
TO: MAYOR J. LEHMAN AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

FROM: K. DUBEAU, DIRECTOR OF CREATIVE ECONOMY

NOTED: Z. LIFSHIZ, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF INVEST BARRIE

M. PROWSE, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

RE: PERMANENT MARKET – PROGRAMMING/UTILIZATION OPTIONS

DATE: JUNE 11, 2018

The purpose of this Memorandum is to provide Members of Council with a high level analysis of the potential uses of the proposed Permanent Farmer's Market space when it is not in use by the Barrie Farmer's Market. The Creative Economy Department was asked by the Executive Management Team to provide input into the Permanent Market Programming, in support of the Facilities Staff Report regarding the Year Round Downtown Market. Guidance was provided to focus on maximizing utilization of the space throughout the weekday periods.

The analysis was based on a review of the previous consultant reports submitted to Council related to the Downtown Permanent Market, and a review of anticipated resources and programming that will be available in the downtown core with the June 2018 opening of Meridian Square and the Sandbox Entrepreneurship Centre, scheduled to launch in the fall of 2018. There was no consultation undertaken with stakeholders or the public regarding this analysis. Further, the analysis included an estimation of the potential audiences for the Permanent Market space, based on the planned intensification and projected residential demographics in the downtown as identified in previous consultant reports for the Permanent Market, and the alignment of those audiences with potential programming. The review also incorporated additional potential uses of infrastructure that was originally proposed, such as the commercial kitchen.

The findings from the high level analysis are that there exists a large number of options for programming in the space that would be synergistic with new and planned initiatives in the downtown core. In particular, a key finding was that weekday programming developed for Meridian Square could be transferred to the Farmer's Market Pavilion during the winter. Further planning, consultation and analysis would be required to develop a comprehensive program, determine an estimated utilization rate, and to assess how the overall program would be supported under the proposed business model.

Objective: to ensure that the 7,500 square feet of space for the Farmer's Market Pavilion at the new location is programmed and utilized throughout the week, not only on weekends, when it would be used by the Barrie Farmer's Market.

Guiding Principles:

1. The usage of the space should be synergistic with other activities and strategic initiatives taking place at the transit terminal facility and in the downtown, namely:
 - i. The Permanent Market Vendors featuring food and retail.
 - ii. Sandbox Entrepreneurship Centre, with engagement of early stage start up and growth-oriented existing businesses.
 - iii. Complementary to existing downtown businesses.
 - iv. Complementary to the downtown Georgian Campus.
 - v. Complementary to the programming in Meridian Place.
 - vi. Supporting the intensification in the downtown.
 - vii. Aligned with the Downtown Creative Hub Vision.
 - viii. Leverages a commercial kitchen facility.

- ix. Ways in which the space could support growth and development of Barrie's cultural and creative communities, and the downtown development such as hotel(s) and intensified residential living.

2. Focus on overall utilization and synergies, not revenue generation.

Identification of Key Audiences:

During the week the audience and client base for programming facility will vary based on time of day, and with the seasons.

Monday – Friday 9:00-12:00

- general traffic of downtown retailers, office workers
- people getting coffee, picking up supplies
- stay-at-home Moms and Dads with young children
- people living downtown: groceries, programming and social activities
- self-employed/solopreneurs that work out of gathering spaces/cafes
- entrepreneurs working out of the Sandbox, and employees of existing companies using the Sandbox facility

Monday – Friday 12:00-2:00

- Noon time traffic for people eating lunch, picking up food, office workers, retirees

Monday – Friday 2:00-5:00

- people living downtown: groceries, programming, meetings, social activities
- stay-at-home Moms and Dads and young children
- students – meetings, study groups
- self-employed/Solopreneurs – work out of gathering spaces/cafes

Monday – Friday 5:00 pm onwards

- People living downtown – supper, entertainment, drinks
- Shift workers
- Students – study groups, evening classes

By Seasons

Programming such as lunch time music, demonstration programs will potentially be delivered at Meridian Place band shell from May – October. Once developed, this programming and audiences can be moved indoors to the Farmer's Market area for November – April season, providing programming Monday-Friday.

Special Seasonal programming such as a Christmas Market could drive specialized foot traffic outside of weekends.

During the spring and summer season, the programming can be structured to re-enforce the outdoors/healthy living/waterfront activities with educational workshops, tours, tourist material, lessons and equipment.

According to the original Consulting report from RMG, a key target market are those people who will be living in the downtown area. The typical age range is anticipated to be 50 – 70 years old, based on previous Permanent Market reports.

By Design: Downtown Living

Use of the Permanent Market space programming could be designed to support and feature unique products and services for people living in the intensification corridor, where there is typically a lack of outdoor space and storage for individual units. These features would be movable as needed, to ensure adequate room for the Farmer's Market on weekends. The attractions could be of interest to Farmer's Market patrons as well.

Examples:

- The commercial kitchen could support weekday meal preparation services, whereby a company provides the menus and purchases the ingredients; customers work together, by themselves or as a social gathering to prepare the meals and store them in individual containers for freezing or usage in their homes during the week. This type of service is popular in downtown and urban areas.
- Living Lab for urban/balcony gardening – classes, tools, shared spaces.
- Ikea-like set up for rooms, furniture designed to maximize small spaces -“downtown Ikea”.
- Tool Lending library – hobbyists, home repair, gardening tools. These and similar ideas would leverage the Sharing Economy model, which has typically been a feature of downtown and urban areas.
- Rent-a-bike/Bike share, and access to a small fleet of car sharing “Zip Cars” would enable downtown residents to have access to vehicles when needed, without the overhead of ownership (parking, insurance, maintenance) or the cost of rental cars. Further, if the fleet were electric vehicles, users would not need to buy gas. A central “depot” at the Farmer's Market Pavilion could ensure ongoing foot traffic for retailers, as well as providing the “last mile” link from public transit to home.
- Aging-in-Place & Accessibility Solutions geared to seniors living in condos and apartments.
- Fitness classes (no equipment) for those who do not have car, may not use transit; these could be provided by downtown businesses or as an extension of programming from City of Barrie's Recreation department. These would be of particular interest to patrons living downtown during the winter months.
- Health and wellness resources regularly used by seniors and typically offered in large pharmacy stores such as blood pressure monitors, orthotics assessments, flu shots and blood donor clinics could be offered at regular intervals during weekdays. There may be opportunities to partner with diagnostic services companies, to offer some services to the residents of the downtown in the Farmer's Market Pavilion.
- Social activities/community building for those in the downtown – a central gathering place for card games, workshops, music rehearsal/classes etc.

By Design: Entrepreneurs – Partnering with Sandbox & Innovation Ecosystem for Pop Up Retail

With the implementation of key technology infrastructure and e-commerce systems, along with a coordinated marketing effort, the space could be used to provide short-term, turn-key retail space for early stage start-ups with consumer focused products. These could range from food to clothes to health and wellness products.

A key attraction for the start-ups would be access to a structured program that would include point of sale systems, Wi-Fi, insurance and targeted marketing programs through the Permanent Market partner organization. The entrepreneurs would be curated and selected by a Sandbox Team, which would include the Henry Bernick Entrepreneurship Centre, Georgian Angel Network, and the Small Business Enterprise Centre.

Such a resource does not currently exist in Barrie, Simcoe or York Region, yet would provide an attractive program for entrepreneurs from a wide area, as Barrie is one of the highest density consumer markets north of Markham/Vaughan and south of Thunder Bay.

This Pop Up resource could also be leveraged through a “Night Market”, that would cater to those shopping after hours and into evenings, combining shopping with entertainment and food.

By Design: Discovery Zone

Linking the themes of entrepreneurship and innovation a pop up Discovery Zone, would allow patrons to explore and experiment with emerging technologies, including Augmented Reality, Virtual Reality, connected devices, smart fabrics, etc.

It would attract patrons, young and old, and would be an opportunity to engage larger companies such as Google, Best Buy etc. to showcase their new technology products.

By Design: Tech Support

Similar to an Apple Store model, a tech support/service centre would provide support to both the businesses and people living in the downtown. This could be extended to provide workshops and demonstrations for people’s communications and entertainment devices, among other potential technologies.

By Design: Supporting Culture, Music and Creatives

The lack of music rehearsal space is a recognized need within the community. The Farmer’s Market Pavilion space could support this need while potentially building audiences for the musicians. In addition to rehearsal space, there would be the potential for an expanded musical instrument lending library program, currently offered by the Barrie Public Library, in partnership with Huronia Symphony Orchestra. The Music Lending Library currently has a 6 month waiting list, demonstrating both interest and demand for such a service.

If the space becomes a gathering place for those interested in music, weekday evenings could feature emerging artists, enabling them to gain experience with performing for audiences and honing their talents. The space could extend the current Emerging Musician’s Program (formerly known as the Street Performers Program) to be a year-round initiative, rather than only during summer months when the weather is amenable to outdoor performances.

The Pop Up Market could be leveraged to provide temporary vending spaces for Barrie’s diverse artists and students of the fine arts program at Georgian College. These could include photography, fine art, ceramics, sculptures, jewellery and other unique items. Currently, these are on display in the small gallery at the main campus of Georgian College. Locating the gallery

downtown would enable larger audiences and markets for the artists, and the short-term nature of the pop up market would ensure that artists and students have flexible schedules, as well as providing a continual renewal of unique products on offer to patrons of the Permanent Market.

Overall: Making it “Sticky”

A key challenge is to make the space a place that people will visit on a regular basis, so that vendors using the Pop Up Model and the Farmer’s Market Pavilion reap the benefits of continual and repeat foot traffic. Having diverse and unique food options, meeting spaces and seating areas are key to bringing returning traffic. Configurable spaces, ability to set up and store chairs/tables and stalls/dividers, staging, audio visual tech and storage lockers are essential to ensuring maximum utilization of the space.

Another attractive option may be to provide child minding services, similar to those provided by Ikea. Moms/Dads can drop off their young ones and take a class or explore the market. Diaper changing stations, stroller parking and a secure area would be required.

Similarly, having a seniors minding service may also be attractive to those caregivers who are seeking some time to shop or relax, while providing social engagement for seniors. This could be an essential support for helping residents in the downtown to age in place.

Overall: Fostering Place-making

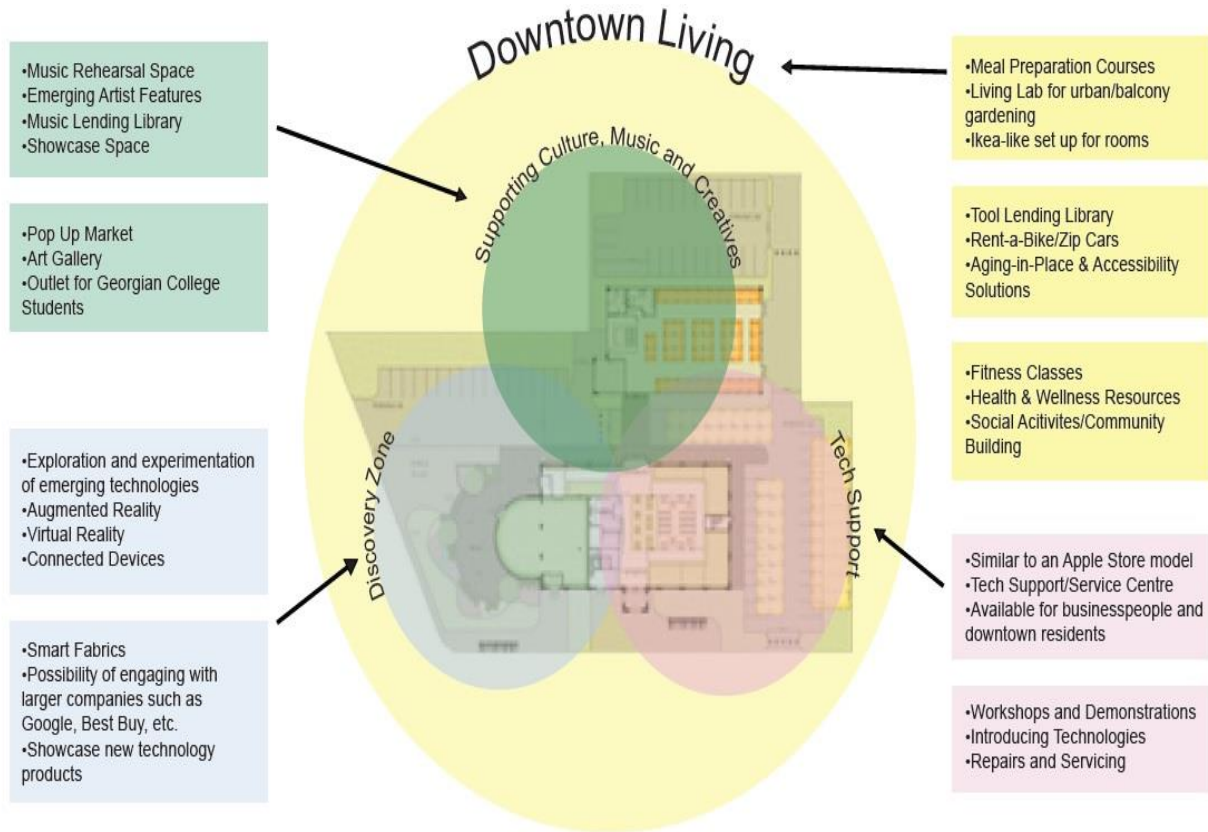
Streamlining the user experience and prioritizing local products and entrepreneurs, musicians and artists will enable the space to cultivate a sense of place and identity. As Barrie adds 75,000 new residents over the next decade, the ability to provide places and spaces that provide opportunities to build shared experiences and identities will be essential to achieving broader social cohesion. Offering unique products and services will create an attraction for those outside of the downtown and outside of Barrie.

Overall: Expanding the Downtown to the Greater Barrie Area

Providing an information technology platform to allow people anywhere in Barrie and beyond to order from the Market vendors and pick up their orders either downtown or at a nearby facility in north or south Barrie, would provide a broader consumer base for the businesses. Having a 10 minute pick up parking zone at the Farmer’s Market Pavilion would be key to enabling this model.

Next Steps

Once Council has made its decisions related to the Barrie Permanent Market Precinct design, staff will consult with stakeholders including but not limited to the Downtown Market Steering/Working Group, BIA and Sandbox regarding refreshing of the Downtown Barrie Permanent Public Market Business Plan to reflect the endorsed facility/building designs. Staff will report back to General Committee with the refreshed business plan after the discussions.



Farmers' Market Configurations

