

# Public Space and Farmers' Markets

Portland Building Auditorium

8/11/2004

**Moderator:** Matt Emlen, Office of Sustainable Development

**Panelists:** Suzanne Briggs, Food Policy Council, Hollywood Farmers' Market  
Tom Grace, Eastbank Farmers' Market  
Eamon Molloy, Hillsdale Farmers' Market  
Dianne Stefani-Ruff, Portland Farmers' Market

**Introduction:** The Portland-Multnomah Food Policy Council (FPC) is a citizen panel that advises the City and County on ways that local government can support a healthy regional food system. FPC sees farmers' markets as important venues for strengthening local agriculture as they connect urban consumers and rural producers.

Markets are growing across the country and in the Portland area. They are helping to build community and enliven urban areas. FPC is exploring how the markets and local government can work together to create great public space and support local agriculture.

## Discussion highlights:

### *What is the economic development impact of farmers' markets?*

Dianne: The markets give vendors the chance to capture retail dollars that they otherwise wouldn't. They also give growers and artisan food vendors first-hand marketing feedback to develop their products, and they connect with new customers. We've had a number of people "graduate" from the market after the market helped them connect with restaurants or stores. It's bittersweet -- we hate to see them go, but it's great to see their businesses grow. One woman started her business at the Portland market and now she has moved on to her own store.

### *What is the impact on the surrounding community?*

Dianne: A report from Larry Lev at Oregon State documented that markets expand sales for surrounding businesses on market days. The Hollywood Farmers' Market is estimated to generate a "spillover" effect of \$16,000 per day for surrounding businesses.

Eamon: Many people will shop at adjacent stores to get items they cannot buy at the farmers market. Some businesses surrounding Hillsdale Farmers' Market report a doubling of receipts on market days. Even Wild Oats, a grocery store, is seeing

increased business on market days. A tanning salon decided to open on Sunday (market day) because of the market. Banks love us; they love the ATM traffic" that markets generate.

[The market managers agreed that the most often asked question at a market is "Where is the ATM?" Tom explained that Eastbank installed an ATM that can process debits cards and the Oregon Trail Card which is used to administer electronic food stamp benefits. The fees from the debit card transactions are covering the cost of processing the Oregon Trail Card transactions].

Tom: Eastbank Farmers' Market helped to reclaim a neighborhood spirit. The Buckman neighborhood has high resident turnover with an 80% rental rate. The farmers market has given neighbors an opportunity to meet and greet on a regular basis, circulating the neighborhood through a common location and allowing residents to become comfortable with each other.

Suzanne: Nobody used to say they were from the Hollywood neighborhood before the Hollywood Farmers' Market was established. One used to be able to hear the sound of their own whistling in the neighborhood on a Saturday morning and this desolation has been replaced by a lively market that has instilled a sense of pride in the area.

***What makes a good farmers' market site? What is good about your site?***

Suzanne: Each site is different, and that gives each market its unique character.

Tom: Eastbank market is located on a bike route

Dianne: The market in the Park Blocks has great trees. We love the shade.

Eamon: It's great to be in a town center and have interaction with surrounding businesses.

[A handout was distributed showing a list of site considerations developed by the Oregon Farmers' Market Association. The market representatives mentioned a number of desirable features for market sites. Water was cited as very important. Other features cited included bathrooms, bike racks, electricity and street signals that help pedestrians get to the market.]

***Do sites need to be paved?***

[All managers agreed that sites need to be paved.]

Representative from the market at People's Coop: We have used an area that doesn't have a hard surface, and we've tried lots of things to make it work. Now we're installing cobble and it looks like that will work well.

Suzanne: A market in Eugene used a system where they put out mats to make a temporary surface, but that is too much work.

***What are the challenges you face with your sites?***

Dianne/Eamon: Parking is a challenge.

Tom: Eastbank has plenty of parking, but it's get pretty hot being in an area with a lot of asphalt. The heat is hard on the berries.

Suzanne: There is no guarantee of permanence for the markets when using public spaces. This needs to be addressed as farmers are planting crops that are dedicated to being sold at farmers markets.

Eamon/Matt: Hillsdale and other markets have looked at using school sites, but school policies and zoning prohibit it.

[Several people discussed the needs for vendors to have adequate access to get in a set up. Some noted that in other communities there are markets where vendors do business right out of their trucks. ]

***What is the ideal size for a market?***

Dianne: Our Saturday market in the Park Blocks has over 100 vendors. It's a destination market, as opposed to a neighborhood market. We wouldn't want another market that size. The 50-vendor size works very well. [Eamon and Suzanne concurred that 50 is a good size.]

Eamon: You wouldn't want a site to be too small. I'd say that 20 vendors is the minimum I would plan for in designing a site. [Tom concurred.]

Suzanne: There needs to be a careful balance between the number of vendors and the number of customers. There needs to be variety of products sold without too much overlap among vendors. Portland's Saturday market in the Park Blocks works well because they are the premiere market for special events that bring in customers.

[Market representatives agreed that stalls are usually 10 feet deep.]

***What is the relationship between the farmers' markets and the downtown public market?***

Suzanne: It's all part of promoting Oregon agriculture, part of a network.

Ron Paul, Planning Bureau: The public market and the farmers' markets developed a memorandum of agreement recognizing their complementary relationship.

***How many volunteers does it take to operate a market? What does that tell us about how many markets Portland can support?***

Eamon: Hillsdale Farmers' Market has a volunteer coordinator and 30 to 40 volunteers. [Other markets reported strong volunteer bases. Portland Farmers' market has the most staff.]

Suzanne: Hollywood Farmers' Market made a great connection with a Japanese language school. They bring visitors from Japan who love greeting people at the market in order to practice their English.

Suzanne: The business model for farmers' market is halfway between a business and a church.

***Other comments:***

Graham Clark, Planning Bureau: Being at the Hollywood Market made the Hollywood-Sandy Plan much easier. It really built good will.

Ellen Ryker, Planning Bureau: In the Gateway area, there is a left-over strip of land near I-205. People have discussed making it part of a horticultural center. Keeping some agriculture in the urban area is a valid idea.

Suzanne: The Food Policy Council's land use committee has been looking at the strategy of establishing conservation easements to protect land for agriculture. It could create buffers around the urban growth boundary.

***What's next with the Food Policy Council and farmers' markets?***

Suzanne: Everyone is invited to join the Food Policy Council as we take a tour of local farmers' markets on Thursday the 19<sup>th</sup> and Saturday the 28<sup>th</sup>. We're meeting with market boards to build relationships.

Matt: We want to hear from staff if you have ideas where we can work together to support farmers' markets and create great public space.

**Participants:**

<b>NAME</b>		<b>ORGANIZATION</b>
RENE	SUSAN	
STEVE	FANCHER	BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
RON	PAUL	BUREAU OF PLANNING
GRAHAM	CLARK	BUREAU OF PLANNING
JULIA	GISLER	BUREAU OF PLANNING
APRIL	COTTINI	BUREAU OF PLANNING
PHIL	GOFF	BUREAU OF PLANNING
HARPER	KALIN	BUREAU OF PLANNING
ELLEN	PARKER	BUREAU OF PLANNING
TROY	DOSS	BUREAU OF PLANNING
STEVE	DOTTERRER	BUREAU OF PLANNING
RIC	CONTRAR	CITY OF GRESHAM PARKS
TOM	GRACE	EASTBANK FARMERS' MARKET
ROSEMARIE	CORDELLO	FOOD POLICY COUNCIL
SUZANNE	BRIGGS	HOLLYWOOD FARMERS' MARKET / FOOD POLICY COUNCIL
DAVID	YUDKIN	HOT LIPS PIZZA / FOOD POLICY COUNCIL
MATT	EMLIN	OFFICE OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
STEVE	COHEN	OFFICE OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
JUDY	CROCKETT	OFFICE OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
JENNIFER	PORTER	OFFICE OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
PAUL	ROSENBLOOM	OFFICE OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
SARAH	CLINE	PEOPLE'S FARMERS MARKET
ROSS	PLAMBECK	PORTLAND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
JEAN	SENECHAL BIGGS	PORTLAND OFFICE OF TRANSPORTATION
DIANNE	STEFANI-RUFF	PORTLAND FARMERS' MARKET
SHAWN	ROGERS	PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION
MARY ANNE	CASSIN	PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION
MARY	HUFF	PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION
JANET	BESS	PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION
HILLARY	CHOLTUS	PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION
BOWEN	PATTERSON	STUDENT