

September 29,
2017

Winter Farmers Market Feasibility Study



Nashua Regional Planning Commission
& Great American Downtown

Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
Introduction and Project Background	4
Community Context	4
Vision.....	4
Market Demand.....	5
Where do People Live?	5
Population by Age and Presence of Children.....	7
Income	8
Race and Ethnicity.....	10
Education Level	10
Traffic Volumes	11
Existing Food Locations.....	13
Vehicle Availability and Transit	15
Food Deserts	15
Customer Interest	17
Vendor Interest.....	18
Precedents and Examples of Success	19
Winter Farmers’ Market at Cole Gardens.....	19
Contoocook Farmers’ Market	19
Merrimack Winter Farmers’ Market.....	20
Milford Farmers’ Market.....	21
Salem Farmers’ Market.....	21
HEAL NH - YMCA Greater Nashua	22
Other Markets.....	23
Seacoast Eat Local.....	23
New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food	23
Recommendations for Market Startup and Operations	24
Winter Market Location and Space Needs Programming	26
Expected Number of Vendors and Customers.....	26
Building Space Needs	26
Expansion Capabilities	26

Site Access.....	26
ADA Accessibility.....	26
Sustainability	27
Redevelopment and Rehabilitation Potential.....	27
Transit Availability.....	27
Parking and Traffic	27
Image and Visibility	27
Availability of Utilities and Telecommunications.....	28
Site Evaluation – 14 Court Street	28
Local Building and Health Codes, Land Use Regulations and Zoning	31
Permit Process for Farmer’s Market Operators.....	31
Building or Fire Permit	31
Place of Assembly Permit.....	31
Food Service License	31
Intent to Hold Farmers’ Market Form.....	31
Hawker’s and Peddler’s License	31
Zoning Compliance.....	32
Site Plan Review Compliance	32
Permit Process for Farmers’ Market Vendors	32
Conclusions	35
Works Cited	36
Appendix A	37



This publication was supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service through grant 15FMPPNH0037. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the USDA.

Executive Summary

The Nashua Farmers Market Promotion Program aims to bolster the availability of fresh local foods in an area with unmet demand. The Nashua Farmer's Market currently hosts 8 to 10 vendors at weekly markets in Downtown Nashua, the second most populous municipality in the State. The market is centrally located within a low income community with low access to food or personal vehicles. Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) and Great American Downtown (GAD) partnered with the goals of increasing the existing market's sustainability and strength through direct consumer marketing, expanding the number of vendors to increase variety and bring additional farms into the market, recruiting new customers, and adding SNAP/EBT payment options.

As part of the initiative, NRPC and GAD conducted a Winter Market Expansion study, which identifies and evaluates the feasibility of a winter market including market demand, existing supply, nearby examples of success and potential competition, and essential considerations for site selection and permitting. This plan establishes the foundation for a sustainable winter market for the Nashua area. Site evaluation assesses the financial costs, overall feasibility, and space adequacy, as well as the access provided for low income-low food access neighborhoods.

A winter market would extend the number of months area consumers could purchase local agricultural products as well as provide additional opportunity for local farmers and businesses to sell their products. After conducting extensive public outreach via written surveys administered to patrons and vendors during summer markets and well as online surveys, both vendors and patrons were strongly in favor of participating in a winter market.

Introduction and Project Background

In order to expand access to fresh local foods beyond the existing market reach, Great American Downtown is interested in operating a Winter Market for Nashua as a logical extension of their current management of the summer and fall outdoor Nashua Farmers Market. Such an expansion opportunity would increase access to local agricultural products to be available year round and to a larger audience. The low income, low food access population extends beyond the City center and into surrounding communities, for this reason, Nashua Public Health and Community Services Department (NPHCS) is interested in additionally studying the feasibility of establishing a mobile market option to serve populations beyond the walkable proximity to the existing farmers market. Such an initiative would further regional planning goals of both the NRPC and NPHCS as well as economic development goals in the Nashua Master Plan. NRPC and GAD applied for and received a two-year, \$70,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to fund the research of the feasibility of a winter farmers market and a mobile market, as well as, promote the current market while expanding and recruiting vendors.

Community Context

The existing Nashua Farmer's Market is organized by the local chapter of Great American Downtown (GAD): Nashua, NH. The market has grown over the course of 2015 to 2017 from 8 to 10 vendors to over 30 vendors at weekly markets held on the Main Street Bridge and into Renaissance Park each Sunday, 10am – 2pm, from mid-June through mid-October. The market is centrally located in the Nashua Downtown, which as described by GAD is the place to be “whether you're seeking fine dining, eclectic shopping, a vibrant arts scene, historic architecture, fun-filled events or just a place to relax and watch the world go by.” The summer market is also centrally located within walking distance of the City's low income, low food access community. Further, this community has a low level of access to personal vehicles and is often dependent upon walking and transit. Geographically, the market primarily serves the City's downtown. However, Nashua is the largest urban center in southern New Hampshire, so many surrounding communities and populations also come to the City for services and opportunities such as the farmers' market. The existing market targets people of all ages and backgrounds. In 2016 the market added payment options for SNAP/EBT customers as well, offering Granite State Market Match that matches a dollar for each dollar of SNAP/EBT funds used to buy fresh fruits and veggies.

Vision

Looking forward to build on the summer market's tremendous growth, the City of Nashua would like to add an annual winter market. Between the summer and winter market, a continual selling season would be available to support local farmers and provide healthy food options for communities in need. The ideal winter market would host a variety of vendors that provide a wide variety of products. If the venue had a kitchen, the market would encourage vendors that sell warm and prepared meals. Great American Downtown is willing to add this venture to their current work portfolio. As such, the winter market will ideally be located downtown, within GAD's service area and able to serve the high density population, as well as those without access to a vehicle and low food access.

Market Demand

As previously stated, the existing Nashua Farmer's Market is centrally located within a low income, low food access community, where this community also has a low level of access to personal vehicles and is often dependent upon walking and transit. NRPC and GAD collaborated and surveyed patrons and vendors throughout the 2016 summer season. There were a total of 266 patron responses and 27 vendor responses.

The demand for a winter market held in Nashua was high, with 95% of patrons answering that they would shop at a winter market in Nashua and 78% of current vendors would like to participate in the winter market. Similar to national trends, interest in local foods has increased in Nashua. 77% of survey respondents said that their main reason for buying fruits and/or vegetables at the Nashua Farmers' Market was to support local farmers and 24% said they preferred fruits or vegetables from the Nashua Farmers' Market because of product quality and freshness.

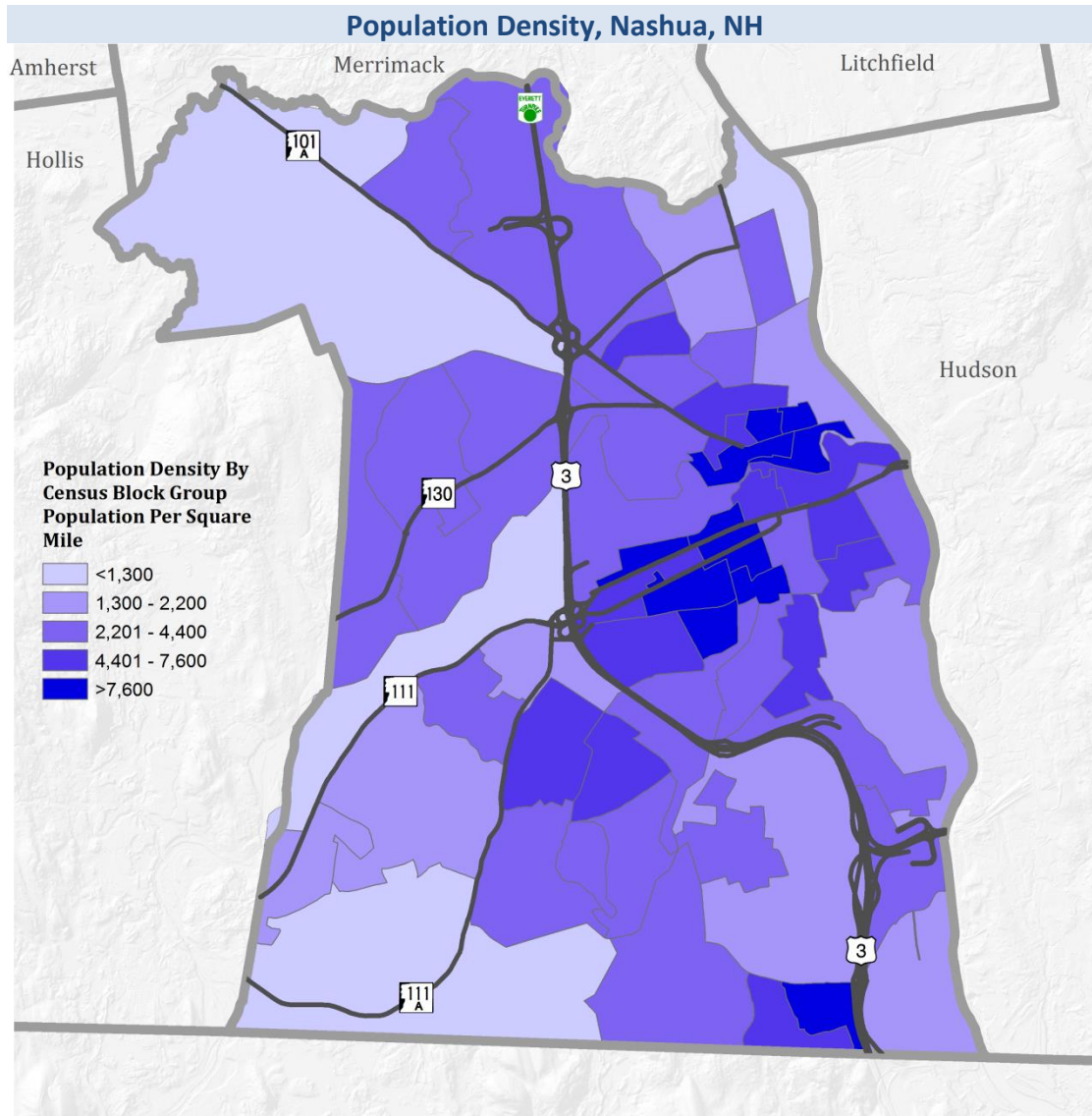
The summer market provided a consistent location for the 87,000 residents of Nashua to purchase fresh local foods and products. In the winter this option completely disappears. The central part of the city has limited access to quality fresh fruits and vegetables within walking distance for the many residents without access to a vehicle. Most neighborhood food store options consist of corner shops or restaurants in this area. The winter farmers' market would alleviate this problem and provide fresh and healthy food options within walking distance of the downtown neighborhoods and within the bus network for those living farther away. An estimated 9% of Nashua residents are also living below the poverty level. Again, much of this low income population is concentrated in the City's downtown neighborhoods. Low income residents benefit from the summer market's SNAP/EBT system with Granite State Market Match and would continue to benefit if the market was extended during winter.

Where do People Live?

About 75% of patrons surveyed are from Nashua. Additional patrons also come from the Towns of Hudson (8%) and Merrimack (4%). There was also a large percent of patrons that fell into the "other" category (14%), which means that many patrons travel to the Nashua market from other communities that do not neighbor Nashua such as Amherst, Andover, Bedford, Brookline, Derry, Hollis, Litchfield, Londonderry, Manchester, New Boston, and various communities in Massachusetts. There were occasional patrons from places far away such as Seattle, WA and the United Kingdom who were staying downtown.

Eighteen percent of the Nashua Summer Market's patrons travel less than a half mile to visit the market, with most travelling less than 5 blocks to get to the Nashua farmers' market during the summer, another 29% travel between a half mile and 3 miles, 35% travel between 4 and 10 miles, and the remaining 12% travel over 10 miles to come to the market. The remaining 6% of customers were already downtown. Driving was the most common form of transportation, used by approximately 70% of patrons to get to the market, followed by 22% of patrons that walk and 5% that bicycle.

Naturally, the population is the densest in the city center, which includes Main Street and the Tree Streets and French Hill neighborhoods. These neighborhoods have more than 7,600 residents per square mile. Locating the winter market in this area would be beneficial given the large number of people that live within easy walking distance. Much of the summer markets patronage comes from its visibility within the community. Centrally locating the winter market would continue to attract walking traffic and attention whereas other locations would miss out on these opportunities.

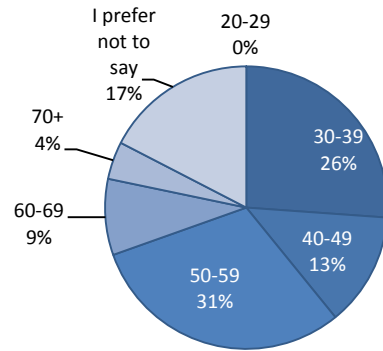


Source: ACS 2015, Map Created by NRPC

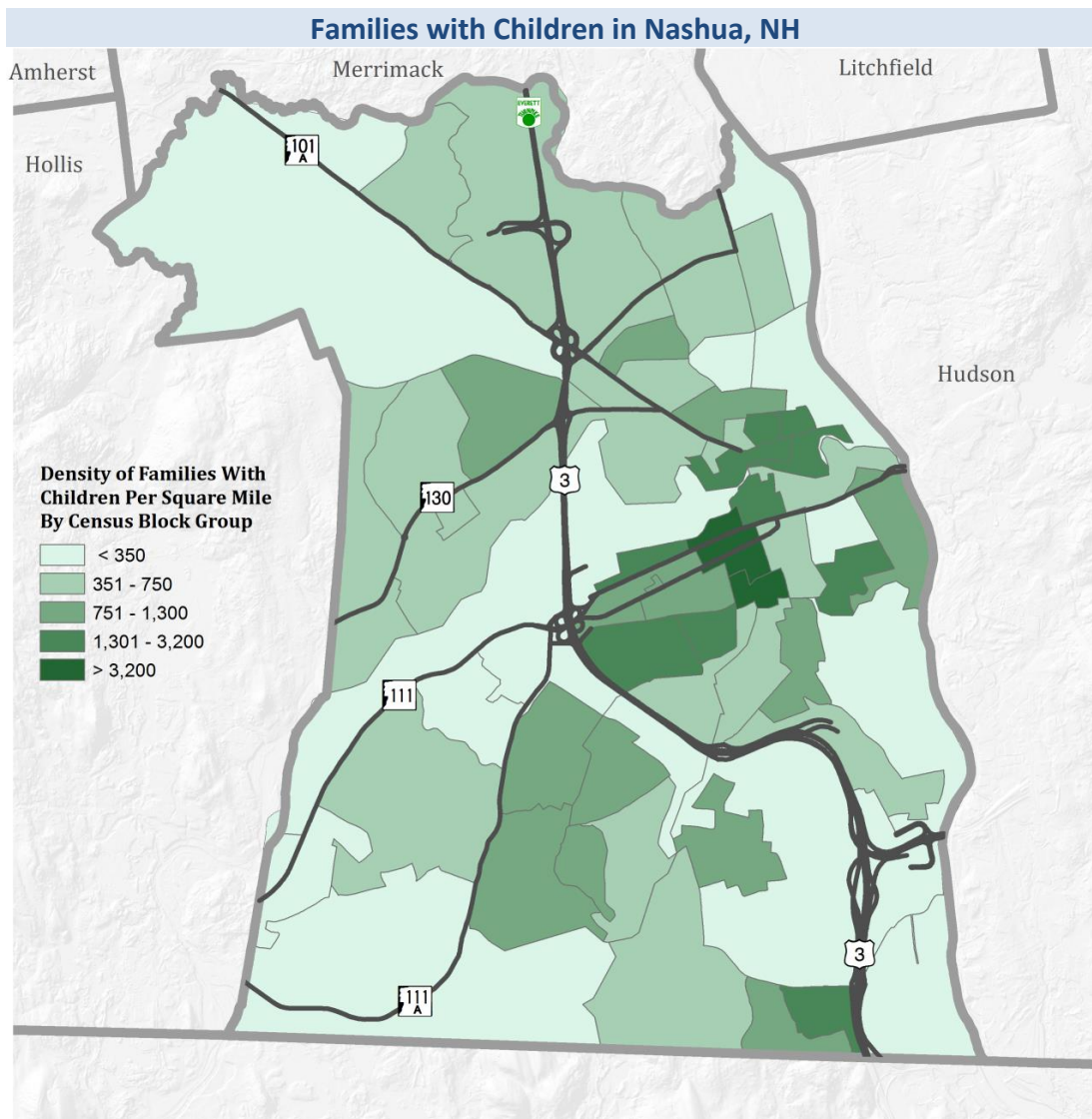
Population by Age and Presence of Children

The Nashua Farmers' market age profile is relatively consistent with others in New Hampshire. The average age of market patrons in Rockingham and Strafford Counties was 45.7 years and 85% of respondents were between 26 and 65 (Jewel McKenzie et al., 2013a). Nashua market customers surveyed were predominantly between 30 and 59 years old, representing 70% of shoppers. Farmers' markets are typically considered to be family environments and many patrons brought their children with them to the Nashua market. Given the high proportion of families with children surrounding downtown, locating the winter market in downtown would encourage families that come to the summer market to come to the winter market as well.

Age of Nashua Market Shoppers



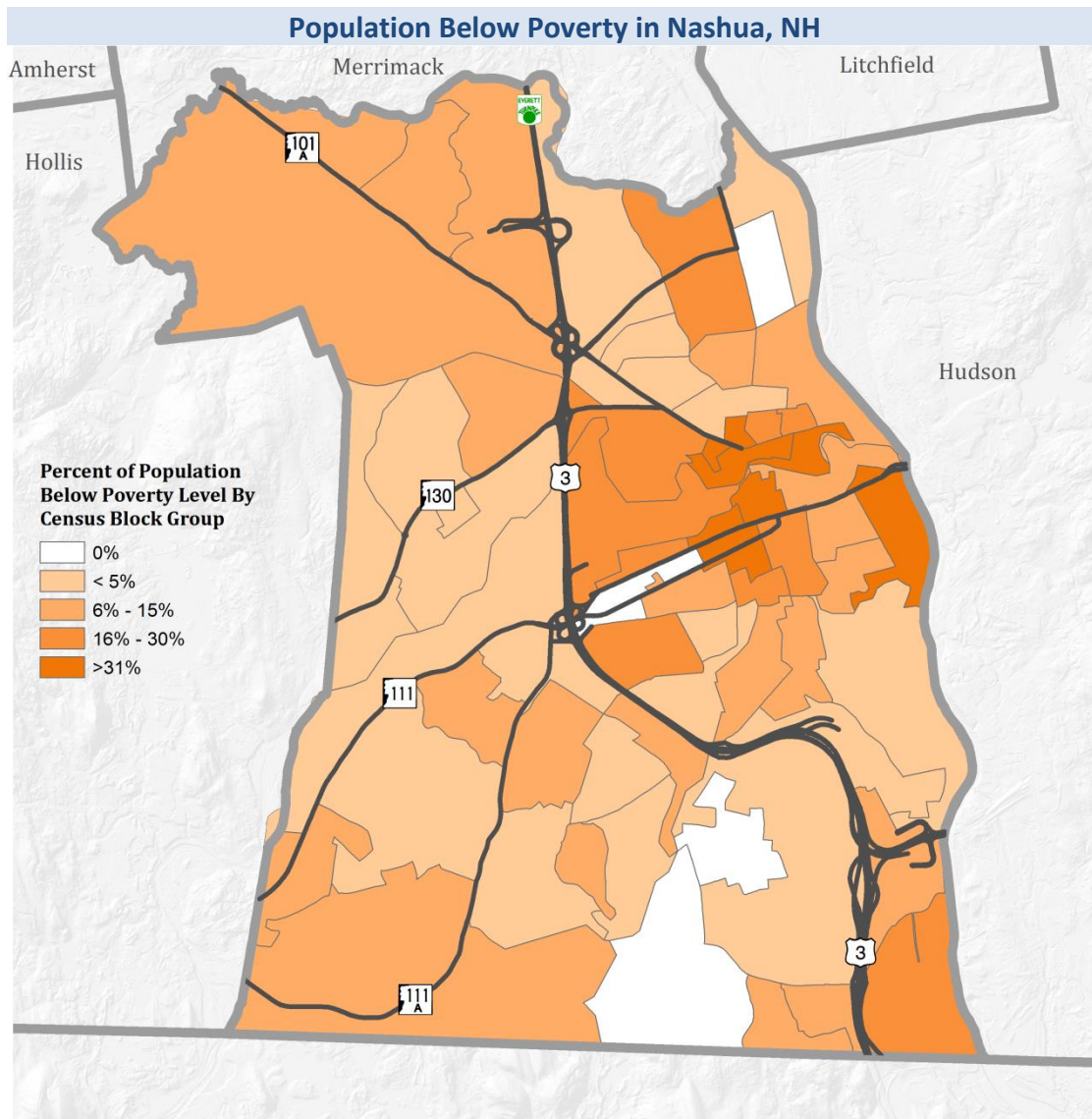
Source: NRPC Surveys



Source: ACS 2014, Map Created by NRPC

Income

The City's highest rates of poverty are mostly clustered around the downtown. This also coincides with the food desert locations. Because of this, it is important to have affordable options at a future winter market such as continuance of the existing summer SNAP/EBT system to accommodate patrons of all income levels.



Source: ACS 2014, Map Created by NRPC

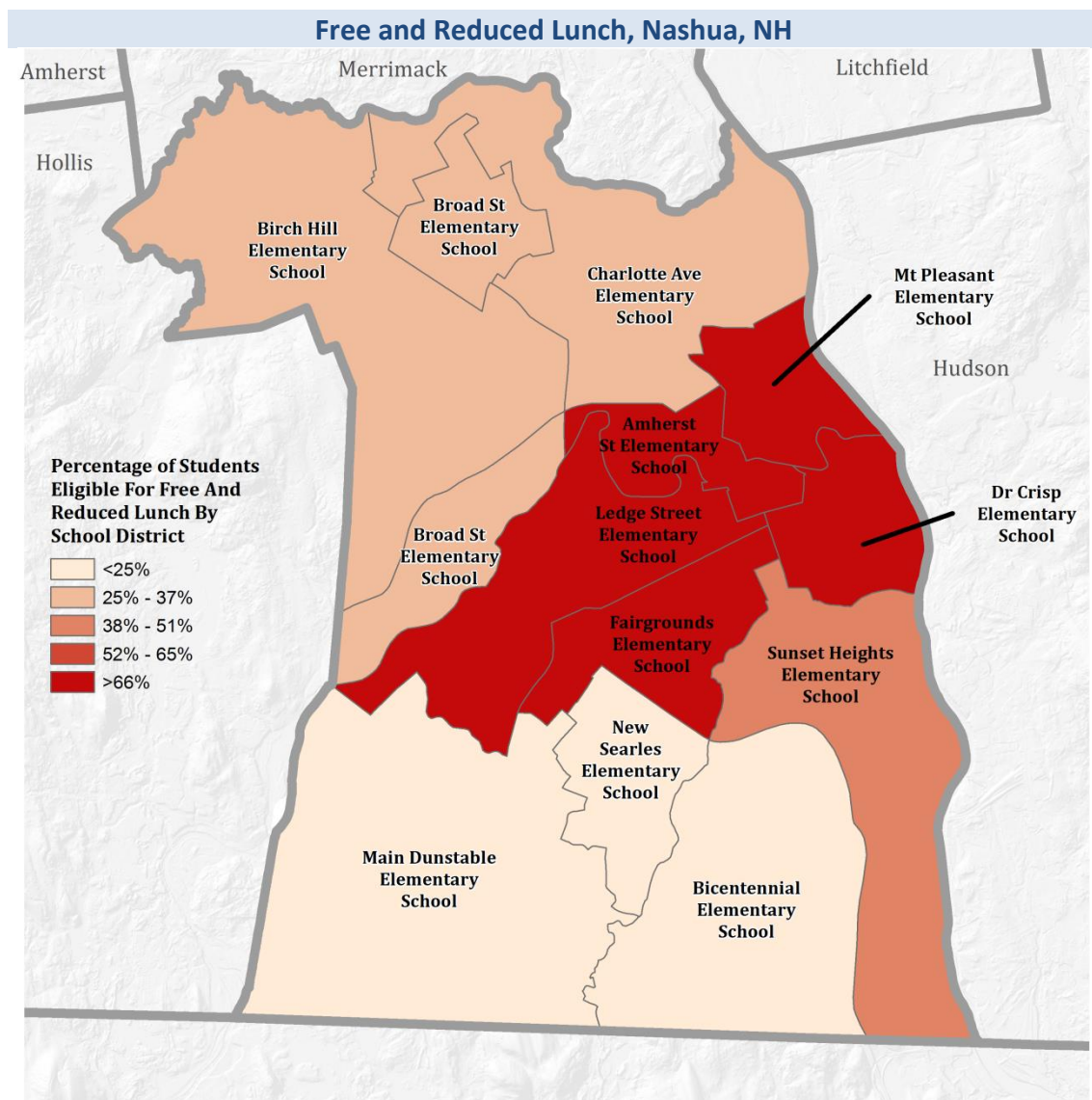
Income as measured as both household and per capita medians are lower in Nashua compared to other communities in the NRPC region. While consumers at the Nashua Market were not surveyed to determine the income levels of customers, the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension surveyed customers at markets in nearby Rockingham and Strafford Counties. The greatest share of customers, 28.6%, had a household income of over \$100,000. Approximately 25% earned from \$50,001-\$75,000 a year, 18.6% \$75,001 to \$100,000 and another 18.6% between \$25,001 and \$50,000. Fewer than nine percent earned less than \$25,000. Looking to the Nashua neighborhoods beyond the

walkable downtown, income levels increase as you move outward. Surrounding communities have median income levels well into these upper income ranges that tend to generate market shoppers.

Median Household, Family and Per Capita Income, 2000 and 2014

Community	Household Income		Family Income		Per-Capita Income	
	2000	2014	2000	2014	2000	2014
Amherst	\$89,384	\$115,898	\$97,913	\$123,354	\$35,531	\$47,881
Hollis	\$92,847	\$107,333	\$104,737	\$124,318	\$44,936	\$57,523
Hudson	\$64,169	\$84,448	\$71,313	\$95,139	\$25,696	\$32,157
Litchfield	\$73,702	\$96,071	\$76,931	\$105,093	\$25,203	\$33,487
Merrimack	\$68,817	\$91,429	\$72,011	\$104,357	\$27,748	\$36,574
Nashua	\$51,969	\$66,818	\$61,102	\$80,793	\$25,209	\$33,200
State	\$49,467	\$65,986	\$57,575	\$80,812	\$23,844	\$31,422

Sources: 2000 and 2010 US Census, 2000-2014 American Community Survey



Students that are eligible for free and reduced lunch directly correlate with populations in poverty. The figure below shows that higher percentages of students that are eligible for free and reduced lunch are concentrated in the census tracts in central Nashua around the downtown. Families with children and populations in poverty all cluster around the downtown for resources, so it makes sense that there is overlap between the two categories.

Race and Ethnicity

About 79% of Nashua's population is White, followed by 10% Hispanic, 7% Asian/Pacific Islander and 2% Black. Native American and other races make up the remaining one percent. 4.9% of the city's population has limited English proficiency with Spanish as their first language. The table below depicts City's race, ethnicity, national origin, and family type. There is an opportunity to recruit vendors and product options to a winter market that appeal to the City's diverse citizenry and potential customers.

Demographics of Nashua, NH

Race/Ethnicity	#	%
White, Non-Hispanic	68,309	78.98
Black, Non-Hispanic	1,954	2.26
Hispanic	8,510	9.84
Asian or Pacific Islander, Non-Hispanic	5,618	6.50
Native American, Non-Hispanic	167	0.19
Other, Non-Hispanic	452	0.52
National Origin	Country	
#1 country of origin	India	2,358
#2 country of origin	Dominican Republic	1,034
#3 country of origin	Mexico	885
#4 country of origin	Canada	742
#5 country of origin	Brazil	698
#6 country of origin	Colombia	619
#7 country of origin	China excl. Hong Kong & Taiwan	580
#8 country of origin	Vietnam	277
#9 country of origin	El Salvador	232
#10 country of origin	Korea	179
Family Type	#	%
Families with children	10,071	46.04
All % represent a share of the total population within the jurisdiction or region, except family type, which is % of total families.		
<i>Sources: HUD AFFH Tool Table 1, Decennial Census; ACS, Refer to the Data Documentation for details www.hudexchange.info</i>		

Education Level

The City of Nashua has a large percentage of population that continued education after receiving a high school diploma. Compared to the state, Nashua has a higher percentage overall of population with advanced schooling (schooling after high school). For farmers' markets in the seacoast area, 82% of the customers surveyed had a college education or higher (Jewel McKenzie et al., 2013a).

Highest Level of Educational Attainment of Population over Age 25, 2010-2014

Education Level	Nashua		Region		State of NH	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<9 th Grade	3,102	5.2	2,552	1.8	23,895	2.6
9 th – 12 th Grade (No Diploma)	3,580	6.0	4,820	3.4	49,628	5.4
High School graduate	14,975	25.1	36,148	25.5	267,439	29.1
Some College (No Degree)	11,455	19.2	24,949	17.6	173,697	18.9
Associates Degree	5,608	9.4	13,892	9.8	87,267	9.6
Bachelor's Degree	13,007	21.8	37,423	26.4	197,592	21.5
Graduate or Professional Degree	7,876	13.2	21,972	15.5	117,636	12.8

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey

Traffic Volumes

Higher traffic volumes can have a positive effect on a market potentially creating higher demand through increased exposure. However, high traffic volumes also can pose a greater safety risk. If a market is located on a busier road, it is important to consider pedestrian safety for all customers ranging from families with children to seniors. Ideal sites will have visible crosswalks and ample sidewalk space for pedestrian access. Greatest traffic volume roads are clustered around downtown and the major state routes that pass through the City.

Highest volume streets in Nashua the Nashua Downtown include:

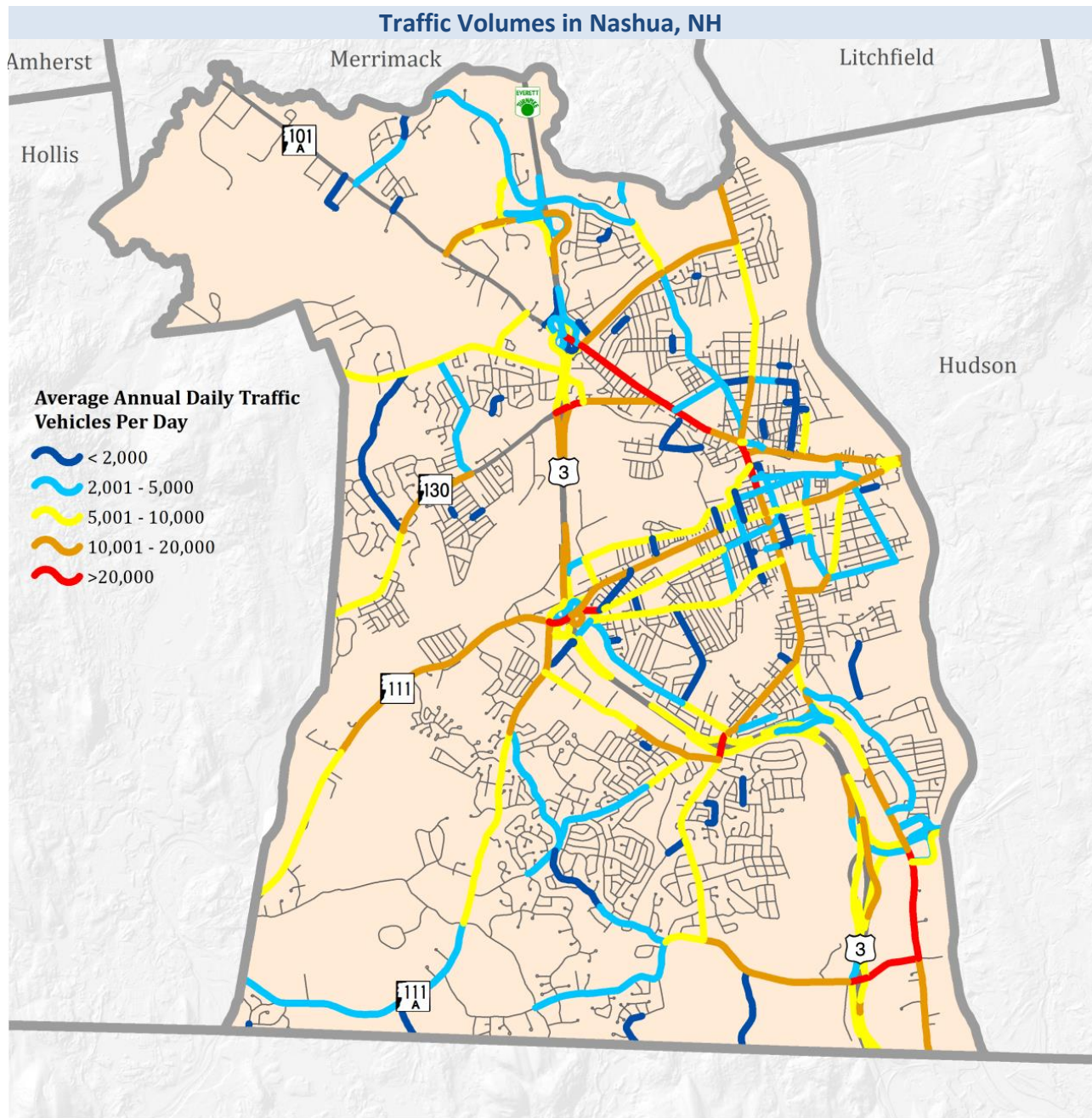
- Main Street – 10,001 to 20,000 vehicles per day
- East and West Hollis Street – 5,001 to 10,000 vehicles per day
- Water Street – 5,001 to 10,00 vehicles per day

Beyond Downtown traffic volumes are even greater:

- Daniel Webster Highway – greater than 20,000 vehicles per day
- State Route 101A (eastern segments) – greater than 20,000 vehicles per day
- State Route 111 – 10,001 to 20,000 vehicles per day



Source: NH DOT, Map Created by NRPC

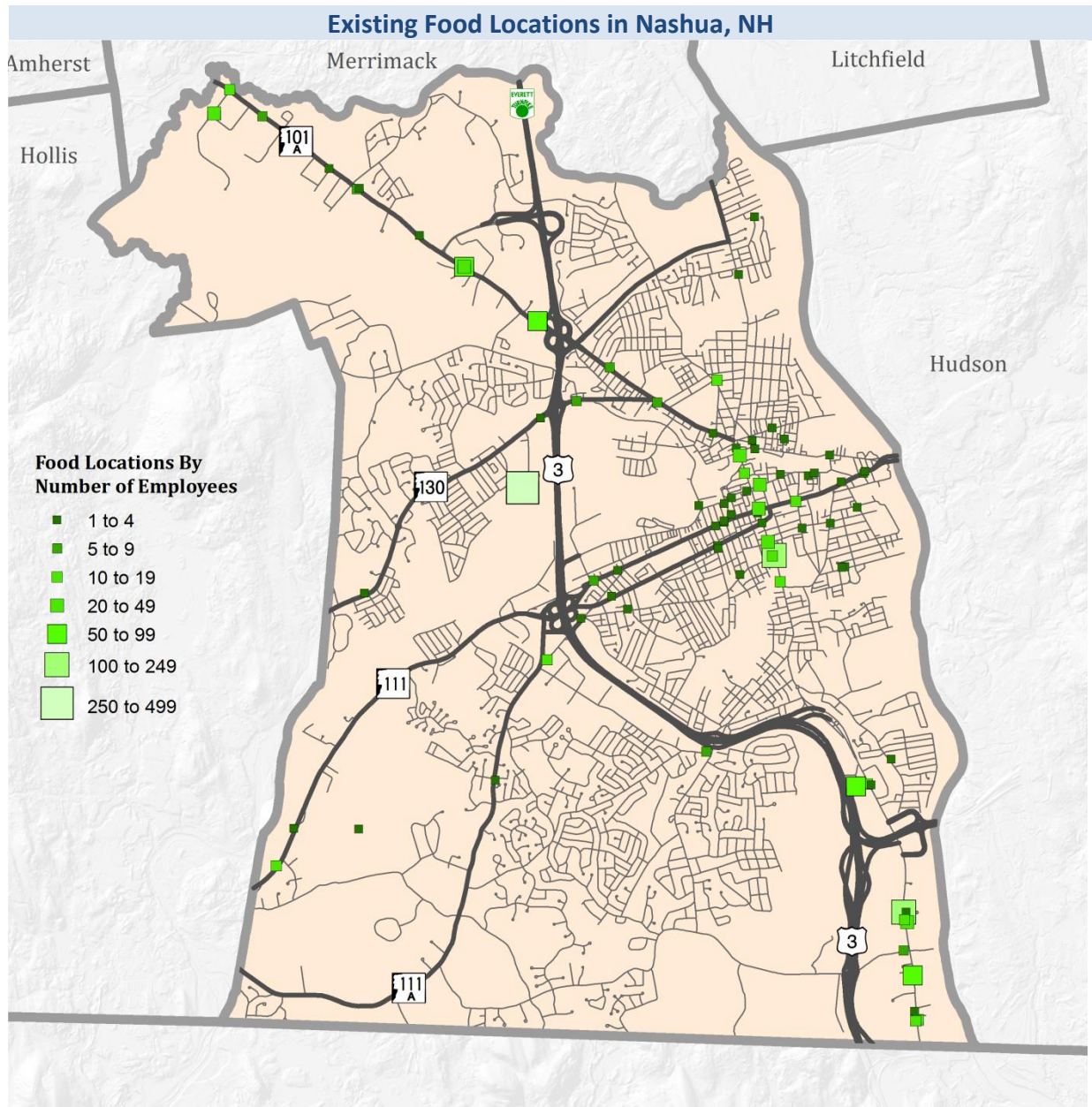


Source: NH DOT, Map Created by NRPC

Existing Food Locations

The University of New Hampshire has mapped existing food locations in Nashua categorized by number of employees at each site. Food locations include all establishments ranging from large super markets to small convenience stores. Typically, locations with fewer employees are smaller stores while locations with more employees are larger grocery stores. It should be noted that smaller shops do not necessarily have produce, and often times are convenience stores with items like soda and candy. Nashua's food locations are clustered in the downtown area and along major routes such as 101A and exits off the F.E.

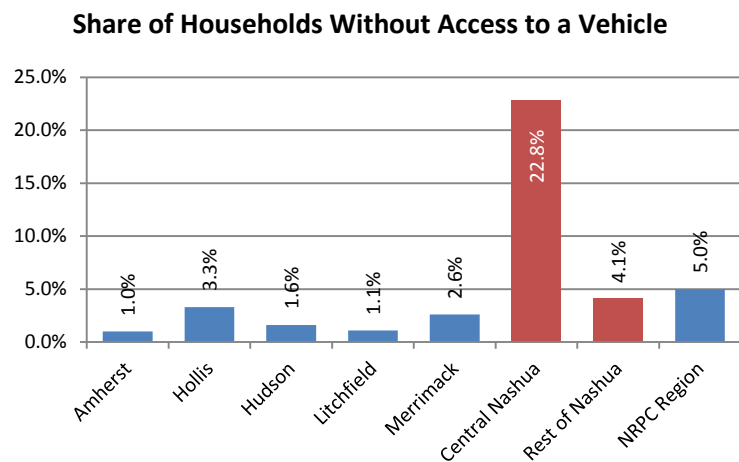
Everett Turnpike. This creates pockets of lower food access less densely populated areas of the city and areas further from major roadways.



Source: Sally Wall (UNH), Map Created by NRPC

Vehicle Availability and Transit

Central Nashua has the highest percentage of households in the region that do not have access to a vehicle. During the 2016 summer farmers' market, 22% of patrons surveyed walked to the market. When planning a winter market, it is essential to choose a location that is accessible to patrons via walking or public transportation. This would provide healthy food options to people who can't necessarily access a grocery store due to the inability to drive or lack of vehicle access.



Source: American Community Survey

Food Deserts

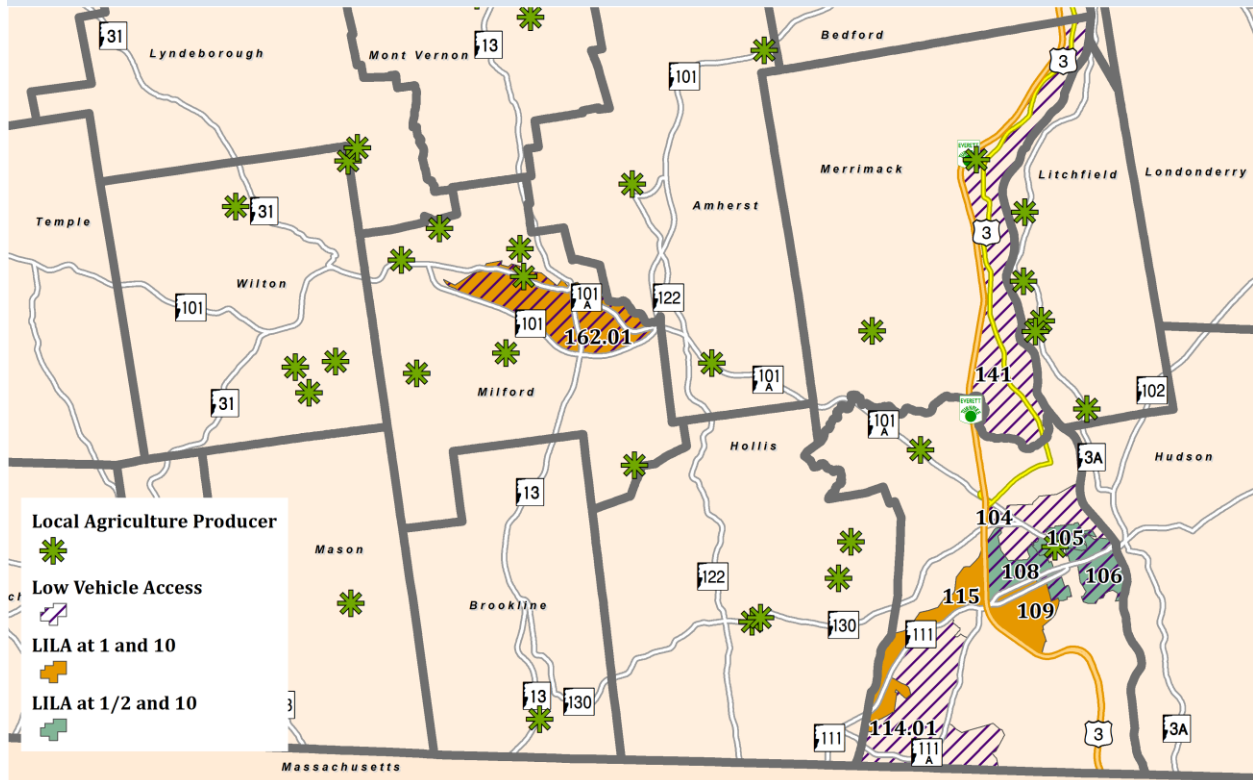
Food deserts are locations where the population is low income, has low food access and low vehicle availability. In Nashua, food deserts in the central part of the city around the downtown. More specifically, Census tracts 105, 106, 108 and 109 are all classified as food deserts. These are the downtown and tree street neighborhoods. These are the locations that are in most need of the farmers' market. The summer market is located in census tract 107, which is right in the middle of the food deserts. Holding the winter market in a centralized area for these neighborhoods in need should be a primary goal when establishing a venue.

Areas of Low Food Access in the Nashua Region, 2015

Census Tract	Total Population	Low Income, Low Access % of Population		Low Access % of Population		Low Vehicle & Food Access % of Population	
		@ ½ mile	@ 1 mile	@ ½ mile	@ 1 mile	@ ½ mile	@ 1 mile
105	3,903	55%	7%	99%	11%	13%	3%
106	5,560	40%	-	84%	-	11%	-
108	7,583	27%	-	40%	-	11%	-
109	6,183	25%	10%	82%	36%	3%	-
115	2,430	27%	24%	96%	89%	9%	8%
162.01	7,017	26%	17%	93%	72%	5%	4%

Source: USDA Food Atlas, US Census

Areas of Low Food Access in Nashua and Milford in 2015



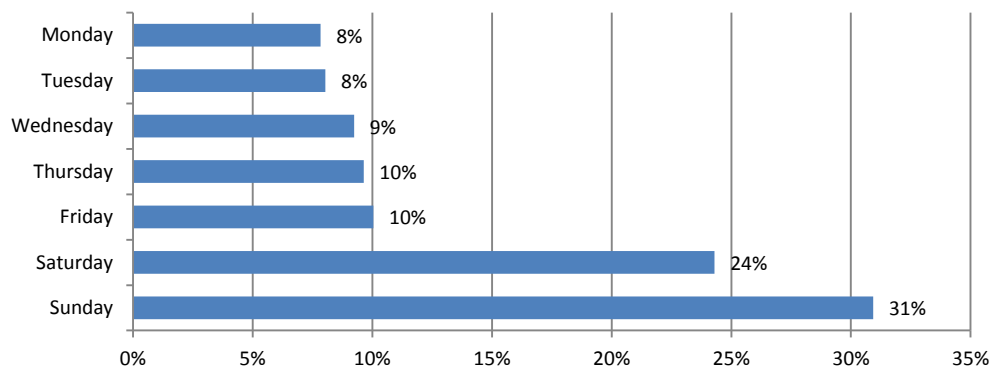
Source: 2015 USDA Food Atlas, NRPC GIS, US Census

Customer Interest

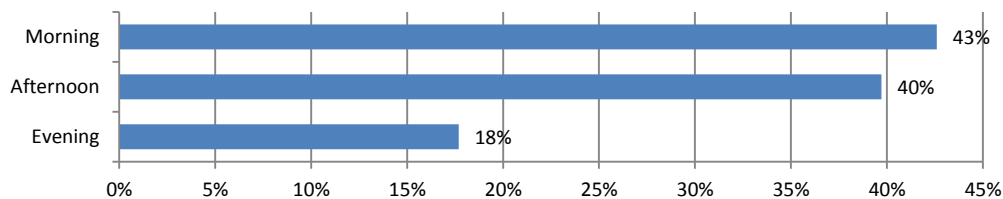
A winter farmers' market in Nashua was of great interest to customers surveyed over the 2016 summer season, with over 95% of responses in favor. Patrons were most interested in being able to purchase fresh vegetables at a winter market. Nashua Farmers Market customers are drawn to the local fresh produce and vegetables in summer as an alternative to grocery stores. Respondents also said that the fruits and vegetables at the farmers' market were fresher than those found in grocery stores, and were in favor of supporting local farmers when given the opportunity.

Customer Preferences (% of patrons)

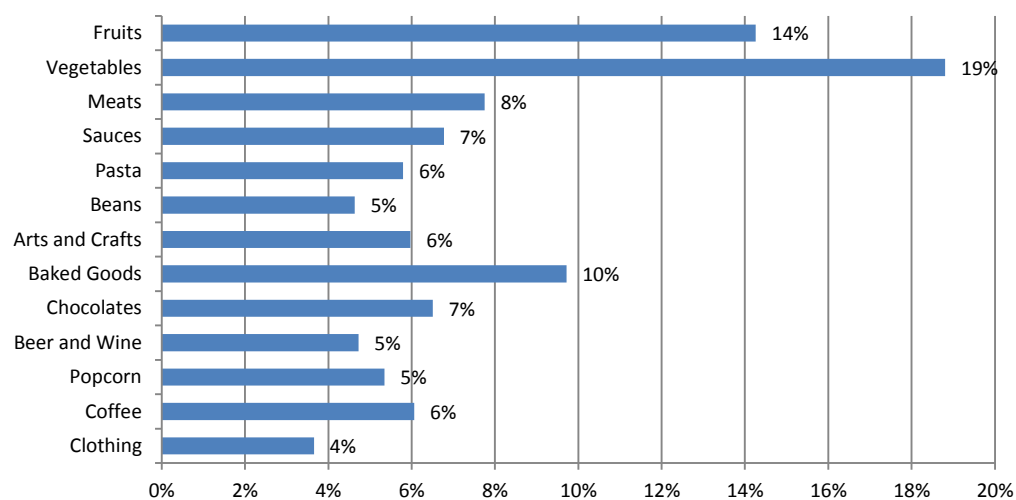
Market Days



Market Times



Desired Products

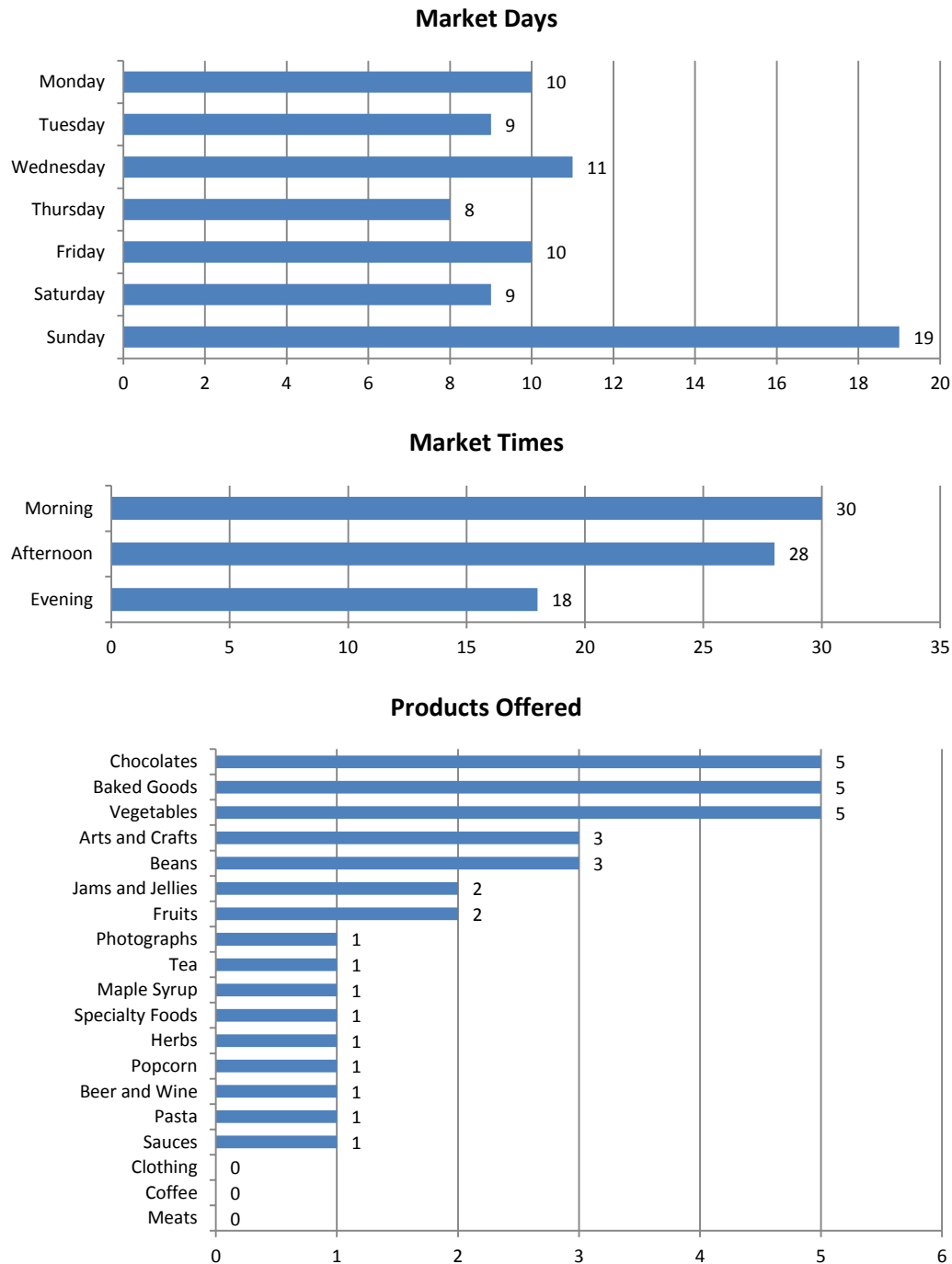


Source: NRPC Survey Data collected at the Nashua Farmers Market, Summer 2016

Vendor Interest

Of the surveyed vendors, 78% would participate in a winter market. Vendors preferred Sunday mornings or afternoons and weekday nights for market times. Top items vendors would be willing to sell at a winter market include vegetables, baked goods, chocolates, beans, and arts and crafted goods.

Vendor Preferences (# of vendors)



Source: NRPC Survey Data collected at the Nashua Farmers Market, Summer 2016

Precedents and Examples of Success

Farmers' markets are very popular in the state of New Hampshire, with most communities hosting summer markets. Bedford, Concord, Groton (MA), Lowell (MA), Manchester, Merrimack, Milford, and Salem all either border or are in close vicinity to Nashua with competing summer markets. Winter markets are starting to grow in popularity, and more towns are trying to find ways to incorporate them. Concord, Hopkinton, Merrimack, Milford, Salem, and the YMCA of Greater Nashua all successfully host winter markets annually.

Winter Farmers' Market at Cole Gardens

There are a wide variety of vendors and products at the Winter Farmers' Market at Cole Gardens including fruits, vegetables, bakery items, teas, mustards, herbs, seasonal flowers and baskets, breads, beef products, dairy products, olive oils and balsamic vinegars, natural foods and produce (Co-op), pet treats, coffees, granolas, goat milk cheeses and soaps, garlic, maple products, chocolates, mushrooms, chutneys, skincare products (soap, lotion, cream, spray, lip balm), guacamole, popcorn, pork products, herbs and medicinal items, non-dairy ice cream, baked goods, seafood, pastries, CSA, soups, goat meat and fiber, and organic foods.



Location and Facility

Concord's winter market is co-located at Cole Gardens at 420 Loudon Road, utilizing greenhouse space vacant in the winter months.

Operations

The winter market operates from the months of November to April from 10:00am to 2:00pm on Saturdays. The market partners with the Merrimack County Conservation Commission (MCCC) who hosts a booth on site where customers using SNAP/EBT, credit, or debit cards receive wooden tokens to use at the vendor. MCCC also offers Granite State Market Match in conjunction with the SNAP/EBT token program doubling SNAP dollars.

For More Information

For more information about the winter market in Concord, call (603) 229-0655, emailcharlie@colegardens.com or visit <http://www.concordwintermarket.com/>.

Contoocook Farmers' Market

At the Contoocook winter farmers' market you can find fruits, vegetables, flowers, plants, maple products, baked goods, meats, eggs, jams, soaps, alpaca products, mushrooms, beer, granola, seedlings, honey, crafts, music, and live demos.



Location and Facility

The winter farmers' market operates out of the Hopkinton Town Hall using the meeting room space at the entrance. There are some tables and benches available to use for the market, but vendors can bring their own tables and seating as well. The facility has on-street parking, is heated and has public restrooms available.

Operations

The market runs November through May, 9:00am to 12:00pm on Saturdays. Vendors are charged \$10.00 per week up to a maximum of \$100.00 per season. The market pays the town \$15.00 for the use of Town Hall per market, and \$25.00 per market when heat is used. The market has a part time volunteer manager.

Lessons Learned: Success Factors and Challenges

Finding the right venue for the Contoocook market was a challenge in the beginning. The first year of the market was held in an unheated barn, and yielded few patrons. Once the market was moved to town hall where there was heat it has thrived. Weather can pose a challenge as well during the winter because of dangerous driving conditions and plowing schedules.

The representative of the Contoocook market said that having a wide variety of vendors and products has been a key to their success. Also having vendors that can provide vegetables during the winter months have proven very desirable to patrons.

For More Information

For more information about the Contoocook winter market, call (603)746-3749, email tookymarket@live.com or visit www.facebook.com/contoocookfarmersmarket.

Merrimack Winter Farmers' Market

The Merrimack winter market features fruits, vegetables, flowers/plants, maple products, baked goods, meat products, honey, wines, prepared foods, jams/jellies, popcorn, mustards, coffees, and dog treats.



Location and Facility

The Merrimack winter market is located on 4 Church Street in the John O'Leary Adult Community Center

Operations

The winter market operates for the months of December through May from 3:00pm to 6:00pm on Thursdays. There are typically about 15 to 20 vendors signed up for each market.

For More Information

For more information on the Merrimack winter market call (603) 235-6232, email minerfamilyfarm@yahoo.com or visit www.facebook.com/pages/Merrimack-FarmersMarket/103790809715271.

Milford Farmers' Market

The Milford Winter Farmers' features fruits, vegetables, dairy products, maple products, baked goods, meat products, fish, infused oils, balsamic vinegars, soups/chowders/chili, spices, baking mixes, jams/jellies, honey, coffees, goat milk soaps/lotions, eggs, cheese, gluten free items and live music at every market.



Location and Facility

Milford hosts its winter farmers' market in the Milford Town Hall located at 1 Union Square. The market operates in the third floor Auditorium. Parking is available on street around the Milford Oval and in a lot behind Town Hall. Restrooms are available to the public and the space is heated.

Operations

The market runs from November to April on the first and third Saturday of the month from 10:00am to 1:00pm. The market pays custodial fees to the town of Milford. For each market the vendors set up and break down their own booth. The vendors also vacuum and clean the auditorium and ensure it is returned to its pre-market day condition. This has worked very well without complaint from Town Hall or the vendors.

Lessons Learned: Success Factors and Challenges

There are between fifteen and twenty vendors at each market. The biggest keys to success for this market are diversity of products and promotion. The managers of the market avoid having duplicate product lines at each market. Additionally, managers try to limit the market size in order to maximize benefits for participating vendors. Customers typically arrive at the market with a total budget in mind as a result if there are too many vendors participating, there may not be enough foot traffic to generate adequate business for each. The managers promote the market weekly on Facebook and have established a large and growing email distribution list.

For More Information

For more information about the Milford winter market, call (603) 345-0860, email awcolsia@gmail.com or visit www.milfordnhfarmersmarket.com.

Salem Farmers' Market

Products at the Salem Farmers' Market include fruits, vegetables, dairy, maple, baked goods, meat products, honey, prepared foods, jams, jellies, chocolates, herbal teas and salves, balsamic vinegars and olive oils, granola, and crafts.

Location and Facility

During the winter the market is held at the Mary A. Fisk School at 14 Main Street. Summer months the market moves outdoors to Salem Market Place at 224 Broadway.



Operations

The Salem farmers' market operates year-round on Sundays from 10:00am to 2:00pm only switching locations with the seasons. The Salem Market publishes information for all vendors online including a participation checklist, vendor insurance requirements, and a policies and procedures guide. The market has a token system available for debit card customers and also accepts SNAP/EBT.

For More Information

For more information about the Salem farmers' market call (603) 339-8424, email SalemFarmersMarket@comcast.net or www.salemnhfarmersmarket.org.

HEAL NH - YMCA Greater Nashua



The YMCA winter market hosts a variety of vendors with diverse products, including honey and maple syrup, farm fresh meats and eggs, pet items, jams and jellies, handcrafted toys, pastries, hand-knit items, handcrafted home décor, soaps, ice cream, jewelry, doll clothes, face painting, and even a tarot card reader.

Location and Facility

The YMCA of greater Nashua has been hosting an annual winter farmers' market for the past three years. This past year it was held at the Merrimack YMCA branch in the preschool and school age childcare wings. Parking is provided on site in the YMCA parking lot and public restrooms are available. Overflow parking is available at the Gate City Charter School where vendors and staff are encouraged to park to allow for closer parking for patrons.

Operations

The markets are usually held in early spring usually one day in February or March. The staff has experimented with a few different time spans in the past. The first year ran from 8:00am to 12:00pm, but found that people still wanted to shop after noon and 8:00am to 9:00am was fairly quiet. The second year ran from 10:00am to 2:00pm, but staff found that it slowed down after 1:00pm. This past year staff decided to aim for the middle, operating 9:00am to 1:00pm, which worked out perfectly.

Vendor selection has also been important to this market. Having interactive vendors, such as the tarot card reader and face painter have proven to be good for kids. Having diverse vendors also ensures that there is something for everybody who comes to the market. Staff try not to have more than ten to fifteen vendors who consult for larger companies (Pampered Chef, Tastefully Simple, LulaRoe, etc.) so there is enough space to support local growers.

Vendors are charged \$40 each for a 10 foot wide by four foot deep space with a 6 foot table. If the vendors provide their own table they are only charged \$30. A \$5 fee is charged for electricity. YMCA employees staff the winter market.

Lessons Learned: Success Factors and Challenges

The YMCA event organizers noted that for all three markets there was always a vendor or two that wasn't happy with where their location in the market. To help with this staff make a vendor layout chart and ask that location requests be sent in ahead of time.

Success factors tied directly to advertising and communication. The YMCA made certain to maximize signage posted in the area and frequently communicated with vendors. Vendors liked having regular emails updates as the market approached. A Facebook event page helped with advertising and engagement. Raffles are a continuous hit and are a great way to fundraise. The vendors are usually very generous with their raffle donations. The market also provides hot food or other lunch options for purchase which draws families to the market. Having food available generally causes people to spend more time at the market as well because they will shop, stop and have some lunch and then do more shopping after eating. Staff found that having the event catered was easier than making the food themselves and still profitable as a fundraiser. A concerted advertising campaign was key to the market and vendors success and likelihood both vendors and customers would return in future years.

For More Information

For more information visit <http://healnh.org/index.php/newsroom/news/415-indoor-farmers-market-success> or email Briana Desfosses, School Age Child Care Site Director of the YMCA of Greater Nashua, at bdesfosses@nmymca.org.

Other Markets

Seacoast Eat Local

Another resource for winter farmers markets in NH is Seacoast Eat Local. This organization supports a number of winter markets in the seacoast area. For more information visit: <http://seacoateatlocal.org/find-local-food/our-winter-farmers-market/>

New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food

The New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food provides an in depth list of all the winter markets throughout the state on its website. This list can be found at <http://agriculture.nh.gov/publications-forms/documents/winter-farmers-markets.pdf>.

Recommendations for Market Startup and Operations

There are a few key factors to success when holding a farmers' market that have been highlighted throughout these case studies. The first is **advertising**. A lot of advertising in different areas will inform people of the market and lead to increased turnout. **Communication** is another key to success. Communication with vendors is essential in having a market run smoothly. **Variety in products and vendors** is also very important. Having a variety of products available at a market ensures that there is something for everyone. Having prepared food available is also helpful because people tend to stay longer when they can get something to eat and sit down at the market to eat it. Lastly, **venue** can make or break a market. A space that is easily accessible with on-site parking will draw more patrons to the market. In addition, for winter markets it is very important to use a heated venue. Like the summer market, the winter market will ideally run for four hours. Patrons and vendors significantly preferred Sundays in the morning and midday with Saturdays a close second.

Farmers' Markets America published ten characteristics of successful farmers' markets, including:

1. **Vendors:** Freshness and quality are key. Consumers want fresh local fruits, vegetables, and other local agricultural products. The market should provide a mix of vendors with high quality products. As the Nashua market surveys found, customers find the quality of produce better than area grocery stores.
2. **Product Mix:** Markets should include a wide variety of products effectively displayed. In addition to high quality, consumers are looking for choice and variety, but also convenience, they want to buy all their food at once. The addition of meats, cheeses, and breads and other goods expands the markets available choice. The Nashua summer market has found a good mix, adding meats in 2017, that should be retained during a winter market. Nashua customers have expressed interest in being able to buy vegetables, fruit, baked goods and meat at a winter market. When queried during the 2016 summer season there were vendors willing to participate and sell each of these with the exception of meats that were newly added in 2017.
3. **Location:** High visibility provides free advertising. While location alone is not sufficient, it is helpful. Helpful components of a good location include adequate space and parking, visibility on a high traffic volumes roadway, a place for signage, vendor access, restrooms, water and electricity, and proximity to other local destinations. As previously noted, Downtown Nashua provides a good mix of location essentials. Based on vendor and customer surveys in Nashua overwhelmingly all prefer a downtown location. More specific suggestions were to be on Main Street, and use vacant or available function space at a church, school, in the mill yard, or an empty shop front such as Alec's Shoes. Customers and vendors are all looking for a space that includes parking, a commercial kitchen, is handicap accessible. There was also interest expressed in the market being located on a bus route and/or in a walkable location.
4. **Mission:** What is the mission for the market? A strong focus on vendors is essential along with effective communication of market goals, policies and programs. The Nashua Market may want

to consider adding readily available vendor information as is provided at the Salem market. This will help ease the start up at a new market.

5. **Management:** Professionalism and organization yields sustainability for the market. This includes training opportunities for the market's staff, board and vendors. The addition of a winter market will increase demand on staff time. Great American Downtown may need to consider either adding a volunteer organization or increasing staffing to take on the winter market without spreading workloads too thin.
6. **Value:** Consumers communicate that they value quality and price through their purchases. Market managers and policy makers should value what customers value. The community in turn gains value from the markets success, local vendors bring revenue to the local economy and have the potential attract tourists. Market operators can invest in creating added value though helping with additional promotion, training, micro-enterprise development, and other efforts that aid market performance.
7. **Partnerships:** Relationships build stability. Strong markets are connected with their community and build relationships with business sponsors and local organizations. Expanding connections increases the ability to build the market's visibility. Great American Downtown has an existing community network that will help spread the word and bolster the potential for success.
8. **Promotion:** Special events and programs help build visibility and increase demand and supply. Entertainment and events can attract new customers and capture the attention of passerby's that might not otherwise stop. If done well, enhanced market promotion will increase demand and in turn support increasing the number and variety of vendors. Space for special programming similar to that included at the existing Summer market should be considered when selecting a site for the winter market.
9. **Economics:** A solid financial plan is essential. Vendor fees need to be adequate to balance expenses for salaries, insurance, promotional materials and any other essentials. While sponsorships, grants and other fundraising based revenue sources are beneficial, they are not sustainable. Reserve funds should be maintained to counteract downturns or to fund training and other expansion costs. Great American Downtown has had access to USDA Farmers Market Promotion Program grant funding for the 2016 and 2017 market season to help increase marketing efforts. While such grant funding might be available in the future to kick off a winter market, it shouldn't be a primary source of funds.
10. **Public Spaces:** Vibrant markets and public spaces are mutually beneficial to one another. An active market can help activate a public space and vice versa. Markets have the ability to help with community building initiatives and creating people friendly places. As noted with the location, downtown has several public spaces that contribute the summer market , similar would be ideal for a winter market.

Winter Market Location and Space Needs Programming

Great American Downtown has expressed interest in operating the Winter Market serving the City Nashua. This is a natural extension of their existing summer market operations. While their programming area is limited to downtown, customers and vendors have expressed a preference for a downtown location. Beyond finding a downtown space, there are a few other considerations to determine whether the space will suit the needs of the market.

Expected Number of Vendors and Customers

For the winter market the ideal minimum is to have 10 to 15 vendors, with the ability to expand if demand supports it. On a nice day the summer market has about 600 to 700 visitors. The winter market could see fewer patrons because of colder weather and less pedestrian activity. Conversely, about 95% of patrons surveyed said that they would be interested in shopping at a winter market. A convenient and heated location in downtown Nashua would encourage these interested respondents to come pay the winter market a visit.

Building Space Needs

Each vendor requires about 36 to 48 square feet. If there are 15 vendors, the market will require a minimum of 540 to 750 square feet total, plus added space for circulation. Additional space (50-100 square feet), while not required, would be desirable for special events and musical performances.

Expansion Capabilities

In selecting a location for the winter market, it is important to consider future market growth and expansion. The building area should be able to accommodate market expansion if the number of vendors increases. Larger markets can have well over 20 vendors. Three markets surveyed in the Rockingham and Strafford Counties had between 26 and 40 vendors (Jewel McKenzie et al., 2013b). For some existing markets where space is limited and vendors increase, such as the Concord Farmers' Market, management has had to shift to a rotating schedule of vendors and publicize weekly list online because vendors can not all fit in the space at once.

Site Access

Whether customers can easily access the market location is essential to success. While most summer market customers drove downtown to attend the market, many walk to the market or would like to take the bus. Sidewalks and safe pedestrian routes become even more important during winter months. Attention should be paid to whether sidewalks and walkways are plowed and potential for icy conditions. Visitors need to be able to safely access the site whether traveling on foot from their parked car, the bus stop or directly from their home.

ADA Accessibility

ADA accessibility is also a requirement for the winter market venue. Great American Downtown wants to ensure that the Nashua Farmer's Market and Nashua Winter Farmers' Market will be accessible to people of all ages and abilities. This includes ensuring dedicated parking spaces, clear access ways both outside and inside the market, curb cuts onto sidewalks, and snowbank free passages.

Sustainability

Continual consumer marketing is essential to success and growth. The winter market will need to be advertised via multiple platforms to raise awareness and attract patrons. Working to expand local vendors to increase variety and bring additional farms and products to the market will also aid in recruiting new customers. Most importantly, the winter market should continue to provide payment options for SNAP/EBT customers.

Related to green sustainability practices, locating a market in the downtown will not only be the best for attracting customers but it will be the most environmentally friendly option as well. Downtown Nashua is accessible by public city transit and provides pedestrian infrastructure. About 75% of surveyed patrons reside in Nashua and 22% of surveyed patrons walked to the summer market.

Redevelopment and Rehabilitation Potential

It is most cost effective to co-locate the winter market within an existing facility. That said, the facility should ideally be ready to occupy. As the market is a seasonal use with a limited schedule, renovations and redevelopment would require resources beyond those that the market could generate. However, the potential to partner with another entity or initiative undertaking rehabilitation of an existing structure provides both a larger community development benefit and increased visibility for the market.

Transit Availability

Similar to the summer market, the goal is to make the winter market accessible by multiple modes of transportation, such as public transit, bike paths, and by walking. The location for the winter market should fall into the Nashua Public Transit Authority's (NTS) service area. NTS offers fixed route bus services as well as paratransit services via City Lift. NTS also contracts with the Souhegan Valley Transportation Collaborative, which provides demand response bus or shuttle services. In addition, multiple taxi companies service the greater Nashua area and there are several bicycle and pedestrian trails through downtown Nashua.

Parking and Traffic

Winter conditions are likely to result in more customers using their cars and driving to the market. Having sufficient parking is critical for the winter market. A venue that has free on-site parking is ideal. All 20 markets surveyed in the Rockingham and Strafford counties provided free parking (Jewel McKenzie et al., 2013b). If the parking lot is small, narrow or on a busy street, a parking attendant may be needed to direct traffic and improve circulation. Cars should also be able to pull in and out of the parking lot safely. Street parking and local garages are also acceptable forms of parking as long as they are close to the venue. In addition, the winter market should be located on a street that has the capacity to handle increased traffic for the market without becoming too congested.

Image and Visibility

Visibility is important for the winter market because 12.5% of patrons found out about the summer market by driving, cycling, or walking by it on Main Street. High traffic and pedestrian volumes in the downtown create highly visible market locations. It is also important to choose a location that leaves a positive impression on consumers, especially those who want to bring their children. For example, a

space that is well-lit, maintained, and in a safe neighborhood will appeal more to potential patrons than a space that is dark, run down or hard to access, and neighbored by blighted buildings or high crime areas. For markets in the seacoast region, many customers (about 22.6%) learned of farmers' markets by road signs (Jewel McKenzie et al., 2013a). The Nashua winter market operator should consider increasing visibility with road signs as done for the summer market.

Availability of Utilities and Telecommunications

Heat and public bathrooms are essential. This includes the availability of water for hand washing. Some vendors may wish to have access to electrical outlets for refrigeration or onsite food preparation. A commercial kitchen is highly desirable for more elaborate food preparation and special events.

Site Evaluation – 14 Court Street

There is an opportunity for a winter market venue at 14 Court Street in downtown Nashua. The site is a former fire station, a portion of which is currently being used as a community movie theater.



Source: NRPC Live Maps, NRPC Photos

The building is owned by the City of Nashua. The apparatus bay on the first floor, approximately 3,300 square feet, is vacant and would be a good space for an indoor market. The bays connect on the same level with the lobby for the theater. Above the apparatus bay are the Peacock Players and other theater groups, as well as a voice lesson studio's rehearsal spaces and offices. Underneath the theater space are additional offices including those for the symphony. Also in the building is a small ballet practice studio.

The fire bay space needs to be renovated in order to be in code compliance for occupancy or a winter market. Great American Downtown is in the process of exploring potential renovations to 14 Court Street in conjunction with the City's Economic Development Department. GAD is also working on pro forma for programming the firehouse portion for music/event venue based upon a diverse line up of uses to sustain the space. The renovations to the market space will be completed in stages. The first stage will be the immediate HVAC improvements that need to be done in order to satisfy building code requirements. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds have been set aside for this project (\$47,463), but it won't be completed before the 2017-2018 winter season.

The second stage will be the addition of air conditioning. This will be general building improvement as air conditioning is not required by code, and will occur likely a year after HVAC work if there is an expansion of building usage beyond the winter market. The third stage will be additional work to improve the building further and is not required by code. 14 Court Street is eligible for the state historical registry, and the City has requested \$20,000 from Division of Historical Resources to replace the entryway fenestration and the old fire apparatus bay doors. A Moose Plate Grant application was also submitted in April 2017; however the decision date is uncertain.

Site Evaluation Matrix – 14 Court Street, Nashua, NH

Programming Needs	
Building and Site Area	
What is the total available floor area?	Approximately 3,300 sf
Do local codes, land use regulations and zoning allow a farmer's market?	Yes
Is there parking available?	Yes
Are there handwashing sinks or more preferably public restrooms?	Common restrooms for theater & fire bays
Is the space heated?	Yes
Is the site privately or publicly owned?	Owned by the City
Is the site highly visible?	Yes
Is Wi-Fi/Internet service available?	Yes
Is there a commercial kitchen?	No
Is there room for expansion?	Yes, the space is oversized
Is any rehabilitation/redevelopment needed?	Yes
Is the site accessible via public transit?	Yes
Are there alternative modes of transportation?	Yes – bus and bike/pedestrian
Is the site ADA compliant?	Yes – including restrooms accessible to firehouse space
Operations	
Will an occupancy agreement be necessary?	Lease - \$1
Is the site available for the desired market time?	TBD

Required Permits	
Is a site plan review required?	Yes – change of use requires a site plan. May potentially qualify as expedited administrative review only.
Is the location in compliance with Nashua’s Land Use Codes?	In need of renovations to comply
Will a building permit be required?	Yes
Will a fire permit be required?	Assembly
Will a Hawker’s and Peddler’s License be required?	Yes
Project Costs	
What are the operation costs (constant)?	Permit fees may be waived by City Ordinance
What are the rental or other site specific costs?	TBD
What are the site/facility preparation costs (construction, demolition, rehab, renovation)?	See narrative above
What are the maintenance costs?	Lease Agreement Tenant responsible for improvements, City responsible for code compliance & building shell
What are the utility costs?	Covered in lease agreement
What are the Insurance costs?	GAD responsible for all insurance, may need additional insurance for events
What are the Vendor fees required to offset costs?	TBD
Overall Mission and Feasibility	
Access provided for low income low food access neighborhoods?	Yes
What is the overall feasibility?	feasible

Local Building and Health Codes, Land Use Regulations and Zoning

Permit Process for Farmer's Market Operators

The following series of permits will need to be obtained by the operator of the Winter Farmers Market. Permits may need to be obtained from the City's Health, Building Safety, Planning and Clerks offices. All permits must be filed and approved before a market can take place. Refer to the following flow chart diagram to assist in determining what permits are required and when they should be sought.

Building or Fire Permit

The building used to host the winter market must be up to all current building codes. If the market operator is going to construct an addition, construct or alter a structure, demolish or move a structure, install or alter any equipment which is regulated by the code, or make a change of occupancy, a [building permit](#) will be required. Ordinary repairs do not require a building permit.

If a stove will be used at the market location, a fire permit will need to be obtained from the [Fire Marshall's Office](#).

Place of Assembly Permit

A [place of assembly permit](#) is required to ensure that the winter market location will be safe with large numbers of people present. This permit needs to be approved by the [Nashua Fire Chief](#).

Food Service License

This permit will be required if vendors are selling anything other than whole fruits or vegetables, honey, or maple syrup. A [food service permit](#) is filed with and approved by the [Environmental Health Department](#).

Intent to Hold Farmers' Market Form

An [intent form](#) is prerequisite for holding a farmers' market. The form must be submitted three weeks prior to beginning date of each farmers' market. For on-going Farmers Markets, new vendors must be added a minimum of two week prior to the beginning of month of participation if added after the initial start date. This form must be filed with the [Environmental Health Department](#).

Hawker's and Peddler's License

If the market will be located on City property, a [Hawker's and Peddler's License](#) must be obtained from the [Nashua City Clerk's Office](#) prior to the market start date. In addition to a Hawker's and Peddler's license from the City, a [state level Hawker's and Peddler's license](#) will also be required. This is a state requirement per [RSA 320](#), which states that "no hawker or peddler shall sell or barter or carry for sale or barter, or expose therefor, any goods, wares or merchandise, unless he holds a license to do so" where the terms "hawker" and "peddler" shall mean and include any person, as defined by [RSA 358-A: 1](#), either principal or agent, who:

- I. Travels from town to town or from place to place in the same town selling or bartering or carrying for sale or barter or exposing therefor, any goods, wares, or merchandise, either on foot or from any animal, cart, or vehicle; or

- II. Travels from town to town, or place to place in the same town, offering to perform personal services for household repairs or improvements, or solicits or induces any person to sign any contracts relating to household repairs and improvements, including contracts for the replacement or installation of siding on any residence or building; or
- III. Keeps a regular place of business, open during regular business hours at the same location, but who offers for sale or sells and delivers, personally or through his agents, at a place other than his regular place of business, goods, wares or merchandise.

Zoning Compliance

Before proceeding, check whether the market is a permitted use at the selected location. [Nashua's Land Use Codes](#) include a list of permitted uses (Table 15-1) by zoning district. Refer to the City's [Zoning Map](#) if uncertain what district the site is located in. The use will either be permitted by right, allowed via a conditional use or special exception permit, allowed as an accessory use, or prohibited. If the use is prohibited, but given the uniqueness of the site should potentially be considered, a variance may be sought. Visit the [Planning Department](#) for more information or to apply for a permit.

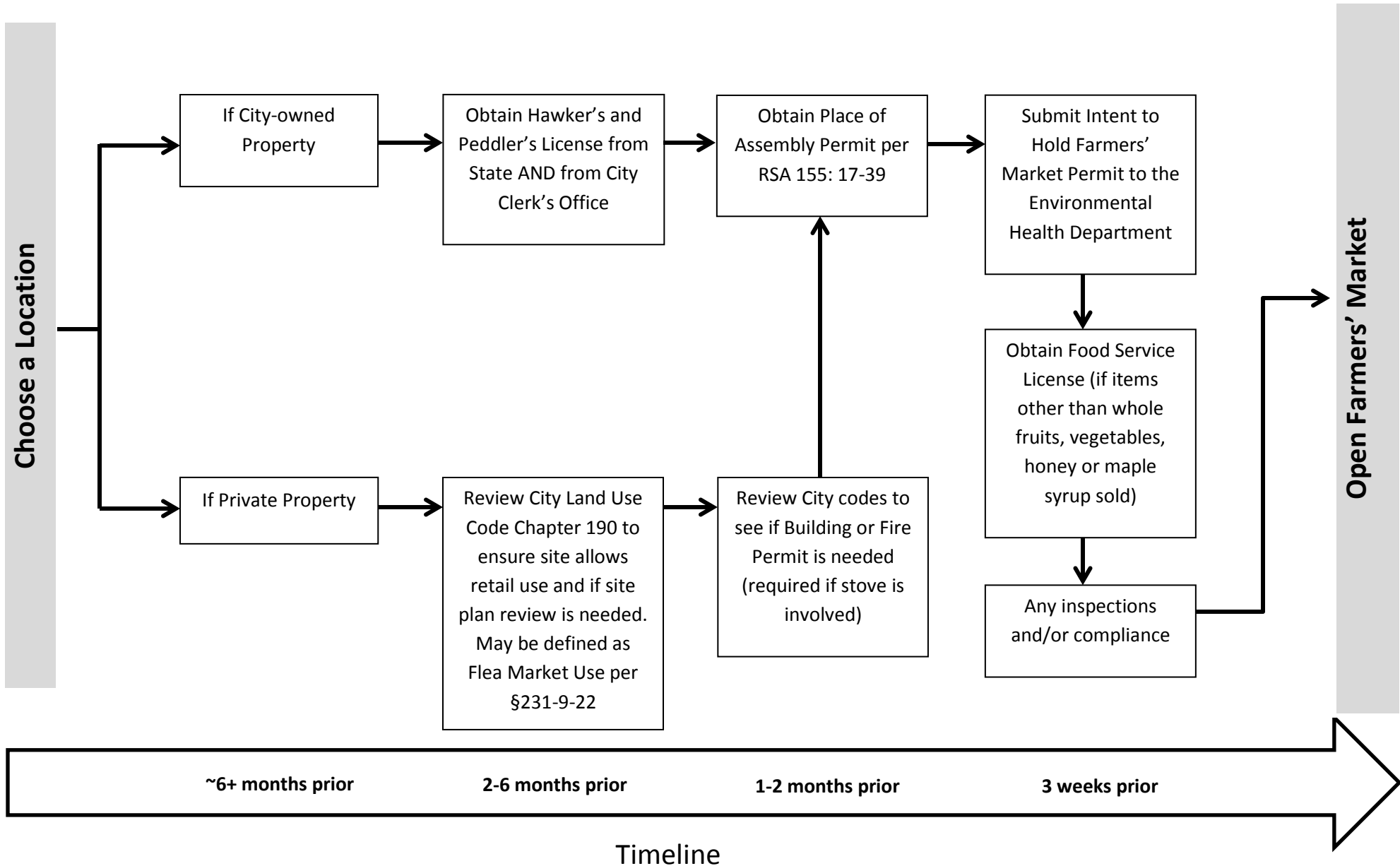
Site Plan Review Compliance

Site plan review will be required for private property operations and dependent on the existing use and location. A Site Plan Review [application](#) must be submitted and reviewed by the Nashua Planning Board.

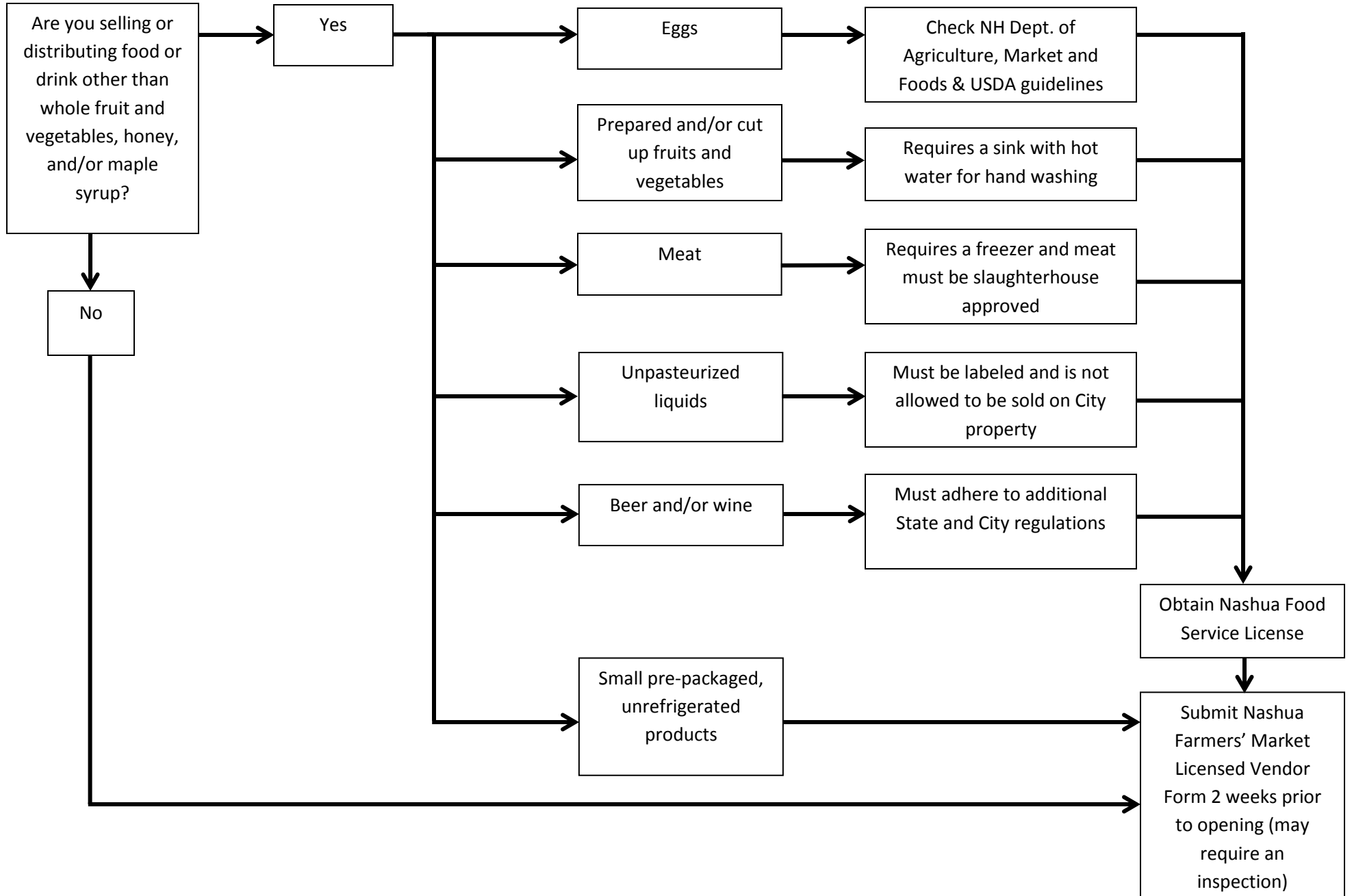
Permit Process for Farmers' Market Vendors

In addition to the various operator permits, individual vendors also need to submit a Farmers' Market Licensed Vendor Form and may also need to obtain a [Nashua Food service license](#) from the Environmental Health Department. Anything that is being sold other than whole fruit and vegetables, honey, or maple syrup must adhere to State and City regulations and follow the New Hampshire Department of Agriculture (USDA) Market and Foods guidelines. Refer to the following flow chart diagram to assist in determining what permits are required and when they should be sought.

Flow Chart of Permit Process for Farmers' Market Operators



Flow Chart of Permit Process and Requirements for Farmers' Market Vendors



Conclusions

Given the popularity of the summer farmers' market and the staggering level of community interest in a winter market, a winter market could be a very feasible endeavor. Almost all existing patrons surveyed are interested in shopping at a winter market and the Nashua region seems to be well suited to support a winter farmers' market. The market operator should be careful when scheduling not to create competition with neighboring winter markets. A Sunday market would maximize vendor availability and customer interest and minimize competition with area markets. Market operators should keep in mind that location and amenities determine the success of a market as well.

Great American Downtown has expressed interest in taking on a downtown winter market and is working with the City to assess the use of the former fire bays at 14 Court Street. Preliminary work has been completed to identify essential building improvements and associated costs for occupancy. Next steps will include fundraising to secure resources to complete building improvements. Beyond essential building improvements and tenant fit-up, next steps will be to move forward on setting up the market.

Major next steps and milestones to bring the Winter Market to fruition include:

1. Establish a business plan for occupancy of the 14 Court Street Fire Station to be reused for a Winters Farmers Market and other complimentary uses
2. Confirm selection of 14 Court Street as the selected location
3. Recruit local farmers
4. Develop by-laws and market rules
5. Apply for non-profit status (if applicable)
6. Identify staff needs
7. Develop marketing plan
8. Address liability issues through insurance

Works Cited

Farmers' Markets America (2008). Portland Farmers Markets/Direct-Market Economic Analysis: Characteristics of Successful Farmers Markets. City of Portland.

McKenzie, Jewel, et al. (2013). Farmers Market Consumers in Rockingham and Strafford Counties, New Hampshire. Durham, NH: Cooperative Extension, University of New Hampshire.

McKenzie, Jewel, et al. (2013). Farmers Markets in Rockingham and Strafford Counties, New Hampshire. Durham, NH: Cooperative Extension, University of New Hampshire.

Appendix A

The Site Evaluation Matrix below provides a table of all the programming needs for a winter market with an empty column to fill in and compare potential market sites.

Site Evaluation Matrix Template

Programming Needs	Location 1	Location 2
Building and Site Area		
What is the total available floor area?		
Do local codes, land use regulations and zoning allow a farmer's market?		
Is there parking available?		
Are there handwashing sinks or more preferably public restrooms?		
Is the space heated?		
Is the site privately or publicly owned?		
Is the site highly visible?		
Is Wi-Fi/Internet service available?		
Is there a commercial kitchen?		
Is there room for expansion?		
Is any rehabilitation/redevelopment needed?		
Is the site accessible via public transit?		
Are there alternative modes of transportation?		
Is the site ADA compliant?		
Operations		
Will an occupancy agreement be necessary?		
Is the site available for the desired market time?		
Required Permits		
Is a site plan review required?		
Is the location in compliance with Nashua's Land Use Codes?		
Will a building permit be required?		
Will a fire permit be required?		
Will a Hawker's and Peddler's License be required?		
Project Costs		
What are the operation costs (constant)?		
What is the rental or other site specific costs?		
What are the site/facility preparation costs (construction, demolition, rehab, renovation)?		
What are the maintenance costs?		
What are the utility costs?		
What are the Insurance costs?		
What are the Vendor fees required to offset costs?		
Overall Mission and Feasibility		
Access provided for low income low food access neighborhoods?		
What is the overall feasibility?		