

**Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP)
Final Performance Report**

The final performance report summarizes the outcome of your FMPP award objectives. You will not be eligible for future FMPP or Local Food Promotion Program grant funding unless all close-out procedures are completed, including satisfactory submission of this final performance report.

This final report will be made available to the public once it is approved by FMPP staff. Write the report in a way that promotes your project's accomplishments, as this document will serve as not only a learning tool, but a promotional tool to support local and regional food programs. Particularly, recipients are expected to provide both qualitative and quantitative results to convey the activities and accomplishments of the work.

The report is limited to 10 pages and is due **within 90 days** of the project's performance period end date, or sooner if the project is complete. Provide answers to each question, or answer "not applicable" where necessary. It is recommended that you email or fax your completed performance report to your assigned grant specialist to avoid delays. Should you need to mail your documents via hard copy, contact FMPP staff to obtain mailing instructions: FMPP Phone: 202-720-4152; Fax: 202-720-0300

Report Date Range: <i>(e.g. September 30, 20XX-September 29, 20XX)</i>	January 1, 2016 – March 3, 2016
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Recipient Organization Name:	Greater East End Management District
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Establishment of 2 nd Ward Farmers Market
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 15-FMPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	14-FMPPX-TX-0159
Year Grant was Awarded:	2014
Project City/State:	Houston, Texas
Total Awarded Budget:	\$70,001

FMPP staff may contact you to follow up for long-term success stories. Who may we contact?

Same Authorized Representative listed above (check if applicable).

Different individual: Name: _____; Email: _____; Phone: _____

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1. State the goals/objectives of your project as outlined in the grant narrative and/or approved by FMPP staff. If the goals/objectives from the narrative have changed from the grant narrative, please highlight those changes (e.g. “new objective”, “new contact”, “new consultant”, etc.). You may add additional goals/objectives if necessary. For each item below, qualitatively discuss the progress made and indicate the impact on the community, if any.

i. Goal/Objective 1: *Improve access to fresh, locally grown food for low income, Hispanic populations and other groups, while increasing farmer direct-to-market access to a new farmers market.*

a. Progress Made: *East End Market officially opened on April 12, 2015 on the Navigation Esplanade, a 3 block tract of land in Houston’s Second Ward owned by the City of Houston and managed by the Greater East End Management District. Second Ward is a Low Income/Low Access food desert with a population of 14,126, 38.5% of those living below the poverty level. The Greater East End area, including Second Ward, has a population of 75,870. 86% of East End residents are Hispanic and 35% have incomes under \$25,000. Many area residents do not have reliable transportation options and grocery stores (all of which are subpar) are few and far between. The East End Market was created to address the lack of access to healthy foods within this urban community. For the past year, the East End Market has been open weekly on Sunday from 10AM-2PM. Over the course of the grant period, the East End Market has worked with a total of 83 market vendors and the weekly vendor count has grown from an average of 15-20 vendors per week to the current average of 35-40 vendors per week. The customer base has also grown from an average of 300-400 customers per week to current crowd sizes in the 600-900 range. Last fall, the East End Market hours were expanded to include periodic night markets. In 2016, East End Market will host 8 night markets in addition to the weekly Sunday market and we will evaluate opportunities for increased operating hours once the construction of two permanent kiosks on the Navigation Esplanade has been completed later this year.*

b. Impact on Community: *Not only has the East End Market provided residents and visitors to Second Ward with regular access to healthy foods, but it has also had a significant positive impact on the community’s internal and external image. The market has become a gathering place for neighbors, a source of civic pride, and a key reason people choose to visit the neighborhood. The success of the market has also had an impact on adjacent local businesses through increased customer traffic. The East End Market has a character and flavor that reflects the culture of the neighborhood in which it is located. Many of the vendors live in the community and the market has been deliberately structured to address the food access needs of the local population while also serving as a platform for local artists and performers. Live music is a regular component of the market, making for a lively atmosphere that is both welcoming to guests and supportive of local talent. Because of this, the East End Market has contributed to the economic development of the area by directly supporting local producers and expanding their customer base, hiring local talent, and driving traffic to local businesses.*

ii. Goal/Objective 2: Provide practical education to growing fruits and vegetables to existing and new urban garden farmers.

a. Progress Made: *In preparation for opening a new farmers market in Houston’s Second Ward, East End Market staff underwent extensive hands-on training*

provided by Urban Harvest that enabled us to launch and manage a successful and continually growing farmers market in an area of town with an identified need. Once the market was opened, it became clear that a number of the market vendors would benefit from training in order to operate their own small businesses. However, our assumptions about the type of training they would need shifted due to the nature of the vendors we were working with. In assessing the skills possessed by individual vendors, it became clear that training in growing crops was not a priority, but rather, overall business training would be more useful to the vendors at this stage in their operations. Therefore, we retooled our approach and developed training that was more suited to the group. This training occurred both on an individual basis and in a classroom setting. Market Manager Roy Rodriguez, who is responsible for recruiting and approving vendors for the East End Market, has assumed the role of mentor or coach for first-time vendors (which account for approximately 40% of our total vendor roster) with no previous market experience. Rodriguez has worked with three market vendors in particular—Sown and Grown, Finca Tres Robles and Last Organic Outpost—to help them develop sound business practices that will contribute to overall stability and longevity. As a result, Sown and Grown and Finca Tres Robles have begun to offer classes and workshops to community members interested in building skills in farming, gardening, and food production. Additionally, Urban Harvest has worked with Rodriguez to develop and offer vendor workshops that provide training in marketing, establishing a social media presence to promote products, design and presentation of product displays at the market, and customer outreach and retention strategies.

b. Impact on Community: *The impact of the market and related training has had an exponential impact on the community. The business training and coaching provided to market vendors has resulted in improved viability for vendors just entering the market, improved booth aesthetics that make the market more appealing to visitors, coordinated and layered marketing efforts that have increased customer traffic and name recognition for individual vendors and the market overall, and community buy-in that will have an impact on the market's sustainability over the long term.*

iii. **Goal/Objective 3:** Provide microenterprise training for establishing market stalls to assist urban farmers and healthfully prepared food vendors in bringing their products directly to the market.

a. Progress Made: *During this initial year of operations, approximately 40% of the vendors participating in the East End Market were new to the industry which resulted in the need for personal coaching and training to 1) educate interested vendors on the required permits necessary to vend 2) proper food handling protocols 3) product labeling 4) booth components and equipment necessary to comply with health department regulations. That training occurred both in one-on-one sessions led by Market Manager Roy Rodriguez that were tailored to individual vendor needs as well as structured workshops led by Rodriguez and Tyler Horne of Urban Harvest. More recently, we have begun working with Ripley House on an entrepreneur training program that targets both adults and high school students in the East End interested in learning practical business skills and/or launching their own small business. The adult program focuses on classroom-based learning and the student program is structured as a mentor/mentee initiative that pairs students with a market vendor to give them hands-on learning opportunities within the market setting.*

- b. Impact on Community: *Over the course of the last year, 12 farmer/producers received one-on-one coaching and 7 of those were farmer/producers who actually launched small businesses with the help of the Market Manager in order to become a vendor. To date, 20 farmer/producers participated in training led by Urban Harvest and 10 individuals have enrolled in the entrepreneur training program developed in partnership with Ripley House.*
2. Quantify the overall impact of the project on the intended beneficiaries, if applicable, from the baseline date. Include further explanation if necessary.
- i. Number of direct jobs created: *1 FT (Market Manager), 2 PT contractors (Custodial and Admin support). Note that the organization also employs a Managing Director who spends a portion of her time on market activities but is not included in the above count.*
 - ii. Number of jobs retained: *n/a*
 - iii. Number of indirect jobs created: *7 (this refers to vendors who worked with the Market Manager to set up a business for the purpose of being a market vendor)*
 - iv. Number of markets expanded: *n/a*
 - v. Number of new markets established: *1*
 - vi. Market sales increased by \$ *n/a* and increased by *n/a*
We do not track individual vendor sales. Our first-year market revenue from booth rentals was \$30,692 with a trajectory of progressive growth. Opening day market revenue from booth rentals was \$190. Largest single-day market revenue from booth rentals during the grant period was \$1125.
 - vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: *83*
 - a. Percent Increase: *100%* Baseline was zero as this was a start-up.*
3. Did you expand your customer base by reaching new populations such as new ethnic groups, additional low income/low access populations, new businesses, etc.? *Yes* If so, how? *The East End Market was established in April of 2015 to fill a community need for regular access to healthy foods in one of Houston's food deserts. Members of the immediate community comprise a large portion of market customers but the market also attracts visitors from neighborhoods throughout the Greater Houston area. The creation of the market has expanded opportunities for local farmer/producers to access 14,000 potential new customers in a low income/low access neighborhood. The East End Market has a distinct personality that sets it apart from other farmers markets in Houston. The market occupies a well-designed, award winning public plaza that is ideally suited to an urban market (many other Houston markets take place in parking lots). It is located in the heart of a tight-knit community with longstanding cultural traditions. Our strategy for attracting customers has centered on making arts and culture a component of the market experience. Live music has become a staple, attracting customers who come regularly and stay longer. We've also launched a monthly Mariachi Market that features strolling mariachi bands who entertain customers while they shop. These events have garnered citywide attention and have quickly established the East End Market as a high-quality, enjoyable, must-attend market. In addition to the incorporation of entertainment intended to attract customers to our market, we've also developed a series of dinners called East End Table that showcase market vendors and their products while educating guests about sustainable farming and local food production. These dinners allow guests to meet local farmers (often on location because some of the dinners have been held at local farms), consume delicious local foods, and learn about how buying local impacts overall community sustainability.*

4. Discuss your community partnerships.

- i. Who are your community partners? *Over the course of the grant period, GEEMD worked closely with Urban Harvest on market start-up and logistics, Market Manager training, and vendor workshops (see above). Founded in 1994, Urban Harvest has garnered a reputation as a leader in the local food movement. The organization teaches how to grow food for oneself and for others to sell or share at local farmers markets. It advocates for access to fresh food which leads to healthy bodies, healthy communities and a healthy planet. We also partnered with Ripley House, a neighborhood center that support residents in Houston's East End by offering a wide range of services. The vendors that comprise the East End Market have also been invaluable partners. Those with previous market experience have been generous with their expertise and we have actively pursued opportunities to deepen vendor connections to the community by developing programs like East End Table that broaden the impact of the market with regard to healthy living lifestyle choices as well as community awareness and support of local farmers and producers. We have also forged partnerships with local chefs who work with us on our East End Table pop-up dinners that utilize food sourced from market vendors. In order to create a presence for the market within greater Houston, we have partnered with artists, cultural organizations, and arts presenters to enhance the farmers market experience and broaden its appeal. Cultural partners have included Writers in the Schools, Tangorrian Houston, Moores Opera Center, Meta-four Houston, and Art Rebels.*
- ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the FMPP project? *Our partnership with the City of Houston led to a 20 year lease agreement that ensures us continued use of a city owned property on which to stage a regular farmers market in the heart of the Second Ward. Urban Harvest has provided input, expertise, and training for staff in order to launch and manage the market and Urban Harvest and Ripley House have provided training and professional development opportunities for new and existing vendors. Our partnerships with notable Houston chefs have raised the profile of the market and led to media attention that we've parlayed into expanded awareness of Houston's local food movement. Our partnerships with arts presenters and cultural organizations to enhance the market experience with live entertainment have broadened the market's appeal to customers with little or no prior connection to local farmers/producers.*
- iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this FMPP grant? *As the East End Market continues to grow and evolve, our partnerships with Urban Harvest and Ripley House on vendor training and education will be an essential component of our continued work within the local farmer/producer community. The sustainability of the market relies on vendor expansion and retention and we recognize that training is essential to vendor success. We will also work with Ripley House to develop a robust plan to raise awareness of the market's participation in SNAP. While East End Market is one of few markets that accepts SNAP benefits, very few customers have taken an advantage of it. In a community with a high poverty rate, we know we must do more to make this benefit available to those who most need it.*

5. Did you use contractors to conduct the work? *Yes* If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the FMPP project? *The utilization of contractors to perform custodial/logistical and administrative support for a full time Market Manager resulted in greater efficiency of weekly operations and allowed the Market Manager to focus his attention on market development,*

vendor recruitment and retention, and market expansion.

6. Have you publicized any results yet?* *Yes*
 - i. If yes, how did you publicize the results? *Website, social media platforms, email newsletters*
 - ii. To whom did you publicize the results? *Internal mailing list (newsletters) and broader public (through social media, fliers, door hangers)*
 - iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach? *Approximately 2000 through mailing list, 26,000 through website, 9000 through social media*

*Send any publicity information (brochures, announcements, newsletters, etc.) electronically along with this report. Non-electronic promotional items should be digitally photographed and emailed with this report (do not send the actual item).

7. Have you collected any feedback from your community and additional stakeholders about your work? *Yes*
 - i. If so, how did you collect the information? *Prior to the launch of the market, GEEMD conducted approximately 50 stakeholder meetings that ultimately led to the creation of a farmers market in Second Ward. During the market's first year of operations, we have not conducted any formal surveys to gather community/stakeholder feedback but have relied on gathering feedback in various settings (board meetings, civic association and Superneighborhood meetings, vendor meetings) in our efforts to refine and improve on our work. These meetings have provided invaluable input on available products, market schedule and layout, marketing and promotional strategies, and vendor list expansion.*
 - ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)? *Stakeholder meetings. Feedback has centered mostly around vendor line-up (i.e. requests for a particular food or product), scheduling (we polled vendors and customers on whether we should change operating hours during the summer due to extreme heat), and themes for special events held at the market (i.e. Dia de los Muertos celebration, Mother's Day, Lemonade Day, Winter Solstice, etc.).*

8. Budget Summary:
 - i. As part of the FMPP closeout procedures, you are required to submit the SF-425 (Final Federal Financial Report). Check here if you have completed the SF-425 and are submitting it with this report:
 - ii. Did the project generate any income? *Yes*
 - a. If yes, how much was generated and how was it used to further the objectives of the award? *\$30,692 was generated from vendor booth rentals. Due to the start-up nature of the market, the first year of operations was heavily subsidized by external funding (grants and business contributions. The income from vendor booth rentals was used to supplement external funding in order to support market operations.*

9. Lessons Learned:
 - i. Summarize any lessons learned. Draw from positive experiences (e.g. good ideas that improved project efficiency or saved money) and negative experiences (e.g. what did not go well and what needs to be changed). *1) A number of the assumptions made preceding the market launch proved incorrect and required adjustment. For example, our approach to vendor education and training and the content of the workshops shifted to meet the needs of the vendors. 2) Several weeks after the market opened, we*

established some additional rules for vendors that streamlined market set-up and tear-down activities. We also developed a simple system for tracking weekly vendors, collecting payments, entering financial data, and recording observations (weather, traffic patterns, customer counts, etc.) in order to identify trends and external factors that could impact the market on any given day. 3) Over the first couple of months, we worked to develop and improve the vendor booth layout and established specific, permanent spots within that layout for our regular vendors while retaining the flexibility to make on-site adjustments on market day as needed. This helped to expedite market set-up and led to better overall organization of the market. 4) We had significant challenges with weather that impacted the market. Over the grant period we had one (1) complete cancellation and three (3) early closures due to rain and experienced a significant decline in customers and a decline in vendors during the scorching summer months.

- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving: *East End Market is one of the only markets in Houston that accepts SNAP (Texas Supplemental Nutrition System) benefits but we have not had many people take advantage of the opportunity to purchase market food using those benefits. Although we have signage at the market stating that SNAP is accepted, we've realized that it will take a concentrated marketing and education campaign in order to raise awareness among community members.*
- iii. Describe any lessons learned in the administration of the project that might be helpful for others who would want to implement a similar project: *We believe strategic partnerships have been essential in the success of our market during year one. Not only have we been able to tap into expertise and resources that would not have been otherwise available without these partnerships, we've broadened the base of support for our market because our partners have a vested interest in seeing it succeed. Partnerships have also helped to connect the market to a broader customer base because our partners, due to their own involvement, share information about it with their own constituencies. We've learned that measured, managed growth of the market has been important. Gradual increases in the number of vendors have allowed for greater quality control, greater cooperation among vendors, and maximum flexibility. We've also recognized the value of creating a market that is distinct, reflective of the community in which it exists, and possesses a character that sets it apart from other markets in the Houston area. The setting of the market, the inclusion of vendors who are truly part of the community, and the inclusion of a cultural component have all contributed to the East End Market's unique flavor and texture.*

10. Future Work:

- i. How will you continue the work of this project beyond the performance period? In other words, how will you parlay the results of your project's work to benefit future community goals and initiatives? Include information about community impact and outreach, anticipated increases in markets and/or sales, estimated number of jobs retained/created, and any other information you'd like to share about the future of your project. *Now entering its second year of operations, the East End Market has gained traction as a quality farmers market in an area with acute need. Over the course of the next year, we will continue to focus on expanding the market with the addition of new vendors that will add to the variety of available products. Our goal is to expand the vendor line-up by 40% by the end of year two. In partnership with Urban Harvest and*

Ripley House, we will continue to provide training and support for farmer/producers seeking to launch a business for the purpose a selling their produce/products in a farmers market setting and will continue to offer workshops (4-6 per calendar year) for existing vendors in the areas of food production, food safety, sustainability, marketing, and business strategies. In late 2016/early 2017, we will add two permanent food kiosks to the market site and a public restroom. The rental income from food kiosks will provide additional revenue to support market operations.

- ii. Do you have any recommendations for future activities and, if applicable, an outline of next steps or additional research that might advance the project goals? *East End Market will continue to be refined and expanded in the coming years and we have identified three areas of particular focus.*

1) Expand vendor participation from an average of 38 to an average of 60 vendors on each market day, with a specific focus on increasing the number of vegetable and fruit producers.

After one year of operation, the East End Market has developed a strong cadre of vendors, averaging 38 vendors on any given market day. Over the course of the proposed project, the market will expand vendor participation, particularly among vegetable and fruit producers, to completely fill the market capacity of 60 vendor stalls. This higher level of farmer participation will be reached through both targeted outreach efforts and through specific efforts to meet the needs of local farmers. Outreach will be strategically targeted through farmer network organizations, such as the Texas Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (TOFGA), which is the leading organization for small farmers in Texas. The market manager will work through TOFGA to reach area farmers who would be interested in selling at the market. TOFGA is structured in regions, and the market manager will focus on TOFGA members in Region 5 which includes the Houston area, but will also contact members in Regions 1, 2, 4, and 7, parts of which lie well within the 180-mile range of the market established as the market's definition of "local." In the past, the market has focused primarily on urban farmers and has successfully recruited farmers within the urban area of Harris County, such as Finca Tres Robles, Sown and Grown, and The Last Organic Outpost. However, the market will now begin to reach out to surrounding small towns and rural areas to substantially increase the number of producers. Outreach will also focus specifically on new farmers who may need assistance in building their business. To reach these farmers (and potential farmers), the project will combine a training component (described in objective 3 below) with targeted outreach efforts through existing organizations/projects, such as the Texas AgrAbility Project, which assists, connects, and empowers agricultural producers with disabilities and chronic illness; the Farmer Veteran Coalition, which works to connect veterans with agricultural job/business opportunities; and the Texas Young Farmers Coalition, which provides a network and advocacy group for young people engaged in starting a farm. Finally, the market will consult with its farmer vendors on a regular basis to ensure that the market is operated in ways that suit the farmers' needs. For instance, farmers are generally restricted in the number of markets they can attend by the fact that most markets around the city are scheduled for 8:00-12:00 on Saturday mornings. There are few other market opportunities at other times. Therefore, the current East End Market schedule, Sunday from 10:00 to 2:00, enables the farmers to attend more markets. The monthly Friday night market time also serves this purpose, and the East End Market plans to expand the number of these Friday night market times as requested by the farmers.

2) Increase attendance at the market from an average of 750 to an average of 1,000, with a specific focus on recruiting SNAP participants.

The marketing plan for increasing attendance and sales will focus specifically upon increasing the numbers of SNAP participants who attend the market and use their SNAP cards to buy fresh produce. Outreach will be through two primary channels. First, the project will partner with the local food pantry at the Catholic Charities Guadalupe Center, to make information available to clients regarding the market, the healthy food available there, and their ability to increase their SNAP purchasing power through the SNAP discounts available at the market. Further, the Catholic Charities Guadalupe Center partners with the Houston Food Bank, which can assist clients in registering for SNAP. Roughly 22% of residents in the target area participate in SNAP (more than one-and-a-half times the state average).¹ Moreover, it is likely that at least another 8% are eligible for SNAP (based upon the 73% participation rate of eligible households in Texas).² The Houston Food Bank has undertaken to increase SNAP participation, particularly in light of historic under-participation among Latinos in Texas, by assisting with SNAP eligibility verification and registration on-site at various food pantries around the city. Second, the project will focus marketing efforts on the children of the area. The market will create child-friendly marketing materials (in both English and Spanish) and conduct child-focused events, such as a “meet the farmer” day, a healthy recipe contest, healthy snack “tastings,” and other activities designed to interest neighborhood children, and thereby their parents, in attending the market. These materials will be distributed through eight Houston Independent School District schools in the designated census tracts: Bruce Elementary, Burnet Elementary, Cage Elementary, Carrillo Elementary, Henderson Elementary, Lantrip Elementary, Pugh Elementary, and Tijerina Elementary. In addition, the market will distribute materials to students of a neighborhood parochial school: Our Lady of Guadalupe School. All of the listed public schools have more than 90% children who qualify for free or reduced meals, so there is a large contingency of SNAP eligible families who will be reached through this effort.

3) Promote good agricultural practices and business sustainability among producers by providing food safety and other relevant training.

Since the East End Market is specifically trying to increase the number of new farmers who become vendors, the market will take on a role in making available the types of training that will assist young farmers in gaining farming skills, implementing good agricultural practices, and developing a sustainable business model. From farmer input so far, certain high-demand training topics have been at least tentatively identified:

- i. Food Safety Training*
- ii. Good Agricultural Practices Certification Process*
- iii. Business Planning*

¹ USDA, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support. (March 2015). *Profile of SNAP Households, Texas Congressional District 29.*

² Cunyngnam, Karen E., Mathematica Policy Research. (February 2015). *Reaching Those in Need: Estimates of State Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participation Rates in 2012.* Available on-line at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ops/Reaching2012.pdf>.

iv. Funding Opportunities for Beginning Farmers

This list will be expanded and refined over the coming months, and the market will begin offering quarterly training opportunities that will be open to current market vendors and other area farmers.