

**City of Culver City, California
Agenda Item Report**

Meeting Date: 8/17/09		Item Number: <u>A-2</u>	
REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY BOARD AGENDA ITEM: Consideration of Potential Locations for the Culver City Certified Farmers' Market and the Possible Pass Through of Additional Fees to Market Vendors.			
Contact Person/Dept.: Jeremy Green/ Community Development		Phone Number: 310-253-5764	
Fiscal Impact: Yes ☒ No ☐		General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☒	
Public Hearing: ☐		Action Item: ☒ Attachments: ☒	
Commission Action Required: Yes ☐ No ☒		Date:	
Public Notification: (Phone) Steve Whipple (08/04/09); (Phone) Downtown Business Association (08/04/09); (Phone) Chamber of Commerce (08/04/09); (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas – Redevelopment Agency (08/12/09).			
Department Approval: Sol Blumenfeld (08/10/09) Charles Herbertson (8/10/09)		Agency General Counsel Approval: Murray Kane (08/10/09)	
Chief Financial Officer Approval: Jeff Muir (by N. Kimball)(08/12/09)		Executive Director Approval: Mark Scott (08/13/09)	

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Culver City Redevelopment Agency Board (the Board) approve the continuation of the Culver City Certified Farmers' Market ("Market") at its current location on Main Street between Venice Boulevard and Culver Boulevard and that additional fees be passed through to market vendors.

BACKGROUND:

The Market has been located on Main Street (and a small section of the north sidewalk along Culver Boulevard) for eight (8) years and occurs every Tuesday from 3-7pm. The northernmost portion of Main Street from the alley to Venice Boulevard is located in the City of Los Angeles. This area of Los Angeles is part of Los Angeles City Council District 10 represented by Council Member Herb Wesson.

Each year, the Los Angeles City Council ("LACC") has passed a motion to approve the weekly special event permit to close the street from Noon-8pm and to waive approximately \$28,356 in annual fees and charges for the Market.

On July 2, 2009, staff provided the Board with a memo (Attachment 1) that explained the LACC's intent to introduce an ordinance to modify how farmers' markets and street closures occur in Los Angeles, which may affect the location

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of the Market. While the ordinance has not yet been adopted, such an ordinance could be adopted at any time.

As a result of the potential implementation of fees under the proposed ordinance, on July 23, 2009, staff from the Community Development and Public Works (Traffic and Engineering, as well as Maintenance Operations) Departments met with the Market Manager, Stephen Whipple, to identify potential alternate locations for the Market.

Criteria used to evaluate the potential locations were:

- Market visibility/revenues
- Safety for vendors/patrons
- Community impact (negative and positive)
- Availability of amenities including electricity, lighting, liquid waste disposal areas
- Costs for amenities and services such as garbage, street cleaning, public safety, electricity, and other.
- Los Angeles County Health Department requirements for temporary events and Farmers' Markets (Attachment 2.)

DISCUSSION:

The Market was created as an economic development tool and has aided in the redevelopment of Downtown Culver City. The Market is considered an integral component of the Downtown Culver City experience, but has the potential to be a stimulus for economic activity in other areas as well. Attachments 3 and 4 provide a summary of the analysis of the options considered.

In summary, staff reviewed the following options:

- (Staff recommendation) Option #1: Maintain the market in its existing location
- Option #2: Reduce the size of the Market to be within Culver City Boundaries
- Option #3: Relocate the Market to Culver Boulevard (in front of City Hall)
- Option #4: Relocate the Market to the vacated portion of Washington Boulevard (as originally recommended in the July 2, 2009 memo to Agency).

In reviewing the four options, staff evaluated each option under the criteria listed above. Based upon this analysis, staff recommends implementation of Option #1.

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Maintaining the Market in its existing location on Main Street creates the least disruption for the community, the vendors, staff and patrons because it is currently well integrated in Downtown and offers the infrastructure and visibility that has made it a success for eight years.

Implementation of this option will result in the assessment of approximately \$29,000 per year in additional fees from the City of Los Angeles (once the City of Los Angeles adopts its ordinance). Staff recommends these fees (which would amount to an increase of \$10 per vendor per week) be passed through to the vendors. Staff has reviewed the fees assessed for other local farmers' markets (Attachment 5) and notes that even with the proposed increase, the new fee would not be unreasonable.

It should also be noted that in the case some existing vendors determine to leave the Market, there is a long waiting list of vendors wishing to participate in Culver City's Market.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends the Agency Board determine to retain the Market at the existing location and adopt a resolution implementing the new pass through fee (estimated at \$10 per vendor per week).

Options 2 through 4.

As detailed in Attachments 3 and 4, Options 2 through 4 were considered as alternatives to Option 1. However, it is staff's opinion that these options present sufficient challenges that lead staff to recommend these options not be considered.

Consideration of Expanding the Farmers' Market to Other Venues

Over 14+ years in existence, the Market is very successful in its current location. The Board may wish to direct staff to further evaluate the development of an additional satellite location in another area of town (and most likely on a different day of the week).

Preliminarily, staff reviewed the following potential satellite locations:

- The parking lot of the Westfield Culver City mall;
- The parking lot of Costco on Washington Boulevard;
- The Agency-owned property at the intersection of Washington Boulevard and Centinela Avenue.

All of these options would stimulate economic activity, could serve Market customers who cannot normally attend on a Tuesday, and attract new customers who may not shop at a farmers' market.

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All of these options would require additional costs to provide appropriate facilities to comply with the LA County Health Department requirements. Two would require a negotiated agreement with the businesses/property owners, and one (the Agency property) would require paving and offsite parking in order to be considered a satisfactory space for a market.

Of the above three options, should the Board desire development of an additional satellite location, staff recommends working with Westfield Culver City who is receptive to the idea, as this property is improved and parking is available.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends the Board direct staff to enter into negotiations with Westfield Culver City to further evaluate a potential satellite Market and return to the Board at a later date.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

The budget for the Farmers' Market has consistently shown a positive net income (i.e. budgeted revenues exceed budgeted expenditures) of more than \$30,000 annually since 2003-2004.

The recommendation to keep the Market in its existing location (Option No. 1) would require the payment of \$28,356 in fees, payable to LA City. However, it is proposed the Agency adopt a pass through fee that would generate offsetting revenues.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Memo from staff to the Redevelopment Agency Board on July 2, 2009.
2. County of Los Angeles Department of Health Services/ Environmental Health: Requirements for Temporary Event/Certified Farmers' Markets.
3. Criteria Spreadsheet for Potential Market Locations.
4. Location Pros and Cons Spreadsheet.
5. Comparison of Vendor Fees for five cities.
6. Draft Fee Resolution for the Culver City Certified Farmers' Market

MOTION:

That the Redevelopment Agency Board:

1. Determine to retain the Culver City Certified Farmers' Market at its existing location; and,

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2. Adopt a resolution updating the fees for the Culver City Certified Farmers' Market, including a pass through fee to offset the fees payable from the Agency to the City of Los Angeles; and,
3. Direct staff to commence negotiations with Westfield Culver City to further evaluate a potential satellite Market and return to the Agency Board at a later date.