



City of Culver City

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Council Chambers
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Staff Report

File #: 19-672, **Version:** 1

Item #: A-4.

CC - (1) Presentation Regarding the Culver City Farmers' Market, and (2) Direction to the City Manager as Deemed Appropriate.

Meeting Date: March 11, 2019

Contact Person/Dept: Glenn Heald/Economic Development
Todd Tipton/Economic Development

Phone Number: 310-253-5752
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Fiscal Impact: Yes ☐ No ☒

General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☒

Public Hearing: ☐ **Action Item:** ☒ **Attachments:** ☐

Commission Action Required: Yes ☐ No ☒ **Date:**

Public Notification: (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas - City Council (03/06/19), the Downtown Business Association (03/01/19), and notices mailed to all businesses on Main Street and to Culver City addresses within a 1,000 foot radius of the Market (02/27/19).

Department Approval: Sol Blumenfeld, Community Development Director (03/04/19)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the City Council (1) receive a presentation regarding the Culver City Farmers' Market; and (2) provide direction to the City Manager as deemed appropriate.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

For over 20 years the Culver City Farmers' Market (Market) has operated on Tuesday afternoons on Main Street in downtown Culver City (Downtown). In 2018 the City hired Mrs. Cynthia Ojeda of Sustainable Management Services to manage the Market for a 21-month period expiring June 30, 2019. Since being hired Mrs. Ojeda has:

- Improved the Market's appearance by requiring clean vendor stalls and umbrellas and by monitoring and enforcing policies regarding waste disposal;
- Revised the composition of Market vendors in order to obtain Certified Farmers' Market status;

- Retained the best of the former vendors while attracting the most desirable boutique growers;
- Revised the number of vendors in order to optimize the available street space while adhering to all health and safety standards and to eliminate unauthorized and/or non-permitted vendors from the Market;
- Increased the number of farmers, and decreased the number of crafts and prepared food vendors;
- Created and installed signs directing Market patrons to Main Street businesses;
- Introduced participatory events and cooking demonstrations to further engage and educate the public, including special events for children;
- Introduced a process to encourage seasonal merchandise;
- Established a social media presence to promote the Market and to advertise special events, demonstrations and seasonal specialties;
- Established accounts allowing Market vendors to accept supplemental benefits programs such as the Women, Infant and Children (WIC) and Electronic Batch Transaction (EBT) programs;
- Performed the necessary actions to permit the Market to accept payment via credit cards;
- Provided and coordinated the City's Community Outreach Table for use by local non-profit and public service organizations.

Shortly after the City hired Mrs. Ojeda, certain businesses on Main Street expressed dissatisfaction with the Market's location claiming it restricted access to their businesses. Mrs. Ojeda responded by creating and installing signs that directed Market patrons to adjacent businesses. Staff has not received complaints in recent months.

The opening of the Culver Steps and Culver Studios projects (Projects) may impact downtown circulation particularly at Main Street and Culver Boulevard. Once the Projects reach occupancy, staff plans to conduct a traffic study to determine if the Market location is adversely affecting the operation of the Main Street/Culver Boulevard intersection. If the traffic study determines the Market adversely affects the intersection, staff will provide a report for City Council consideration to discuss potential options, which may include:

1. Exploring relocation of the Market to a different location in Downtown, such as:
 - Canfield Ave (which may require street modifications);
 - Media Park (requires modifications to Media Park);
 - The expanded Town Plaza area;
2. Exploring relocation of the Market to a location outside of Downtown.
3. Exploring a change in day and/or time for Market operations (in its current or a different location).

FISCAL ANALYSIS

There is no cost associated with the discussion regarding the operation of the Market. The Market has an annual budget of \$75,000 and generates approximately \$30,000 in annual net revenue.

MOTION

That the City Council:

1. Receive a presentation regarding the Culver City Farmers' Market; and
2. Provide direction to the City Manager as deemed appropriate.