



## Call to Action: General Public in Support of the Proposed Madison Public Market

Current Status: The Madison Public Market is shovel-ready, and without delay, would be set to move into the Fleet Building in 2022. The Mayor and the Common Council have approved the funding and implementation of the Public Market Business Plan as well as the final architectural designs. The Public Market Foundation has fulfilled its commitment to raise \$3 million for the project, built a strong volunteer Board of Directors, developed a brand and marketing strategy, worked with City staff on the design process, and engaged the community at large to create a strong foundation for a successful Market.

**Despite the progress made to bring our dream to fruition, the proposed Madison Public Market is again in danger!**

Due to the financial impact of COVID-19, the Mayor's office is reassessing all City department budgets and projects, including the Public Market. City staff have been directed to cease Market-related activity. When asked by the *Wisconsin State Journal* [in a recent article](#) whether the project could stall or end, Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway shared, *"That's certainly a possibility. I don't think that's anyone's first choice. The landscape has shifted. There's a lot of things in flux right now. I think everything is on the table at this point."*

**We need your help! To help convince Mayor Rhodes-Conway that the community is solidly behind the Public Market, a groundswell of support must be shown.**

Your supportive emails to the Mayor and the Common Council members are crucial, now more than ever. Below, please find a series of "talking points" to use in your communications with both the Mayor and Alders. Please use any of these in your communications. Put them into your own words, so that your appeal to save the Market is genuine and shows your true commitment to the cause. **State clearly that you are strongly supportive of the Madison Public Market.** Write to them at:

Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway: [mayor@cityofmadison.com](mailto:mayor@cityofmadison.com)

Common Council Alders: [allalders@cityofmadison.com](mailto:allalders@cityofmadison.com) or <https://www.cityofmadison.com/Council/contact/>

To find email addresses of individual Council Alders:

<https://www.cityofmadison.com/Council/councilMembers/alders.cfm>

### **Talking Points**

Broad Rationale:

- The proposed Madison Public Market would be an essential step in the region's economic recovery.
- With COVID-19 and the closure of many State Street businesses, opportunities like this are critical. A Public Market located in a single site can best maintain a safe environment for all.
- This is a win-win for everyone and truly deserves the community's support.

Economic Development:

- The Public Market's main purpose is community based economic development.
- The Market will have a significant positive economic impact – creating jobs and supporting new businesses, with an emphasis on supporting women- and persons of color-owned businesses.

- The Market will be an accelerator for local food and artisan businesses including home-based production companies seeking to take their business to the next level.
- The Market would offer business start-up opportunity to small companies and individual growers, producers, artists and craftspeople. The emphasis is on allowing these small businesses to rent space on a part-time, low commitment and low overhead basis.
- Regional infrastructure supports food and beverage production, processing, packaging, and distribution. Several food-related incubators, such as the FEED Kitchen, the Garver Feed Mill and even the Dane County Farmers' Market support a growing number of local entrepreneurs, while established dairy, beverage and food product companies thrive.

Community Benefit:

- The vibrant art-filled atmosphere of the Fleet Services building will be Madison's next great public place; repurposing an ideally suited building that the City already owns makes economic sense and promotes sustainability.
- The Market will serve as an incubator for diverse entrepreneurs to start and grow businesses. The City's innovative MarketReady Program is preparing 30 entrepreneurs through an intensive program of business coaching, training, and small grants. The MarketReady participants are a passionate, committed and diverse group (83% are people of color, 60% are women, and 33% are first generation immigrants).
- The soon-to-be vacant Fleet Services building, in the heart of the vibrant Capitol East neighborhood, is the gateway to downtown, close to the airport and the interstate and will spur economic growth and activity for the surrounding area. The vibrant art-filled atmosphere of the building will be Madison's next great public place; repurposing a city-owned building makes economic sense and promotes sustainability.
- The Public Market design will include a connection to the adjacent Burr Jones Park as well as the Yahara River. The Yahara River bike path and the park and will offer green space for exploring outdoor events and future opportunities.

City Support:

- Since 2012, the Common Council has approved over 20 formal Council resolutions authorizing next steps with the Public Market and the project has been authorized in the City budget for the last three years.
- This includes adoption of the business plan, launching the MarketReady Program, selecting the architecture team, establishing a partnership with the Public Market Foundation, approving architectural designs and more.
- Mayor Rhodes-Conway has expressed strong support for the MarketReady Program and the Public Market's focus on supporting diverse entrepreneurs.
- The Public Market has been well-vetted by the community, analyzed by experts, embraced by diverse entrepreneurs, repeatedly approved by the Common Council, recommended in City plans, and authorized by the City's budget.
- The Public Market is a recommendation in the City's adopted Capitol Gateway Corridor Plan, Emerson East/Eken Park/Yahara Neighborhood Plan, and the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan.

Funding:

- The Madison Public Market Foundation has already raised \$3 million in private support, is on track to raise more, and is anxious to take over the operations of the facility with no financial risk to the City.

####