Market Cities: Approaches for creating market networks
Market Cities are places with **strong networks for the distribution** of healthy, regionally produced food and other goods.

Market Cities provide multiple **economic, social, health and environmental benefits** that are essential for creating vibrant, extraordinary places for people to live, work and play.

*Project for Public Spaces*
What’s Toronto’s approach to building a Market City?
Regional food systems

Ontario’s Greenbelt is the world’s largest permanently protected greenbelt, keeping our farmlands, forests, wetlands safe and sustainable.

- Almost 2 million acres
- 36% for agricultural use
- 20% of the farmers sell directly to consumers
Toronto has an **informal network** of diverse markets with strong neighbourhood ties and unique character.

Toronto’s markets are anchored in community, embracing a diverse range of models, audiences and mandates.
City Market
Historical market

Image: St. Lawrence Market
6 Public Markets
Inclusive Local Economies

Image: Thorncliffe Park Women’s Committee & Scadding Court Community Centre
4 Market Districts
Multicultural places

Image: Kensington Market BIA
44 Good Food Markets
Access to fresh food for everyone
10 Good Food Mobile Market
Addressing Food Desserts

Image: Foodshare Toronto
35 Farmers Market
Connecting Rural & Urban landscapes

Image: Dufferin Grove Organic Farmers Market
Shared Challenges

Increase bureaucracy and complicated permitting system
- Inconsistent and incomplete information about procedures, permits, regulations, and fees for markets in public spaces, which leads to increase bureaucracy and unnecessary steps within the permitting process.
- No city staff or office responsible for the support, development of public markets in the city leading to lack off or inefficient communications between all parties involved in delivering markets in public spaces.
- Lack of interdepartmental collaboration, leading to duplication and bureaucracy.

None or limited infrastructure for markets and local food
- NO infrastructure for efficient distribution of local food, resulting in local food is more expensive than imported food.
- The majority of the public market operate seasonally, limiting access to fresh food for customers during the offseason
- Farmers Market and Public Markets are not divided equally and fairly across the city.
- Inability to secure long-term tenure.

Lack of awareness & impact
- Public Markets are not integrated into city strategies. Therefore they are seen as a nuance more than an asset.
- Limited knowledge and understanding of the role and types of Public Markets within the city.
- Lack of understanding of the social, economic and environmental impact of Public Markets in neighbourhoods and in the city, leading to lack of recognition and support by BIA, Local Businesses, Councilors, Parks, Forestry & Recreation and other City Departments.
- Lack of promotion of public markets in the city.

No career path in the sector
- Limited Market Manager training programs. A non-professional workforce. In most cases, market managers are low pay seasonal jobs with no professional development opportunities and career prospects.

Entrepreneurship & economic development
- The lengthy vendors waiting list to access market opportunities, topped with the high cost of retail in cities resulting in limited access to a market for entrepreneurs & innovators.
- Corporate concentration in the food and retail sector. Classically, retail concentration produces higher prices for consumers and lower prices for suppliers, including farmers and processors in the region. A well as creating service gaps in the city.

Limited funding
- Lack off or limited funding for Public Markets operations and program delivery.
Imagine a network of all Toronto’s Public Food Markets working together to collectively advance regional food systems, inclusive local economies and social cohesion.

Ensuring all residents have access to fresh locally produced food and a strong social infrastructure that supports an inclusive, prosperous and a resilient Toronto for everyone.
Distributed Place-based approach to Market City
A decentralize model that allows us to organize social change agents under joint principles.

A network of markets working together, while keeping each organization’s identity and mandate.
Engaging the City of Toronto divisions

Bottom up
Stakeholder driven approach to Market City

Engaging the Public Market organizations and other stakeholders to inform needs and opportunities

Supported by
8 Key leanings

1. Global inspiration followed by local action
2. Develop a shared language
3. Create opportunities to work together
4. Joint action in education & advocacy

- Have a Public Goal: Renew Neighborhoods & downtowns
- Operate in Public Spaces: Promote social interactions and Public Health
- Bring diverse people together: Create Active Public Spaces
- Increase economic opportunities: Link Rural & Urban Economies, Promote Leisure and Tourism
Join Toronto team at our London Celebration!
What’s next?

- London Study Tour Public Markets and Participation
- Progress Report
- Food & Bev. Sector Strategy Brief
- City of Toronto Public Food Market Working Group
- Stakeholder and Community Engagement
- Mapping Collective Impact
- Final Report Public Food Markets
Toronto is building a Market City anchored to regional food systems, inclusive local economies and social cohesion one step at a time.