

Building Bridges:

Eau Claire Public Market Feasibility Study

Project
Newsletter
No. 2
March 30, 2016

Tell us what you think! Take the Public Market Survey by going to:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/eauclaire_publicmarket

Consultant Visit

In late January 2016, a public market consultant was hired by City Council. Ted Spitzer and Hugh Boyd with Market Ventures, Inc. visited the city in early March to start the feasibility study. Over three days, they interviewed over 20 stakeholders, presented on what makes public markets successful at a Downtown Eau Claire Inc.'s Idea Lounge event, met with the project steering committee, and visited potential sites for a facility.



Idea Lounge

About 85 people attended the March 3rd event at the Eau Claire Children's Theatre. Here is some of the feedback provided by the public:

- If successful, Eau Claire could be branded for having a strong local food system
- Some apprehension was shared about whether Eau Claire is large enough to support a facility
- Easy parking is needed for access but should be designed to minimize negative impacts on urban aesthetics
- If located in the Cannery District, protecting natural resources like the river is a priority
- It was voiced that farmers receive wages they deserve while low-income customers have access to purchase affordable food too

Consultant Insight

- A public market is mission-driven with social and local business goals. It is located in a public space and is open to all people, though it may or may not be owned by the public
- There are 5 components of a successful public market: great site location, pleasing physical environment, professional management, strong demand, and quality vendors that innovate
- Markets should carry little to no debt and provide low rent to vendors. Augmenting with other revenue streams can ensure viability over time

Steering Committee

The committee made of primary stakeholders met for the first time with the consultants. Five preliminary goals were formulated to drive project planning:

1. Support the Northwest WI regional food system
2. Provide entrepreneurial opportunities and jobs
3. Help revitalize Downtown and possible West Riverside Neighborhood (Cannery District)
4. Contribute to community health and wellness
5. Become an asset to attract and retain talent



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