

PROPOSAL
for a
Tumwater Town Center Farmers Market

Background/Needs

Need for public space and community identity. Tumwater is gaining thousands of new daytime residents as state agencies occupy new offices in Tumwater Center. Yet these state employees rarely have cause to interact among themselves or with others in Tumwater.

There is a growing need for public space in which to gather and share a sense of community.

Access to local food/local markets. State employees and others in Tumwater Center need services and shopping opportunities that are easily accessible within walking distance.

Promoting healthy eating. State government is committed to increasing public health and wellness, and is seeking opportunities to promote and encourage healthier eating and lifestyle choices.

Support for local farms. Farmers markets bring together producers and consumers in a congenial atmosphere that promotes the economic well-being of local agriculture, the nutritional well-being of consumers and the social health and wealth of local communities.

Proposal

To address these needs, an ad hoc group of state employees and local farmers market advocates propose that Tumwater-based state agencies and the City of Tumwater partner with the local agricultural community to develop a midweek farmers market as an interagency wellness initiative. The *Tumwater Center Farmers Market* would open one afternoon per week, June-October, in a central, visible location in easy walking distance of the new office buildings. Modeled on the USDA Farmers Market in Washington D.C., the market would operate according to Washington State Farmers Market Association Guidelines and feature local farms and food processors. Vendors currently expressing interest include: Kirsop Farm, Lattins Country Cider Mill, Left Foot Organics, Rising River Farm and Winlock Meadows Farm.

Benefits to the City of Tumwater and Tumwater-Based State Employees

A Tumwater Town Center Farmers Market will:

- Create an open air focal point for healthful shopping, workplace events, and information sharing for thousands of state and city employees and their customers;
- Increase access to fresh produce direct from farmer to consumer;
- Contribute to a highly visible, positive community identity for Tumwater Center;
- Result in little or no impact to grounds, requiring no permanent structure or parking beyond existing facilities;
- Ease traffic congestion at the end of the workday, as workers delay their commute to shop.

Governance

Market operation would be directed by a volunteer board representing the City of Tumwater, city and state workers, local farmers, other vendors, and local residents.

Startup Costs

\$30,000 would fund a two year, part-time market development and management position, supplies, promotion and site costs. A simple fee structure charged to vendors (flat rate per 10x10 ft. space plus percent commission on sales) will offset on-going operation and administrative costs once the market is established.