

Project Narrative – Manhattan Beach Farmers Market (MBFM)

Proposed Use

The proposed project consists of the continued operation, in the Civic Center Plaza, of the Manhattan Beach Certified Farmers' Market (MBFM), a certified farmers' market providing fresh produce, prepared foods, and specialty food items from regional farmers and food vendors. Since October of 2024, and because of the closure and subsequent demolition of Lot 3, the market was relocated to the Civic Center Plaza from the original space on 13th street (between Morningside Drive and Valley Drive) and the NW corner open plaza area of Metlox Plaza.

The DBPA respectfully requests that the Civic Center Plaza location be approved as the permanent location for the MBFM. As a result of the move, the MBFM has experienced a healthy 16% increase in sales. Additionally, data pulled from Placer.ai in September 2025 outlines the significant increase in foot traffic, thus exposing healthy eating options and farm fresh produce to double of the previous location. Additionally, the data shows the average duration of stay has increased by five minutes from 53 to 58. The Civic Center Plaza location lends more places for visitors to sit, eat, and enjoy the beautiful trees and tables of the plaza.

Cause for permanence

Safety - Relocating the Manhattan Beach Farmers' Market to the Civic Center Plaza significantly enhances safety for both pedestrians and vendors by eliminating exposure to through vehicular traffic. Unlike the former location on 15th Street between Valley and Morningside Drives—an active roadway requiring temporary closures and physical barriers—the Civic Center Plaza is a fully pedestrian-oriented space with no through traffic. This substantially reduces the risk of vehicle–pedestrian conflicts and eliminates the potential for an errant or unauthorized vehicle to breach temporary barricades. The controlled access points, open sightlines, and separation from active travel lanes provide a more secure and predictable environment for market operations, vendor setup and breakdown, and public circulation. Overall, the Civic Center Plaza location offers a fundamentally safer setting by design, rather than relying on temporary traffic control measures to mitigate risk.

Consistency - Maintaining a consistent, long-term location for the Manhattan Beach Farmers' Market is essential to vendor morale, operational efficiency, and public safety. Frequent relocations create uncertainty for vendors, disrupt established setup and circulation routines, and increase the potential for operational errors as staff and participants adjust to new conditions. A stable location allows vendors, market management, and public safety personnel to develop and reinforce familiar safety patterns, emergency access protocols, and spatial awareness over time. Consistency also strengthens consumer habits—residents and visitors know where and when to find the market, which supports reliable attendance and vendor viability. Overall, a permanent location fosters confidence, predictability, and smoother market operations, benefiting vendors, patrons, and the city alike.

Established in 2006 by the Downtown Manhattan Beach Business & Professionals Association (DBPA) the market serves residents, City and local business owners and employees, and visitors by supporting access to locally sourced foods while promoting sustainability, public health, and small business vitality. The MBFM is a low-intensity, temporary, outdoor use designed to be compatible with surrounding civic and institutional land uses, including City Hall, the Civic Center, County Library, and Police and Fire Departments.

Location and Frequency

The Farmers' Market will operate one day per week on Tuesdays only.

Hours of Operation

Public market hours will be from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., with peak activity occurring between 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Hours remain the same during summer months with NO special hours.

Set-Up and Break-Down

Vendor set-up activities will occur no earlier than 9:30 a.m. Complete vendor break-down and removal of all market-related materials, equipment, and waste will be concluded no later than 90 minutes following the close of the market. Currently the MBFM contracts with the CMB Public Works Department as the setup and porter service. Vendors shall use designated public loading zones and parking spaces to load-in or out only. Vendors shall not park and/or load vehicles in any prohibited parking areas or fire lanes.

Vehicle Access and Load-In / Load-Out Controls

To maintain pedestrian safety, traffic circulation, and emergency access, no late-arriving vendor vehicles will be permitted to enter the market area after 10:45 a.m. Vendors arriving after this time must wait offsite and load in manually with trolley carts and will not be allowed to enter the market footprint. Haul-out vehicles may not enter the market area until 15 minutes after the close of the market to allow patrons to safely exit the site. Additionally, some vendors load in/out, using wagons, from 13th street as well as a city designated loading area on Highland Ave. All traffic and loading is approved in collaboration with the CMB Traffic Engineer.

Operating Characteristics

The market is comprised of temporary vendor stalls that are assembled and dismantled on the same day, with no permanent structures installed. Operations occur entirely during daytime hours consistent with surrounding civic uses. Attendance levels are somewhat predictable and primarily concentrated during the midday lunch period. During summer months the flow of foot traffic is strong during the entirety of the market hours. The market encourages pedestrian access and serves nearby City employees, residents, business owners and employees, and library patrons. There is bicycle racks located around the perimeter of the Civic Plaza area.

Vendors

This is a Certified Farmers' Market consisting of Farmers, Ranchers, Prepared and Packaged Goods. The number of vendors is fluid but always remains within the MBFM approved footprint and individual sections that are regulated by the Health and Agricultural Inspectors and Departments. There is no "Craft" section at the MBFM. There is an MBFM information booth/customer service booth as well as space for "Market Approved" Community Groups and Non-profit entities to Exhibit. Additionally, businesses with a valid business license within the DBPA, are allowed to request space to exhibit on a quarterly basis. Preference is given to all businesses in the DBPA, Community and Civic Groups in Manhattan Beach. MBFM reserves the right to review all applications for vendors, exhibitors, and any visiting groups and fieldtrips.

There are approximately, but limited to:

- 18-25 Growers and Farmers
- 30-40 Packaged Goods
- 11-16 Prepared Food
- 2-6 Community Section

The quantity of vendors is dependent upon the size, scope, category, seasonality, and demand and what fits within the approved boundary of the MBFM. For example, some vendors require a 10x10 space, some boutique Packaged Good vendors are limited to a 5x10 space (allowing MBFM to accommodate (2)

vendors, large Farmers and Ranchers often require 2-4 10x10 spaces, as do some Prepared food vendors. Each vendor has unique needs and is placed within the unique footprint of the market, section, and overall flow of the market is considered. Positioning of the booths is a fluid process and will always remain within the approved boundaries of the MBFM. The layout shows total boundary space and layout is at the discretion of the Market Manager to best suit safety and market needs.

Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses

The MBFM is compatible with surrounding civic and institutional uses due to its limited hours of operation, weekly frequency, and community-serving nature. The market activates public space during lunch hours while maintaining respect for the operational needs of City Hall, the Library, and Police and Fire Departments. Additionally, the market provides a temporary vendor opportunity for public, non-profit, and civic groups to have access to the market on a quarterly basis. Applications are mandatory and reviewed by the DBPA Executive Director and Market Manager.

Operational Controls and Mitigation Measures

The following operational controls are implemented to ensure compatibility with surrounding land uses:

- Fire lanes and emergency access routes maintained clear and unobstructed at all times.
- Vendor vehicle movement strictly controlled to prioritize pedestrian safety, and ADA accessibility.
- Trash and recycling receptacles provided, with full site maintenance throughout market hours, clean-up completed immediately following market closure.
- All vendors required to comply with applicable City, County, and State health, safety, environmental, and permitting requirements.
- Market layout is designed to maintain clear walkways and safe circulation.

Management & Oversight

The MBFM is produced by the DBPA.

The DBPA contracts with the Market Manager for onsite production and all management functions.

Management & Oversight cont'd

The DBPA Executive Director works closely with the Market Manager to ensure the safety and vitality of the market. Together new vendors are vetted, existing vendors mitigated, and the overall health and safety of the market is held in utmost importance.

The MBFM Market Manager communicates and works closely with the CMB Traffic Engineer, PW, MBFD, and MBPD to ensure the safety of the market vendors, employees and customers.

The MBFD Fire Inspector works closely with the Market Manager to ensure all hot-food vendors operate in a safe manner.

The MBFM Market Manager and DBPA Executive Director collaborate regularly with the CMB Environmental Programs Manager to be in compliance with all sustainability laws, rules, and initiatives.

The DBPA contracts with a Marketing Coordinator to assist with marketing, website, and digital projects.

The DBPA Board of Directors reviews market performance monthly.

The CLA Public Health Department monitors with random health inspections as well as Environmental Health inspections are made at each Farm.

Market operations are further governed by the *Manhattan Beach Certified Farmers' Market Rules and Regulations* document, which establishes vendor conduct, operational standards, safety requirements, regulation, review, and enforcement procedures. This document will be updated to reflect the approved permanent location address and street access upon final approval. Once updated, all vendors will be provided with the revised Rules and Regulations and will be required to sign and return the document promptly as a condition of participation in the market.

Community Impact Statement – Manhattan Beach Farmers Market

The Manhattan Beach Farmers Market (MBFM) provides meaningful and measurable positive impacts to the Manhattan Beach community through economic support of small businesses, promotion of public health, community activation of public space, and alignment with City sustainability and quality-of-life objectives. Operating once per week on Tuesdays from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., the market serves residents, local employees, families, seniors, and visitors while maintaining compatibility with surrounding civic facilities including City Hall, the MB Library, Police and Fire Departments. **Since its inception in 2006, the MBFM and DBPA have donated over \$215,000 to local non-profits** such as - MBEF, The Roundhouse, Grades of Green, Growing Great, Mira Costa PTSA, Mira Costa Grad Night, Mira Coster Boosters, MBLL, and more.

Economic and Small Business Support

The MBFM supports regional family farmers, specialty food producers, and independent small vendors by providing a consistent, well-managed marketplace within the city. The market encourages local spending, supports entrepreneurship, and contributes to the resiliency of the regional food economy. It also benefits nearby businesses within Downtown and surrounding commercial districts by increasing daytime visitation and pedestrian activity. **Economic and Small Business Support partners include but are not limited to – The MB Chamber of Commerce, DBPA business booth (each business can exhibit up to 4 x per year), The Roundhouse Aquarium, MBEF, SKX Pier to Pier Friendship Walk, Tour de Pier, Local Chef cooking and healthy eating demos, Elementary School field trips, Summer Camp field trips and more.**

In addition to significant contributions to local non-profits, the MBFM net proceeds supplement the revenue for the DBPA. These funds are used primarily for marketing and advertising (digital and

Economic and Small Business Support cont'd

print), events benefitting the DBPA, branding and marketing materials for use by the businesses, residents and visitors.

Public Health and Community Well-Being

The MBFM improves community health by providing convenient access to fresh, seasonal, locally sourced produce and prepared foods. The market supports healthier eating habits, enhances food education, and provides opportunities for residents and families to engage directly with growers and food producers. The outdoor daytime setting offers a safe, welcoming, and family-friendly community gathering environment. **Community Well-Being partners include but are not limited to – Growing Great, MBUSD, MBEF, BCHD, American Red Cross (4 blood drives/year).**

Civic and Community Value

As a community-serving use within the Civic Center area, the MBFM activates public space and creates a vibrant, welcoming environment consistent with the community's identity and values. The market fosters social connection, strengthens neighborhood ties, and enhances civic pride. The predictable weekly schedule and daytime operating hours ensure that the market enhances—not disrupts—civic campus operations. **The Civic and Community Value partners include but are not limited to – MB Library, City of MB Initiative Projects (Project Pulse), Neighborhood Watch.**

Environmental and Sustainability Benefits

The MBFM supports environmentally responsible practices by encouraging local sourcing, reducing long-distance food transportation, and promoting reusable bags and waste reduction. The market helps educate the community on sustainable agriculture and responsible consumption, aligning with broader community sustainability goals. **Community sustainability partners include but are not limited to - City of Manhattan Beach Environmental Program Department, Waste Management's Green Business Program, and Grades of Green.**

Operational Compatibility

With clearly defined hours, controlled vendor access, structured set-up and break-down procedures, and adherence to established Rules and Regulations, the MBFM operates as a low-impact, well-managed use. Emergency access routes remain unobstructed, noise levels remain limited to normal conversational levels, and site cleanliness is ensured. The market integrates seamlessly with surrounding civic uses and maintains a safe and orderly environment.

Conclusion

The Manhattan Beach Farmers' Market represents a well-established, low-impact community use operating on a predictable and limited schedule. With defined operational controls, vehicle management procedures, and adherence to market rules and regulations, the project will remain compatible with surrounding civic land uses while continuing to provide social, economic, and public health benefits to the community.