

**CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNICATION:**

ITEM _____

02-279

**OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
CITY OF DES MOINES, IOWA**

AGENDA:

SYNOPSIS -

JUNE 3, 2002

Over the course of the past several months, public input has been collected regarding the concept of a year-round public market in the Court Avenue area. Before Council tonight are a series of steps that are recommended in order for this concept to move forward.

SUBJECT:

YEAR-ROUND
COURT AVENUE
PUBLIC MARKET

FISCAL IMPACT -

None.

TYPE:

RECOMMENDATION -

RESOLUTION
ORDINANCE
RECEIVE/FILE

Receive, file, and direct the City Manager to proceed with the following actions:

SUBMITTED BY:

ERIC A. ANDERSON
CITY MANAGER

- 1) Coordinate with the Downtown Community Alliance to enable the Alliance to assume the lead role in development of the market.**
- 2) Determine what incentives are appropriate to encourage restoration and use of the upper floors of existing buildings on 4th Street and Court Avenue.**
- 3) Explore funding resources and development opportunities similar to those used for the Vine Street Lofts project to develop housing on vacant land at 4th/5th Streets and Court Avenue.**
- 4) Develop an integrated parking plan, which includes a transit element, for these proposed uses.**
- 5) Provide quarterly reports to the City Council as to the progress of actions taken.**

BACKGROUND -

In February 2002, Council asked staff to investigate the possibility of a year-round public market in the Court Avenue area. This concept was brought forth due to the high popularity of the current Farmer's Market that is held every Saturday morning May through October.

On February 28, 2002, a public meeting was held where approximately 170 people attended and engaged in a lively discussion about what they would/would not like to see in a public market. This was followed by several smaller meetings with interested parties, and then concluded with two more public meetings. This process resulted in hundreds of ideas being suggested. After reviewing all the responses, several common threads appeared. Most people believed that a year-round public market was a good idea for the Court Avenue area. They also believed that the market should include the following:

- Specialty foods, such as organic or quality products
- Iowa/local products (both food and non-food products)
- Diversity of foods/vendors
- An on-site food preparation component, which could include:
 - Bakery
 - Coffee/Tea
 - Restaurants, but not a food court
 - Other products

Other common suggestions included:

- There is a strong connection with the current Farmer's Market. Whatever is proposed with the year-round market, it should complement and support, not compete with, the current Farmer's Market.
- The Public Market should be incorporated into an existing building (such as the Baggage Building), or a new structure built in the Court Avenue and 4th/5th Street area.
- The Market should be operated by a private or non-profit organization, not the City.
- In the Court Avenue District, there should be areas designated for entertainment purposes, or other attractions that make coming to the market an event/social attraction. Many people come to the Farmer's

Market not to purchase anything but to see neighbors and be entertained.

- Housing should be incorporated into any proposal in the Court Avenue area.

- Begin process as soon as possible to restore/renovate existing buildings along Court Avenue and 4th Street.

- Look at possibility of creating housing on upper floors of year-round market structure.

- Housing will need to accommodate diverse housing needs.

As future actions are taken, these ideas and suggestions will help provide a framework for the development of a year-round market in the Court Avenue area.
