



## **Stakeholder Meeting Agenda**

### Eastern Market 2025 Strategic Plan

1. Welcome & Introductions – 10 min
2. Recap of the Eastern Market 2025 planning process so far – 10 min
3. Presentation of recent work – 20 min
4. Discussion– 20 min

#### **Upcoming meetings:**

Open House  
Wednesday November 4  
4-7pm, Shed 5

#### **NOTES: Key Takeaways**

##### **MONDAY 10/19:**

##### **RETAIL MERCHANTS**

- Consider the logistics and loading needs of existing businesses and plan accordingly. How will the plan accommodate and improve existing truck circulation. There is already some conflict with the school schedule.
- More food processors would be good neighbors to existing food processors, with similar needs and interests.
- What leverage do we have for this plan to find traction? Support from the City and Land Bank in this process. Job creation is a strong selling point.
- Also thinking about streets that are more focused on supporting and concentrating retail spaces. Some sort of retail coop would be welcome, along with more standard hours of operation by retailers and a more walkable environment.
- What comes next? Work with the City on next steps in terms of land acquisition, policy and development.
- Dequindre Cut can play a central role as a spine for the district.

## **CUSTOMERS**

- Most consistent feedback heard: people support greater development as long as it does not negatively impact the public market experience. People appreciate the improvements that have already been made.
- How does this planning process relate to greater food system change work?
- Seniors appreciate the smaller crowds of the Tuesday market.
- A way to preserve the existing experience is to have an input into how it develops, because “change is afoot.”
- Think further about the pedestrian experience east of the Dequindre Cut. Is the Wilkins retail design geared toward a Saturday experience or everyday? Retail at the North end of the market balances out the experience.
- Adelaide is another major entry/connection into the market.
- Consider overflow parking in the FID diagram plan.
- School is a major player and needs to be fully accommodated and considered. Don't forget about the connection to their pending athletic facilities.

## **FOOD DISTRIBUTION & PROCESSING**

- Who will own these buildings/properties? There are several options being explored as part of this process. Could be a developer that leases space, could be the business owners own separate lots, could be in partnership with EMC and within guidelines enforced by the City and EMC... Intention to maintain food and ag uses into the future. There is a plan to look for appropriate developers.
- Need to ensure that there is ample room for trucks to maneuver and not conflict with school traffic.
- What about residential in the market? There are already a couple of residential developments in the planning stages, particularly around the edges of the Market district. This planning effort focuses on the food economy, which still leaves room for some residential in the district.
- Discussions with the City to ensure this area is used for food business/industry. This plan is the first step. May need to address zoning.
- Land acquisition will be a challenge with many different property owners, though a significant amount of the land is publicly owned. Is there potential for public funding?
- Jobs are a priority; there are many potential new jobs and a risk of these jobs leaving the city if there are no facilities that meet the demand for food industry space.
- Concern for whether businesses are going to move... EMC has documented interest in new and more space from 20-25 existing and new food business owners.
- The new FID facilities would allow more space for small and incubating food businesses to go into the older building stock. Emphasis will be on food-related businesses in the area now available for a mix of uses. Maintain food in the district!
- Is it really cost effective to build new vs. rehab? YES!
- Concern about electrical capacity in the neighborhood.
- Could there be a transfer of business from the west side terminal?
- Consider including Gratiot as a southern truck route.



### **ARTS & HOSPITALITY**

- Who would own these buildings? There are options... Could be a developer, could be leased, could be owned by individual businesses (see notes above).
- Nobody wants to see a festival marketplace, need to be clear that mix of uses in older building stock will prioritize food. Also allow for retail and other uses that will make the area active at all times of the day for different audiences. More evening activities welcome, as well as more density of uses.
- “You don’t want it to become a theme park. You want it to stay legit.”
- There are experiential boundaries, let’s try to mitigate them (such as the Gratiot Connector). Hopefully the Dequindre Cut will not be a hard boundary.

### **WEDNESDAY 10/21:**

### **RESIDENTS & PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

- Define the criteria that lead to Alternative 3: 4 goals for Eastern Market; supporting the food industry; balance food industry, public market and daily business; how do we maintain a working market and prioritize food businesses?
- What about the occupied properties in the Food Innovation District diagram? This is just a diagram and land acquisition and exact placement is still to be determined, there are many steps that need to happen first.
- Think further about the public health issues associated with trucking as well as the impact of developing areas that are currently “green.” There should be a significant buffer between food industry and the school/pedestrians.
- Are there other viable options north along St.Aubin? Yes, also being considered.
- How is this really going to circulate beautifully? Where and how are the trucks going to come in and out? Many intersections need improvements.

### **COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

- How does this relate to recent rezoning efforts? The district was never actually rezoned because the process became overly complicated with proposed overlays. We are hoping this process will help inform and simplify land use controls. There is now more demand for light industrial food space. We are looking toward a “new urban food industry” model.
- Real fear of commercial gentrification also informs policy considerations.
- What about residential? Focus on food first, there will be room for some residential, some is already in the works. (See notes above.)

- How far east are we looking? Chene, possibly Grandy, and moving to the north with EM as an anchor.
  - Need to think further about transition of uses. What does that look like for this area?
  - What about all of the other considerations such as stormwater management, etc?
- Yes, these things are also being considered and will be included in the final materials. This meeting focused on the food industry.

## **THURSDAY 10/22:**

### **MARKET & BRIDGE VENDORS**

- Is there a timeline for doing something else with the bridge? That is largely up to MDOT, there is a range of opportunities.
- We want it to stay a true working market. Future development needs more guidance.
- Think about the Dequindre Cut as an entry point rather than a barrier. What happens with snow removal?
- Concern about street trees blocking business signage.
- Is there a thought about live/work about the Wilkins spaces? Yes, that is one option!
- This is first a working food district and then a neighborhood, which has a different attitude toward residential.
- You could repeat this Food Innovation District diagram on adjacent land. It will be more attractive to food industry if they see room for expansion.
- “You’ve got trucks and then you’ve got trucks.” Could transition to neighborhood trucks at the larger facility.
- Parking is a real issue for market vendors.
- There is a district manager already in place and now we are looking for developers. There are many strong developers in the area, these guidelines will contribute to future work.

### **PROPERTY OWNERS & DEVELOPERS**

- The example images show different parts of the district. Some show what the area with older buildings could look like; others show the potential for larger food industry facilities.
- The food industry diagram is sited on a once-thriving neighborhood that is now largely vacant land. Long-term residents should vet this plan as well.
- Other considerations: stormwater management, truck “plaza” isolates truck traffic from surrounding context, also creates jobs.
- The intention is trying to make more accessible street fronts, safer for pedestrians, while still growing the food industry.
- The large scale of food facilities is a departure from previous Eastern Market development and are intimidating.



- What is the percentage of surface parking, green space, building, etc.? Can we stack parking? We may be able to stack some parking, but not feasible for trucks or food facilities, and we would not want parking at street level because it does not contribute to street life. The building-to-lot ratio is higher than other similar facilities, and there is room to expand the building footprints as well.
- This diagram keeps the water/police building to show how it could accommodate larger existing facilities.
- Concern regarding Mack, what happens on the south side will influence the north side and truck traffic will impact both sides. The intention is to further extend food facilities north of Mack, which would prioritize Mack as a truck route...
- What about Dequindre Cut users?
- What was the impact of Pepsi on Mack in terms of trucking? People were saying the market
- This diagram responds to current needs and includes several businesses looking to relocate as well as some food businesses new to the area. Many businesses are not in ideal spaces right now, moving to new spaces frees up older buildings for retail and mix of uses. We want people to stay in the area rather than move away. This expansion would facilitate old and new businesses in old and new facilities.
- How many land owners does this footprint represent? For now this is a concept. We will work according to land acquisition possibilities. Shown in a specific area to show a sense of scale. There are many things that need to happen before we can dig in further.
- Is it an option to show multiple possible configurations in different locations?
- There are 40-50 other land owners in the area. It might make more sense to start discussions with larger property owners that could potentially move their businesses.
- What is the timeline? Next year is realistic to develop particular uses for particular land. This year we are working with businesses to identify need. Site control is one of the next steps.
- Need to make sure there is long term demand for the food facilities and how the city and state will support them.
- This requires leadership, there are a couple of different options, can create a development climate over time, which EMC can guide. Several different development models are possible but needs an entity that shepherds the process. EMC has the right people to move this forward. "This area could be the silicon valley for the food economy." We can prepare the supporting infrastructure. Will take time.
- All different scales of the food economy are here.
- Metro Cold Storage is one of the businesses looking for a new location, which impacts how other people do business as well. Much of this is in anticipation of the Food Modernization Act that calls for newer food facilities.

## **PUBLIC SECTOR PARTNERS**

- Is housing still part of the picture? Yes but not leading with housing (see notes above).
- Maintain the identity as a working market first.
- We do not want this place to turn into Seattle's Pike Place Market: tourist-oriented, lost its authenticity, not a working market like it used to be.
- Nice to see this food facility diagram fit within the city grid and work as infill. How do businesses feel about the enclosed environment? Part of it is food security; part of it is creating a safer streetscape.
- Next steps? Open House and then use this strategy as a framework for decision making that will guide the process moving forward. EMC will work on the organizational structure to make it happen.
- New industrial urbanism typology that invites nearby development. Not at the urban design plan point yet. Great way to envision how to develop and isolate truck traffic. We are focusing on food but it could fit other types of development as well.
- How does this align with DFC and planning department? This is a more focused planning effort than DFC, which identifies this area as an employment center. The Planning Department has been part of the dialog.
- DEPSA is a big challenge, priority on pedestrian thoroughfares and green space. DEPSA is okay being in a working food district and wants to see the area develop.
- Number of jobs? : DC: 800-1200 with the opportunities anticipated. Up to 4000 over 10 years. Plus workforce housing nearby.
- Regarding trucks using Mack – will they also use other cross streets? Goal is to focus truck traffic in certain areas.