

The following summary is taken from the April 5, 2016 City Council Memo on the Civic Area Update.

Market Hall

Background

One of the specific uses identified in the Civic Area Master Plan is a year-round market hall that would complement the existing Farmers' Market as well as advance local foods and activate the east bookend. A consultant team, Economic & Planning Systems, a national economic consulting firm, and David O'Neil, an expert in the development of public markets halls, were retained by the city to assess the potential program mix, type, and scale of a year-round market hall consistent with the vision articulated in the Boulder Civic Area Master Plan. The consultant team has developed preliminary recommendations (which are summarized below) including the desired mix and types of food related programs and activities for the market hall, as well as the desired management structure. See **Attachment E** for the consultants' draft report. The recommendations were made based on data from comparable year-round markets around the country, stakeholder outreach, market research, and input from two sessions with an ad hoc working group comprised of individuals representing a wide range of the local food industry (i.e., production, packaging, distribution, retailing, as well as institutions such as the Boulder County Farmers' Market, the Boulder Valley School District, University of Colorado, and Colorado State University). The group provided input at two sessions held on Dec. 15, 2015 and Feb. 10, 2016. See **Attachment F** for the list of participants on the working group. Meeting notes can be found on the [Civic Area website](#).

Summary of Preliminary Recommendations

The individual components of the preliminary recommended programs include:

- Flexible event hall with its primary use intended to be for food related activities including a year-round farmers' market
- Demonstration kitchen
- 6 - 8 vendor stalls
- Single tenant brewer, distiller, or vintner
- Tap House/Tasting Room with education oriented production space
- Common dining area with tables and chairs, with shared access from tasting room within/adjoining the large hall
- Farmers' Market Co-op store
- Office Space for the Boulder County Farmers' Market
- Rooftop – Opportunity to create a teaching garden on the roof that can also be used for events, seating and education
- Cold Cellar – A naturally cooled cellar for product storage and public education
- Outdoor Market Area –an attractive and flexible public space around the building that promotes circulation to and from neighboring uses
- Garden – A street-level, outdoor kitchen and wellness garden

Size Options

In regards to the potential size of a market hall, the consultants have recommended two options; a low option of approx. 20,000 s.f. and a high option of approx. 30,000 s.f. of net operating space as indicated in the table below.

Market Hall Elements	Size (sq. ft.)	
	Low	High
Market Hall/Event Space	8,000	10,000
Demonstration Kitchen	1,000	1,500
Anchor Attraction	4,000	6,000
Production Space	2,000	3,000
Tasting Room	2,000	3,000
Food Hall	2,200	5,500
Food Vendors	1,200	1,600
Farmers' Market Co-op	1,000	1,500
Permanent Retail Stalls	-	2,400
Additional Elements	4,000	6,500
Office Space	2,500	5,000
Storage	1,000	1,000
Bathrooms and Support Space	500	500
TOTAL	19,200	29,500

Source: Economic & Planning Systems; David K O'Neil

Table 1 - Market Hall Elements

The low option has all the elements required to achieve a diverse level of activity and a break-even operation. The high option has all of the elements of the lower option, but includes a larger event hall and anchor space, more office space in addition to space for the Farmers' Market, and additional permanent retail stalls to provide a critical mass of retail that is open daily and complement the Farmer's Market Co-op Store. Both options achieve the critical mass required for the market hall to succeed; however the high option has the potential to add more activity to the market hall and operate in the black.

Management

The consultants recommend the market hall be operated and managed by a not-for-profit corporation. The Board of the nonprofit should be community based and may include members from the City of Boulder and the Boulder County Farmers' Market. The board should not be seen as over dominated by any group and should be comprised of seats that best serve the market goals. The responsibility of managing a public market will also require contracting with a property management entity.

Potential Market Hall Facility

In addition to the program mix and type of food-related uses described above, a "test-fit" analysis is also underway to help identify options for a facility to house the market hall at the

east bookend. The analysis will explore options to repurpose the existing Atrium building¹ with a possible addition as well as options for a new mixed-use building. This analysis will be coordinated with various potential uses identified in the Civic Area Master Plan to be explored for the east bookend, such as city facilities, innovation center, events space, etc., consistent with the vision articulated in the Civic Area Master Plan to have a rich mix of horizontal and vertical uses. The desired program of uses will be informed by the planning process being initiated for the Boulder Community Health/Broadway Campus redevelopment project, particularly in relation to potential city facilities and community meeting space (i.e., which facilities and spaces will remain in the Civic Area campus, and which will relocate to the Broadway campus site). The preferred program of uses will also determine the need for additional parking and access improvements, all of which will inform the final analysis of facility options and selection of a preferred alternative.

Proposed Next Steps

The above conclusions are preliminary and based on initial analysis; however, they clearly show that a year-round Market Hall is potentially feasible from a market and financial standpoint and should be considered further. Staff proposes initiating a more robust public process to understand how a public market can best play out in Boulder. The specific process and schedule have yet to be developed, but it is anticipated that the next steps will include the following:

- Further exploration of the Market Hall Feasibility Analysis with the community including: refinement of the Market Hall program and mission, and in depth analysis of governance and finance options;
- Investigation of implementation phasing options to build off the existing success of the Farmer's Market;
- Determine facility needs and possible re-use of the Atrium building and/ or new facility;
- Cultivate partnerships and sponsors (potential city and nonprofit partnerships)
- Continue discussions with potential tenants; and
- Explore the relationship of the Market Hall and potential adjacent city uses in conjunction with the larger Boulder Community Health/Broadway Campus and Civic Area planning efforts.

Based on council direction, staff will scope the work plan for the remainder of 2016 and 2017, detailing the next steps and identifying needed resources.

¹ The city-owned Atrium building has historic significance associated with one of a group of “first rate modern architects”, Hobart Wagener, and has a pending landmark designation application. See **Attachment I** for information on this and other historic resources in the Civic Area.