

Partners for Places Project Lessons Report

Project Name: *Developing Minneapolis farmers markets system for a healthier local community and economy*

- **Year Complete:** 2018
- **Local Government:** City of Minneapolis, MN
- **Local Foundation:** Greater Twin Cities United Way

Project Purpose

To convene Minneapolis farmers' markets for collaborative metrics collection, marketing and outreach, and other activities that support market incentives for residents in disadvantaged neighborhoods.

Key Lessons Learned

Lessons learned about tools and tactics through the project that other sustainability directors could use to advance their work.

The West Broadway Farmers Market opened in 2017 at its third location in three years. This made it incredibly difficult to carry over momentum from previous years where patrons have gained familiarity with the markets location. While longer-term plans were in place for a permanent location for the farmers' market, in the near term it was critical to maintain the market at a stabilized location on the corridor. Partnerships with other markets and healthcare providers were incredibly important. These groups were champions for the market to drive customer growth and perceptions of the farmers' market.

The market was transitioned from the West Broadway Business and Area Coalition (a business association) to management by Appetite for Change (a growing and thriving food advocacy organization operating an array of complementary programming, training and advocacy). Both organizations felt that this was a better fit for the goals and mission of each organization and the farmers' market itself. Appetite for Change was a co-founder and key vendor for the market with their produce aggregation table and numerous complementary projects, including the Kindred Kitchen incubator kitchen and its partnership in the development of a new food business incubator program. The change enabled the West Broadway Farmers' Market to better serve the community.

Lessons for developing a collaborative process between a local government sustainability director and local place-based foundation(s).

The City and Greater Twin Cities United Way had effective and positive working relationships on many issues in the past. Much has been learned about collaborating with different departments and projects that have varying levels of capacities and priorities. Given the new development of this particular collaboration and the breadth of work, it would have been helpful to identify opportunities for check-ins around major milestones and to share and discuss project accomplishments. Additionally, given the different organizational structures and contractual relationships, it would have been helpful to consider some sort of MOU or charter document that more clearly articulated the various roles/responsibilities and/or expectations of the partnership both between the city and the foundation as well as any contractors and/or grantees.

Additional Information and Resources

As a result of this grant, the Farmers Markets of Minneapolis have been successful in opening or sustaining [area farmers markets](#) as well as educating the community in healthy food skills and food access.