



Portland Multnomah
Food Policy Council



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January 19, 2011

Multnomah County Commissioners
501 SE Hawthorne Boulevard, Suite 600
Portland, Oregon 97214-3588

Dear County Commissioners,

The Portland-Multnomah Food Policy Council (FPC) assists the City and County by providing expertise and advice toward food and food-related policies. It is under this directive that we would like to provide this letter of support for the development proposal of the James Beard Public Market as associated with the recent County Request for Proposals (RFP) for: The Acquisition and Redevelopment of the Morrison Bridgehead Property (Joint Development Solicitation # FY 11-01).

The development of the James Beard Public Market will directly implement policies and strategies outlined in City and County plans that the FPC has advocated for and supported since the inception of the FPC in 2002. These include the policy recommendations in the Food Policy Council's Annual Report of 2003, that noted, "develop[ment] of a Public Market [would] provide a foundation for building a regional food economy and raising public awareness." More recently, the FPC has assisted in the development and endorsement of the 2009 Climate Action Plan and the 2010 Multnomah Food Action Plan which also recognize the importance of establishing the Market.

In addition, the development of the Market will also help to fill policy and program gaps identified by the FPC. The James Beard Public Market will provide a development solution that responds to sustainability benchmarks for construction, economic development and job creation set by the Portland community. Some specific policies are as follows:

- **Comprehensive Food Strategy.** The 2009 Climate Action Plan clearly calls out a more comprehensive food strategy with detailed goals and deadlines. Creating the Public Market supports the following goals: (II) Identify and implement City and County strategies to encourage local food production and distribution, including providing incentives and removing regulatory obstacles. (III) Develop policy and provide programmatic resources to significantly *increase the percentage of home-grown and locally sourced food*, and (IV) Provide educational opportunities for residents to gain skills in organic gardening, fruit production, animal husbandry, food preservation and cooking, and affordable, healthy eating.
- **Central City Public Market.** The recently released Multnomah Food Action Plan specifically supports a central city public market as part of Economic Vitality, Goal 13.3 "Establish more local food hubs, develop and support additional food hubs (e.g. farmers' markets, food cart pods *and a year round major public market*) to increase demand by

vendors of regional food." The James Beard Public Market proposal also aligns within a number of other actions and goals including:

- Action 2.1 – Increase opportunities for farmers,
- Action 2.3 – Increase local purchasing in the retail sector,
- Action 5.1 – Make healthy food more affordable and accessible,
- Action 14.1 – Promote Oregon food,
- Action 14.2 – Facilitate a regional connection, and
- Action 16.3 – Support local food businesses.

- **Opportunities for Distribution.** The Food Policy Council also believes that the Market will help to “fill in the gaps” in underserved areas of food production and distribution, specifically, in relation to the immigrant/ethnic community. The market will do so by providing opportunities for distribution of culturally appropriate food as a result of commitment to programs with Mercy Corps Northwest and the Hacienda Community Development Corporation.

It is for these reasons that the Food Policy Council believes that by adding The James Beard Public Market as yet another local food resource to our community’s collective basket will strengthen our regional food system on these, and many additional levels. Thank you for your consideration of our request for support of this project.



Anita Yap

Food Policy Council Chair

and Members of the Portland Multnomah Food Policy Council