fee structure is followed by many farmers' markets in the region.

Objective 2.B: Establish three to five trial stalls allowing potential vendors to "tryout" the Market before obligating themselves to an annual contract.

Strategy 2.B.1: Trial stalls should be available to those potential vendors that contact the Market manager three days prior to Market days. The cost of the trial stall should be \$25.00 per day.

Objective 2.C: Establish a Market Association to foster ongoing communication between vendors and Market management.

Strategy 2.C.1: The Market Association should be represented by vendors, Market management, and the Shockoe Bottom Neighborhood Association in the following composition:

- Three vendors (two produce vendors/one craft vendor)
- One member of Market management
- One member of the Neighborhood Association

Strategy 2.C.2: The Association should meet on a monthly basis to advise the Market management on issues, brainstorm new ideas/concepts, and facilitate communication between the represented groups.

Objective 2.D: Schedule the Market days and times to attract a higher number of potential customers, especially neighborhood residents and workers.

The product variety at the Thursday Growers' Market appeals to the highest number of potential customers, but Thursday morning is an inconvenient time for them. The Saturday Eclectic Market has the potential for being well-attended at its current time, but the product selection at this market is weak. The Sunday Shockoe Flea and Antique Market is unpopular with current and potential customers, market vendors, and area businesses.

Strategy 2.D.1: Move the Thursday Growers' Market to a late afternoon/evening time period. This will allow area residents and workers to frequent the Market in much higher numbers.

Strategy 2.D.2: Invite current Thursday vendors to return for a similar growers' market on Saturday.

Strategy 2.D.3: Change the Sunday Market from the flea-market format to one that focuses more on produce and prepared food.

Strategy 2.D.4: Once the customer base has been expanded and all Market days are well-attended, explore the addition of other weekday markets.

Objective 2.E: Revise and enforce the vendor contract to ensure a large and consistent vendor base at the Market.

Strategy 2.E.1: Develop a new vendor contract with Market management and vendors. The contract should include attendance requirements and agreements to provide products of a consistent quality and variety.

Strategy 2.E.2: Include a strict vendor attendance policy in the vendor contract. Market management should be notified in advance of unexpected vendor absences and only one unexcused absence may be allowed.

Strategy 2.E.3: Market management should enforce the new contract and, if necessary, exercise its authority to regulate the type of products sold at the Market and reassign vendor stalls if the attendance policy is not being followed.

Objective 2.F: Create a 501(c)(3) organization to allow the Market to accept tax-deductible contributions and federal grants for which it is currently ineligible.

Strategy 2.F.1: The Market should investigate becoming a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization independent of the City of Richmond. A future business plan or study may be useful in determining the decision. Other farmers' markets, such as the Findlay Market in Cincinnati, have utilized 501(c)(3) status and have had much success with it.

Strategy 2.F.2: Create a functioning board of Market management and vendors which will direct and oversee the Market 501(c)(3).

Design

The design of the 17th Street Market is a critical factor in the future success of the Market. The following recommendations therefore propose improvements to both the design of the area surrounding the Market as well as the Market structure, in order to create a multi-use retail and park space for Richmond residents and tourists. The recommended design schemes are based, in part, on the responses from residents, Market vendors, the business community, and City staff, as well as environmental issues such as frequent flooding.



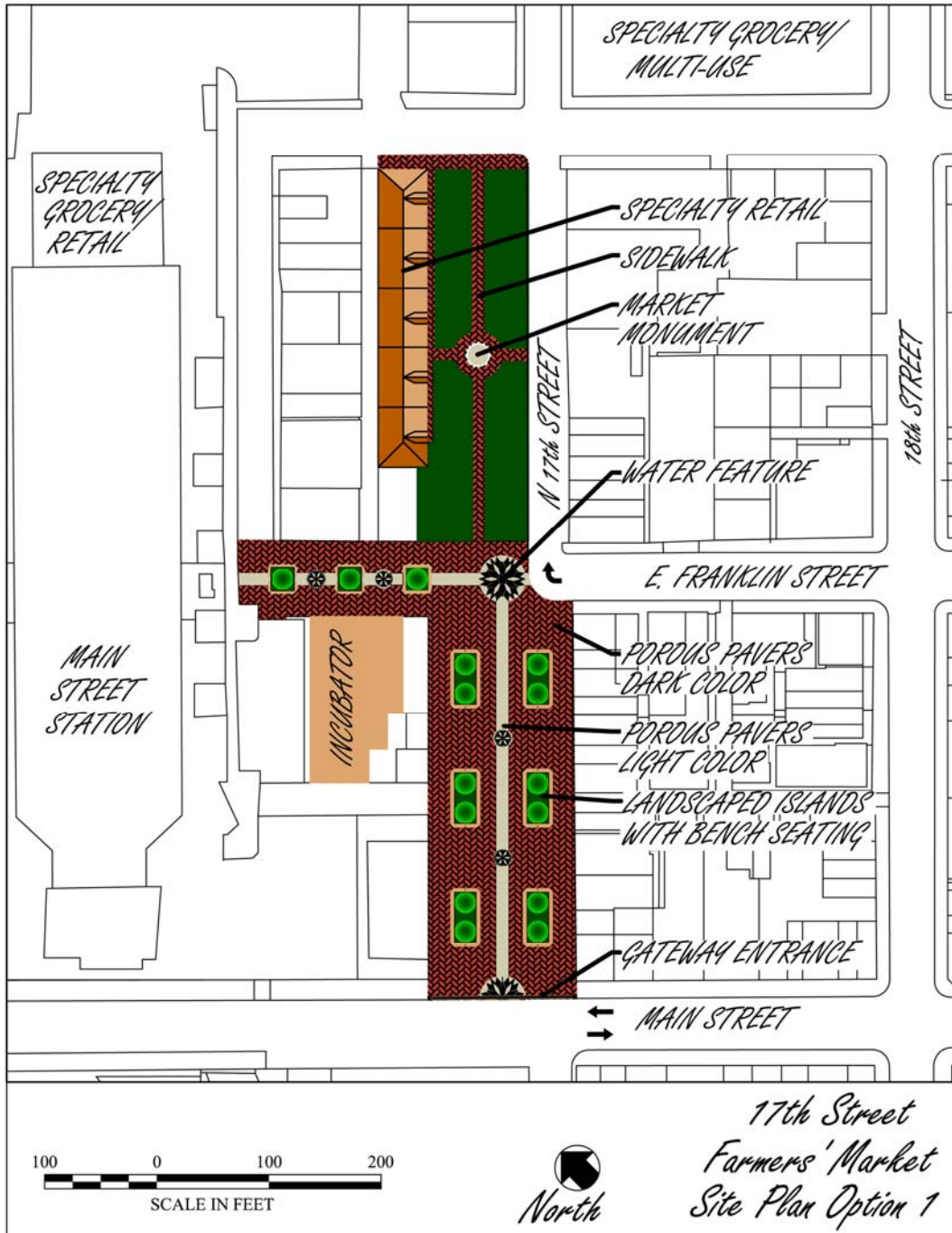
Two site plans are presented as alternatives to the existing Market design. Both of these site plan scenarios are designed to include Market space, a new public park, retail space (with emphasis on a specialty grocery store), and the Market incubator. New construction should replicate the existing architecture in the area. In order to minimize operating costs, design elements should be as low-maintenance as possible while still maintaining a high level of quality and aesthetic value.

GOAL 3: Create a design for the 17th Street Farmers' Market and surrounding area that maximizes the Market's economic viability and potential for use and enjoyment by the Shockoe Bottom community.

Alternative 1: Shockoe Plaza

Objective 3.A: Establish a sense of place by removing the existing Market structure (i.e. awnings, overhangs, and supports) to create a pedestrian-friendly plaza that can be enjoyed by different groups for a variety of functions, including the 17th Street Farmers' Market. Shockoe Plaza would provide Shockoe Bottom with much-needed greenspace, public seating, gateways, and pervious groundcover. In addition, this alternative addresses the issue of the current Market structure being vacant and uninviting or used as a makeshift parking lot when markets are not being held (see Site Plan 1).

Site Plan 1



Strategy 3.A.1: Close 17th Street to vehicular traffic from Main to East Franklin creating a pedestrian plaza. Franklin Street should also be closed to vehicles from the train shed to 17th Street linking the plaza to Main Street Station.

Strategy 3.A.2: Arrange the new pedestrian plaza so that it fronts the existing buildings on North 17th Street and build new sites for specialty retail along the current Farmers' Market parking lot.

Strategy 3.A.3: Create open spaces that can accommodate different functions including a farmers' market, outdoor dining areas and other activities such as Jazz at the Park, Night Art Market, etc.

Strategy 3.A.4: Establish strong gateways into the site from Main, Grace, and Franklin Streets.

Strategy 3.A.5: Install water features and landscape the plaza so that it produces shaded areas for vendors as well as customers during the day.

Strategy 3.A.6: Introduce portable stalls for use by Market vendors during Market hours.

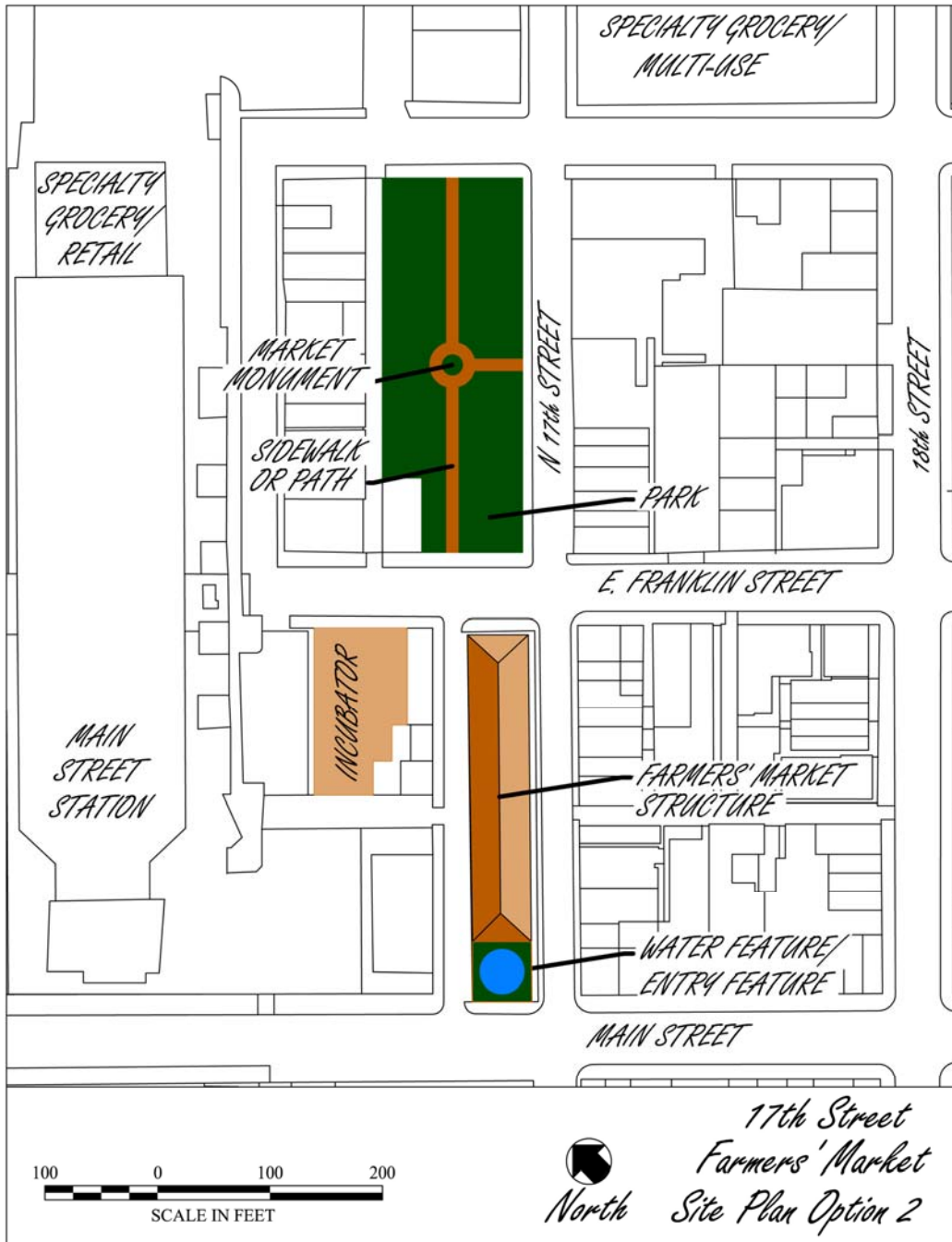


Alternative 2: The New Market Shelter

Objective 3.B: Modify the 17th Street Farmers' Market structure in order to provide protection from the elements (sun, rain, etc.), and enhance the aesthetics of the Market. The new market shelter also features greenspace and gateways with an emphasis on multiple uses by the public, though its permanent cover allows for greater flexibility during inclement weather (see Site Plan 2).



Site Plan 2



Strategy 3.B.1: Remove the smaller, individual awnings that currently cover the 17th Street Farmers' Market and replace the existing roof structure with a single pitched roof that covers three-fourths of the existing market footprint. Though Market vendors appreciate the protection offered by the current shelter, they have concerns about the

current awnings not offering full protection from the elements and appearing primitive and uninviting.

Strategy 3.B.2: Remove unnecessary columns that are not load-bearing in order to make the Market space more flexible for use by Market vendors as well as for use as an outdoor dining and entertainment area.

Strategy 3.B.3: Create a high-quality, attractively landscaped entryway with a water element in order to appeal to Market customers and potential customers that are passing by.

The following design objectives can be implemented as part of Alternative 1 or Alternative 2:

Objective 3.C: Install a park space featuring a Market-related monument and traditional park features (e.g. benches, paths) within the Shockoe Bottom neighborhood that is adjacent to the 17th Street Farmers' Market, between Franklin and Grace Streets, and North 17th Street (i.e. the current site of the Market office and parking lot) (see Site Plans 1 & 2).



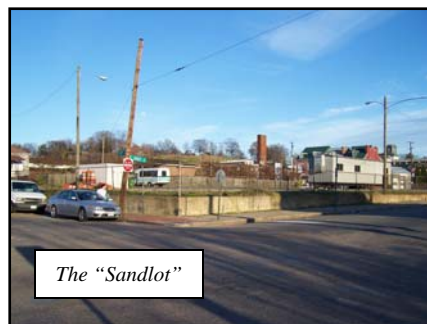
Strategy 3.C.1: Remove the existing asphalt covering on the lot adjacent to the Farmers' Market.

Strategy 3.C.2: Develop an open green-space that will cover the length of the lot. Include a fountain that is central to the space, walkways, and park elements (i.e. benches, tables, etc.).



Objective 3.D: Incorporate a specialty grocery store into the Market area design (see Site Plans 1 & 2).

Strategy 3.D.1: Locate specialty grocery store on the vacant lot ("the sandlot") located on the corner of Grace and 17th Streets. (This site can also include mixed-use/mixed-income residential units and various commercial uses).



Strategy 3.D.2: Develop the Main Street Station train shed as another possible location for the new specialty grocery store. This location will create a valuable link between the Farmers' Market and the Main Street Station through the proposed pedestrian walkway. (If the new grocery

store locates in the train shed, mixed-use/mixed-income development can still be encouraged on the “sandlot”).

Objective 3.E: Incorporate the Market incubator into the 17th Street Farmers’ Market area design (see Site Plans 1 & 2).

Strategy 3.E.1: Acquire the Loving’s building and adjoining parking lot which is adjacent to the Market, on the southwest corner of Franklin and 17th Streets.

Strategy 3.E.2: Locate Market incubator the above mentioned Loving’s property after renovations.



Promotion & Marketing

Stakeholders can increase the Market’s customer base and vendor base through various advertising and promotion techniques. By emphasizing the easy accessibility of the Market, highlighting the diverse offerings of local growers, and exposing the regional population to the Market brand, the Market can reach more potential customers and vendors with their advertising budget. As the Market grows more successful and self-sufficient, the promotion and marketing campaign can be scaled back to allow the City and Market staff members to focus their energy on other issues pertaining to the Market.

GOAL 4: Heighten the public’s awareness of the Market and increase patronage during Market hours and special events.

The plan statement recommends that stakeholders focus on strengthening the produce customer and vendor base for the Market. This can be addressed by developing promotion and marketing strategies that emphasize the easy accessibility of the Market for customers, highlight the diverse offerings of local growers, and expose the local population to the Market brand.

Objective 4.A: Improve community exposure toward the Farmers’ Market brand.

Strategy 4.A.1: Increase the volume of visitors to the Market’s website by 10 percent each year. Create a stamp to be placed on all City utility bills and correspondence letters listing the Market’s website and/or Market days and times.

Strategy 4.A.2: Place signage throughout the city to increase awareness of the Market's location and accessibility.

Implementation: The City should place signs along key Market gateways to guide traffic towards free public parking surrounding the Market.



Implementation: Virginia Department of Transportation should place an interstate sign at Interstate exit 74B or 74C. This will draw motorists off the freeway who seek food, cultural, or recreational offerings along their journey.



Strategy 4.A.3: Utilize free marketing services to expand branding techniques. Form a partnership with Virginia Commonwealth University's AdCenter to develop a marketing campaign that maximizes awareness of the market offerings to potential customers.

Objective 4.B: Promote the Market as an enjoyable public space which contributes to the overall appeal of Shockoe Bottom as a destination point.

Strategy 4.B.1: Redesign pamphlets to stress the Market area's historical significance. Increase the volume of pamphlets in welcome centers, hotels, & other tourist sites. Educate tourist guides about the Market area's historical significance and uniqueness.

Strategy 4.B.2: Develop new business relationships with surrounding retail and restaurant establishments. The businesses participating in this relationship should encourage customer traffic for other involved businesses and the market.

Implementation: The City should develop a business consortium between the Market and surrounding establishments. This consortium should focus on inter-business promotion by discounting. For example, customers who shop at the Market can receive discounts on menu or retail items that were created with Market products. In return, the restaurant offers the customer coupons to the market vendor where the items were purchased from.

Implementation: The Market staff should coordinate onsite cooking demonstrations at the market using local chefs. These chefs prepare food with the market produce while educating and enticing customers with quality products. Chefs can offer the recipes of the prepared dishes to the customers.

Strategy 4.B.3: Implement an advertising campaign that stimulates a new and improved perception of the Market.

Implementation: The Market staff should create image-building events that change the public's perception of the Market. Successful image-building campaigns build upon the Market's existing assets, its market potential, and community values. Through marketing campaigns, the Market can promote itself as a contributing destination in Shockoe Bottom with a recognizable identity and image.

Implementation: City along with the market staff should organize a media blitz for the Grand Re-Opening of the Market (radio, TV, print); advertisements of the event should be published in the local newspapers (*Style Weekly*, *The Times-Dispatch* and neighborhood newsletters); radio advertisements (Public Radio or any other station); an ad placed online and Artsline (Public Radio website). There should be an opening festival and celebration of this event, including tasting, music, dance, and kid's entertainment.



Strategy 4.B.4: Develop public outreach events and offerings.

Implementation: The City should establish a health food program in local schools to educate children about healthy eating habits and diets. This program will highlight the offerings of vendors at the Farmers' Market.

Implementation: The Market staff should set up an informational kiosk within the Market detailing the nutritional content of the vendor's produce and food offerings.

Implementation: The City should facilitate the Market accepting the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program WIC vouchers (Women, Infants, and Children) and inform area social service organizations about the program. Vendors are reimbursed by the Federal

Government when market customers use WIC vouchers to purchase qualified goods.

Objective 4.C: Increase volume of customers that attend the Market and the frequency with which they purchase items.

Strategy 4.C.1: Encourage traffic between the surrounding restaurants and the Market.

Implementation: Distribute coupons for surrounding restaurants during regular Market days when customers buy produce. This will create an incentive for the customers to spend more money and time in the surrounding area more frequently.

Strategy 4.C.2: Increase the capture rate of motorists traveling around the city.

Implementation: The City will place banners over high traffic roads and highways throughout the city advertising select special events at the Market, specifically for its Grand Re-Opening in April and subsequent April openings and December closings of the in-season Market activities.



Strategy 4.C.3: Increase the frequency of customer purchases.

Implementation: Market staff will direct vendors to develop frequent-customer cards that offer free items to customers once a certain number of purchases are reached. Frequent-customer reward programs are aimed at raising customer satisfaction and cultivating loyalty.

Implementation: The Market staff will work with market vendors to create discount coupons in its print advertisements. Varying the coupons weekly keeps the advertising fresh and will spread customer traffic evenly across all Market



vendors. This will create an incentive for the customers to come back to the market for new products and serve as a gauge on which print advertising methods are the most effective.

Implementation: The market staff will distribute informational pamphlets and posters in downtown office buildings highlighting the Market's lunchtime food offerings. Stress the accessibility of Greater Richmond Transit Company's (GRTC) Lunchtime Express route that stops at the Market.

Strategy 4.C.4: Alter current print advertising media to highlight the local farmers and their produce offerings at the market. By focusing on these vendor offerings, produce vendors gain greater exposure in the marketplace.

Implementation: In the *City Edition*, *The Richmond Times-Dispatch* and *Style Weekly* print advertisements, the Market Organization will create new advertising pages that only emphasize the cluster of unique produce offerings located in the Market.

Strategy 4.C.5: Orient Market special event schedule towards food-related activities/themes. Special events can greatly increase the customer base of the Market, if used correctly. It is vital to hold special events that help promote the concept of the Market and make people want to come back during the regular Market days.

Implementation: Create revenue-building events designed to promote the goods and services offered at the Market and to directly generate retail sales. These events can either be discount-oriented sales events or targeted non-sale promotional events. The complete focus should be on food and the whole purpose of this event is to promote the Market.

Implementation: Create traffic-building events. Often special events revolve around alcohol, music, and dancing. Traffic-building special events are designed to generate eventual (not necessarily immediate) retail sales for the vendor. These events should be designed to appeal to specific groups of consumers or as staged celebrations involving the entire community. To ensure that vendors support and benefit from the event, only vendors that sell complementary produce and food should be allowed to sell at the Market during special events.

Objective 4.D: Expand customer base of key produce and food vendors.

Strategy 4.D.1: Offer advertising incentives to produce and food vendors at the Market. Advertising incentives can entice produce and food vendors to provide better customer service, stall presentation, and quality of their products. Additionally, free advertising for new vendors will lure new product choices to the market.

Implementation: The Market Organization should promote its most improved produce or food vendors (measured by total sales) at the Market by providing exclusive articles in advertising publications and on the Market website. Set limits on the number of these rewards per season as well as limit the term of such exposure.

Implementation: When a new produce or food vendor sets up at the Market, these vendors will be given priority advertising in the Market's print advertisements and exposure on the Market's website for a limited time period.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

The following implementation timeline tables provide deadlines for starting and finishing each strategy listed in the Revitalization Plan. The tables also identify which party should be responsible for each strategy; these parties include the Market Staff, the Richmond Economic Development Department (REDD), the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), Richmond Department of Parks and Recreation, the Market Association, and the Shockoe Bottom Neighborhood Association (SNA).

Table 7: Implementation Timeline for Short Term Strategies				
Strategy	Description	Responsible Party (ies)	Start	Finish
1.A.1	Encourage vendors from other farmers' markets to sell at the 17th Street Market	Market Staff	6 months	1 year
2.D.1-4	Market days and times should coordinate with the surrounding neighborhoods' and workforce's schedules	Market Staff	6 months	1 year
4.A.2	Install signage leading to the Market	REDD, VDOT	6 months	1 year
4.B.1	Redesign pamphlets stressing the Market's historical significance	Market staff, SNA	6 months	1 year
1.A.2	Utilize the Virginia Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to recruit vendors	Market Staff	6 months	Ongoing
1.A.3	Call/meet with potential vendors	Market Staff	6 months	Ongoing
1.A.4	Require a 60:40 ratio between produce and craft vendors	Market Staff	6 months	Ongoing
1.B.1	Establish communication between vendors and area businesses	SNA, Market Staff	6 months	Ongoing
1.C.1	Encourage area restaurants to purchase produce from vendors	Market Staff	6 months	Ongoing
1.C.2	Create links between area artists, the Market, and area businesses	Market Staff, SNA	6 months	Ongoing
2.A.1	Establish annual fee	Market Staff	6 months	Ongoing
2.B.1	Provide trial stalls	market Staff	6 months	Ongoing
2.C.1	Establish a Market Association	Market Staff, Vendors, SNA	6 months	Ongoing
2.C.2	Encourage Market Association communication	REDD, SNA, Market Staff	6 months	Ongoing
2.E.1	Enforce vendor contract	Market Staff	6 months	Ongoing
2.E.2	Enforce attendance policy	Market Staff	6 months	Ongoing
4.A.1	Increase volume on Market website	Market Staff	6 months	Ongoing
4.C.1	Encourage traffic between surrounding restaurants and the Market	Market Staff, SNA	6 months	Ongoing
4.C.2	Increase the capture rate of motorists traveling around the city	Market Staff	6 months	Ongoing
4.C.4	Increase frequency of customer purchases	Market Staff	6 months	Ongoing
4.C.5	Orient Market special event schedule towards Market needs	Market Staff	6 months	Ongoing
4.D.1	Offer advertising incentives to produce and food vendors at the Market	Market Staff, Market Association	6 months	Ongoing

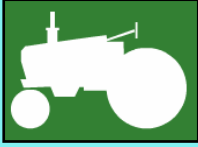
Table 8: Implementation Timeline for Medium Term Strategies

Strategy	Description	Responsible Party (ies)	Start	Finish
4.B.3	Implement an advertising campaigns that enhance the new image of the Market	Market Staff	1 year	2 years
3.A.4	Construct gateways on Main, Grace, and Franklin Streets	REDD, Parks and Recreation	2 years	3 years
1.D.1	Attract a specialty grocery store to area	REDD, SNA	2 years	5 years
3.D.1	Locate the specialty grocery store in the Sandlot	REDD	2 years	5 years
3.D.2	Main Street Train Shed is another possible location for the specialty grocery store	REDD	2 years	5 years
3.B.1	Remove awnings and replace Market roof	REDD	2 years	5 years
3.B.2	Remove unnecessary columns	REDD	2 years	5 years
3.A.6	Introduce portable stalls	Market Staff	2 years	5 years
1.B.2	Networking opportunities between Market vendors and other farmers' markets vendors	Market Staff	1 year	Ongoing
1.B.3	Connect market vendors with the Virginia Business Assistance	Market Staff	1 year	Ongoing
4.B.2	Business relationships with surrounding retail and restaurant establishments	REDD,SNA	1 year	Ongoing
4.A.3	Utilize the VCU AdCenter	Market Staff	1 year	Ongoing
4.B.4	Develop public outreach events	Market Staff	1 year	Ongoing
4.C.4	Highlight local farmers and local produce offered at the market	Market Staff, Merchant Association	1 year	Ongoing
1.D.2	Specialty store should offer complementary products to Market	REDD	2 years	Ongoing
1.D.3	Specialty store should have a section featuring vendor produce	Market Staff	2 years	Ongoing
1.D.4	Specialty store should advertise upcoming Market events	Market Staff	2 years	Ongoing
1.E.1	City task force charged with establishing a business incubator	REDD, Market Association, Market Staff	2 years	Ongoing
1.E.2	Renovate site for Market incubator	REDD, Market Association, Market Staff	2 years	Ongoing
1.F.1	Recruit businesses	REDD	2 years	Ongoing
1.F.2	Establish a CARE Neighborhood	REDD,SNA	2 years	Ongoing
3.E.1-2	Locate Market incubator within the Loving's building	REDD, Market Association, Market Staff	2 years	Ongoing
1.E.3	Create farmers' market product line	Market Staff, Market Association	3 years	Ongoing

Table 9: Implementation Timeline for Long Term Strategies

Strategy	Description	Responsible Party (ies)	Start	Finish
3.B.3	Remove the first quarter of the existing structure and replace with water element	REDD, Parks and Recreation	3 years	6 years
2.F.1-2	Create 501(c)(3) organization	REDD	5 years	10 years
3.A.1	Close 17th Street to vehicular traffic from Main to East Franklin creating a pedestrian plaza	REDD and VDOT	5 years	10 years
3.A.2-3,5	Create a pedestrian plaza	REDD and VDOT	5 years	10 years
3.C.1-2	Remove existing asphalt on the adjacent lot and replace with greenspace	REDD	5 years	10 years

The Revitalization Plan should guide the City of Richmond's Department of Economic Development as it transforms the 17th Street Farmers' Market into a vibrant, attractive, and self-sustaining commercial destination and public space within Shockoe Bottom. The Plan calls for an implementation timeline ranging from six months to ten years, so the process will be gradual. However, with continued support from the City, the goals set forth in this Plan can be achieved.



THE 17th STREET FARMERS' MARKET

Revitalization Plan: Appendix



Prepared for the City of Richmond

By the Fall 2006 Urban Commercial Revitalization Class
Master of Urban and Regional Planning Program
L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs
Virginia Commonwealth University

December 2006

THE 17TH STREET FARMERS' MARKET REVITALIZATION PLAN

APPENDIX

Prepared for:
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Background Information

History¹

The 17th Street Farmers' Market (the Market), formerly known as "First Market" and "Old Market," is one of the oldest public markets in the United States and it has a rich history as the centerpiece of local commerce in Shockoe Bottom and the City of Richmond. The Market is located in Shockoe Bottom on 17th Street between Main and Franklin Streets.

Shockoe Bottom was founded in 1707 by Colonel William Byrd and was named after Shockoe Creek, which currently runs underneath the area. Its proximity to the James River made this area an important economic center in the city. As the canal system and railroads developed, Richmond and especially Shockoe Bottom became one of the region's primary commercial trading and manufacturing centers. The Bottom developed into the leading tobacco processing center for the entire nation. Tobacco factories and warehouses lined Cary Street while candle manufacturing plants and breweries spread throughout the area. Another component of Shockoe Bottom's economy during this period was the slave trade. The Bottom's thriving manufacturing and commerce helped drive Richmond's economy and development, pushing residents out of the area into adjacent neighborhoods.

An important part of Shockoe Bottom's thriving economy during the 18th and 19th centuries was the 17th Street Farmers' Market. Since 1737, this location has been a public marketplace and in 1780 it was established as the permanent location for the Market. The Market's site was deeded to the City by the Scott family under the stipulation that it be used as a farmers' market in perpetuity.

The Market's site has served many purposes, in addition to being a growers market, and has undergone several changes. In 1794, the Market also became the location for a City Council meeting room, courtroom, community hall, and theater. By 1854, as the need for more space arose, the First Market House was constructed. The first floor was strictly a retail market while the second floor served as a police station, courtroom, and community hall. The building also served as a location for political speeches and played various roles during the Civil War.

As the Market and community continued to thrive a new brick building was constructed in 1913. This new building operated primarily as a market. In 1962, the Market became an open-air venue when the 1913 building was replaced with an open aluminum shed structure. The final structure that exists today was constructed in 1985 and cost roughly \$600,000. The 17th Street Farmer's Market has played many important roles in the city,

¹ General sources for this section: The 17th Street Farmers' Market History Website found at <http://www.17thstreetfarmersmarket.com/history.php>; The City of Richmond Website found at <http://www.ci.richmond.va.us/>

but in recent decades it has struggled due to shifts in the economy and the surrounding area.

Traffic Circulation

The following chart indicates the level of service for the various intersections studied in Shockoe Bottom.

Table 4: Level of Service Traffic Results

Signalized Intersection	AM LOS (7:30 - 8:30 AM)			PM LOS (4:30 - 5:30 PM)		
	2003 Existing	2013 Baseline	2013 Improvement Scenario	2003 Existing	2013 Baseline	2013 Improvement Scenario
14th and Broad	B	C	C	C	D	D
14th and Franklin	C	D	E	C	E	E
14th and Main	B	C	C	B	D	D
14th and Cary	B	B	B	B	C	C
14th and Canal	B	D	D	B	B	B
14th and Dock	B	E	E	B	B	B
I-95 Ramp and Franklin	A	A	B	B	B	B
15th and Main	A	A	A	D	E	E
17th and Broad	B	C	C	B	B	B
17th and Main	A	A	A	A	A	A
18th and Broad	B	B	B	B	B	C
18th and Main	A	B	B	B	D	C
21st and Marshall	B	B	B	B	B	B
21st and Broad	B	D	D	B	B	B
21st and Main	A	B	B	B	B	B
25th and Main	B	B	B	A	B	B

Note: Traffic results are color-coded: green (LOS A or B), yellow (LOS C or D), and red (LOS E or F).

As seen from Table 4, overall, traffic conditions in year 2003 are relatively good with only a few isolated intersections in the LOS C and D range. Conditions degrade by 2013 with LOS E occurring at 14th Street / Franklin Street, 14th Street / Dock Street, and 15th Street / Main Street.

Other Farmers' Markets: Complete Reports

The following reports comprise case studies of successful Farmers' Markets. The reports utilize the four-point "Main Street" categories (i.e., Design, Economic Structure, Organization, Promotion) to analyze the characteristics of each market. The case studies provided valuable lessons for the 17th Street Farmers' Market, and these lessons were incorporated into the final plan for the Market.

Alexandria Farmers' Market

A. Design/Physical Characteristics

The market is located in front of Alexandria's City Hall building in an urban landscape. The market plaza is 12 blocks from the King Street Metro station for Washington DC's heavy rail system and 6 blocks from Old Town Alexandria's waterfront. The market is fronted by three roadways with King Street, the city's major thoroughfare, abutting the property. A free public parking garage is located below the site. Restaurants, shops, office space, and residences surround the site, all with similar urban design schemes containing intricate brickwork with a scale that lends to a small town atmosphere.



The market is located on an open air square with a public fountain presented as the focal point. A small covered pavilion stands on the site, and some covered vendor space is located at the entrance of city hall. About 150 vendor spaces are available in relatively equal size configured around the fountain, but the configuration is typically limited to 116 to ease customer circulation. A wide variety of products are available at the market including produce, baked goods, clothing, flowers, plants including herbs and spices, artwork, crafts, and pottery. Vendor signs are "makeshift" – no design standards are enforced – however strict enforcement of location and size of vendor space is administered. The market is very accessible with regards to pedestrian and vehicular access. However, there are no road signs indicating the location of the market on King Street or interstate highways passing through Alexandria.



B. Economic Structure

There are no apparent themes for the market. Most of the farmers are independent yet a few vendors resell or wholesale the produce available at the market. A 100 – 150 mile radius is the widest range of farmers that the Alexandria market draws from. Vendors come from the metropolitan DC area, namely Virginia, Maryland, West Virginia, and DC. Alexandria draws these farmers due to its affluent population. It is relatively easy for vendors to capture sales during market hours. A cheap entry fee of \$15 per month coupled with short, farmer-friendly operational hours is appealing for merchants. There is also a modest sales volume during inclement weather. Some vendors operate in Delray and Dupont Circle markets at other market times. Most market customers come from the city of Alexandria. The customers are predominantly white, middle-to-elderly aged, and buy mostly baked goods and produce. The general consensus that brings them back to the market is its ambiance, friendly atmosphere, and accessible location.



C. Organization

The market operates every Saturday year round from 5am to 10:30am. Some special events mark the calendar throughout the year (more detail). The market is city owned and

operated with a staff of two people: the Market Manager and an assistant. The market manager is a part time position and both staff members assist in clean-up, enforcement of market rules, allocation of vendor space, promotions and advertising, and market organization meetings. Vendors are not recruited. The long history and established nature of the market coupled with the affluence of the market customers brings vendors to the market without effort. There is a two to three year waiting list for vendor space on the market square. Fees include \$15 a month to participate in the market, while January and February are free. Attendance during these months is not mandatory for vendors; however an attendance policy is enforced throughout the rest of the year. Temporary vendor slots are available that run from October to February around the edge of the market. This allows some vendors to test their products before committing to vendor space. Maintenance of the market occurs at the close of market hours. Vendors must vacate the premises by 11am, so the market manager may clean up the public square for general usage throughout the week. City Hall employees most likely maintain the public square on days when the market is not functioning. There are no partnerships with other organizations in the city. Market performance is gauged by the number of vendors that sell on the market square per week, eyeing a head count of customers on market days, and the longevity of established market vendors.

D. Promotional Activities

There is little marketing besides a pamphlet passed out to vendors during market hours and there is a minimal cost associated with the pamphlets besides printing. The market relies on the tourists that Old Towne Alexandria draws to lure customers to the market. However, there are various advertising schemes in the works. A weekly article in the local Alexandria paper highlighting a select vendor from the market is an advertising example that might be implemented in the future.



E. Overall Assessment

The biggest reasons for the success of the Alexandria Farmer's market are its location, product choice, momentum, and fee structure. Its location in front of the city government building provides a notable public space that residents identify with. The public fountain, brick pavers, and landscaped sitting areas provide an ambiance and allure that makes the market experience appealing and comfortable. The population base of Alexandria maintains high levels of disposable income. Generally, affluent populations have discerning tastes that demand high-quality and unique products which can compliment the market's desire to provide a wide range of product types. All of these factors provide momentum for the market to draw new customers and vendors to its location. The low fees required to operate a stand also allow small and new farming operations the chance to participate in the market.

Gathering a consensus between market vendors and management and integrating surrounding businesses into market activities seem to be the biggest challenges the market faces. A large complaint of the market vendors is that rules and regulations for the market operation are loosely enforced. Over time, this could erode the confidence of vendors in the market management and eventually lead to the loss of vendors and long time customers. Surrounding restaurants do not participate in market events, such as chef exhibitions or featuring market products on their menus. These activities can promote the market and surrounding businesses while fostering a sense of community and create priceless advertising for both ventures. The lack of funds devoted to advertising may adversely affect the number of customers the market can draw in the future.

Richmond can learn from the examples set forth by the Alexandria Farmer's Market. Providing a location that is pleasant for shopping and gathering is imperative, as the market is not only a place of commerce, but a place for social interaction and community. Additionally, Alexandria's farmers market does not need to rely heavily on advertising because of its strong customer base, location, and history. The vendors, customers, and management of the market have confidence in the identity and allure the market brings. Richmond's market should not rest on its laurels with advertising. It may lack the sense of place and identity to draw a consistent customer base to its vendors, requiring heavy involvement in advertising to draw new customers.



Ashland Farmers' Market

A. Design/Physical Characteristics

The Ashland Farmer's Market is located in the historic center of downtown Ashland on Duncan Street directly behind the Town Hall. It is just a short drive straight down Route 54 off of Interstate 95 and roughly twenty minutes from downtown Richmond. Its very visible location allows for easy access for all modes of transportation. A large percentage of the Market's customer base is local residents and they often prefer to walk or ride bicycles to the market; however, plenty of parking is available directly beside the market and along nearby streets.

The surrounding area is complementary to the market. Next to the market are the Town Hall, fire station, and a Southern States Farm and Garden Center. Also nearby is the well-known Ashland Coffee Shop, a law office, and other retail businesses. Besides commercial and government buildings, there are also several residential districts located just a short distance away. This location helps to capitalize on the small town feel of Ashland which complements the friendly community focus of the Farmer's Market.

The Market itself is an open air street market that works well because its location and small size. There are no permanent structures because they are unnecessary for the style of this market and would only increase costs. Any permanent structure would also inhibit traffic flow on Duncan Street on non-Market days. The vendor spaces are simply parking spaces that line Duncan Street where the vendors sell directly from their vehicles or from temporary tents setup behind the vehicles. Customers have ample room to move from vendor to vendor with ease because the street is closed during the Market. Vendors are responsible for providing any and all display equipment such as tents, tables, signage, and decoration. Most vendors had some kind of table to display products on and a few had small signs displaying prices and products. Making vendors responsible for market spaces, displays, and signage is good because it requires no organization on the part of the Market manager; however, does introduce inconsistency between the vendors.

B. Economic Structure

The Ashland Market prides itself on being a producer-only market that is a community gathering place for Ashland residents. It has a very friendly atmosphere that they work hard to maintain. The vendors are all local small independent farmers or backyard gardeners that have anywhere from a quarter of an acre to ten acres of land. While the market is open to growers within a seventy mile radius, most of the vendors reside in or near Ashland. On average, ten to fifteen vendors make it out for market day and sell a wide variety of fruits and vegetables including tomatoes, peppers, squash, onions, garlic, apples, and melon just to name a few. Other items such as fresh flowers, landscaping plants, herbs, eggs, and cheese are also permitted. Baked goods and value-added products are allowed if prepared in a certified kitchen and crafts are permitted as long as they are locally produced and contain home-grown materials. Only twenty-five percent

of what a vendor sells can be crafts though and each vendor is responsible for any licenses and certifications required by the products they are trying to sell.

The vendors come to the Ashland Market for many reasons; however, the primary reason is because of the small town charisma and customer relationships that have been established. The vendor/customer relationships create a warm, friendly atmosphere where conversations are not limited to pure business affairs, but extend to social conversations about family and friends. The vendors are very welcoming and open to talking with everyone, even newcomers.

Aside from the warm community atmosphere, vendors also come to the Ashland Market because of its organizational structure and fees. The Market is controlled by the vendors and they have the ability to make the rules and decisions on any issues the market might face. Market helps to draw the vendors to this market instead of other markets in the region by giving each vendor a voice in the decision making process. Along with the organizational structure, the low twenty-five dollar annual fee that the market charges also was something that attracted several of the vendors to the Ashland Market. The majority of the vendors only try to sell at this market; though a few sell at other markets within the region including the 17th Street Farmer's Market, the Williamsburg Market, the Charlottesville Market, and a new market that has just started this season in Goochland County.

The customer base for the Ashland Farmer's Market is primarily made up of Ashland residents who come to the market because of the community atmosphere. While most customers come to purchase fresh local produce, some simply come to visit with neighbors and friends. On an average market day there are anywhere from three hundred to four hundred customers that come to buy fresh fruits, vegetables, and flowers. It appears as though most of the customers are Caucasian middle-aged or elderly women and men, with some exceptions of course.

C. Organization

The Ashland Farmer's Market is open on Saturday's from nine a.m. till noon from May until November. In the past they have had small special events or contests associated with the Market but recently they have not planned any such events. An association of the vendors owns and governs the Market and it is operated by the Town of Ashland. It also partners with Virginia Grown, a program run by the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. One part-time volunteer market manager helps organize the Market and enforce the rules that are developed by the vendors. Once or twice a year the vendors association meets to discuss and rules and regulations that should be in place as well as fees and other matters of business that the market faces. The market does not openly recruit new vendors in any way, but they are always open to new members as long as they abide by the governing rules. Currently, no budget exists for the market. It receives roughly three hundred dollars from the Town of Ashland annually and it charges a twenty-five dollar annual fee to the vendors. There is not a need for a large budget because almost all costs for vendor spaces are the responsibly of the vendor. There is

also no method in place to track the market's performance. No maintenance is required for the market either. The space is a street and parking lot that is simply closed off by the market manager for market day, and because it is a street there is no maintenance required by the market other than making sure vendors clean-up as they leave.

D. Promotion

The Ashland Farmer's Market does not focus at all on marketing or advertising. A webpage exists for the Market on the town website but it provides only basic information such as hours of operation and directions. The town paper in May announces the beginning of each market season, but that is the extent of the advertising that is done. They rely primarily on word-of-mouth promotion throughout the local community and the nearby Randolph Macon College to promote the market. The town is small enough that word-of-mouth promotion provides a successful and free form of advertising.

E. Overall Assessment

The community atmosphere that is created by the Ashland Farmer's Market is its most important reason for success. Vendors are very friendly and eager to talk and educate the customers and the Market has become a town gathering place where people can meet and spend time together while purchasing fresh produce at reasonable prices. The Market has been very successful since it began in 1999, but it does face several challenges. One of the biggest challenges is that it is solely governed by the vendors and the role of the market manager is simply to advise the growers and enforce their policies. Vendors can have a bias view on certain issues while a market manager with more control would have an independent, unbiased view of the market. Some vendors and customers also expressed concern about the lack of a physical structure though others felt that it was not necessary. Overall, the Ashland Farmer's Market is a very successful small town market. Though the Richmond Farmer's Market is much different in size and scope, it would still benefit from trying to capture the friendly and relaxed atmosphere that is the key to the Ashland Market. Vendor/customer relationships are essential to ensuring that people will return to the market week after week and will spread the word about the Farmer's Market.

Baltimore Farmers' Market

A. Design/Physical Characteristics

The Baltimore Farmers market is located near the intersection of North Holliday Street and East Saratoga Street in Baltimore City. This is on the eastern edge of the central business district and just north of the inner harbor. Many of the near by buildings are either large high-rise office towers, or are small historic apartments and lofts. The immediate setting for the market is a weekday commuter parking lot built below the Jones Falls Expressway (JFX I-83) and across the street there is a second commuter parking lot on N. Holliday Street. This location provides the market ample space to set up while still allowing plenty of both lot and street parking opportunities. The site is also

a good location because of its close proximity to and entrance and exit ramp for the JFX, as well as only being a few blocks north of busy Pratt and Lombard Streets along the harbor. While at the market shoppers are constantly being reminded of their urban environment by the trucks on the highway above, as well as views of the city from almost all sides.

The market is roughly laid out in a large oval shape, with the main corridors roughly lining up with the road deck above. As visitors to the market travel around, they are always surrounded on both sides by vendors, and there were three exit points along the western side of the market serving as easy access to the surrounding parking facilities. Many of the vendors had nothing more than long tables and their trucks for their displays; however, a few along the edges also had tents they purchased because they were unable to be fully sheltered by the expressway. The vendor signage and decoration was generally kept to a minimum, some with no signs or decorations, others with simple signs displaying prices or farm names. The greatest amount of on site decoration came from murals that were painted on many of the support columns for the expressway depicting different market scenes. The continuous circular flow the market worked with seemed to be very efficient in handling large volumes of visitors because it provided only two directions of possible travel.

The Farmers Market at Baltimore has a lot of elements to be desired going for it, including its central location in a large city, its ample parking, and the inertia that has been generated from such high attendance by both farmers and customers. There is little the Baltimore market needs to improve upon for its own success, except to possibly look for an even larger space for future expansion.

B. Economic Structure

From a week to week basis the market did not appear to have a particular theme it based itself upon, however certain days such as opening day, closing day, and the apple festival do serve as special events for the vendors and customers, and often attract the largest crowds according to the market manager.

The website for the farmers market provides a word document of the name and address of all the farmers who are participating in the market for the 2006 year, as well as information on some of the crafts and ready food that is available. In total, there were just under 100 different farmers, crafters, vendors or other booths set up at the market. About half of these sellers were farmers of various sizes, most being small independent farms or small regional companies. The market has a requirement that all products and crafts sold at the market are hand made or home grown and a review board set up by the city is responsible for making sure the vendors are adhering to these guidelines. All but 3 or 4 of the vendors at the market are Maryland farmers and crafters, and more than half have a farm or small business within the city or one of the immediate adjoining counties. Of the farmers we spoke to on September 3rd, the predominant reason they choose to sell at the Baltimore market was the sheer volume of customers and total sales they can make. Positive feedback was also given regarding the markets annual contract policy.

Especially the small craft vendors seemed to appreciate having an annual contract instead of a weekly contract because it gave them the piece of mind that there would always be a spot for them to sell. Many of the farmers and crafters said they were able to use the market as a stepping stool for having their products sold at area stores as either special displays or part of the stores standard merchandise. A lot of the smaller farmers were only at the Baltimore market as a hobby, but a few of the larger farms said Baltimore was just one of many markets they sold at on a weekly basis.

The customers at the Baltimore Farmers Market were a dynamic a part of the experience as the farmers were. According to the Baltimore Office of Promotion and The Arts (BOPA), on a typical Sunday somewhere between 4,000 and 5,000 people will visit, and that number has been as high as 8,000, particularly on the busiest market day of the year, the Sunday before thanksgiving. There appeared to be a very good mix of races of people at the market, particularly white, black and Asian backgrounds. Many were younger or older couples who had made coming to the market part of their Sunday morning routine, including as a stop before or after church service. There were also a number of young families with very young children. What was missing in general was a school age population (4-18years), likely because there was a lack of children oriented activities or booths at the market. Most of the customers were coming from the same general radius from the market as the farmers, less than a 30 minute drive, including some that were from neighborhoods within the city. Based on observation alone, it appears very few people are able to actually walk to the market because of a lack of housing near the site, but the ample parking and descent access makes up for the lack of pedestrian attendance.

The economic structure in place at the Baltimore market seems to fit the needs of the vendors well with the requirements and fees. Even in bad weather the Baltimore market is swarming with shoppers who wish to take advantage of what the market has to offer. However, some elements it is leaving out such as making it a more family friendly place need to be considered more to help jump start the Richmond Market.

C. Organization

Baltimore's Farmers' Market is a Sunday-only market that opens yearly in the beginning of the spring season, on the first Sunday in May, and continues its operations through Christmas Eve. During its months of operation, the market opens early each Sunday morning at eight o'clock and continues until most vendors sell out of their products, which is noted as noon, but is clearly underestimated according to our recent visit. Opening day is one of the market's biggest events, incorporating local bands and celebrity appearances into the event to heighten the already intense farmers' market experience. Master gardeners are also invited present on opening day to give patrons, as well as vendors gardening tips on how to start and improve their crops for the upcoming fall season. Another significant event for the Baltimore Farmers' Market is the Apple Festival which takes place at the beginning of the fall season. This popular event has been a staple at the market for several years and draws close to 7,000 people each year.

The City of Baltimore is the owner of the farmers' market. It is operated through the city's Office of Promotion & the Arts, and is supervised by. The market manager supervises the daily operations of the market which are fairly minimal compared to the scale of the farmers' market itself. Responsibilities of the market manager typically include casual problem solving and the arrangement and supervising of security – the Baltimore police – and city maintenance staff in order to sustain the market grounds during hours of operation. The market manager functions within an operating budget; however, expenses have typically included portable restroom facilities and promotion (i.e. decorations and musical entertainment). Currently, there is only one full-time worker, the market manager. Any additional duties, such as promotions or maintenance are contracted out or arranged through the city. During the months the market is not in operation, the market manager, along with, along with a farmers' market committee are engaged vendor product approval and promotion for the upcoming market year.

Fees: The fees for the various vendors differ depending on the product they are selling - fruits and vegetables, foods, or craft vendors. The operating profit that is generated is reinvested back into the city for other municipal programs.

D. Promotion

The Baltimore Farmers' Market is in its twenty-ninth year of operation and is well established, but initially it took the assistance county executives and the department of agriculture to reach out to the regional farmer and attract them and various other vendors. Baltimore's Farmers' Market's two largest events, opening day and the fall Apple Festival, are two of the city's most anticipated events by its patron annually. The key marketing tools implemented to promote the farmers' market for these events and its regular days of operation are newspaper articles, visitor center circulars, but mainly word-of-mouth. Due to the large number of citizens present at the farmers' market each Sunday at the market, there are always a large number of community organizations and social advocate groups who seek to establish linkages and publicize at the popular market venue.

E. Overall Assessment

Baltimore's Farmers' Market is an exemplary model of the various farmers' markets throughout the region. There are several key elements of this market that can be borrowed and utilized within Richmond's 17th Street Farmers' Market.

Similar to the Richmond's 17th Street Farmers' Market, Baltimore's market is located adjacent to its central business district. Sufficiently utilizing the Jones Falls Expressway overpass and a handful of erected tents as shelter, Baltimore's Farmers' Market operates efficiently on the grounds of a commuter parking, without a dedicated structure. Since it is strictly a weekend farmers' market, it benefits from the vacant lot spaces that remain useful during the week. This provides a fundamental idea for Richmond's market – creating a market site that can be employed for more than a single use.

The arrangement of the Baltimore Farmers' Market is also an attribute to its success. It is configured in an oval shape which helps to control the circulation of the visitors. Within its oval shape, the Market is divided into two distinguishable sections – one for fresh produce and vegetables, and another for crafts, with prepared foods spotted throughout. This provides an efficient market structure for the vendors, and allows visitors to move purposefully within the market. These design features help to provide effective circulation in the market.

The Baltimore Market also has a notable economic structure. The market has a requirement that all products and crafts sold at the market are hand made or home grown and a review board set up by the city is responsible for making sure the vendors are adhering to these guidelines. Almost all of the vendors at the market are local farmers and crafters, and more than half have a farm or small business within the city or one of the immediate adjoining counties. The majority of these farmers and vendors were solicited by the City's Department of Agriculture, or were drawn by volume of customers present at the market and the potential sales they can make.

Each craft vendor's product is required to go before the market's review board before being admitted to the market. It requires for its vendors, both craft and produce to sign a contract to ensure their attendance at the market each week. The ability of the market to serve as a business incubator contributed to the market and vendors' success.

Lastly, the Baltimore Farmers' Market is a market that is owned by its local municipality through the city's Office of Promotion and the Arts, much like the organizational structure of Richmond's Farmers' Market. However, it gives proponents of the 17th Street Market relief that a market can be run effectively by one person. Although the Market Manager is the sole operator of the market, who handles the daily activities of the market and arranges for its security and ground maintenance, Baltimore's Farmers' Market is renown and efficiently operated.

Through these market policies and strategies, Baltimore's Farmers' Market can serve as a template, providing Richmond's 17th Street Farmers' Market with valuable means for revitalizing its market.

Charlottesville Farmers' Market

History of Market

- The Charlottesville City Market began in 1973.
- The Market had several locations before moving to the current location on Water Street in 1993.

A. Design/Physical Characteristics

- The Charlottesville City Market is a seasonal, open air market located in a city owned parking lot. The market is located on Water Street within the historic downtown. The market is easily accessible from The University of Virginia, the 250 By-Pass, and Route 29 Business. The attached map illustrates the market's location within the downtown area.
- The market is surrounded by boutiques, specialty shops, and a variety of restaurants and bars. The downtown walking mall is within walking distance from the market. The walking mall offers additional shopping, dining, and various special events sponsored by the City of Charlottesville.
- The market operates April-October on Saturdays from 7:00 a.m.-noon.
- Several parking options are available for vendors and market patrons. A city owned parking garage and lot are located within a block from the market. Additional private lots are located near the market; however, all of these options require \$1-\$2 per hour. Free street parking is located several blocks from the market.
- Vendors are allotted 8x8 spaces. Vendors selling over \$10,000 the previous market season have the option of renting a 10x14 space. Tents and awnings are not permitted within the market except for vendors in the 10x14 locations.
- The attached map displays the market layout. The market has over 100 reserved spaces and nine spaces available on a first come first serve basis.
- The displays vary based on the type of the products being sold. Larger producers have banners or advertise on vehicles parked within their booth. Smaller vendors have homemade signs or do not have signs. The pictures below illustrate examples of vendor displays within the market.



Produce Vendor



Food Vendor

- Several portable signs greet residents at the market entrances. The market manager has a booth inside the market as a resource for vendors and market patrons.



City Market Entrance Sign



Market Manager's Booth

- Overall, the market has an open, friendly atmosphere. The flow of the market seems to work well with booths set-up in parking stalls and customers milling about in the center aisles. Both, customers and vendors, enjoy being in the outdoors. The market is easily accessible being located in the city's center and ample parking is readily available for a fee.

B. Economic Structure

- Sixty percent of the vendors are food producers and the remaining forty percent are artisans. The market has a variety of products to include fresh produce, baked goods, flowers, jewelry, clothing, specialty drinks, watercolor paintings, etc. The market has over 100 permanent vendors selling products on a regular basis.
- The vendors vary from small, local farmers to larger regional producers. Many of the vendors sell at a variety of markets in the area, for example several of the vendors also sell products at markets in and surrounding the DC area. However, several vendors operate smaller businesses participating solely in the Charlottesville market. Many of the vendors also participate in special events, such as the Virginia State Fair and the Annual Vegetarian Festival.
- Vendors come from as far as Virginia Beach area, yet there are several local producers. The market is open to all that are willing to come and meet the market guidelines. The market caters to producers from Charlottesville and the surrounding area.
- The vendors appreciate the warm, friendly atmosphere of the Charlottesville City Market. Vendors seem to be confident that they will make ample profit to meet expenses with the consistent flow of consumers.
- The market requires a \$20.00 annual/registration fee. In addition to the annual fee, the market requires the vendors to pay a percentage of sales. Food producers pay 8.5% of sales and non-food producers contribute 11% of sales each market day. The percentage of sales is collected on an honor system. A copy of the fee and market guidelines is attached.
- The market attracts a fairly diverse age group from young families, single adults, and older retirees. The majority of the customers, on this particular Saturday,

- were white, middle aged females. Many of the customers seemed to be local city residents, but the weather limited customer and vendor turn out. The market has been successful in attracting tourists visiting the area, as well as local residents.
- Customers seemed to enjoy the weekly ritual of selecting fresh produce and visiting with friends. The majority of the customers were purchasing produce, flowers, and other food products.

C. Organization

- The market operates April-October on Saturdays from 7a.m.-noon. The only special event is the Holiday Market located on the Downtown Walking Mall, which takes place November-December on Friday and Saturdays from 10a.m.-5p.m.
- The city owns and operates the market.
- The market is managed by a part-time market manager and an assistant helping out on market days. The market manager reports to the Manager of Parks and Recreation.
- The city loans the market roughly \$20,000 to cover promotion and operating costs. The market is completely self-sufficient reimbursing the city as it collects registration fees and revenues from sales.
- Vendors are recruited by word of mouth. The current market manager explained that the market's reputation is her sole recruitment tool. The market currently has a waiting list of vendors wanting to rent permanent spaces.
- The area is owned and maintained by the city. Vendors are responsible for discarding trash, the removal of props, and unsold products.
- The market manager discussed her frustration over the task of tracking the market's performance and keeping a tally of customers visiting the market on a given Saturday. The earnings collected from the percentage of sales each week in the only tool the market currently utilizes. She explained that it was simply too difficult to complete all of the necessary tasks required to operate the market with her limited staff. She was eager to have more help to better serve the market.

D. Promotion

- The market is promoted in a variety of local publications, such as the Hook and the C-Ville Weekly. Postcards advertising the market are distributed in various hotels, bed and breakfasts, Welcome Centers, and other tourists' attractions.
- Vendors market their products and farms with signs and brochures. The pictures below are examples of a few of the banners and signs vendors display.
- Next season the market will be adding an additional day/market on Wednesdays. The Wednesday market will be held in Meade Park for food producers only. The market manager selected the Wednesday in order to avoid competition with the Fluvanna Market on Tuesdays and the Richmond Market held on Thursdays.

- The market does not have any interaction with civic organizations or the permanent merchants that surround the market. The lack of market staff makes it difficult to manage and foster these relationships.
- The market does allow protesters and organizations to distribute literature during market hours. The organizations represented included a pro-choice organization and an organization fighting against a proposed by-pass that would encompass a section of Penn Park. The photos below illustrate a few of the groups attending the market.



Pro-Choice Organization



By-Pass Protester

E. Overall Assessment

- The key asset of the market is the warm, community atmosphere the market creates. The market serves as a community center where friends meet to shop and catch up on the week's events. Vendors and customers know each other on a first name basis having developed one on one relationships that are impossible to foster when shopping in big box retail stores or chain grocery stores.



Example of the Community Atmosphere



Friendly Exchange between Vendor and Customer

- The market provides a variety of products ranging from produce to watercolor images. The 60/40 split helps to maintain a balance between the food and non-food vendors. The variety of products attracts numerous consumers and fosters healthy competition within the market.
- The biggest weakness facing the market is the fact that the current location does not adequately meet the vendors' needs. The market has simply outgrown its current location. Currently, there is a waiting list of vendors interested in participating in the market, but the market does not have space available to rent.
- Abundant parking is within close proximity to the market; however, paying \$1-\$2 per hour discourages patrons and is an additional expense for vendors.
- Another obstacle is the lack of a permanent building to provide shelter and protect products. A structure would also provide restroom facilities, storage, possibly a kitchen to make baked goods, and a washing station for vendors to prepare produce.



Current Restroom Facilities

- The market faces the large obstacle of having to relocate. The city is in the process of selling the lot to a developer forcing the relocation of the market. The market has one season left at the current Water Street location. The attached articles discuss the recent debate over the market's location.
- The atmosphere the market creates is critical to the market's success. The Charlottesville Market Manager commented that, if the manager is happy it will trickle down to the vendors and onto the customers. No one wants to be in an environment that is inhospitable.
- An atmosphere begins with a great location. Being located in a central place with ample pedestrian traffic is critical to any market's success. It takes people coming to your market in order for it to be successful. Charlottesville's current location fosters an effective traffic flow. This characteristic is critical to any market and is one that will be one that Charlottesville will have to look for when relocating.
- A great atmosphere creates a positive reputation! Charlottesville has this reputation and it shows in the fact that they don't have to recruit vendors. Richmond needs to create a market that is a fun, friendly place to visit and shop

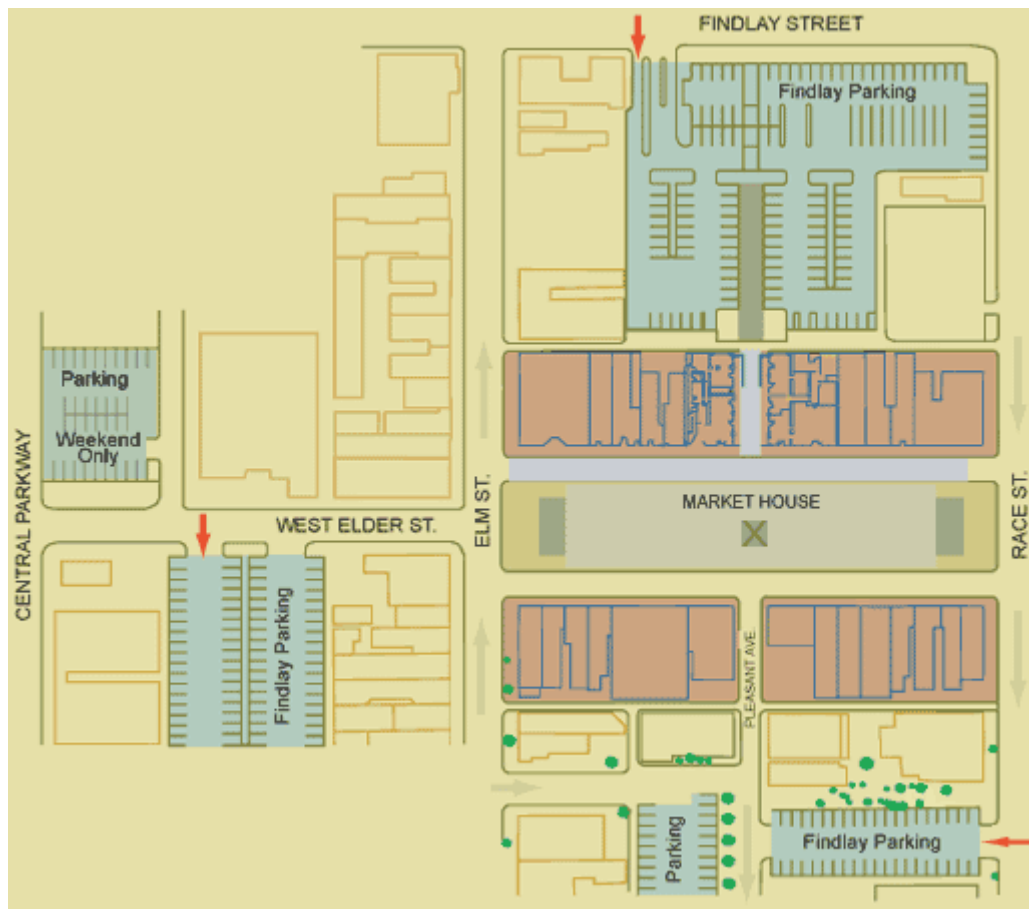
for vendors and customers. Creating a great market will foster a positive reputation that will bring in vendors and customers.

- It takes money! Set a realistic budget and don't be afraid to charge high fees. This is the first year that Charlottesville has charged a registration fee and taken a percentage of sales, but it has been successful with few complaints from vendors. The additional revenues have allowed the market to expand next season on Wednesdays and the ability to expand the holiday market season.

Cincinnati's Findlay Market

A. Design/Physical Characteristics

Findlay Market is Ohio's oldest continuously operated public market (since 1852) and one of Cincinnati's most cherished institutions. The market is located just blocks from downtown in Over-the-Rhine, a dense historic neighborhood rich in 19th century architecture. The market features an enclosed structure as well as outdoor vending stalls, and it is served by several conveniently-located parking lots.



B. Economic Structure

Findlay Market is a gathering place for people from all over the city. It routinely attracts perhaps the most socially, economically, racially, and ethnically diverse crowds found anywhere in Cincinnati. They come for the sights and sounds and smells of an old-fashioned public market, for the great variety of fresh foods, bargains, people watching, and for a quintessentially urban shopping experience.

Most appealing to shoppers is the variety of fresh produce, which is usually brought in straight from local farms. Traditionally, the market offered the produce, authentic German wursts, European-style meats and cheeses and hearty breads, but has since expanded to include samples from Irish, Italian, African-American, Latino, Lebanese,

East Asian, Vietnamese and other cuisines. It's also possible to buy flats of vegetable and herb plants, fresh baked goods and other homemade products.



Quality space is available for rent both indoors and outdoors at newly renovated Findlay Market. Indoor vending stands are more expensive than outdoor stands and generally are leased to merchants on a long-term basis. Indoor vending is a full time occupation. Space in the outdoor market on the streets surrounding the market house can be rented on a daily basis for as little as \$8.00 per day. Growers and cottage producers who qualify for the farmers market typically rent space by the season and at present sell only on Saturdays.

Outdoor vending space is available year around on Elder and Pleasant Streets adjacent to the market house. Outdoor stalls measure ten feet by ten feet. The market does not provide electric service, water, shelter, tents, tables, chairs, or other amenities. Trucks, trailers, and other vehicles are not permitted, but the outdoor market will accommodate health department licensed, NSF compliant mobile food carts. Rents are collected on a daily basis and vendors must pay before setting up. Stall rents are \$12 on Saturdays and \$8 dollars all other days. No advance reservations are required. Market management assigns vendors to locations based on the type of product being



sold and the vendor's seniority in the market.

Space in the farmers' market is reserved for vendors selling agricultural products they grow themselves. When space permits, the farmers' market is also open to "cottage producers" who prepare food or craft items from scratch in their own homes. Cottage food producers must complete and submit a Cincinnati Health Department Food Vendor Information Form prior to selling at Findlay Market. The farmers market operates on Saturdays from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm from March through December. Most stalls in the farmers market consist of nine foot wide parking spots adjacent to an open sided shed. Growers can back their vehicles up to the shed, which provides some shelter from the weather. There is electric in the shed, but no water. The market does not provide tables or chairs.

Findlay Market enjoys the support of many partners. Some of the key organizations involved with supporting, promoting, and operating the market include:

- [Corporation for Findlay Market](#)

The Corporation for Findlay Market (private non-profit) is a tax-exempt 501(C)3 organization. It coordinated, through the Findlay Market Fund, more than \$400,000 in tax deductible contributions from foundations and private individuals towards the market's renovation and revitalization. It is governed by a volunteer Board of Trustees comprised of community leaders and market vendors.

- [Findlay Market Association](#)

Merchants' organization. The FMA collaborates with the City of Cincinnati and the Corporation for Findlay Market in the operation of the Market and represents tenant interests in the management process. The FMA also coordinates some marketing and advertising for merchants and supervises the production and distribution of Findlay Market gift certificates.

- [IMPACT Over the Rhine](#)

Employs and trains inner-city adults and at-risk youth on a year-around basis. IMPACT OTR does this through organized efforts to improve the physical appearance and livability of Over-the-Rhine. It works in partnership with neighborhood organizations, the City of Cincinnati, and downtown businesses.

- [Friends of Findlay Market](#)

A non-profit, volunteer organization of Market shoppers and other Cincinnatians who love the Market. Their main goal is: To Preserve, Protect and Promote Findlay Market.

- [Art in the Market](#)

Art in the Market employs at-risk youth to work with artists in the creation of public works of art installed in the Findlay Market District of Over-the- Rhine.

- [City of Cincinnati Department of Community Development and Planning](#)
- [SmartMoney](#)

Provides financial services and economic education to underserved individuals in Over-the-Rhine and Greater Cincinnati Communities.

C. Organization

The City of Cincinnati owns Findlay Market. It is built on land donated to the city in 1851 by the estate of General James Findlay for the specific purpose of providing space for a public market. Until recently, the City of Cincinnati was exclusively responsible for running Findlay Market. The Market is now in a transition period after which it will be managed by a private non-profit organization, the Corporation for Findlay Market.

Open Wednesday through Sunday, Findlay Market is home year-around to about two dozen indoor merchants selling meat, fish, poultry, produce, flowers, cheese, deli, and ethnic foods. On Saturdays and Sundays from April to November, the Market also hosts a thriving farmers' market, dozens of outdoor vendors, numerous street performers, and lots of special events. On Sundays, Findlay Market is a FREE WiFi hotspot. Shoppers can bring their laptops and check all the scores while shopping or grabbing a bite and listening to music on Essen Strasse.



D. Promotion

Findlay Market offers gift certificates. Each gift certificate is worth \$5.00 and can be spent at any Findlay Market merchant.

District of Columbia Eastern Market

A. Design/Physical Characteristics

The Eastern Market is located in at the corner of 7th Street and North Carolina Avenue in the Capitol Hill Historic District of Washington, DC, approximately seven blocks from the United States Capitol. It is about a ten minute drive from the market to the White House in the heart of Downtown, and the Virginia and Maryland state lines. The Eastern Market is conveniently served by two major thoroughfares which include, Pennsylvania Avenue, located one block away and Interstate-295 (Southeast/Southwest Freeway) which is about seven blocks away. The Eastern Market subway station is located one

block from the market on Pennsylvania Avenue, providing access to the blue and orange rail lines.

Although arriving by car is relatively easy, parking one's car in the area can be problematic. The market has a parking lot behind its South Hall, which is the main building. However, the lot only has about 15 parking spaces. Usually a city police officer mans the parking lot on weekends to ensure the safety of pedestrians, ensure order, and prevent double parking. On-street parking is available in the Capitol Hill neighborhood, yet on Sundays many of the local residents are at home, which obviously does not free much parking for patrons of the market.

The surrounding Capitol Hill Historic District compliments and adds character to the Eastern Market. Both the market, which was completed in 1873, and the neighborhood are listed in the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places. The Capitol Hill neighborhood received its name from the hill of which the U.S. Capitol rests. It is the largest residential neighborhood in the city encompassing over 150 blocks. The architecture of the area is eclectic and impressive with manor houses, Italianate bracketed houses, brownstones, and brick rowhouses. The street pattern is tied to Pierre L'Enfant's plans that of grand diagonal avenues that include Pennsylvania Avenue and East Capitol Street (National Register of Historic Places – Capitol Hill Historic District, 2006). The streets are lined with brick sidewalks and plenty of shade that is inviting to pedestrians. Although the market serves as the center of the community, there are a number of coffee shops, exquisite restaurants, and small retail operations present in the neighborhood. These stores are also very busy on the weekends as they obviously take advantage of the crowds drawn to the Eastern Market.

Because the market has been in place for over a century without much maintenance, it shows signs of physical decay. The walls inside the South Hall building are in dire need of a new paint job and the aging pipes that hang low detract from the grand height of the ceiling. According to National Register of Historic Places – Eastern Market (2006) the entire South Hall is a "... lofty one-story space with an open plan, stall arrangement, natural light, easy access and exit, [and] ventilation ...". Its exterior, Italianate architecture includes high brick walls, large windows, and many doors which also enable it to blend in the neighborhood, but stand out as a center of neighborhood activity.

Within the South Hall there are fourteen vendors which sell seafood, poultry, deli meat, beef, pork, and dairy products. All the vendors are lined around the perimeter of the building leaving one central aisle for buyers to walk and shop. The majority of these vendors each have a freezer to display their products or a series of shelves and stands for produce. None of the displays were gaudy or really eye catching. In fact, the signs and displays used appeared very old, as they could probably indicate how long a particular vendor has been in business. Many of the vendors use flowers, arts and crafts, or homemade signs to add appeal to their spaces.

The Farmer's Line is a row of 22 vendors selling flowers, fruits, vegetables, nuts, and spices, outside of the South Hall building on the sidewalk. Merchants are assembled

under a large awning that protects the products, shoppers, and merchants from the elements. The Flea Market section of the Eastern Market uses the playground of the local junior high school for space. Each vendor is provided a tent by the market where they can display their product.

B. Economic Structure

All of the vendors in the South Hall are small, independently owned or family owned businesses. Out of the fourteen, six are meat and poultry vendors, one seafood vendor, a small lunch area, delicatessen, two produce vendors, a candy vendor, one dairy vendor, and one flower vendor, and one pottery vendor. All of the vendors are from Washington, DC except the seafood and flower vendors who come from Charles County in Southern Maryland. Most of the merchants interviewed expressed that the market is their primary place of retail, because they have no existing store to sell their goods. Because of this, they sell at the market Tuesday through Saturday from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Sunday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. During the weekend each vendor had at least two employees working to handle the large volume of customers.

The Farmer's Line vendors come from a variety of places. Only four are actually based in Washington, DC, which is not surprising considering the amount of land needed to farm. Others come from West Virginia (3), Southern Maryland (7), Anne Arundel County, MD (1), Roanoke, VA, (1) and the Baltimore area (2). A few of the farmers also sell at the Baltimore and Alexandria markets. Three out of the four vendors interviewed stated their primary reason for coming to the Eastern Market was because of the large crowd. They seem really confident that if they bring a good product to the market, it will sell. One of the vendors expressed their like for the market because of the metal awning provided that protects her goods in case the weather is not ideal.

The arts and craft/flea market vendors are mostly from the Washington DC – Baltimore Area, however, one vendor was from Southwestern Virginia. What is most interesting about the flea market is the product variety. Customers can buy furniture, eyeglasses, African artwork, clothes, tablecloths, toys, video games and many other things ordinarily found in retail stores at higher prices. The market has a separate website for the flea market that highlights several of the vendors each week (The Flea Market at Eastern Market on Capitol Hill, 2006). Some of the vendors have small shops throughout the city where they sell their products, however most simply make their products at home and bring them to the market to sell every Saturday and Sunday from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Most of the vendors interviewed including the Farmer's Line and South Hall merchants agreed that parking is a major problem at the market, especially when all the vendors are trying to arrive at once and set up.

The market is a very vibrant place with many customers. There were plenty of families present as well as individuals shopping for themselves. Elderly individuals were present enjoying the variety of products, and there were also a good number of what appeared to be young, urban professionals from the local area. The racial makeup of the customers

was relatively mixed, but predominantly White, Black, and Asian. Most of the customers came from the Washington, DC Metro Area. Judging from customer interviews and license plates of cars in the market parking lot, most of the shoppers were from DC. However, a fair number of customers were from the Virginia suburbs of Arlington and Alexandria, and Prince George's and Montgomery Counties in Maryland.

In addition to providing a variety to goods, many of the customers come to the market for leisure. Others appreciate the fact the market provides fresh produce, that exceeds grocery store standards. It's somewhat like a one-stop place for all things fresh and hand-crafted. Customers were buying fruit, fish, meats, sunflowers, sandwiches, CDs, DVDs, rugs, antiques, books, jewelry, purses, and paintings.

C. Organization

The South Hall of the Eastern Market, which houses most of the meat and dairy vendors, is open Tuesday through Saturday from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Sunday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The Flea Market and Arts and Crafts Market has hours from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. The Farmer's Line is open Saturday and Sunday from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (Eastern Market DC, 2006).

The Eastern Market is owned by the City of Washington, DC and regulated by the Office of Property Management. Currently, the market is staffed by four employees, some of which handle multiple positions which include market managers, two leasing representatives, and two vendor representatives. The market managers are responsible for the overall daily management of the market while the leasing representatives primarily communicate with the meat, and dairy vendors who sell their products within the South Hall and the farming vendors who sell produce outside of the hall. These representatives also collect fees, and enforce food safety regulations within the South Hall. The vending representatives communicate with and manage the Saturday and Sunday Flea Market and Arts and Crafts Market vendors. They are directly responsible for collecting fees, and enforcing rules of the market.

Overall, the market is self-sufficient. In spite of being managed by the local government, the market has its own revolving fund to carry out its day to day activities. The operating budget that it does maintain is not subsidized by the government. However, the Office of Property Management is responsible for physical improvements to the building.

The current market manager could offer no real insight as to how vendors are recruited. Many of the meat and dairy vendors who operate inside the South Hall have served for 10 to 20 years. However, there are a few that have been in place for more that 60 years. The farming vendors, who sell goods outside, have also been in place for the past two decades. One particular vendor has been at the market for over 100 years. As a general rule, if one vendor leaves, the market manager tries to replace them with a vendor selling like goods. This serves to maintain the current balance in product variety.

Every vendor within the South Hall is required to pay \$25 per square foot of space used per day. Vendors outside (Farmer's Line) must pay a rate that varies from \$20 to \$35 per area, per day. Flea market spaces sell for \$25 for an 8 ft. by 4 ft. space, \$35 for a space accommodating two 6 ft. tables, \$50 for four 6 ft. tables, \$80 for 200 ft. and \$30 more for every additional 100 ft. Besides collecting the vendor fee, the market does not collect figures on the sales of its vendors or measure its performance in any way over time. The four employees mentioned above are responsible for maintaining all areas of the market (inside and outside). Surprisingly, no partnerships are maintained with other organizations. This is ironic considering that the outdoor arts and crafts vendors use the local junior high school playground for space.

D. Promotion

Currently, two websites are used to advertise the market. www.easternmarketdc.com provides information on the meat, produce, and dairy vendors of the market, while www.easternmarket.net provides information on arts, craft, and flea market operations. The market recently hired a marketing company – Edge Advertising – to develop and implement a marketing plan for September. No events are co-sponsored with other organizations or solely by the Eastern Market.

E. Overall Assessment

The Eastern Market is successful for two main reasons. First, the market has a long standing history as gathering place in the community, and provider of quality goods. Second, in spite of the issues with parking, vendors are committed to coming back time and time again as exemplified by the fact that there hasn't been much turnover in the past two decades. The biggest issue that the market faces is its outdated infrastructure. The lack of air conditioning in the summer months allows the South Hall to become very hot and humid. Such conditions are not ideal to sell poultry, meats, and produce. Although these concerns have been mentioned in stakeholder meetings and are some are listed for completion in the capital improvements plan, they have yet to take place (Capital Improvements Subcommittee, 2006).

Both the Richmond Market and Eastern Market are located in areas of strong history. Although the Eastern Market does not overtly advertise its history to promote the market, the architecture of the market itself and the neighborhood mesh to compliment each other and give customers somewhat of an "old town" feel, with the market at the neighborhood center. Richmond could do the same thing by highlighting the history of its farmers market, and using design principles that would make the market the neighborhood center for Shockoe Bottom. Just as the Eastern Market is a part of the larger Capitol Hill community, the Richmond Farmer's Market must also identify with the Shockoe Bottom community.

Fredericksburg Farmers' Market

A. Design/Physical Characteristics

The Fredericksburg Farmers' Market is in downtown Fredericksburg, about two blocks from the main commercial street, Caroline Street. The market is about a five to ten minute walk from the University of Mary Washington campus. The market is located along George and Prince Edward Streets which in part surround Hurkamp Park. Nearly all the streets in downtown Fredericksburg have sidewalks; thereby allowing for easy pedestrian access to the park and farmers' market. Public vehicular parking is allowed on the streets of downtown near the market; as well there is a BB&T bank branch caddy-corner to the market which allows market customers to park for short intervals of time.

Hurkamp Park provides a complementary natural backdrop to the market. The neighborhood house which in part surround the park and market also help to create a pleasant small town ambience which adds to the farmers' market shopping experience. On the remaining side of the market there are businesses and a fire station. On Saturdays, the main market day, the large Verizon building which lies across from the market along Prince Edward Street is silent. This neither distracts from the market, nor does it add to the market ambience.

The market itself lacks any permanent structures. Market vendors supply their own shelter table display tables. The market is located on the sidewalks surrounding the park along two encircling streets. The number of vendors at the market is limited by the space provided on the sidewalks. Vendors are responsible for their own decoration, signs, and display organization. Due to the width of the sidewalk and the tables used by particular vendors, circulation in and between vendors in the market can be cramped and difficulty to maneuver increases with the amount of shoppers. The open space in the park does little to alleviate this issue as there is a short brick wall of about two and half to three feet separating the park from the sidewalk/market.

B. Economic Structure

The Fredericksburg Farmers' Market does not have any running themes throughout the season or year. The number of vendors varies based on the day of the week and weather conditions. Saturday is the busiest day; typically, 10-15 vendors sell on Saturdays while the weekdays attract fewer vendors. The vendors are small farmers some of whom participate in co-ops and/or other farmers' markets, such as the Roanoke Farmers' Market. Vendors come to the market from distance ranging from 10 minutes up the road in Stafford County to 3 hours away in Charlotte County. Some vendors have begun coming to the market recently while other have built up a loyal customer base having sold at the market for many years.

The main reason sited for why the vendors enjoy the Fredericksburg Farmers' Market was the surrounding neighborhood and the people who lived in it. Included in this

neighborhood is the commercial and tourist destination of downtown Fredericksburg with its many restaurants and antique shops. It is not uncommon for people to enjoy a leisurely lunch in the restaurants downtown and then stroll the few blocks to farmers' market to purchase fresh produce for the upcoming week. The vast majority of Farmers' Market customers seemed to come from the within the City of Fredericksburg and the surrounding Counties of Spotsylvania and Stafford.

The customer base for the Farmers' Market appears to be primarily white and middle-aged, not unlike the resident living in close proximity to the park/market. Customers purchase the range of vegetables available at the market (tomatoes, squash, eggplant, onions, etc.) as well some value-added products such as breads, jams, and cheeses. However, few customers were purchasing coffee from a vendor during research visitation.

C. Organization

The Fredericksburg Farmers' Market is technically open Monday through Saturday from 6:00am to 6:00pm. These long hours are the hours that farmers are allowed to have their displays up and selling to the public. Practically no farmers actually stay the full 12 hours of possible operation. Most vendors arrive in the morning and leave as the customer flow slows around noon to early afternoon. The Farmers' Market does not have special events throughout the season.

The City of Fredericksburg owns the Farmers' Market. According to city code the City Manager is authorized and directed to administer the Farmers' Market. The city sells parking decals to participating vendors which allow them to park along the market for many hours during market days. These decals are the source of funding organized by the City for the Farmers' Market. All the City must do for market upkeep is provide the sidewalks upon which the market operates. The market manager is a City employee who interacts fairly rarely with the market vendors. Therefore, in reality the Fredericksburg Farmers' Market is generally operated and policed by the vendors themselves. The Markets' sales and other performance indicators are not measured; however, individual vendors track their own progress.

D. Promotion

The Fredericksburg Farmers' Market does not spend money in marketing or advertising efforts. The local Fredericksburg paper, the Free-Lance Star, does periodically write stories about the Farmers' Market. However, many of the last few stories covered by the paper have contrasted the Fredericksburg Farmers' Market with the newer Spotsylvania Farmers' Market.

E. Overall Assessment

The most important reasons for the success of the Fredericksburg Farmers' Market revolve around the surround neighborhood. First, the neighborhood's character itself enhances the small town, small farmer feel of the market. As well, the neighborhood is full of loyal customers who have been visiting the market for years. On the flip side, the biggest problems facing the Fredericksburg Farmer's Market includes the small, rather "impromptu" structure of the market. Some people who live in the Fredericksburg area go to the Spotsylvania Farmers' Market because of its larger size and the possibility that it may be easier to go to given a sometimes congested traffic situation in Fredericksburg. As well, a possible lack of parking near the market on pleasant sunny days when many people flock into downtown Fredericksburg to enjoy the day complicates matters for the Farmers' Market.

The Fredericksburg Farmers' Market provides some lessons for the Richmond Market. First, the neighborhood and its perception need improvement for vendors and customers to come. Second, the fees at the Richmond Market need to change; vendors need to feel more secure in their ability to make a profit. If the vendors spend most of their market income on market fees and the market has a slow customer flow vendors simply will not participate in the market.

Roanoke Farmers' Market

A. Design/Physical Characteristics

The Historic Roanoke City Market is the oldest continuously operating open air market in the Commonwealth of Virginia. It began when 25 licenses were issued to "Hucksters" (Vendors) in 1882. The first City of Roanoke Charter formally authorized a municipally owned market in 1884. The first City Market Building was completed in 1886 and formed the core around which the Curb Market and Market Square developed. The original building was destroyed by fire and was replaced by the current building in 1922.

After serving as an indoor market for many years, the City Market Building was renovated in the mid 1980's and currently houses an International Food Court - a hugely popular lunch time destination in downtown. The Historic Roanoke City Market has been recognized as a "Great American Public Place" by the Lyndhurst Foundation along with other winners like the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC and Central Park in New York City. Locally, the market receives many "Best of Roanoke" awards by readers of the Roanoker Magazine.

The placement of this hardscaped area is a very nice amenity. It provides a place for people to come and relax in the shade after a day of shopping in the market. The area features several monuments of various different styles celebrating many countries of the world. Situated between two buildings it serves as a brief retreat from the hustle and bustle of the city. The area has a patio or portico kind of feel with the fountains located on one end of the space. The landscaping helps to keep the area cool and inviting.

The Historic Roanoke City Market is located in the heart of the heart of the city. The market provides an economic and vital boom to the district. It is the center of social, economic and cultural activity of the downtown area. The market is very accessible for vehicles and pedestrians. Market Street runs parallel to I-581 just a few blocks away from its Exit into the city.

B. Economic Structure

The customers are typically local citizens from the Roanoke area. There are some who do travel from neighboring counties to come to shop. There is truly a good mix of ages and ethnicities. When we asked why people come the general response was “they come because they enjoy the atmosphere, the fresh produce, and the good food made with local ingredients.” The customers’ purchases were typically produce, as well as other foods.

There is a strong connection between the market, the city, the media, local businesses, and organizations. The success of the area is definitely attributed to this strength within this community.

C. Organization

The organization of the Historic Roanoke City Market is very detailed, and it includes a set of standards for both vendors and products. On market days, there are people assigned to the task of making sure everything runs smoothly and that everything is of high quality. The rules are pretty strict, but this has enabled the Market to get excellent vendors that they can count upon to come to the Market.

The performance of the market is followed closely by various committees within the organizational chart. The market is held accountable for its performance by the Board of Directors. There is a budget prepared every fiscal year similar to a corporation.

The Historic Roanoke City Market is open year-round, seven days a week, and closes only on Christmas and New Year's. The hours of operation are yearlong for the market. The business hours are: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday – Saturday and 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. There are 42 permanent tables covered by yellow and white awnings that mark an inviting display of fresh fruits, vegetables, flowers, and plants during growing season. There are additional spaces in Market Square where vendors erect tents to display their wares inviting display of fresh fruits, vegetables, flowers, and plants during growing season. In recent years, a number of artisans have joined the farmers and planters offering handcrafted items, unique jewelry, and other art objects. The market even boasts a variety of fresh meats. There are several special events held throughout the year. Some examples of events that occur are Oktoberfest, Fright Night, The Blues and Jazz Festival, and the popular Dickens of a Christmas Festival. There are also weekly and monthly events held in downtown close to the market such as First Fridays, Art by Night, and Party in the Park.

D. Promotion

The promotion of the market and special events is an on-going process in which the city and local businesses play an important role. Advertisements are circulated by means of several ways. The promotion of the market and surrounding events is handled by a corporation named Downtown Roanoke, Inc. The means used to promote the downtown and the city market are radio, TV, newspaper, fliers, banners, direct mailing.

E. Overall Assessment

Overall, the Roanoke City Market provides a good example of what a farmers' market can aspire to be. It is an important part of the city's culture and history. The market projects a rather unique and uniform theme through the architecture around the market and the historical markers and signage in the vicinity.

The market demonstrates the ideals of variety and competition while promoting success. This is done through the stringent standards that the operators of the market enforce. Everyone wins because of these standards. They seem to keep customers coming back because the products are of excellent quality. The farmers and vendors are happy because there are many people who come and buy their items. Lastly the city is pleased because there are people downtown spending money and enjoying the pleasures of the downtown area.

The local businesses and the market help sustain each other. The restaurants buy their food from the farmers within the market. Some businesses cleverly associate with the market by their names. Many of the vendors are also store owners within the market area. Therefore they have a vested interest in how well things are doing.

The complimentary amenities such as park and open space or even hardscaped areas provide a good place for people to gather and unwind to enjoy the experience.

While we found very few problems there were a few which were being addressed already. One such problem is the issue of vacancy of some buildings within the area. The 17th Street Farmers Market could learn a great deal from the example by the Roanoke City Market. First of all, organization is the key to a successful farmer's market. The organizational chart and structure which Roanoke has put in place is excellent and it works.

Revitalization to the whole area around the market will help draw more people downtown. If there are vacant buildings, let people know about it. People are always looking for a place to start businesses. More businesses generate more foot traffic.

Develop a theme around the strengths of the community. Richmond has a rich history, it would be a shame not to incorporate it into the atmosphere of the market. Promote other city attractions and they will promote you. Work out partnerships and important relationships with organizations, clubs, schools, and local businesses.

Provide public space for people to relax and join together. These spaces should provide landscaping for shade from the heat, places to sit and enjoy the experience, and places for local artists and students to display sculpture and artwork. While we found very few problems there were a few which were being addressed already. One such problem is the issue of vacancy of some buildings within the area. Another problem that I remember as I was growing up in the community is the fact that many homeless people will loiter in the market area right after hours in hopes of getting some change.

While vacancy is not a huge problem in the main area of the market, there are a few empty buildings along Salem Avenue. The city has a webpage dedicated to advertising the properties in the downtown area which are available to purchase. The picture above illustrates that this building is in pretty good shape from the exterior and could possibly be used as a mixed use building or some residential apartments among many other possibilities.

The market does face some challenges. The biggest challenge is competition from Big Box Retail and shopping malls. There is some competition from other farmers markets but not very much. This market is the largest one within several miles and has been established since the late 1880's. The downtown revitalization has really been a big success within the past few decades.

Williamsburg Farmers' Market

A. Design/Physical Characteristics

The Williamsburg Farmer's Market (the market) is centrally located in Merchant's Square on Duke of Gloucester Street near the heart of Colonial Williamsburg.² Duke of Gloucester Street is conducive to pedestrian traffic, and the market is served by six free parking facilities located no more than two blocks away. Major transportation routes such as Interstate-64, State Route 60, and State Route 199 are within two miles from the market.³ Williamsburg itself is conveniently located between Richmond and the Hampton Roads metropolitan area.

The Williamsburg Farmer's Market enjoys the charms of a small college town set against an historic backdrop. Close proximity to the College of William and Mary campus and the Colonial Williamsburg Historic District attracts professors, college students and their parents, and tourists to the market. Also, the Williamsburg-Jamestown-Yorktown historic triangle is a popular site for vacation homes and upscale retirement communities, so the market is often visited by retirees and families seeking recreation and shopping. Duke of Gloucester Street is lined with a variety of boutique shops and restaurants that offer additional commercial linkages for both market vendors and customers. Market vendors and customers maintain a leisurely pace, and it is not uncommon to see children playing games, actors dressed in colonial attire, and locals jogging or walking along

² See below, Map 1

³ *Id.*

Merchant's Square. Finally, Duke of Gloucester street is often abbreviated as "DOG Street," and appropriately the market encourages customers to bring their canine companions.

The Williamsburg Farmer's Market is an open-air market with no permanent structure. Duke of Gloucester Street is closed to automobiles between Boundary and Henry Streets (i.e., the site of the market), and customers walk comfortably and safely among restaurants, shops, and the stalls of the market. Vendors set up approximately one dozen covered, portable stalls along the sidewalks of Duke of Gloucester Street.⁴ The stalls are clean and neat-looking, and they feature simple, yet descriptive signage.⁵ There is ample space between the stalls and the storefronts behind them, and customers are able to walk freely behind the stalls to access shops and restaurants. Although the stalls themselves are not remarkable, the surrounding shops and the cobblestones of Duke of Gloucester Street provide an attractive setting for the market. Importantly, a permanent visitors' information booth with restrooms at the corner of Boundary Street and Duke of Gloucester Street serves the market's customers.

B. Economic Structure

If the Williamsburg Farmer's Market has a theme, it is that the market features "producer-grown food." Peddlers are not permitted at the market; instead, vendors are small, independent farmers who raise their own crops and livestock. Both the vendors and the market manager are proud that the market promotes producer-only products, and customers seem to appreciate this aspect of the market as well. While the market allows some value-added products, these items must be closely associated with a raw product that the vendor grows on a farm.

When interviewed, many of the vendors emphatically stated that both farmers and customers prefer producer-only markets. As one vendor put it, "People go to farmer's markets expecting fresh food that comes directly from local farmers. You can't get that at the supermarket." While contrasting the Williamsburg Farmer's Market with Richmond's 17th St. Farmer's Market, one vendor noted that producer-only markets tend to establish a higher level of quality that customers appreciate. The vendor explained that allowing vendors to re-sell produce that they bought from a supermarket or a convenience store cheapens the market experience. The vendor rhetorically asked, "Why would you go to a farmer's market that sells the same stuff you can get at 7-11?" The Richmond market allows peddling, and several vendors called attention to this fact while explaining why they preferred the Williamsburg market.

The Williamsburg Farmer's Market currently hosts forty different vendors at different times throughout the season. Some vendors appear weekly, some bi-monthly, and some participate only during certain segments of the season. The most commonly-offered items at the market are fresh fruits and vegetables, potted plants, and baked goods.⁶ Also

⁴ See below, Photo 1.

⁵ See below, Photo 2.

⁶ See below,, Table 1.

appearing are: seafood, chicken, and pork; freshly-cut flowers; ethnic prepared foods; organic produce; seasonal field crops; and cheese, honey, and mushrooms.⁷ Most vendors hail from the Tidewater region of Virginia including: the Northern Neck, the Middle and Lower Peninsulas, Hampton Roads, and the Eastern Shore.⁸ However, seven vendors travel from localities near or west of Richmond; one vendor is from Shenandoah County.⁹ In addition to the Williamsburg market, vendors exhibit their products at markets in Arlington, Goochland, and Richmond.

The vendors indicated that they come to the Williamsburg Farmer's Market because the customers have disposable income and are well-educated about the quality and health benefits of locally-grown organic and natural foods. Also, the vendors noted that the Williamsburg market, in stark contrast to the Richmond market, is located in an area that enjoys high levels of pedestrian traffic during the time that the market is open. These same vendors bemoaned the fact that the Richmond market receives almost no publicity and hence, few Richmonders are even aware that the market exists. They explained that Richmond's city government has given the market little support, and that City Hall could be doing a lot more to publicize the market and its value in the community.

In addition, the vendors indicated that although the Williamsburg market's fees were higher than the Richmond market's fees, the Williamsburg fees were not prohibitive because total sales in Williamsburg were consistently higher than sales in Richmond. Several vendors speculated that the reason for this disparity was that the Williamsburg market is located in a place where white, upper middle-class, educated customers tend to congregate; in contrast, the Richmond market is located far from the western Henrico and northern Chesterfield neighborhoods where such potential customers reside. One vendor stated that he made more money in thirty minutes to an hour at the Williamsburg market than he would make all day in Richmond. However, another vendor explained that she sold almost as much in Richmond as she did in Williamsburg, yet she claimed that her success in Richmond was due to developing her own customer base through painstaking networking and persistence for over ten years. The vendors who exhibit at both the Richmond and Williamsburg markets said that they attend the Richmond market on Thursdays and the Williamsburg market on Saturdays. Some of these vendors warned that if the Richmond market does not improve soon, they will likely abandon the Thursday market in Richmond for newer markets opening in Goochland and New Kent Counties.

The Williamsburg Farmer's Market is visited by a great number of customers traveling from Hampton Roads in the east and the Richmond metropolitan area in the west. As one customer/local explained, the Williamsburg market is a social event for locals, tourists, time-share holders, students, and professors. In addition to buying fresh food, flowers, and plants from local growers, these customers enjoy using the market as a meeting place for conversation and outdoor recreation. Customers are generally white, middle-class or upper middle-class, and well-educated, which reflects much of the local population.

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ *See below*, Table 2.

⁹ *Id.*

Families are about as common as retirees and empty-nesters, and there is a smaller, yet substantial, number of college students and young professionals. The type of customer tends to change with the time of day: locals come early on Saturdays and late on Tuesdays; tourists and time-share holders come early on Tuesdays and late on Saturdays. One customer reported that he visited the market every week on Saturday and Tuesday, and he claimed to frequently walk from his office to the market to eat lunch during the week.

C. Organization

The hours of operation for the Williamsburg Farmers' Market are from 8 to noon every Saturday and 3 to 7 every Tuesday afternoon during the regular season. During holidays and winter, the market is open from 8:30 to noon on Saturdays. During the days the market is open, there are many special events held that attract and entertain the customers. There are music events almost every Saturday and almost every restaurant in Merchant's Square and the surrounding area holds cooking events at the Chef's Tent in the square. During the Chef's Tent events, local chefs buy products from the market and use them in a dish. There are also recipe cards available that explain how to make the dish that is on display. In addition, there are many Saturdays in which local growers hold short educational seminars on some aspect of their product or growing method.

The farmers' market is operated by a market manager and her assistant. These two individuals are the only paid staff for the market, however the market also relies on the work of many volunteers who perform many of the administrative tasks. During market days, the manager and assistant work at a booth in the center of the walkway and offer information on the market and various vendors. They are very attentive to anyone looking for answers.

The vendors that sell at the market are solely from Virginia. There is no requirement for proximity to the market in terms of miles, except that they be from the Commonwealth. These vendors maintain the selling space themselves and provide their own signage, tents, tables, etc. They are allowed to set up anytime from the night before until the beginning of market day. The cost of maintaining a booth at the market is two-fold: there is a once-per-year fee of \$35 plus the vendors are assessed a percentage of their sales, which is 6%. The market manager mainly relies on the honor system to collect the percentage of profits, and she said that the farmers there understand that by paying this percentage, they are supporting the thing that is making them money. There have been no problems with farmers paying their dues.

Some of these vendors also serve as Board Members for the market. This board works with the partnership of Colonial Williamsburg, the City of Williamsburg and the Merchant's Square Association in keeping the market viable. Local banks and the local hospital also partner with these other organizations. Two of the board members, Tom Power, the owner of the Cheese Shop and the Fat Canary, and Tom Austin, the owner of Berret's Seafood Restaurant, are the founding members of the market, and were responsible for creating the idea of the market as it is today as well as the location.

According to many of the vendors, the market would not be in existence today if not for the work of Power and Austin in gaining the local community buy-in.

The market manager measures the market's success in many ways. One way is that she performs a head count every hour to assess the amount of people that come to the market. On average, the market receives over 1200 visitors every Saturday during the regular season.

D. Promotion

Promotion for the market is very organized and all three members of the coalition are involved in advertising. There are numerous flyers in local shops and there are also advertisements in all of the local newspapers (the Williamsburg papers as well as in the surrounding county newspapers). In addition, the market manager sends out a weekly e-newsletter reminding people to come to the market and also to promote the events happening that week. There is a sign-up sheet provided at the market to collect email addresses and names and one can also sign up for the newsletter via the farmers' market website.

E. Overall Assessment

Location is a fundamental reason for the success of the Williamsburg Farmer's Market. The market itself enjoys a prime location within the City of Williamsburg, and Williamsburg itself is conveniently located between the major urban centers of Richmond and Hampton Roads. Williamsburg's reputation creates a perceived level of quality that attracts upper-middle class shoppers with plenty of disposable income. When customers visit the market, their expectations are met by vendors offering the highest quality and variety of products.

The market is able consistently to offer high quality products largely because the market allows producers only. This is the market's identity; although the historic surrounding of the market add to its charm, the historic element is not vital to the market's success. The market's customers demand a producer-only market because they are generally well-educated about the benefits of buying local products directly from farmers. Market events, such as cooking and gardening demonstrations performed by vendors and local retailers, are useful tools for educating new customers about the quality of the market's products. Market events serve a dual purpose of both educating and entertaining customers, and the result is a market environment that is both commercial and social. The market benefits from the active support of local retailers, which creates a strong community both economically and socially.

The Williamsburg market is very successful and it has few weaknesses. The market is an open-air market, and since it operates regardless of rain, customers may be put off by having to walk in the rain. Another challenge to this market is that during football season there is an abundance of college students packed into Merchant's Square. This may discourage the market's usual customers from attending the market.

A successful farmer’s market maintains a strong and singular identity; the Richmond market should follow Williamsburg’s model and maintain a producer-only market that offers high-quality products. The Williamsburg market emphasizes advertising and educating in order to attract more customers who want fresh, locally-grown products. The Richmond market should work with state and local government transportation agencies to increase signage for the market, and the market should use weekly educational events at the market and in local stores to promote the benefits of a producer-only market. Finally, the Williamsburg market has succeeded in large part through the support and collaboration of local retailers. The Richmond market is located near a multitude of restaurants in both Shockoe Slip and Shockoe Bottom; collaboration between these retailers and the market vendors should be facilitated and strongly encouraged.

Map 1

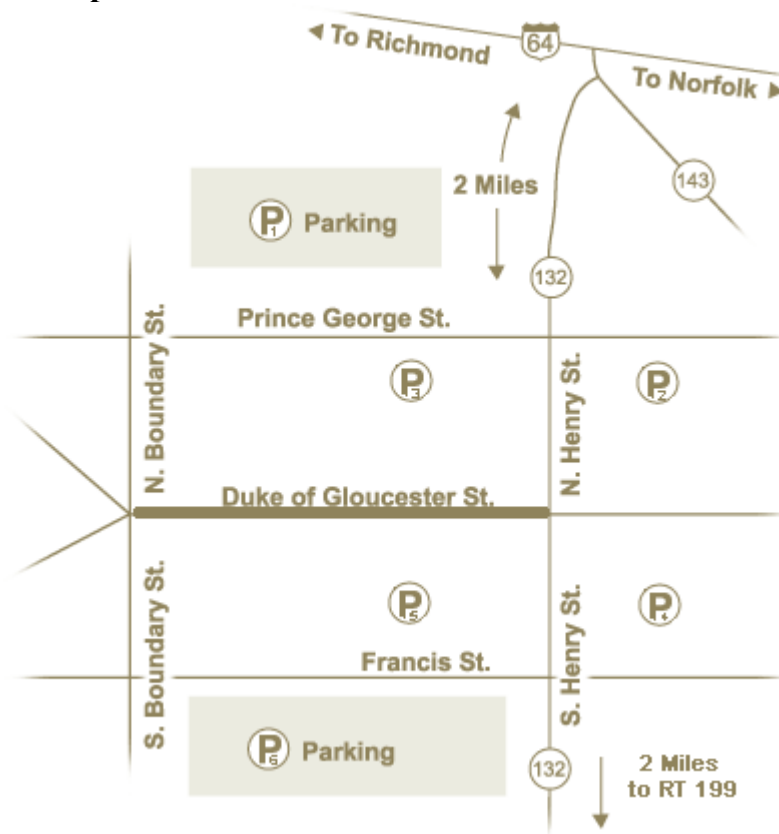


Photo 1



Photo 2



Table 1

Type of Vendor	Number
Seasonal field crops	3
Cut flowers	3
Ethnic prepared foods	3
Baked goods	6
Seafood	3
Potted plants, hanging basket plants, bulbs, shrubs, trees	6
Organic produce	2
Misc. (Cheese, Honey, Mushrooms)	3
Meats	2
Fruits and vegetables	8

Table 2

County/City*	Number of Vendors
Accomack	1
Caroline	1
Charles City	1
Gloucester	4
Hanover	1
Henrico	1
James City	5
King William	1
Mathews	1
Middlesex	1
New Kent	2
Nottoway	1
Poquoson*	1
Powhatan	1
Richmond*	2
Richmond	1
Shenandoah	1
Southampton	2
Suffolk*	2
Surry	1
Sussex	1
Virginia Beach*	1
Westmoreland	2
Williamsburg*	4
York	1
Total Vendors	40
Vendors located west of Richmond	7

CONSUMER MARKET SEGMENT SURVEYS

Current Customers

Survey Methodology

The surveys were distributed on Thursdays and Saturdays at various times during Market events. Researchers distributed the surveys on clipboards with pens, and respondents wrote answers to the survey questions and immediately returned them to the researchers. The surveys were collected and the responses were tabulated. A total of 36 surveys were collected over several days at the market.

Summary of Results

All but three of respondents live within the Greater Richmond area. Twenty customers had not visited any other farmers' markets. Sixteen respondents stated that they heard about the market by word-of-mouth and three discovered the market by walking/driving by the area. Seven respondents stated that they heard about the Market because they

work nearby. When asked “how often do you visit each market day,” sixteen customers stated that they visit the Thursday market on a weekly basis and seven on a monthly basis. Only four customers said they attend the Saturday market weekly and four stated monthly. The current customers most frequently visit the Thursday market; though respondents indicated that the midday hours any day of the week would be acceptable. Saturday morning was also a popular time that customers stated they would prefer to visit the Market.

When asked “what you plan to purchase today,” twenty-two customers said “produce” and eighteen said “prepared food items” as well. Only seven respondents planned on purchasing crafts or art and only nine planned to purchase plants or flowers. There is a wide variety of items that respondents desire to see at the market, but most of the respondents want more fruits and vegetables, especially organic vegetables, and cheeses. Some of the prepared food items that people want the Market to offer include honey, peanuts, spices, herbs, and lunch foods. When asked “are you planning on visiting any other shops, restaurants, or bars in the neighborhood today,” sixteen said “yes,” and all but two of those identified a restaurant, coffee shop, or bar as where they plan to visit. This indicates potential for partnership between the Market and surrounding businesses.

The respondents were asked to rate several characteristics of the Market as Good, Fair, or Poor. In general, the current customers think that the Market is favorable in almost all categories. These characteristics include the Market’s outdoor setup, circulation in the Market, surrounding neighborhood atmosphere, quality of products, and the quality of vendor displays. Only two characteristics stand out as unfavorable when compared with the rest of the responses. The amount of parking available as well and the types of products offered are perceived as problems.

These results of the current customer surveys indicate that very few customers hear about the Market through any form of advertising. Secondly, it is no surprise that the current customers feel that Thursday is a good day for the Market because they already attend on this day. Third, it is very clear that produce and food are the most popular items that customers want to purchase and they would like to see more of these items available at the Market. Finally, the product variety offered at the market appears to be the biggest concern for the current customers

Special Event Visitors: Haunted Market

Survey Methodology

The surveys were distributed on clipboards with pens, and respondents wrote answers to the survey questions. The surveys were collected and the responses were tabulated. Thirteen people responded to the survey.

Summary of Results

Despite the low response rate, the frequency of certain responses allows us to draw some tentative conclusions. Many people have been to the Market before; however, most do not return on a regular or even a frequent basis to either the regular Market events or special Market events. Most people decide to attend special Market events to interact with people or to enjoy the surrounding area. Visitors to the Market are interested in purchasing items at the Market, but they are dissatisfied with the product selection. People have the most interest in attending special Market events on weekend afternoons and evenings.

All but one of the respondents live in the metro-Richmond area. Three respondents heard about the special event by word-of-mouth. The next most popular response to how the respondents heard of the event was “other”; this includes responses such as “walking by,” “a Church Hill newsletter,” and “participation as a vendor.” A majority of the respondents had previously visited the Market. Less than half the respondents visit the Market somewhat frequently (weekly or monthly). The remaining respondents visit rarely (every few months or yearly). A majority of respondents find that the surrounding neighborhood environment positively affects their decision to attend the Market. Most respondents had not visited other farmers’ markets in the region.

The most popular response to why the respondents visit the Haunted Market was to “see/meet people.” Respondents like the “outdoor event” and the “variety and night time market.” On the other hand, respondents dislike the poor attendance by visitors and the lack of advertising. Most respondents were planning on purchasing something that day in the Market and/or the surrounding neighborhood. Items that respondents listed as having purchased included produce, food, and crafts. When asked what items were not present but should be available, responses included more jewelry and crafts as well as alcohol. All respondents were pleased with the current outdoor set-up. Respondents were also asked when they would be likely to attend regular market events and special events. The most popular responses for both events were Saturday and Sunday afternoons and evenings. Respondents also indicated that they are “somewhat likely” to return for either a regular market event or a special market event.

Special Event Visitors: Virginia Gay Pride Festival

Using the same methodology as the Haunted Market, special event visitor surveys were also administered approximately 80 patrons of the Virginia Gay Pride Festival held at the Market.

This special event is not related to the Market and does not promote farm-related products. Nonetheless, the surveys were administered in order to gather opinions pertaining to the Market. The most important result of this survey showed that people are willing to come to the Market for special events like this. The advertising done by Gay Pride VA was effective and reached the target audience as well as the community at large. It also showed that the Thursday grower's market isn't a good time for most people (except the people who are already coming) and Saturday or Sunday or a Weekday evening like Thursday or Friday would be better for a grower's market. Finally, beer

sales at this event showed that permitting on-site alcohol sale and consumption would be very popular and successful without posing a public safety problem.

Downtown Workers

Survey Methodology

The researchers created a sixteen-question survey for State government employees who work in the James Monroe Building, which is located on North 14th Street near the 17th Street Farmer's Market. The researchers asked all of the agencies with offices in the Monroe Building for permission to distribute paper copies of the survey to the State employees; only six agencies agreed to allow the survey to be distributed within their offices. Of the 150 surveys distributed by this method, only 57 were completed one week after distribution.

Researchers also approached patrons of the Monroe Building's cafeteria between 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. Paper copies of the surveys were given to Monroe Building employees to complete at their leisure during their lunchtime. The researchers found that roughly two-thirds of the cafeteria patrons claimed to not work in the Monroe Building. An additional 24 surveys were completed through this method.

Summary of Results

Eighty-one surveys were completed. The survey included questions designed to test employees' familiarity with the Market and the type of products they purchase at the Market, if any. Almost all of the employees surveyed have visited the Market at least once, and almost half of that group have visited the Market within the past year. Almost half of the employees go to the Market to buy fresh produce, and more than half visit the Market on days that they work. Half of the employees shop for produce once per week. Over one-third of the employees claimed that they would be somewhat likely to shop at the Market if the Market were to provide a reliable source of produce, yet interestingly, the same number of employees claimed that they would not be very likely to shop at the Market.

Several survey questions were designed to investigate employees' lunchtime dining habits since the Thursday Grower's Market is open during lunch. Nearly all the employees sampled reported that they are allowed thirty minutes to one hour for lunch. Almost half leave the building for lunch less than once per week, yet almost one-third leave the building for lunch on three or more occasions during the week.

The Market is located only four blocks away from the Monroe Building, so some questions were designed to test whether employees would be willing to walk to the Shockoe Bottom neighborhood for lunch. Four-fifths of the employees sampled walk to lunch when they leave the building, and over one-third know about the Greater Richmond Transit Company (GRTC) Lunchtime Express route that serves the Monroe Building and the Market but they do not use it. When employees leave the building for lunch, over

half of them travel three to ten blocks from the Monroe Building. Almost three-quarters of the employees surveyed indicated that they do not participate in the Walkin' Wednesdays events that are guided by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (these events are advertised through posters located near the elevators in the Monroe Building). Last, almost half of the employees surveyed reported that they considered crime in Shockoe Bottom to be a deterrent.

Finally, three open-ended questions were designed to obtain personalized feedback from Monroe Building employees regarding their opinions of the Market and their ideas for improving it. Only about two-thirds of the sample answered these questions. The most popular suggestions for how the Market could be improved include providing parking spaces closer to the Market and increasing advertising. The most popular reason that employees gave for not visiting the Market is that they live and shop in the suburbs and have no need for a farmer's market. Last, the employees reported that a better produce selection, lower prices, and closer parking would bring them back to the Market.

Several conclusions may be drawn from the results of the survey. First, it is clear that the employees sampled are knowledgeable about the Market; almost all of them have personally experienced the Market, in most cases, during the past year.

Second, it appears that Monroe Building employees have sufficient time and interest to walk down to the Market from their building during their lunch-break. Most of the employees go to the Market on workdays, which suggests that part of the Thursday grower's market's customer base comes from the Monroe Building. Further, since most of the employees walk to a restaurant located three to ten blocks away from their building for lunch, it seems reasonable to expect the employees to be willing to walk to the Market for lunch if they had a reason to do so. Finally, crime in Shockoe Bottom does not appear to be a major deterrent to employees.

Last, the survey results include two interesting *non sequiturs*. The employees seem to want fresh produce at the market, and more variety in the produce selection. Also, the employees tend to shop for produce once per week, and given that they prefer to shop at the Market on workdays, the Thursday grower's market could potentially serve as their weekly produce market. However, it appears that even if the Market provided a reliable source of produce on a daily basis, only twenty percent of the employees would be very likely to purchase their produce at the Market. One explanation for this result is that employees do not want to have to lug their week's groceries back to the office, even if it is located no farther away than the back lot at Tom Leonard's Supermarket. Another explanation could be that the employees simply do not desire to visit the Market frequently enough to make it their weekly market; only four percent of the employees who had visited the Market had visited it within the past week.

Another curious result of the survey is that the most popular suggestion for improving the Market was to provide parking spaces that are closer to the Market and ideal for quick pull-in shopping from one's car. Also, several employees claimed that providing closer parking would bring them back to the Market. These results seem odd considering that most of the employees walk when they leave the building for lunch. If employees are not

averse to walking to lunch, it does not follow that they would want to drive to the Market. In fact, given the size of the State parking decks, it might take some employees longer to walk to their car than it would to walk to the Market.

Shockoe Bottom Residents

Methodology

Residents of the nearby Tobacco Row and Church Hill neighborhoods were also surveyed in order to learn what changes are necessary to further penetrate this segment. The proximity of these residential neighborhoods to the Market presents an opportunity for the Market to develop a strong local customer base.

Researchers distributed the surveys to people at a Shockoe Bottom grocery store on clipboards with pens, and respondents wrote answers to the survey questions and immediately returned them to the researchers. The surveys were also distributed to residents of two Tobacco Row apartment complexes via an interactive website. The surveys were collected and the responses were tabulated.

Summary of Results

The most important findings from this survey showed that while most people knew about the Market, the current advertising is not reaching them, and the current dates and times are not convenient. Those that had visited the Market said they were unsatisfied with the current selection of produce, and they would also like to see more value added foods, as well as meats and cheeses. Finally, the Sunday Flea Market is very unpopular with residents and is seen as an unattractive feature of the market.

Potential Regional Customers

Survey Methodology

In order to gain insight into the views of potential Market customers residing in the Richmond metropolitan region a survey was distributed to people at local grocery stores and at the 2006 National Folk Festival on Browns' Island. Surveys were also sent via e-mail to employees of a regional corporation. A total of 11 respondents were intercepted through personal interview, and 23 respondents were encountered through e-mail. The researchers took the results of the Southeastern Institute of Research survey into account as they created survey questions. The questions were designed to determine what is necessary to attract these metropolitan residents to the 17th Street Farmers' Market.

Summary of Results

All the respondents had visited Shockoe Bottom. A few do not live in Richmond but have visited Shockoe Bottom during their stay in the Richmond region. The vast majority of respondents partied/drank or ate a meal while in Shockoe Bottom; some

either had lived or currently live there or had visited the Farmers' Market. The most common impression of Shockoe Bottom was that the neighborhood is dirty or trashy. Also, some associate the Bottom primarily with nightclubs, and these respondents noted that the Bottom was nothing special but "not too bad."

Over 90% of respondents had heard of the Farmers' Market. Those who had not heard of the Market do not live in the Richmond area. Half the people who had heard of the Market found out about it by word of mouth. "Word-of-mouth" and "living near the Market" accounted for how 80% respondents had heard of the Market. None of the respondents visit the Farmers' Market weekly. Most respondents visit once per month. This fairly frequent patronage indicates that the Market should be performing better than it is; however, many people responded that they bought nothing at the Market when they visited.

Further, the lack of product variety and quality makes respondents unwilling to overlook the Market's inconvenience. Also, some respondents are unimpressed, if not dissatisfied, with the vendors and their displays. The option of having a specialty grocer near the Farmers' Market only slightly increased willingness to detour to the Market. Still, many respondents liked the idea of having such a grocer near the Market.

Most respondents visit once per month. This fairly frequent patronage indicates that the Market should be performing better than it is; however, many people responded that they bought nothing at the Market when they visited.

Half the people who had heard of the Market found out about it by word of mouth. Over 90% of respondents had heard of the Farmers' Market. Most of these respondents think the Shockoe Bottom area needs improvement. The most popular areas of the city that respondents visit are the Fan and Carytown. Respondents enjoy the atmosphere of a friendly, clean "walking city." Respondents are interested in the Farmers' Market, but they think that in its current state the Market leaves much to be desired. Respondents stated that the Market's location and hours are generally inconvenient. Most respondents think that the Market needs to increase its variety and quality of product selection. It appears that if the Market lived up to people's expectations they would be willing to drive out of their way to go to it. There were a few suggestions that a building be constructed so that the Market could be indoor and outdoor.

MARKET STAKEHOLDERS

Inactive Market Vendors

Methodology

Inactive market vendors are defined as those vendors that at one time sold or attempted to sell at the 17th Street Farmers' Market but no longer sell there. A total of six interviews

were conducted with inactive Market vendors via phone or in person. Products offered by the six inactive vendors interviewed include plants, cut flowers, produce, crafts, and homemade candy.

Summary of Results

Responses to the question of why the vendors are not currently selling at the Market varied, though common themes became apparent. The most common response was that there are not enough customers at the Market for the vendors to break even. More specifically, there is not enough foot traffic in the Shockoe Bottom area and the Market is located too far from downtown offices and businesses. One vendor noted that Shockoe Bottom is not a “destination” and “there is nothing to do there.” Another common complaint was the lack of produce vendors and too many craft vendors. Insufficient advertising was another reason for not selling at the Market.

When asked what could be done to encourage the inactive vendors to sell at the Market on a weekly basis, the issue of the proportion of produce and craft vendors came up frequently. The general consensus is that craft vendors should not predominate over produce vendors at the Market. Moreover, Market staff should focus on keeping the presence of produce vendors consistent at the Market. Vendors also expressed a desire for better communication and implementation of plans between vendors and staff, as well as staff and City management. Vendors also suggested moving the growers’ market from Thursday to Saturday, keeping the hours of regular market days consistent with special market days, and having special market events that compliment the regular market days. More customers and better advertising would also encourage the inactive vendors to become active.

Four of the six inactive market vendors currently sell at other farmers’ markets in Virginia. The attended markets are located in Williamsburg, Spotsylvania County, Fredericksburg, and Goochland County. The vendors reported that about half to almost all of their income comes from these markets. When asked what they liked about these markets the vendors once again raised the issue of the proportion of produce to craft vendors by stating they liked these markets because they had a high proportion of produce vendors or were producer-only markets.

Active Market Vendors

Methodology

Active vendors are defined as those vendors that currently sell at the 17th Street Farmers’ Market at least several times a year. A total of 30 active vendors were interviewed in person during regular Market hours on Thursday and Saturday.

Summary of Results

Out of the 30 vendors surveyed, 27 (90%) sell at the Market on a weekly basis. The remaining three vendors all sell on a monthly basis. As previously confirmed by the Southeastern Institute of Research study, the majority of vendors sell on Thursdays (83%), followed by Saturdays (57%). There is some diversity of goods sold: Half of the vendors sell produce while 20% sell prepared foods, 17% sell crafts, and 13% sell antiques and collectibles.

Ten vendors have been selling at the market for one to five years, followed by ten selling for six to ten years. Seven vendors have begun selling at the market in the past year and only three have been at the market for 20 years or more. Three of the vendors travel less than five miles to sell at the market, whereas ten travel five to ten miles, ten travel 11-50 miles, six travel 51-100 miles, and one travels over 100 miles.

Of the 30 vendors surveyed, 50% participate in special market events. The most popular events are the Shockoe Tomato Festival, Mercado, and the Brunswick Stew Festival. Seven vendors attend Christmas in October and the Haunted Farm Market. Nevertheless, only three vendors noticed an increase in sales on regular market days following the special market day events. Respondents that noticed an increase in sales were asked to specify the special events after which they noticed the increase. Naturally, the most popular events listed above were the ones noted.

Three vendors who used to participate in special events informed us that they will no longer participate in future events. Reasons for their dissatisfaction with special events were that the fee is much higher for special market events (around \$50) and space becomes an issue as vendors are pushed out of their regular stalls. Vendors complained that they made less money during special events than during regular market days as people simply came to listen to the band and socialize, rather than to buy.

Vendors were asked to note the number of customers they serve on a typical market day. Twenty-five vendors (83%) sell at the market on Thursdays. Of that total, eight vendors serve 10 to 20 customers, seven serve 21 to 30, and four serve over 50 customers. Seventeen vendors (57%) sell on Saturdays, six of which serve 10 to 20 customers and four of which serve 21 to 30. Two of these vendors serve over 50 customers. Only seven of the 30 surveyed vendors (23%) sell on Sundays, three of which sell to 10 to 20 customers, and two of which serve over 50 customers. Three vendors were not able to give an estimate because they do not sell to a consistent number of customers on a regular basis.

Vendors were asked for the main reason they sell at the market during regular market days (Thursday and Saturday). Responses varied among the vendors, but the majority of them come to the market because it allows them to advertise their products at a low fee and build up their clientele. Links on the market website provide additional advertisement for vendors. For some, the Market is the only place where products can be sold at a comparably cheap price, besides over the Internet or from a home business. Thursday is the growers' market, and for many produce vendors this is the only place where they can promote and sell fresh produce directly to the buyers. Many sellers look at the Market as an extra source of income. Earnings from the Market help the vendors

support their farm or retail business. Other minor factors that influence the decisions of some vendors to sell during regular market days include convenience of the schedule, atmosphere, interaction with people, or simply just having something to do in their spare time.

Vendors were then asked if there is anything they would like to change about regular market days. Only two vendors responded that they were completely satisfied with the Thursday market as it is. Twenty-three out of thirty vendors (77%) think that advertisement of the Market needs the most improvement. Vendors are dissatisfied with the small amount of promotion done for the market and complain that on only special market events are publicized.

Some other issues are constant flooding of the market, the perceived lack of safety in the area by customers and vendors, and the dirtiness of the area. Parking is an issue for those vendors who keep their produce in the car and do not have cold storage. During hot days there is no or little shade in parking areas and produce can quickly spoil. Vendors also suggested closing 17th Street along the market to automobile traffic to allow for freer pedestrian movement and a more pleasant shopping environment. Vendors would like to see: a greater variety of produce and lunch items offered at the Market, strictly categorized market days (i.e. Thursday – growers-only market) so customers know what to expect when they come, adding Friday as a market day and possibly eliminating Thursday as a market day. The implementation of a no-smoking policy was also suggested.

Only eight vendors (27%) would like to have more meetings with the market staff, but they would only want more meetings if they were beneficial and productive. Vendors would like to be included in the decision-making process and meet with the market staff in order to resolve some of the Market's issues.

However, vendors are skeptical of the outcomes of such meetings because they believe the market staff cannot make decisions without the City's involvement. Moreover, the vendors perceive a lack of communication between market staff and the City.

The following section reviews the portion of the survey in which vendors were asked to rank their answer as "very satisfied," "satisfied," "don't care," "dissatisfied," "very dissatisfied" with: market stall layout, number of customers, vendor parking, variety of products offered at the market, management's enforcement of market rules, and the amount of advertising done for the market.

The majority of vendors (63%) are very satisfied or satisfied with the market stall layout. However, some of the issues of concern are: the awnings do not offer protection from the weather and are primitive and uninviting, poor drainage in some stalls, cleanliness of stalls, the small size and limited display space, and a lack of light that prevents colors of the produce from showing. A few vendors believe that having the stalls face the street rather than the center of the market space would attract more customers.

Twenty out of thirty vendors (67%) are not satisfied with the number of customers that buy from them. Vendors stated that they barely make any money coming to the Market, but enjoy being a part a historic market. Vendor parking does not seem to be a concern, as 22 vendors (73%) are satisfied with it. Vendors are almost equally split on the variety of products offered at the market: 15 vendors (50%) are satisfied or very satisfied, 12 (40%) are dissatisfied, and three do not care. Of the unsatisfied vendors, four would like to see more produce (e.g. organic produce or cut flowers) offered at the market. Some vendors think there are too many craft vendors and that the market is more of a bazaar with too many unrelated types of products mixed together. Overall, vendors believe the market staff does a good job enforcing market rules and regulations, and are satisfied with the work they do. The lack of advertising for the market was again noted, however, as a major shortcoming.



The following information is derived from the section of the survey that looks at the current market fees, amount of sales done at the market, and advantages of other markets in the area. When asked about fees, 17 (57%) vendors responded that current fees should remain the same but special event and electricity fees are too high. Some vendors would prefer an annual fee compared to the daily fee charged at the 17th Street Market, and the majority of vendors are opposed to fees based on a percentage of their sales at

the market. This is related to fact that only three vendors (10%) depend on the market for 100% of their income, while for majority earn less than 20% of their income at the market.

Almost half of the vendors (47%) sell their produce to local businesses or restaurants, including: Havana 59, Millie's, Cha Cha's Cantina, Curbside Cafe, Ipanema, Emilio's, Melito's, Torman, The Jefferson Hotel, Comfort, 1 North Belmont, the Track, Café Lafayette, Julep's, Edible Gardens, Ellwood Thompson's, and Sensai. Non-produce vendors sell their products online or to garden centers, plant nurseries, and local stores such as Pandora's Box.

Thirteen out of thirty vendors (43%) sell at other farmer's markets in the surrounding region, including: Williamsburg, Lynchburg, Goochland, Irvington, Heathville, Lovettsville, Ashland, Alexandria, Charlottesville, Spotsylvania, and Arlington. All of the vendors sell at those markets on Saturdays only. Vendors like these markets because of the large customer base and corresponding sales that exceed sales at the 17th Street Market. Vendors also like the annual or flat fee that most of the markets charge, indoor market structures, cleanliness, support from the local government, numerous sponsors, a safe location, and produce-only policies (natural and locally grown).

Overall, vendors are fairly satisfied with the 17th Street Market. Major concerns include a lack of customers and a lack of advertising, which seem to tie together from the vendors' perspective. At this point, there is no clear objective for the Market, whether it should be

growers-only or mixed market. If the Market is advertised as growers' market on Thursday, more attention needs to be placed on the *farmers themselves*. At this time, many people may feel lost in the variety of products offered. There needs to be a clear direction for the customers as to what they can expect when they visit the Market. As the vendor-customer network develops, customers will begin to rely on vendors and vice versa leading to a steady relationship between the two. Of course, professional market staff with strong marketing, business, and personal-relation skills is a must in order to achieve this goal.

Shockoe Bottom Business Owners

Methodology

The Shockoe Bottom business owner survey was distributed to 15 Shockoe Bottom business owners and managers, with a focus on businesses surrounding the Market. There were three main sections to the survey that was administered to the businesses: information about their particular business, perceptions of Shockoe Bottom, and perceptions of the 17th Street Farmers' Market. In total, 11 businesses out of 15 responded to the survey and offered some compelling insights regarding the Market.

Once the surveys were completed and the results were analyzed, a focus group was conducted during a meeting of Shockoe Bottom Neighborhood Association on Monday, October 16, 2006 in order to gain further insight. Many of the sentiments that are reflected in the survey results were echoed at this meeting.

Summary of results

Of the 11 businesses, more than half are food establishments, or closely related. There is one bakery, three bars, and two restaurants. This is important because these businesses seem to be the most logical places to make connections with the Market. The rest of the businesses consist of men's and women's apparel, legal services, real estate, a barber shop, and a variety store. All of these businesses are locally owned and run, with the majority of them (four) being open for between one and five years. There are three that have been open for less than a year, three that have been open for at least five years, and only one that will be opening within the next six months.

Most of the respondents (eight) cited the location and diversity of Shockoe Bottom as the main reason for the area being good for their business. This means diversity in stores, people, and businesses. Other reasons provided include the sense of community in the area and the potential and desire to revitalize the area. Owners referred to diversity, history, and community as the main strengths of the area.

Conversely, the perception of crime, the lack of cleanliness, and the potential of flooding were cited as the weaknesses of Shockoe Bottom. Overall, however, crime was continually talked about as being the major weakness. Nine businesses thought that

crime in the area was too high. To combat that, suggestions included more police patrols and more streetlights. This also ties in with what owners felt the City could do to improve the area. Improved infrastructure was the main suggestion. Business owners also wanted to see more retail establishments, restaurants, bars, and comedy clubs in the area.

With respect to the effectiveness of the market, ten businesses ranked the market as not operating at an optimal level. Suggestions for improving the market included a better selection of vendors and products, to open it more days, and to center it more around family life.

The owners have a somewhat vested interest in the Market; they all commented that if more people came to the Market, there would be a larger potential for an increased customer base for each establishment. The businesses do not buy products from the Market on a consistent basis, but eight said they do purchase produce from time to time.

Strengths of the Market included its location, the Thursday market, and the Market's personality. Weaknesses included its size, lack of variety in produce, the flea market, and the Market's lack of marketing and advertising. Most were satisfied with the hours, but would have liked to see the market open more days.

Business Owner Focus Group

There were six questions asked to the group. When asked how the Market could improve its draw, all of the panel members stated that better advertising would help. Television commercials, radio ads, and more magazine fliers would help. The idea of joint advertising was also something that the panel members thought would be a good idea, because it would defray their advertising costs while legitimizing the usefulness of the Market.

In terms of the potential for a cooperative effort between their businesses and the Market, they all expressed an interest in partnering with the Market in the future, but would not currently, because the Market is too unreliable. They would not depend on the Market to get their produce due to the lack of volume, variety, or viability. A few of the owners were interested in promoting their business by selling their prepared food at the market, however, they were skeptical because in order to do that, they would have to pay someone to be in the market, and there are not enough people frequenting the Market for this situation to be beneficial.

A question regarding the current market configuration and logistical operations was asked. The owners thought that some indoor component to the Market in which meats, seafood, cheese, and others items could be sold. This would also extend the amount of time throughout the year that the Market could be open. It also would shield patrons from the harsh conditions. It was also suggested that the vendors be oriented with their backs toward the center to allow the patrons to walk around the outside of the Market.

Other suggestions included extending the VCU Connector into the Shockoe area to cater to the MCV students, and to tailor special market days around food.

The members all want to eliminate the Sunday market. They do not see much usefulness in it. They would also like to see the hours shifted back so that there is at least a little overlap between when the Market closes and when their businesses open.

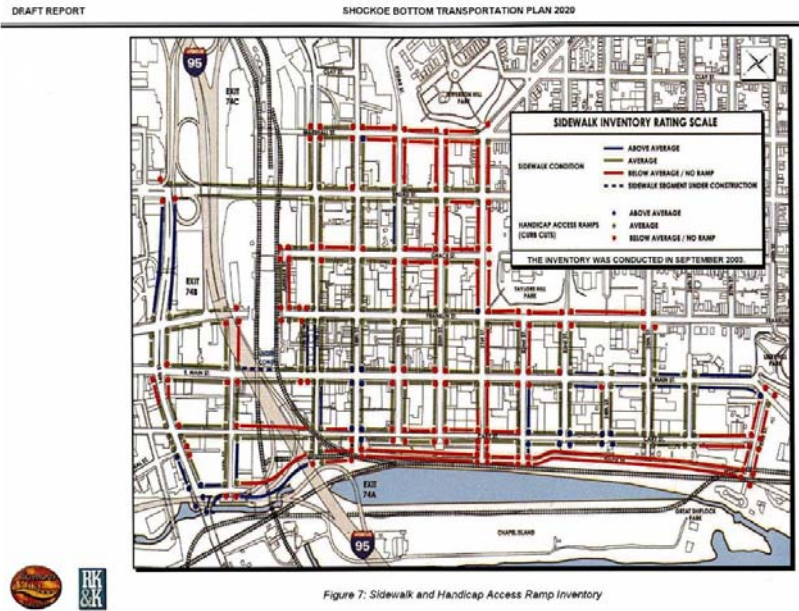
Vacant Property Owners

Methodology

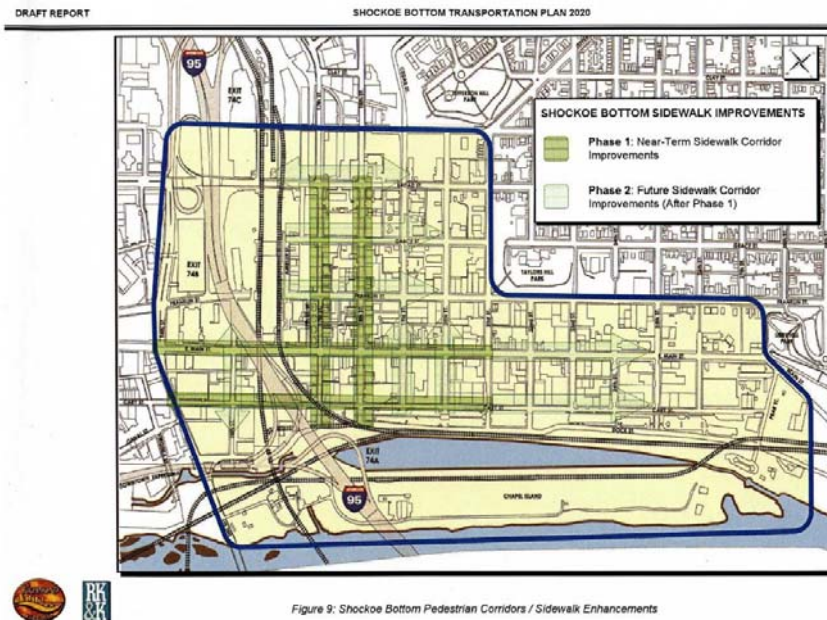
Owners of vacant property surrounding the Market were identified and contacted by phone. Owners were asked to answer four questions pertaining to their future plans for their property, the role of the Farmer's Market in the Bottom, the future business market in the Bottom, and improvements the City of Richmond should undertake to improve Shockoe Bottom. Two property owners responded to the questions. Both of these property owners own several buildings in Shockoe Bottom.

Map Appendix

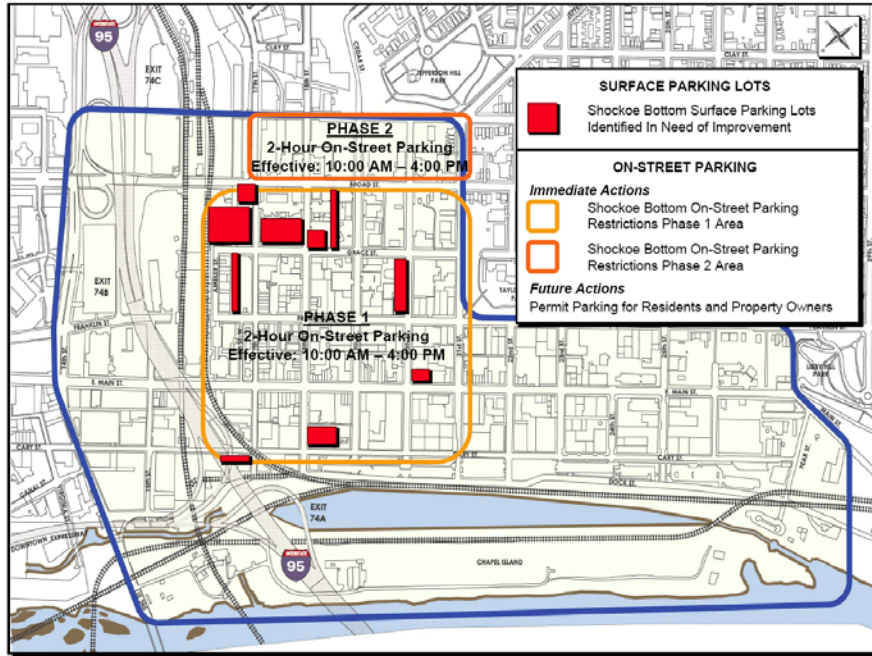
Shockoe Bottom Transportation Plan 2020: Sidewalk Inventory Map



Shockoe Bottom Transportation Plan 2020: Sidewalk Improvement Map

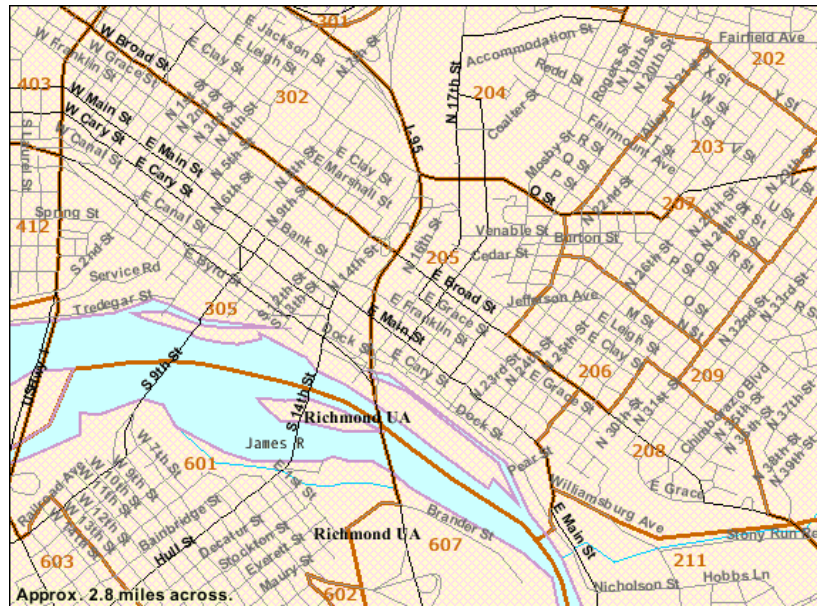


Surface Lot and On-Street Parking Recommendations



Source: City of Richmond. (2004).

Census Tract Map



Source: US Census Bureau

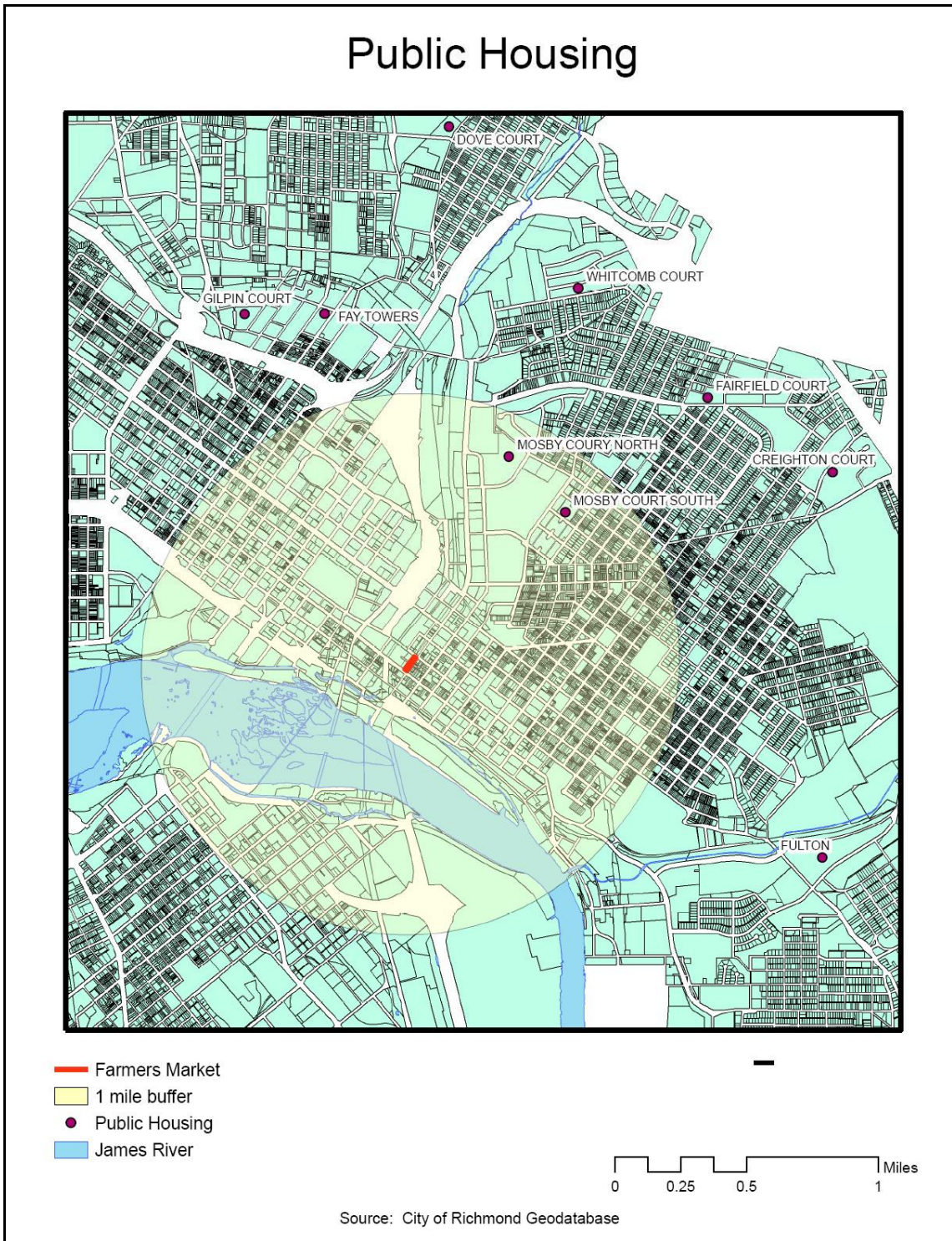
On Street Parking Restrictions and Locations



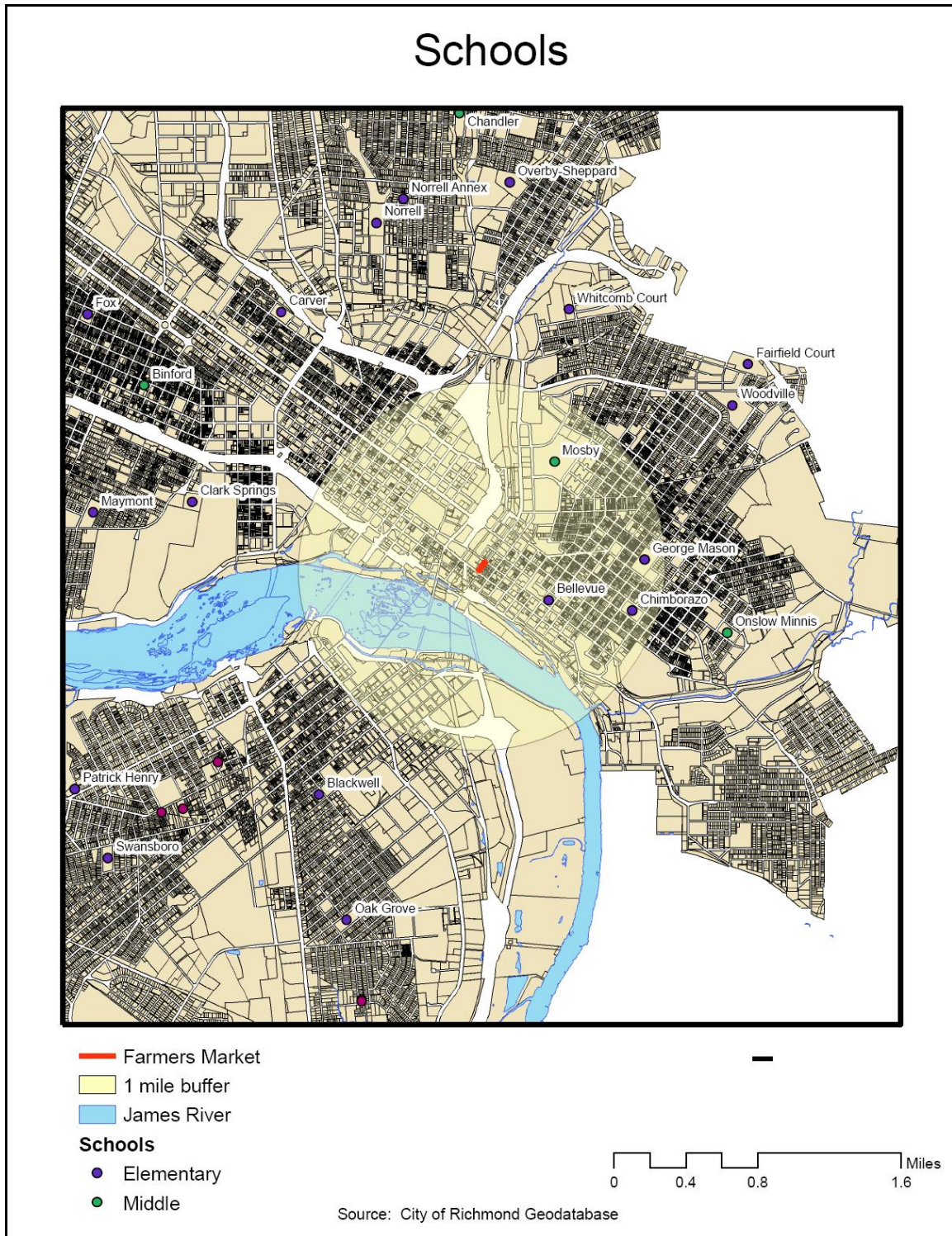
LEGEND:	
NO PARKING	Red solid line
2 HOUR PARKING	Purple solid line
1 HOUR PARKING	Green solid line
15 & 30 MIN. PARKING	Blue solid line
12 HOUR PARKING	Pink solid line
RESERVED	Brown solid line
NO RESTRICTIONS	Black dashed line
1 HOUR EXCEPT BY PERMIT	Green dashed line
NO PEAK HOUR PARKING	Purple dashed line
LAW ENFORCEMENT VEHICLE PARKING	Blue dashed line

Source: City of Richmond (2006)

Public Housing Map

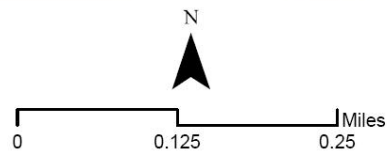


Area Schools Map



Industrial Land Use Map

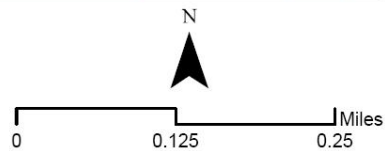
Shockoe Bottom Land Use



Source: City of Richmond GIS Data, 2006

Restaurant/Retail & Mixed Use Land Use Map

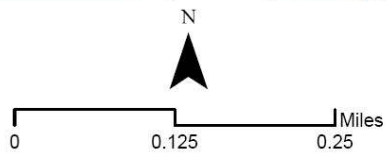
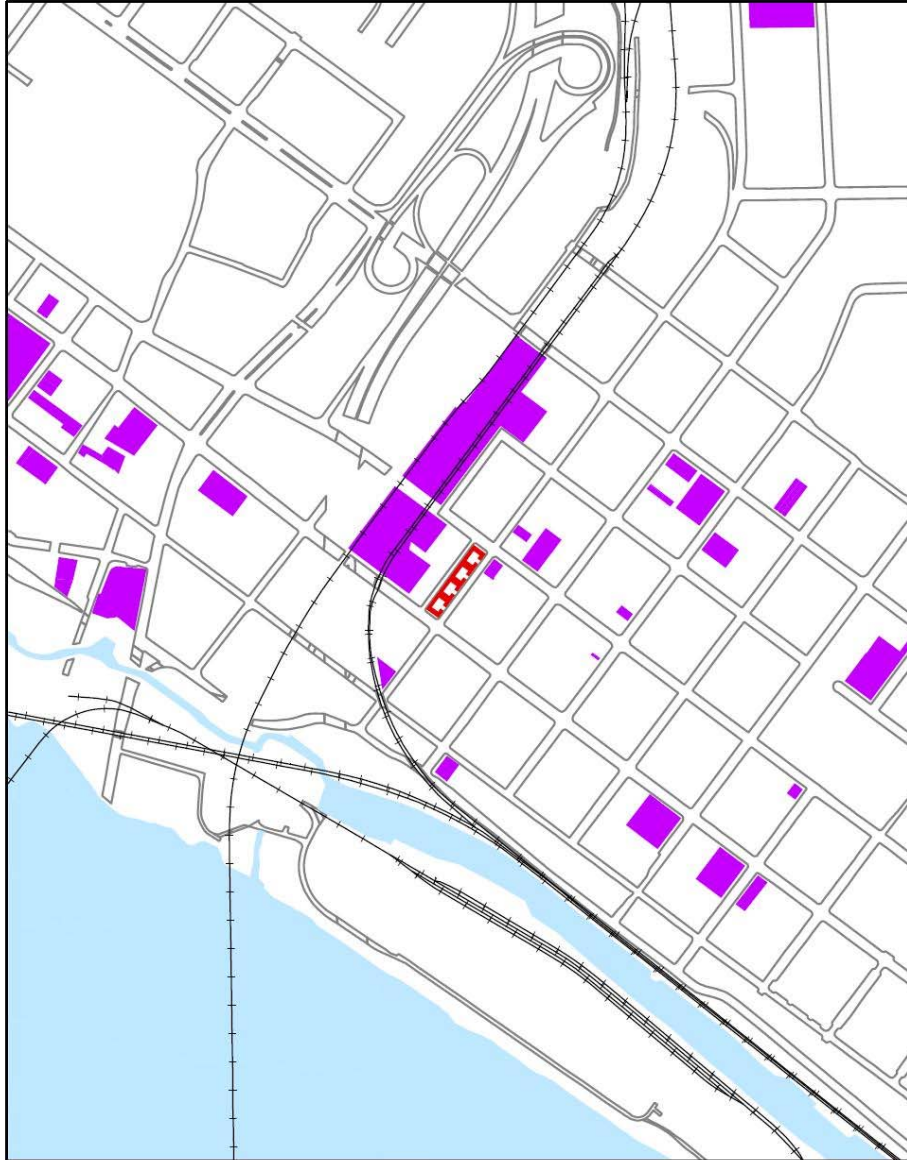
Shockoe Bottom Land Use



Source: City of Richmond GIS Data, 2006

Office Land Use Map

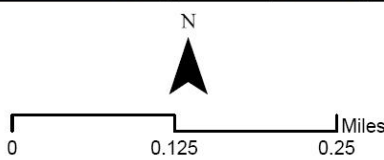
Shockoe Bottom Land Use



Source: City of Richmond GIS Data, 2006

Residential Land Use Map

Shockoe Bottom Land Use



Source: City of Richmond GIS Data, 2006