

APPENDIX B: SUMMARY OF BUSINESS PLAN ASSESSMENT

A critical first step in the business planning process was an assessment of the Market's strengths. The results of this assessment are shown below.

Strengths

Tradition

Buffalo is known as a working person's town with a long immigrant tradition. This is a community with a rich tradition of foods, cultures, and products. Buffalo's citizens love the Broadway Market. They joyfully remember shopping at the Market during its heyday. They remember celebrating Thanksgiving or Labor Day with their families as hundreds of thousands of people paraded past the Market. The Market still has many unique and flavorful family-owned and operated businesses. Broadway Market does a great job of reflecting and showcasing the traditional fresh and prepared foods of the Polish population that used to inhabit the surrounding Broadway Fillmore neighborhood surrounding the Market.

Regional Recognition

An estimated 600,000 shoppers visited the Broadway Market during Easter Week. There is a large enough potential customer base (256,304 people in Buffalo and 1,130,152 in the Greater Buffalo metro region and 16,000,000 annual regional visitors) to sustain the Market.

Physical Infrastructure

The "bones" of the Broadway Market are suitable for a successful Public Market. There is more than adequate potential net retail space (roughly 100,000 Square Feet – SF) and there is an excess of parking (over 1,000 spaces).

Diversity

The Broadway Market population is a 'United Nations' that includes recent immigrants with foods and cultural traditions that are attractive to many regional residents and visitors. The Broadway Fillmore neighborhood has coexisting populations of Bengalis, Laotians, Somalis, Ethiopians, Karens, and other Burmese, Arabs, Vietnamese, etc. These subgroups live alongside African Americans, white millennials, LGBTQ, and the remnants of the Polish and German population that remain in the neighborhood.

A Shared Vision

The key public officials who hold the Broadway Market's future in their hands understand the difficulties and promise of the Market. This includes City Councilman members, Mayor Byron Brown, City of Buffalo staff, Empire State Development representatives and local philanthropic organizations.

Strong Local Demand for Food Experiences

The fact that 692 people responded to an online survey on improving the Broadway Market gives testament to the hunger

that area citizens feel to see the Broadway Market rejuvenated. In total, over 1,000 people provided input to this Plan, either in-person or online. Buffalo is a city that appreciates good ethnic food. Buffalo is the 50th largest city in the country, yet, the 'Taste of Buffalo,' a food extravaganza, is touted as the best-attended, two-day food event in the United States, with 500,000 visitors over the two days of the fair.

Weaknesses

A Failure to Adapt with the Neighborhood

The Broadway Market has not successfully adapted to the demographic changes in the Broadway Fillmore neighborhood. Except for Easter, the Market lacks customers, merchants, and a sense of vitality. The majority of the tenants are still striving to serve the historic Polish and German residents who have, for the most part, long departed the neighborhood. Despite the majority of Black and Asian populations now living in the community, until very recently, both the Market and the broader area were called "Polonia," the designation for Polish people living outside of Poland.

An Uninviting Layout

On Broadway, a prominent commercial street in Buffalo, no food-related merchants reflect the bounty inside. A police substation anchors the corner of Broadway and Gibson St., arguably the most prime retail space. The other prime corner, Broadway and Lombard, houses a bank. The main entrance is through the poorly lit, back parking lot of the building, past scores of odoriferous garbage carts. Additionally, most customers enter the Market alongside the meat and fish stalls. Because these stalls are not enclosed nor designed for daily wash down sanitation, the smells are malodorous.

Differed Maintenance and Capital Investment

The building appears somewhat shabby, with peeling paint and a single-issue, band-aid approach to many repairs. For example, the roof is continually patched rather than addressing the underlying capital issue. Additionally, the floor surfaces in the Broadway Market are not designed to look clean. They appear dirty despite regular cleaning.

Poor Tenant Mix

The tenant mix is so diluted and varied that it does not communicate any particular theme. The focus appears to be on prepared Polish food specialties. The Market is missing whole categories necessary if the goal was to be primarily known as a fresh food, international Market. Pierogis are plentiful, but there are no places to buy items like cheese, fresh bread, or

flowers. The product mix is further diluted and confused by offerings of flea market type items and imported low quality crafts.

Inadequate Hours of Operation

The Market's hours of operation, 8 AM to - 5 PM, Monday through Saturday, do not align with when many of its customers can shop. Furthermore, since most tenants either do not keep regular hours and/or are only open Saturdays or during the Easter season, this means that customers cannot rely on the Market as a place to shop for any particular item. For most Public Markets, Sunday is the second busiest shopping day of the week. The Broadway Market, however, is closed on Sunday. For a Market with a current majority of prepared food vendors, the Market is closed during breakfast and dinner hours.

Inadequate Public Investment

Funding does not come close to meeting the operating and capital needs of the Market. This has resulted in several deficiencies including the following:

- In 2020, the annual marketing budget of the Market was \$13,000. This is less than 1/20th of what a Market with equivalent space should spend.
- The Market has one permanent (0.8 time) staff manager. She has insufficient power, an inadequate budget and no permanent staff. For comparison, before its recent expansion doubled the amount of retail square footage, Seattle's Pike Place Market had over 60 employees. The Pike Place Market's managing entity still has an annual positive cash flow of more than five million dollars.
- The Market uses various contract employees to perform all maintenance, security, and janitorial functions. Contract employees usually have no loyalty to the Market. Typically, neither tenants nor customers know who they are. They are usually more expensive to pay, and they often perform poorly as the Market's management has little or no operational control over them.
- Broadway Market's community services, while admirable, are poorly programmed and inadequately utilized. It is a strength that the Market contains a community kitchen and a senior center. These facilities lack programming and are poorly used.
- The City pays to clean, heat, cool, and maintain over 500,000 square feet of retail, storage, and parking space in a building with only 33,500 square feet of permanent rent-paying tenants. It is not a surprise that the City loses over a hundred thousand dollars annually on the

Broadway Market. This is a woefully inadequate and inefficient use of space.

- Through the years, the City has commissioned many studies, many of which contained thoughtful and helpful recommendations. Few of these recommendations were ever implemented.

Competing Interests

The current Save-A-Lot Supermarket, located within the Broadway Market, competes directly with the few fresh food Market tenants while typically providing higher-priced, non-quality foods in a relatively dirty environment. Supermarkets can often be located near Public Markets while complementing them with their offerings of dry goods, pharmaceuticals, canned and packaged goods that are needed but not typically sold at the Public Market. Aldi located across from the Market, sells higher-quality foods at a lower price than Save-A-Lot, in a cleaner environment. Based on the survey results, Aldi is patronized far more frequently by area residents.

Disinvestment in the Neighborhood

Both the Broadway Fillmore neighborhood—and the broader neighborhood of East Buffalo—have been faced with several challenges including concentrated poverty, abandoned properties, poor access to employment and lack of adequate housing options. This has resulted in a high proportion of condemned buildings, vacant lots and a general feeling of malaise.