

OLIVE STREET MARKET

Social Change Grant Proposal Washington University in St. Louis February 2009

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I. SUMMARY

Economic opportunity, which is so crucial to one's overall well-being, is relatively unavailable to the poor. This economic inequality keeps poor families and individuals from ever achieving stability or upward mobility. By stimulating economic opportunity and building a close-knit community, a street market will address this serious social justice issue of disparity in economic opportunity. The street market we propose has the potential to become a vibrant cultural center within St. Louis while helping the poor leave the cycle of poverty.

Also known as a flea market, open-air market, or trading fair, a street market is an outdoor public marketplace consisting of a large, diverse collection of shops or stalls. Based on the successful Maxwell Street Market in Chicago, the Olive Street Market will occur weekly on Saturdays in downtown St. Louis.

II. SOCIAL and ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Because of unstable part-time work and work that pays so little, the poor often fall into the cycle of poverty where they come to rely on social services, such as shelters, soup kitchens, and unemployment benefits. By allowing people to put the skills they already have to work, self-employment, through the venue of a street market, will establish a more stable work environment. The street market will not only supplement the efforts of social service institutions to stabilize the lives of the poor, but also provide the means for economic mobility.

For users of the market, a street market:

- Directly gives some vendors an opportunity to earn extra income;
- Minimizes financial risk and encourages persistence in entrepreneurial efforts by providing a venue for start-ups that incubates businesses;
- Reduces vendor susceptibility to and involvement in crime by providing an alternate, meaningful activity and source of income;
- Instills a sense of community spirit by encouraging social networking and mutual exchange of information between diverse groups of people; and
- Entertains consumers who find bargains and treasures while enjoying themselves in an atmosphere bustling with activity.

For non-users of the market, a street market:

- Addresses the need for vibrant and lively places which can have spillover benefits on the surrounding area;
- Spurs the local economy because of vendors who will spend money on suppliers and at fixed-location stores outside the market;
- Creates jobs and generates income from newly formed businesses; and
- Reduces crime and criminal justice system expenditures.

As opposed to farmer's markets, the main objective of Olive Street Market is poverty alleviation. The street market will attract a different set of vendors than the typical farmer's market. Having the street market once a week on Saturdays gives people with low-paying jobs during the week to earn some extra income over the weekend. Or for those currently unemployed, income earned at the street market can provide them with temporary support as they search for a job during the week.

III. LOCATION

The ideal location is one that has a close proximity to potential vendors as well as the potential for a large amount of foot traffic. It should also be large enough to support a large number of vendors and visitors, but small enough that it appears to be buzzing with activity. To this end, Centenary United Methodist Church has graciously offered the use of its parking lot at the intersection of Olive and N. 16th Streets for free on Saturdays. Because Olive Street Market will take place on private property, Alderwoman Kacie Triplett assured us that we would be exempt from most city regulations.

Foot traffic will come from many sources, including local, middle-class residential areas (e.g. Blu condos), nearby hangout locations (e.g. Lucas Park, Washington Avenue, and Memorial Plaza), and churches (e.g. Centenary Church and Christ Church Cathedral). We will also reach out to neighborhood associations (e.g. St. Louis Downtown Residents Association) and existing farmer's markets (e.g. Soulard and Tower Grove). Vendors themselves will serve as patrons of the street market, and the vendor recruitment process will also serve as an indirect form of advertising for the street market. In addition, direct advertising throughout the St. Louis region will attract people outside the vicinity of Centenary Church, which is Metro-accessible. Parking is readily available on adjacent parking lots and along Olive Street.

IV. VENDORS

Recruiting Vendors. Initially, the primary target population for vendors of the street market will be the working poor. In one of our conversations with potential vendors, one man's business idea was having visitors compete against him in chess. In addition, artists and musicians will be recruited to add entertainment and cultural value to Olive Street Market. We will begin our recruitment by working with many relevant organizations and government agencies*, such as Habitat for Humanity, Better Family Life, and St. Patrick Center. All of these organizations or agencies either serve clients or have information about clients who would benefit from vending at our proposed street market.

Becoming a Vendor. A permit and license will be required to become a vendor. A license will give vendors approval to sell certain merchandise, and a permit will give them a space at the market. To obtain the license or permit, an application will be required. After obtaining the license, applicants can then obtain a permit.

Selling at the Market. Unlike farmer's markets that focus on fresh fruit and vegetables, vendors of a street market can sell a wide variety of goods, ranging from used goods (similar to what is sold at the typical yard sale) to new merchandise (clothing, CDs, etc.) purchased through wholesalers.

V. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN & EVALUATION

Using start-up funds potentially provided by Washington University, Olive Street Market will be implemented in three overlapping phases. Naturally, execution and results from earlier phases will affect planning in later phases.

Phase I - Initial Implementation & Evaluation (Summer & Fall 2009)

This phase will be characterized by measures that get the market up-and-running. During the first year, the Olive Street Market will occur over twelve Saturdays between mid-June and mid-October. We will focus our efforts on three areas: (1) recruiting vendors, (2) generating foot traffic, and (3) street market operations.

The experience gained from each market day will serve as lessons for the improvement of subsequent market days, including adjustments in publicity and recruitment strategies. In addition, as early as possible and for the duration of Phase I, we will begin a thorough evaluation of the street market. Vendor and visitor counts will be taken to measure progress relative to our stated goals below. We will also interview or survey 5% of the vendors from each market day to assess their revenues and profits as well as the street market's impact on their lives. To analyze the effectiveness of our advertising, we will talk to visitors to determine how they learned about the market. Towards the end of Phase I, we will conduct an ethnographic study of the street market. In addition to evaluation we conduct ourselves, we will consult various community leaders and field experts to evaluate the street market, such as Professor Alfonso Morales, who has done extensive research on Maxwell Street Market in Chicago.

Our Phase I goals are:

1. At least 25 vendors in June with steady growth to 40 vendors by October;
2. A majority of the vendors part of the working poor; and
3. At least 100 visitors in June with steady growth to 200 visitors by October.

Phase II - Sustainability (Fall 2009 through Summer 2010)

We hope that Olive Street Market will outlive our time in St. Louis. In order to achieve the sort of sustainability we envision, there are two major considerations: funding and governance. In order to cover costs, we will rely on revenue generated from vendor license fees and vendor permit fees, but we will also seek additional sources of funding, such as private donations, foundation grants, and fundraisers. We will also need to establish a governance structure that handles day-to-day operations, though realistically a complete infrastructure may not be fully achieved for a couple of years.

Phase III - Expansion (Spring 2010 through Fall 2010)

In addition to issues that come up through evaluation, we will focus on the following during Phase III: (1) Broadening the street market's audience both in terms of vendors and visitors; (2) Conducting a feasibility study for the implementation of microfinancing; (3) Securing a larger, more permanent location; (4) Having a longer street market season; and (5) Becoming a cultural hotspot within St. Louis.

* Relevant organizations and government agencies include: Habitat for Humanity St. Louis, Provident, Better Family Life, The Luminary Center for the Arts, First Civilization, Human Development Corporation, City of St. Louis' Department of Human Services, St. Louis Association of Community Organizations, South Side Day Nursery, Grace Hill Settlement House and Health Centers, the YMCA, Washington University's Center for Social Development, St. Patrick Center, Centenary Cares, What's Up Magazine, and Horizon Club. Specific information about each of the following organizations and how they can assist us implement Olive Street Market is available upon request.

VI. BUDGET for STERN SOCIAL CHANGE GRANT

Note: Whenever possible, we will seek donations and/or discounts to maximize use of the grant. Also, our budget purposely does not include living expenses, which we will cover ourselves.

Item/Category	Description	Est. Cost
Pre-Event Costs		
Advertising	Radio spots: nine 30-second spots on 104.1 and 107.7	\$954
	Newspaper ads in local and regional papers (St. Louis Dispatch)	\$793
	Additional Newspaper ads: 1-inch columns in 5 local papers	\$156*
	10 Posters & 500 Business Cards – donated from Preprint based in Atlanta, GA	\$0
	2 Large Banners	\$700
	Banner stand – borrowed from Habitat for Humanity	\$0
	Website from Skap Web Design	\$0
	Direct-mail advertising 1000 Stamps: \$420 1000 Envelopes: \$160 1000 Brochures/Flyers/Applications: \$300	\$880
	Fliers to hand out and post	\$100
	Advertising Total	\$3583
Stationary	Copying e.g. application forms, licenses	\$80
	More copying funds	\$20*
	Folders & filing	\$37
	Pens, pencils, paper	\$30
	Stationary Total	\$167
	Pre-Event Total	\$3750
Day-of-Event Costs		
Location	Centenary Church's Parking Lot	\$0
Canopy tents	6 tents for registration tables	\$654
Tables	50 tables borrowed from various organizations; 15 purchased	\$300
Security	One security guard for 9 market days (\$108/day)	\$972
	One security guard for 3 market days (\$108/day)	\$324*
	Security Total	\$1296
Trash cans	Borrow from various organizations	\$0
Clean-up	Volunteers from various organizations	\$0
	Day-of-Event Total	\$2250
	Total	\$6000
	First phase of funding	\$5500
	*Second phase of funding	\$500

VII. BUDGET for KALDI SOCIAL CHANGE GRANT

Note: Whenever possible, we will seek donations and/or discounts to maximize use of the grant. Also, our budget purposely does not include living expenses, which we will cover ourselves.

Phase I and II of Funding: May 2009 – November 2009		
Item/Category	Description	Est. Cost
Pre-Event Costs		
Advertising	Radio spots: two 30-second spots on 104.1	\$212
	Newspaper ads: 1-inch columns in 5 local papers	\$172
	Additional newspaper ads	\$156*
	10 Posters & 500 Business Cards – donated from Preprint based in Atlanta, Georgia	\$0
	2 Large Banners	\$700
	Banner stand – borrowed from Habitat for Humanity	\$0
	Website from Skap Web Design	\$0
	Advertising Total	\$1240
Stationary	Copying e.g. application forms, licenses	\$60
	More copying funds	\$20*
	Folders & filing	\$30
	Pens, pencils, paper	\$30
	Stationary Total	\$140
	Pre-Event Total	\$1380
Day-of-Event Costs		
Location	Centenary Church's Parking Lot	\$0
Canopy tents	3 tents for registration tables	\$324
Tables	50 tables borrowed from various organizations	\$0
Security	One security guard for 9 market days (\$108/day)	\$972
	One security guard for 3 market days (\$108/day)	\$324*
	Security Total	\$1296
Trash cans	Borrow from various organizations	\$0
Clean-up	Volunteers from various organizations	\$0
	Day-of-Event Total	\$1620
	(May 2009 – November 2009) Total	\$3000
	First phase of funding	\$2500
	*Second phase of funding	\$500

Phase III of Funding: December 2009 – May 2010		
Item/Category	Description	Est. Cost
Pre-Event Costs		
Advertising	Direct-mail advertising 1000 Stamps: \$420; 1000 Envelopes: \$160 1000 Brochures/Flyers/Applications: \$300	\$880
	Newspaper ads: 1-inch columns in 3 local papers	\$96
	Posters and business cards	\$0
	Advertising Total	\$976
Stationary	Copying, and other materials	\$24
	(December 2009 – May 2010) Total	\$1000
	Third phase of funding	\$1000

Phase IV of Funding: May 2010 – August 2010		
Item/Category	Description	Est. Cost
Pre-Event Costs		
Advertising	Newspaper ads: 1-inch columns in 5 local papers	\$162
	10 Posters and 500 business cards	\$0
	Direct-mail advertising 1000 Stamps: \$420 1000 Envelopes: \$160 1000 Brochures/Flyers/Applications: \$300	\$880
	Advertising Total	\$1042
Stationary	Copying e.g. application forms, licenses	\$60
	Folders & filing	\$20
	Pens, pencils, paper	\$20
	Stationary Total	\$100
	Pre-Event Total	\$1142
Day-of-Event Costs		
Location	Centenary Church's Parking Lot	\$0
Tables	50 tables borrowed from various organizations	\$0
Security	One security guard for 9 market days (\$108/day)	\$972
Trash cans	Borrow from various organizations	\$0
Clean-up	Volunteers from various organizations	\$0
	Day-of-Event Total	\$972
	(May 2010 – August 2010) Total	\$2114
	Fourth phase of funding	\$1000
	Other sources (see 'Phase II – Sustainability')	\$1114