



On April 23, 2024 operations management of the West Side Market transferred from the City of Cleveland to Cleveland Public Market Corporation (CPMC), a 501(c)3 organization, via a management agreement signed between the City of Cleveland and CPMC.

WEST SIDE MARKET MANAGEMENT TRANSITION – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Why is the City of Cleveland transferring management of the West Side Market to a non-profit organization?

Cleveland Public Market Corporation was created as an independent non-profit after Mayor Justin Bibb and his administration reviewed current best practices for managing public market operations. It was determined that CPMC, with its own independent staff and a community-led board of directors, would be best equipped to efficiently and thoroughly meet the evolving needs of merchants and customers of the West Side Market. **The City of Cleveland maintains ownership of the West Side Market land and facilities. CPMC is charged with managing the operations of West Side Market via a management agreement signed with the City.**

2. Is it common for public markets to be managed by an independent non-profit?

Yes. While all public markets are highly varied in their merchant offerings, customer base, and place within their individual communities, it is increasingly common and considered an industry best practice for cities to enter into management agreements and/or leases with non-profit entities to manage the daily operations of a public market. Examples of other prominent public markets in the region that have followed this model include North Market in Columbus, OH; Findlay Market in Cincinnati, OH; and Eastern Market in Detroit, MI. Other prominent U.S. examples include Pike Place Market in Seattle, WA and Reading Terminal Market in Philadelphia, PA.

3. What is the benefit of a non-profit managing the West Side Market?

CPMC, under the terms of the management agreement with the City of Cleveland, can operate independently of city government and maintain its own dedicated staff, manage the allocations and execution of its budget, and be advised by an independent board of directors comprised of members of the Greater Cleveland community. This allows for dedicated planning for Market projects and growth, efficient responsiveness to any issue that may arise, the creation and marketing of new public programs, and the ability to fundraise for capital improvement projects.

4. What will change at the Market now that management has transferred?

Changes to the customer and merchant experiences will happen over the course of several years. When the CPMC Board of Directors was formed, they collaborated with the Bibb Administration to

create a masterplan that calls for a complete renovation and upgrade of existing Market infrastructure and operations systems, and a large expansion of publicly accessible spaces to enhance the customer experience. The masterplan also includes a business plan that protects the local entrepreneur and family-owned small business merchant model while diversifying the offering and merchant base of the West Side Market. CPMC is charged with both operating the Market on an ongoing basis and executing the changes called for in the masterplan.

5. What is the timeline and cost to complete the masterplan?

Timeline for completion is contingent on securing funds for the project. The projected cost for completion of the masterplan is approximately \$55-\$60 million. The City of Cleveland has already committed \$20 million to the project. CPMC is pursuing a diverse set of public and private funding sources to raise the remaining funds to complete the project.

6. What are the specifics of the masterplan?

[The masterplan was created holistically](#) to benefit the experiences of West Side Market customers, merchants, and the larger community. The masterplan brings the operation model of the West Side Market into the 21st century through the following key strategies:

- **Restoring infrastructure** and operating systems so merchants can effectively compete, including a complete basement renovation that will provide more efficient food prep and storage space.
- Expanding the Market's community impact with **equitable neighborhood food access, education, and entrepreneurship programs** to help diversify the Market's merchant and customer base.
- Enhancing the Market experience by **reimagining underused spaces**, including:
 - New prepared food hall with seating in the North Arcade building.
 - Landscaped courtyard with seating between the Arcade and the Market Hall.
 - Event space with seating on the east mezzanine.
 - New teaching kitchen designed for education programs.
 - New commercial kitchen to serve existing merchants and support entrepreneurial pilot programs.
 - Providing ADA compliant access to new spaces and restrooms.
 - Creating all of the above while preserving the Market's iconic architecture.

7. Is the transition immediate? What near-term changes can the public expect?

While CPMC's management of the West Side Market is in effect, there will be a period of ongoing transition and consultation with City staff who managed the Market during the creation of the masterplan. The City and CPMC are committed to collaboration that will ensure merchants' businesses are supported through this transition. CPMC's staff will continue to be onboarded through May. Staff are engaged in establishing partnerships and logistical planning and look forward to creating an even more welcoming and enjoyable experience for everyone.

8. Will any proposed changes affect the types of businesses that operate in the Market currently?

West Side Market is one of the most enduringly successful public markets with a family-owned business model in the country. CPMC is committed to maintaining an environment where family-owned small businesses thrive in the West Side Market. The masterplan emphasizes improving the operational support for these businesses, as well as expanding operating models to better accommodate a wider mix of potential merchants. The goal of diversifying the merchant mix is supported by the creation of dedicated space for prepared food, seating to allow patrons to better enjoy the Market experience, and educational and commercial facilities that make the Market a regional food hub.

9. What oversight does the City of Cleveland have over CPMC?

CPMC will present updates to the City's Department of Public Works on a quarterly basis. City Council will make budget allocation determinations annually, based on CPMC performance in managing the market.

ABOUT CLEVELAND PUBLIC MARKET CORPORATION

Cleveland Public Market Corporation strives to make West Side Market the nation's premier public market by meeting the evolving needs of merchants, customers, and the community. CPMC preserves the city's public market tradition while making the local food system more accessible, equitable, and diverse.