



Subject: Downtown BIA Farmers' Market Agreement Extension

To: Council

From: Office of the Chief Administrative Officer

Report Number: 2022-221

Meeting Date: October 11, 2022

Recommendation:

That Chief Administrative Office - Economic Development and Tourism Division Report 2022-221 be received;

That Council approves the Downtown BIA (Business Improvement Area) managing the Farmers' Market for four years commencing with the new term of Council;

That Council approve the updated Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Appendix A between the City and the Downtown BIA, attached as Appendix A to Report 2022-221; and

That a By-law authorizing entering into the MOU with the Downtown BIA be approved.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the results of the Downtown BIA Farmers' Market management of a two-year pilot program. Additionally, staff recommend that the program be extended four years and align with the four-year term of Council.

Background:

Founded in 1813, Port Colborne Farmers Market is one of the oldest markets in Ontario. The Port Colborne market is a certified farmers' market with well over the required 51% of vendors being farmers and between 27 to 30 farmers participating throughout the market season. Some key facts about the Port Colborne Farmers Market are as follows:

- 87% of the shoppers are Port Colborne residents (2021)

- Attendance averages well over 1,000 during the peak season and 500+ on the shoulder seasons
- In 2022 the highest attendance to-date has been 1,456 (Canada Day)
- The official start of the 2022 season was Friday, April 22, 2022, operating every Friday morning from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., until October 28, 2022. Market vendors are ready at 7 a.m.

In the years preceding 2021, the Port Colborne Farmers' Market had been managed within the City's Community and Economic Development Department by a Market Clerk. After a department restructuring left this position vacant, the Downtown BIA approached the City with a proposal to manage the Farmers' Market on a two-year pilot basis and this was approved by City Council at their March 8, 2021 Meeting and part of staff report 2021-67. Council also approved a Memorandum Understanding (MOU) agreement as part of staff report 2021-100. The agreement will be ending October 30th at the conclusion of the 2022 season.

City staff continue to be involved with the Farmers' Market and work with the Downtown BIA regarding logistics, set-up, and garbage removal. The Downtown BIA requests that this support continue over the four-years of the updated agreement.

Discussion:

In 2021 and 2022 the Port Colborne Farmers' Market has been managed by the Downtown BIA and supported by City staff. This arrangement has been advantageous to the City and the Downtown BIA and has contributed to the success of the Port Colborne Farmers' Market.

This management arrangement is similar; to the rest of the province where 82% of farmers markets are managed by BIAs, service groups, or other not-for-profit organizations. With new and emerging trends in farmers' markets, the Downtown BIA is well positioned to ensure that the Port Colborne Farmers' Market remains a leading market in the Region and province.

For the Downtown BIA to continue with this management arrangement, the City's By-law for the farmers' market needs to be updated to designate the Downtown BIA Administrator as the Market Clerk to oversee the operations. An updated by-law is attached to this report in draft form as Appendix B.

Internal Consultations:

This proposal has been discussed with the CAO, the Director of Corporate Services, the City Clerk, the Manager of Strategic Initiatives, the Economic Development Officer, and the Events and Volunteer Coordinator. The consensus is that the two-year pilot with the

Downtown BIA was a success and that a four-year extension to the agreement should be granted.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

The initiative contained within this report supports the following pillars of the strategic plan:

- Service and Simplicity - Quality and Innovative Delivery of Customer Services
 - Attracting Business Investment and Tourists to Port Colborne
 - Value: Financial Management to Achieve Financial Sustainability
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Conclusion:

In the spring of 2021, the City of Port Colborne entered into a MOU with the Downtown BIA for a two-year pilot program to have them manage the Port Colborne Farmers' Market. This MOU has now ended. After the success of the pilot, staff are recommending that the management agreement with the Downtown BIA be extended for a four year term, aligning with the new term of City Council.

Appendices:

- a. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Agreement
- b. By-law

Respectfully submitted,

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Report Approval:

All reports reviewed and approved by the Department Director and also the City Treasurer when relevant. Final review and approval by the Chief Administrative Officer.