

Island Roots Market Co-operative



This two part 8880 square foot Year Round Community Market building (YRCM) and its additional 10,000 square foot covered outdoor market area is about eating local and healthy living. It promotes community connection, social transformation, environmental preservation and rebuilding a once flourishing local food industry. The YRCM will provide a permanent, year-round space for shoppers, vendors, farmers, artisans, artists, crafters and the community.

The building will be a permanent home to five anchor vendors¹: A baker, a butcher, a caterer, a deli and a green grocer. Two days each week these anchor vendors will be joined by seasonal and specialty vendors (30 to 40 during the winter and 80 to 90 in the summer). In winter, the seasonal and specialty vendors will be inside the bustling market building with the anchor vendors. In summer, vendors will spill out to fill the outdoor covered area with the fresh seasonal look, smells and tastes of Vancouver Island.

Everyone offering products for sale will have product knowledge from being involved in the production of those products and all products will be grown, baked, made, or caught on Vancouver Island or the adjacent islands. Wherever possible, value added product production will involve the use of ingredients from the same area.

The YRCM's demonstration/catering kitchen will be at the core of our growing local food culture, featuring local foods and beverages that will be consumed at the market, in the building's dining room and delivered to functions and activities throughout the Regional

¹ Anchor vendors will provide their own leasehold improvements (fixtures and equipment) and pay market rents for the space they occupy but will benefit from the use of common areas like washrooms, shared seating and the kids play area at no charge. Their combined rents will cover the monthly mortgage payments leaving the cost maintenance, operating and market staff to be covered by rents paid by other vendors.



District. The work of local artists will be proudly displayed, and available for sale.

The YRCM, when not being used as a market, will be available for other activities such as weddings, banquets, meetings, classes or other educational activities. The kitchen will double as a catering facility for local food, or be used as a backup for the two nearby commercial kitchens production from which will support the market.

As the local food culture and local food production grow the YRCM building will increase the time that seasonal and specialty products are made available to consumers without local producers being required to take additional time from their core business of producing local food. This will be done by offering vendors the option of leaving product at the YRCM to be sold by IRMC staff between our two weekly Market Days.

Project Rationale

In 2012, 'Growing Our Future Together' - the Regional District of Nanaimo's Agricultural Area Plan - identified development of a year-round farmers market as a priority action towards strengthening the local agriculture and aquaculture economy. In 2016 when the City Council asked the public to comment on its priorities, the largest group of online comments (25% of the total) were about local food, food security and food production.

On April 29, 2017 Nanaimo Community Gardens Society opened its new greenhouse just meters from the proposed location of the YRCM. Our market will support the work of, and provide a market and revenue source for, this exciting new agricultural training facility.

The proposed YRCM also aligns with the City of Nanaimo's Official Community Plan and Strategic Priorities regarding developing a sustainable food system.

This is further reflected in the recent Beban Park Master Plan, where 41% of visitors to the Complex currently use the short-term, seasonal farmers market, second only to visiting the social center and pool. When asked, visitors also expressed an overwhelming desire for an indoor year-round farmers' market at this location.

The YRCM is heavily driven by local farmers and vendors who expressed a desire for reliable markets for their products.

Project Description and Activities

The goals of the Year Round Community Market are:

- To increase the community's sustainability and food security.
- To increase economic activity in the area of Beban Park and create employment
- To increase the economic viability of local agriculture and provide a stimulus for



local food production.

- To provide a profitable venue for local farmers and producers to sell their wares year-round.
- To offer Nanaimo residents – and those from further afield – options that allow them to buy fresh local produce, year-round.
- To increase and support awareness and access to locally-sourced produce and products.
- To contribute to consumer awareness of the local food industry and provide opportunities for learning and engagement.
- To develop partnerships with other Vancouver-Island based organizations whose goals reflect those of the IRMC.
- To engage community members as volunteers.

Actions:

- Acquire and develop permanent market space in Beban Park including a multi-functional and environmentally responsible building. This building will have 3 key components consisting of the core, an indoor marketplace and an outdoor marketplace. The core will house the anchor vendors and include a comfortable, temperature controlled area for consumers to enjoy. The inside marketplace will allow the beauty of the outdoors in while keeping the harsh elements out. During market days, this indoor space will be opened up to allow vendors a dry, accessible place to set up during the inclement weather seasons. The outdoor marketplace will be a covered outdoor venue for the market to operate during warmer weather. This design allows the market to thrive in all conditions as well as provide optimal shopping conditions for all consumers. Our focus is to design and create a project that will attract a broad spectrum of residents from toddlers to seniors throughout the year, as well as appeal to the wide range of out of town shoppers and tourists that frequent the region.
- Obtain city council's approval to have the city issue receipts making donation to IRMC income tax deductible.
- Solicit contributions individuals, businesses and governments to cover all of the project costs except for \$625,000 to be obtained as a mortgage from VanCity Credit Union.
- Continue sales of Co-op Membership shares in the community as part of our fundraising efforts. Although shares purchases are not eligible for a tax receipt Council's approval of the receipting process will greatly assist this effort.
- Agree to terms of a lease between the City of Nanaimo and the Island Roots Market Cooperative for the designated land - pending
- Identify and arrange leases with anchor vendors (total lease payment to cover the monthly mortgage payments).
- Encourage local producers to see the YRCM as a viable opportunity to develop and build a market for their niche and seasonal products as well as providing them with an incubator situation that will lead to economic growth and spin-off businesses.
- Establish business terms and hours which meet the needs of vendors and



customers.

- Approach other Vancouver-Island based organizations with similar goals to explore opportunities for partnerships, e.g. Food Share (possible office space tenant), The CoCo Cafe (possible anchor), The Indigenous Peoples' Place of Culture, VIEx, the Cedar Market, etc.
- Develop a calendar of activities and workshops, possibly in co-operation with Nanaimo Foodshare, that meet existing customer needs and serve to promote the market.
- Promote the market and its activities in order to continue to raise awareness and to educate the public on the role of local food production in advancing the goals of food security and sustainability for Vancouver Island.

PROJECT TIMELINES

*Nov 2015 - Nanaimo Parks and Recreation Commission Approval

*Aug 2016- public input - City of Nanaimo

*Oct 2016 - Approved in Principle - City of Nanaimo

*Jan 2017 - \$25,000 RDN Grant approved for initial engineer, architect, Quantity Survey (QS)

*Feb 2017 - Architect contracted to prepare drawings and oversee development

*Apr 2017 - Amend Memorandum and Rules of IRMC making it non profit.

Apr 2017 - Sign lease for land at Beban Park

May 2017 - Quantity Survey report

May 2017 - Ask city council to approve issuing tax receipts (May 10 delegation)

May 2017 - Begin local fundraising

Nov 2017 - Development Permit Approval

Feb 2018 - Final drawings approved

Feb 2018 - Tenders Complete

Mar 2018 - Build Permit

Mar 2018 - Fundraising complete

April 2018 - Construction

Sept 2018 - Occupancy

Oct 2018 - Soft Opening

Dec 2018 - Grand Opening

* Successfully completed project preparations

PROJECT BENEFITS

1. **Expanded and sustainable markets for new and developing businesses -**

The YRCM will provide a good foundation for new vendors to the industry, offering a secure market from which they can learn the fundamental aspects of



direct sales. By being surrounded by seasoned vendors, they will develop skills and confidence and are more likely to be successful.

2. **Increased sales and employment at neighbouring businesses.** - By increasing traffic to the area, local businesses can expect to see consumer growth and increased sales. Studies have shown that businesses surrounding a farmer's market have seen an increase in revenue on market days. Studies also indicate that some businesses adjusted their hours to match those of the market, hired more staff, or made sure their best staff was present on those days. There is strong evidence, based on survey responses from market managers, surrounding business owners and customers, that farmers' markets have a positive impact on surrounding businesses.
3. **Development of new, and support for existing businesses in the area of the YRCM due to increased consumer traffic** - areas rich with consumer traffic become highly attractive to new and developing businesses. There are two underutilized commercial kitchens in the immediate vicinity of the YRCM. One, a production kitchen, is owned and operated by an individual who grew her business at the summer markets that take place on the proposed YRCM site. With the YRCM in operation, the close proximity of this kitchen will permit a number of small and startup businesses to prepare for food sale at the YRCM without the added expense of building their own kitchen or the health risks associated with transporting food longer distances. The second kitchen, is located across the parking lot from the YRCM site in the Beban Park Social Center. It is available for rent but scheduling difficulties and high rental rates mean it can only be used as an occasional back when other facilities are not available. The YRCM catering kitchen will fill a gap and support local caterers who need a facility in the area when the one at the Beban Social Center is not available to them.
4. **Increased Income security and Growth for Local Producers** - With a steady flow of customers to the market, vendors can confidently increase production. Creating a year-round market hub offers local producers a stable platform from which they can grow and develop their business. It gives them the security of knowing the public will have year round access to their goods without taking up precious food production time.



5. **Improved Community Economies** - The economic multiplier effect shows that a dollar spent on a local business yields two to four times the economic benefit of one spent elsewhere. Our market will keep consumer dollars in the region and support other local small businesses.
6. **Increased food security** - With the majority of our food coming from the mainland, being on an island leaves us vulnerable to food shortages, In the event of extreme weather, transport trucks would be unable to provide services to Vancouver Island and leave our community at risk . By supporting and even increasing local food production we provide an immediate improvement in our region's food security.
7. **Increase in overall community health** - Providing a space that allows the whole community to participate by integrating different social classes, generations and cultures results in greater civic welfare, and greater equality. Studies have shown that in order for a person to thrive, they must have a sense of meaning in their lives and a sense of belonging. Our YRCM will provide platforms for both to be developed by creating space where people from all walks of life can come together to learn, develop skills to a mastery level and contribute to the overall wellness of their region.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND SUPPORT

The concept for the market came out of direct demands from local producers and existing farmer's market vendors, and was further supported in consultation with and input from stakeholders:

- The need for a permanent community market identified through a meeting of Occupy Nanaimo activists - a significant number indicated a desire to farm. This then raised the concern about having no place to sell farm products. November 2011
- Community input meetings held to develop a goal and a plan for achieving it - a year-round market. November 2011 to June 2012.
- Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) approved Agricultural Area Plan suggesting a permanent indoor market - possibly at Beban Park, making it a priority for completion by 2017 and suggesting that local farmers' markets should take the lead on the development. August 2012
- Beban Park Master Plan adopted by the City of Nanaimo with emphasis on agriculture and community partnerships for future development. May 2015
- Nanaimo Parks and Recreation commission approved the IRMC's proposal for development at Beban Park. Nov 2015
- Meetings involving IRMC, Bowen Road Farmers Market Society (BRFM), Indigenous Peoples Place of Culture (IPPC - Nanaimo Aboriginal Centre, Mid Island Metis



Association, Boys and girls Club of Nanaimo), Nanaimo Equestrian Association (NEA), Vancouver Island Exhibition (VIEx) and city staff - discussing potential location of buildings to be constructed in accordance with the Beban Park Master Plan and the sharing of facilities to be built within Beban Park. December 2015 - June 2016

- A partnership formed between the IRMC and the BRFM which operated a Wednesday afternoon summer farmers market at Beban Park.
- Vancity Credit Union staff expressed support of the project and indicated willingness to provide a mortgage. May 2016
- City-mandated Open House on the proposed development at Beban Park revealed strong public support for the Year Round Community Market project.
- City Council's call for comments about priorities for the coming years resulted in 25% of online respondents identifying a year-round public market, local food production and/or food security as priorities. Oct 2016
- City Council approved the project in principle and instructed staff to negotiate land leases with each of the groups. Oct. 2016
- The Regional District of Nanaimo approved a \$25,000 Grant for engineering, architecture, and a quantity survey. January 2017

ORGANIZATION CAPACITY

As a registered Community Services (not for profit) Co-operative, our activities are guided by an elected board of directors. There are 9 board members in total. Elections are held in April of each year. Board members are local vendors and farmers as well as consumers. Each board member is deeply committed to agricultural growth in our region, responding to the needs of local consumers and supporting the goals of the IRMC.

Two paid part-time staff (more than one FTE when taken in total) fill the roles of Market Manager (.75 FTE) and Administrative Assistant (on call). An architect has been contracted to provide drawings and oversee the project.

Shares, which are available at the cost of \$10 each, allow members of the community to participate in meetings and support the development of the project.

Skilled support in the areas of public advocacy, accountancy, fundraising and communications is currently provided by in-kind services from local individuals and businesses.

Our organizational efforts are maximized by support and guidance from external organizations such as Regional District and City of Nanaimo staff.

Currently financial resources limit much of the work to volunteers, local vendors and producers whose collective knowledge and commitment drive the project. As the market develops, more resources will be committed to the various elements involved in bringing it to life.

PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY

The YRCM will begin operating with five rent-paying anchor vendor-staffed booths.



The baker, butcher, caterer, green grocer and deli operator will be joined by thirty to forty seasonal and specialty vendors for two market days each week in the winter and eighty to ninety for the same two days each week in the summer. (cash flow projection available on request)

Once fully operational at the two day per week level, the market days and hours of operation will be expanded by providing vendors the opportunity to leave product with market staff who will handle consumer transactions while producers tend to other parts of their small businesses.

Local vendors' and producers' involvement in the market will help build demand and create an ongoing awareness of the role of local produce and products in the economic life of Vancouver Island. Their own commercial goals will be supported by a regular, dependable growing markets, allowing farmers and producers in turn to hire more local workers.

The market will provide regular, year-round access to local produce and products to local consumers, and it will also be a destination - drawing customers and visitors from further afield, contributing to sustainable growth in tourism as well as local agriculture and production.

MARKET ASSESSMENT AND COMPETITIVE IMPACT

The YRCM addresses the needs and supports the demands of three major markets:

- 1) Local agriculture (farmers, growers, producers) seeking to expand and diversify their markets in order to contribute to food security and sustainability in the region. See item #2 and #3 under Project Benefits (above) for an example of how this will work.
- 2) Consumers who increasingly demand local produce and require access to diverse products.
- 3) Artists and crafters who seek an outlet for the items they produce.

A number of successful local seasonal farmer's market operate in the summer and early fall. The YRCM will work to a) avoid direct competition with these markets and their vendors, b) include operators and vendors from these markets in YRCM activities, c) maximize opportunities for vendors to participate in multiple markets, d) ensure consumers are aware of options available to them in terms of market open hours and activities, e) maximize opportunities to collaborate and share resources with other/seasonal markets in the area.

IRMC, which operates a 3 hour market each week in the winter, has partnered with a summer market in order to advance the YRCM, and is exploring opportunities to share promotional activities, coordinate schedules and support efforts to spread the word



about the value of shopping local with others.

FUNDING AND BUDGET

Requirement	Cost		Area - sq ft	cost per sq ft
Land	\$270,000		18,000	\$15
Services	\$50,000			
QS and Engineering Study	\$25,000			
Temperature Controlled Building	\$900,000		4500	\$200.00
Indoor Market	\$350,000		3500	\$100.00
Outdoor Market	\$500,000		10000	\$50.00
Total	\$2,095,000		18,000	\$116.00
Consultants	\$175,000			
Development Cost Charges	\$80,000			
Total including architect	\$2,270,000			

Funding Source	Amount	Commitment	
City of Nanaimo (land)	\$270,000	\$270,000	Land lease approved in principle, detailed lease pending
City of Nanaimo (services)	\$50,000		Request amount depends on QS report not yet completed
City of Nanaimo (Development Cost charges)	\$80,000		Amount depends on construction costs
Regional District Of Nanaimo	\$25,000	\$25,000	Approved to cover feasibility study (QS report)
Member Shares and individual donations	\$625,000	\$19,000	Fundraising drive pending City tax receipt approval
Credit Union	\$625,000	\$625,000	Approved in principle, details pending, can be increased if needed
Grants and Donations (other)	\$195,000		
ICET	\$400,000		
Total	\$2,270,000	\$939,000	



