



October 13, 2015

Press Release

Eau Claire Public Market Feasibility Study - Press Conference

The Eau Claire City Council will vote on October 13th to accept a \$25,000 U.S. Department of Agriculture *Local Food Promotion Program* planning grant to undertake a public market feasibility study. If accepted, the study will evaluate if the local economy can create and sustain a year-round indoor facility, by expanding supply and consumption of local food. USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack announced on October 2nd that the “USDA is helping to create economic opportunities for producers, increase access to fresh, healthy food for consumers, and connect rural and urban economic across the country... each of the grants target a unique part of the growing market for local foods.”

The study will also investigate important factors such as the goal of the project, supply and demand analysis, programming and tenant mix (including a possible food hub element), merchandising principles, ownership, management and operating structure, healthy food access initiatives, site and building design, financial and pro forma analysis, capital funding options, partnerships and more.

Interest in public markets has been reinvigorated based on the economic success of local food. Madison, Green Bay, and Kenosha are well underway with such efforts. The Project for Public Space defines public markets as “markets which operate in or as a public space, feature only locally owned and operated businesses, and which have a broader public purpose, such as neighborhood revitalization or improving community health.”

The City is specifically looking to revitalize a central neighborhood called West Riverside. The City’s Redevelopment Authority has been assembling properties along the Chippewa River/Oxford Avenue in the Cannery District to create a future mixed-use redevelopment with public parkland. The feasibility study will also look at the potential of locating such a public market facility within this area.

The City is pleased to be working with a host of great community partners. Our “Champion Sponsors” - Group Health Cooperative of Eau Claire, Marshfield Clinic, and Mayo Clinic Health System – NW WI each provided \$25,000 in support of this study. Project team partners include UW-Extension Eau Claire County, UW-Eau Claire, and Downtown Eau Claire, Inc. Together with our partners, this official press conference will kick off the project.

- WHAT:** Public Market Feasibility Study - Press Conference
- WHEN:** Wednesday, October 14th at 9:30 a.m.
- WHERE:** Eau Claire Downtown Farmers Market, Clock Tower
- CONTACT:** Ned Noel, Associate Planner, City of Eau Claire, 715-839-8488



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