

St Kilda Esplanade Market Strategic Plan

2016 – 2020



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1. STRATEGIC PLAN

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2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The St Kilda Esplanade Market is an important St Kilda tradition and cultural asset, a makers' market where artists and craftspeople sell authentic high quality arts, crafts and goods. With an iconic beachside location and committed stallholders, the Esplanade Market has many strengths on which to draw. There are challenges for the Market as well, including its exposure to the weather, and the increased competition from other markets and retail spaces.

This Strategic Plan was drafted in 2015/16 with key input from the Esplanade Market Reference Committee, Port Phillip City Council and Market stallholders, and with consultation from the wider community. The Plan describes the context, strengths, challenges and opportunities for the St Kilda Esplanade Market for the period from 2016-2020. The Plan reinforces the Market's identity as a makers' market, and sets out three key priorities: to continue to make the Market a 'market of choice' for stallholders and visitors; to ensure a positive market experience through improving amenities and infrastructure over time; and to increase visitor numbers and Market profile through marketing and communications.

3. SCOPE

The 2016 – 2020 St Kilda Esplanade Market Strategic Plan provides a road map for the future direction of the Market. It establishes the vision and key goals for the Market, and identifies how these will be achieved over the next five years.

The Plan recognises the need for the Market to be responsive to the ever- changing environment in order to continue to appeal to both stallholders and customers.

The Plan identifies strategic directions which will enable the Market to operate sustainably into the future.

A report on Market operations will be provided to Council in each year of this Plan, reporting on progress, operations and finances. Through this process Council will confirm annual operations.

4. MARKET STAKEHOLDERS

The following groups were identified as being the Market's key stakeholders. The Strategic Plan aims to take into account the needs and expectations of its stakeholders.

Stakeholder	Interest and Expectations
Stallholders	Seek a successful and sustainable Market which provides a viable source of income and an opportunity to promote and sell their products. Stallholders also expect the Market to operate with transparent governance.
Esplanade Market Reference Committee	Made up of stallholders, industry experts and local community members. Seek to maximise the success of the Market and provide input and feedback on strategic direction.
Stallholder Association/ Committee	Represents the interests of stallholders that are members of the Association.
Market customers	Seek quality, variety, price, consistency and reliability of products as well as easy access to the Market (parking, public transport etc) as well as suitable amenities.
Market visitors and visitors to St Kilda	Seek a good variety of products and are interested in the price, reliability and quality. Accessibility (car and bike parking, public transport) and pre-visit information are important factors for most visitors. For many they see the Market as an attraction which will enhance their visit and experience in St Kilda, or the key motivation for their visit
Council & Councillors	The City of Port Phillip considers the Market to be an important community asset. It recognises the Market adds to the vibrancy and appeal of St Kilda and is an important marketing and tourism asset and tradition. Council has an expectation that the Market operates in compliance with Council and other authorities' requirements, and is operating with high regards for safety and community amenity.
Local residents	Expect the Market to have a positive or neutral impact on local amenity, enhance their experience of living in the area, and expect the Market to have some relevancy to the local community.
Local traders and St Kilda Tourism & Events	See the Market is an important attraction and destination driver for St Kilda, and seek Market visitors to spend with traders before or after attending the Market.

5. MARKET PRODUCTS

The Esplanade Market is a makers' market, known for its authentic and high quality Australian made arts & crafts. The concept of art and craft evolves over time, and the Market must allow for growth itself to continually diversify, attract new customers, and compete with similar markets in the region.

Arts and crafts included in the Market's selection criteria is subject to continual review, and may include newer forms of arts and craft such as design, artisan food, boutique beer and wine, specialized plants (such as bonsai or terrariums) or flowers grown and arranged.

The focus on arts and crafts within the Market does not preclude complementary products or activities being made available, in the interests of activating the Market for special events, seasonally or longer term.

KEY ISSUES IMPACTING THE MARKET

5.1 Historical Context

For the past 45 years St Kilda Esplanade Art and Craft Market has been operating almost every Sunday of the year in its iconic beachside location. It has been an important avenue for art and craft makers to sell their authentic handmade art and craft products. Many hundreds of stallholders have passed through the Market, and a number have been trading at the site for much of the 45 years of operation.

The Market is recognised as being a significant shopping, leisure and tourism destination by Market visitors, the City of Port Phillip and stallholders. It is a major drawcard for St Kilda and for many has gained iconic status as a Melbourne landmark.

5.2 External Factors Affecting the Market

The Market has survived the impacts of substantial societal changes over its 45 year history including:

- the introduction of Sunday trading and extended trading hours
- a significant increase in shopping options including significant increases in retail shopping spaces in Melbourne
- an increase in the number and variety of markets operating in Melbourne and throughout Victoria (including art/craft, farmers, design and special interest markets)
- changing consumer interests, fashions, trends in markets and art and craft products
- positive and negative changes relating to the economic climate
- changes in the demographics within St Kilda, nearby suburbs and throughout Melbourne
- changing expectations relating to amenities, access to food/beverage and visitor services
- a substantial increase in competition for leisure time

- significant technological changes including the way people obtain information, buy goods and search for products.

5.3 Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities

Location and Amenities

The St Kilda Esplanade Market is located at Melbourne's most iconic beachside location. However its outdoor location means it is subject to the full forces of the weather, at times presenting challenges for both stallholders and visitors. It has been identified that the amenities and infrastructure supporting the Market are in need of improvements in order to meet customer expectations and to appeal to the type of stallholders that will ensure the ongoing success of the Market.

Market Products and Experience

Over the years, the Market has retained its focus on art and craft products that have been made and sold by the makers. Today this is considered to be one of the Market's competitive advantages. Visitors can buy authentic, handmade Australian products, a point particularly relevant for international visitors.

The Market has a special character which needs to be preserved and developed. The 'makers' market' ethos and reputation for authenticity is important to the Market's unique identity.

The challenge and converse opportunity is to identify the type, variety and quality of products, stallholders and experiences that

will appeal to broad target markets, and continue to evolve to meet developing customer expectation, industry trends and market innovations.

Competition and Marketing

The Market is facing increasing competition from other leisure, tourism and shopping experiences. Wider choice, technology, and changing consumer expectations means the landscape has changed substantially and the Market needs to respond accordingly.

The Market needs to ensure it is appealing and profitable to current and potential stallholders. Implementing strategies for it to become the *market of choice* for quality art and craft makers is becoming increasingly important as makers broaden ways of selling their products, and consumers change their ways of researching and buying products.

There is a need to identify clearly the product on offer, who the product will appeal to, and strategically attract these people to the Market.

Market Outcomes and Benefits

The Market is recognised as being an important asset for St Kilda and the City of Port Phillip. It creates positive and beneficial outcomes in many areas including:

- Generator of tourism and visitation
- Important contributor to the image and identity of St Kilda

- Builds the profile of St Kilda
- Provides a creative outlet and a sales outlet for art and craft makers
- Creates social and cultural benefits for the local community and visitors
- Presents an opportunity for small business development
- Provides a physical link between St Kilda's key visitation areas, being Acland Street, O'Donnell Gardens, Luna Park, the Triangle seaside precinct and Fitzroy Street.

The Future

It has been recognised that preserving the core foundations of the Market is important. Whilst significant change is not required, a renovation of specific aspects of the Market will position it to survive long into the future.

Beyond the Market's independent development, it will need to respond and grow with changes to St Kilda itself. As a key asset for tourism and visitation for the area, the Market will be integrated with and responsive to St Kilda's planned resurgence, the City of Port Phillip Events Strategy, and ongoing planning and development of the Triangle seaside precinct. The Market will continue to be a priority for Council when assessing forthcoming event or development proposals, and considered a key stakeholder in St Kilda's physical and cultural landscape.

6. VISION

The St Kilda Esplanade Market is a world renowned art and craft makers' market in an iconic beachside location - a place of choice for art and craft makers, and for customers seeking quality, authentic Australian made products.

7. PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

Stallholders

- Stallholders are recognised as being at the core of the Market and will be provided with the opportunity to have real input into the Market's strategic direction.
- Future activities will seek to grow the sustainability of the Market and its stallholders.
- Stallholders will operate in a professional manner, abiding by all trading terms and conditions and the Market's Code of Conduct

City of Port Phillip

- The City of Port Phillip recognises that the Market is a major cultural asset and seeks to protect and preserve its place in the community
- The City of Port Phillip will manage the Market as a self-sustaining, not for loss operation at no cost to ratepayers over the life of the plan, ensuring identified needs are met, capital works are included and a safe workplace is provided
- The intrinsic character and experience of the Market will be preserved, in particular the "makers' market" focus where quality authentic Australian handmade art and craft products are sold.
- Inclusive, consistent and transparent policies and procedures will be implemented to ensure the smooth operation of the Market.
- Stallholder fees and charges will be set annually, to ensure full cost recovery and no net cost to ratepayers. Including but not limited to Market operations such as management and administration costs, advertising and marketing fees, capital works improvements, insurance costs and annual contribution to St Kilda Tourism and Events Association that offsets Council's overall funding.

9. ACTION PLAN

9.1 GOAL 1 - To be the preferred destination for high quality, authentic Australian art and craft products

The Market will seek to continuously improve the quality and variety of products available for sale and improve the appeal and attractiveness of the Market for stallholders and visitors, therefore increasing the attendance at the Market.

The Market recognises the need to continuously evolve of the range of products at the Market and to be positioned as a creative, inspiring and unique shopping, leisure and tourism experience. Evolving the Market product mix and enhancing the visitor experience will ensure new visitors are attracted to the Market, and those already familiar with the Market will want to return on a regular basis.

The Market seeks to be the *market of choice* for quality art and craft makers – their preferred place to trade, and a place that is both profitable and a pleasure to be a part of.

Goal 1: <i>Strive for the Market to be the place of choice for a wide variety of makers of high quality authentic Australian art and craft products</i>		Proposed Implementation Timeline and Responsibility
Strategy	Actions	
1.1 Strive to maintain a mix of products with broad customer appeal.	a) Audit the mix of products and identify opportunities and gaps.	Monthly through selection process – Market Manager
	b) Prioritise stallholder attraction to seek out new stallholders proactively.	Quarterly at Committee Meetings – Reference Committee
	c) Incorporate contemporary and innovative art/craft makers and new product offerings that can complement arts and crafts to attract new audiences.	Monthly through selection process – Market Manager
	d) Implement a system of allowing applications and assessments to be made throughout the year to ensure Market operates at 80 – 100% capacity.	Monthly through selection process –

		Market Manager
	e) Investigate regular review of stallholder permits to ensure a quality mix of product is maintained at the Market	Annual process, alongside ongoing monitoring through monthly selection process – Market Manager
	f) Expand product categories to implement caps across the Market and maintain variety of product offering at the Market	Monthly through selection process – Market Manager
1.2 Attract and retain stallholders with quality art and craft products, and position the Market as the “market of choice”.	a) Review and update Stallholder selection criteria and process (including membership of selection panel).	Annual process, May each year – Market Manager
	b) Ensure there is ongoing assessment of compliance to the Market’s rules, and implement procedures for enforcement.	Weekly – Market Manager and City of Port Phillip compliance teams
	c) Ensure user friendly permit and compliance processes.	Annual process, May each year – Market Manager and City of Port Phillip compliance teams
	d) Ensure stallholders are charged affordable fees benchmarked with comparable markets and opportunities.	Annual budget process – Market Manager
	e) Council to monitor and ensure non-permitted traders are not trading near the Market site.	Weekly – Market Manager and City of Port Phillip compliance teams
1.3 Build a positive culture within the Market where collaboration and stability is valued.	a) Ensure regular communication between management and stallholders.	As required (weekly newsletter, emails, SMS and letters as needed) – Market Manager
	b) Provide ongoing support to stallholders and improve stallholder capacity including:	As required

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular communications (at least monthly) - Training/mentoring/coaching where needs are identified 	(weekly newsletter, weekly contact with stallholders at the Market) – Market Manager
1.4 Create a vibrant Market site to maximise yield, visitors' experiences and length of stay.	a) Encourage stallholders to engage actively with customers, enhancing the customer experience.	Quarterly at Committee Meetings – Reference Committee & Market Manager
	b) Research and program unique promotional attractions, events and activities including community groups.	Ongoing – Market Manager
	c) Investigate opportunities to retain customers on site for as long as possible and to enhance their experience.	Ongoing – Market Manager
	d) Explore new opportunities of art, craft and design that can be included within the Market's offering to attract new audiences	Ongoing – Market Manager
1.5 Remain up to date with best practice in markets, shopping and art/craft sectors.	a) Identify best practice – what's happening in other markets, in retail and the art and craft sector. Regularly obtain information relating to trends, consumer behaviour and the retail environment	Quarterly at Committee Meetings – Reference Committee & Market Manager

9.2 GOAL 2 - Enhancing the Market experience

Creating a positive Market experience is essential to attracting stallholders, customers, visitors and the local community. It is vital to achieve return visitation, positive word of mouth and publicity, and to ensure ongoing profitability for stallholders. Whilst acknowledging the Market is located in one of Melbourne's most iconic beachside locations, enhancements to the amenities and visitor comforts will further improve the Market's viability and appeal.

<p>Goal 2: <i>Actively support the on-going development of quality infrastructure, amenities and innovation to enhance the site, growth and success of the Market.</i></p>	<p>Proposed Implementation Timeline and Responsibility</p>
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Strategy	Actions	
2.1 Develop a Market Infrastructure, Access and Amenities Plan	a) Identify ways to build on the Market's iconic location by improving the ambience and amenity of the site including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Landscaping improvements (plantings) - Creating art work in the precinct (e.g. on footpath, lamp posts etc) - Improve customers' rest areas (whilst ensuring they remaining in the precinct). - Increased bicycle parking to promote the Market as a bicycle riders' destination 	Quarterly at Committee Meetings – Reference Committee & Market Manager
	b) Continue to improve the integration of the Market site with Acland and Fitzroy Streets and surrounding areas	Ongoing – Vibrant & Creative City Department
	c) Work with Council departments to improve the quality of the public toilets in the precinct	Weekly monitoring – Council Building Maintenance Department
	d) Work with Council and other relevant groups to develop a parking solution that encourages access for both stallholders and visitors, including loading for bump in and out	Solution implemented 2016/17 – Market Manager, Council Transport Safety Engineering Department
2.2 Improve Market stallholders' infrastructure and servicing	a) Implement and sustain management presence on site while Market is in operation, and explore creation of an information stall	Management presence 2016/17 - Vibrant & Creative City Department. Explore Information stall 2017/18 – Reference Committee
	b) Maintain mechanisms and procedures for stallholders to set up, pack down and operate their stalls safely	Ongoing as required – Market Manager
2.3 Ensure appropriate standards of risk and safety are implemented during Market operations.	a) Implement and continuously improve operational policies, guidelines and procedures in relation to operations, selection, risk & safety, conduct and compliance, including annual risk assessment undertaken.	Ongoing – Market Manager, Council OH&S Department
	b) Improve stallholder capacity and knowledge relating to risk and safety.	Training and instruction 2016/17 then ongoing – Market Manager,

		Council OH&S Department
2.4 Maintain a balance between attraction of tourism and a locally loved attraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Continue to update the product offering, providing opportunities to showcase artisan products that locals can return for (such as food or flowers) b) Maintain links within the local community, via community group partnerships and activations aimed at residents c) Seek opportunities for local community input or participation 	Quarterly at Committee Meetings – Reference Committee & Market Manager
2.5 Investigate opportunities for site development and activation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Explore methods and initiatives to improve the site and visitor experience, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dedicated space for children or marquee with children’s’ activities, such as craft making or book launches • Expansion of the site when stallholder demand exists, such as Alfred Square, Lower Esplanade or O’Donnell Gardens • Open mic activities or “poets corner” b) Special event days to coincide with events or key dates (ie Mothers’ Day, Easter, Christmas, Market key anniversary dates etc) c) Develop and activate to Market to celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2020 	Bi-annually at Committee Meetings – Reference Committee & Market Manager
2.6 Ensure Market needs and issues are known by Council and other relevant authorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Regularly communicate with other authorities to ensure Market needs are identified, and that the Market’s needs are considered in planning. b) Integrate Market planning with other sections of Council, including arts and culture, city business, events and infrastructure planning. 	Ongoing as required – Market Manager, Vibrant & Creative City Department

9.3 GOAL 3 - Marketing and Communications

With increasing competition, the global economy, substantial technological changes and changing consumer expectations, the need to understand the target audiences and how to reach them is essential.

Goal 3: Prioritise continuous improvement in marketing and communications to increase visitor numbers, the Market profile and sustainability for stallholders.		Proposed Implementation Timeline and Responsibility
Strategy	Actions	

3.1 Continuously improve marketing and communications to promote the Market.	a) Conduct research to ascertain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a clear understanding of the Market's customers: - their demographics, behaviour and economic impact - Visitor numbers at key markets throughout the year - Feedback on the Market from visitors and attendees - Stallholder satisfaction survey - competitor analysis 	Implement in 2017/18 (budget bid) – Market Manager
	- Monitor effectiveness of marketing and communications to maximise value for the Market	Quarterly at Committee Meetings – Reference Committee & Market Manager Further measured through market research 2017/18
	b) Identify value and priorities in allocating budgeted expenditure for marketing and communications.	Annual budget process – Market Manager
3.2 Strengthen the Market's brand and position.	a) Position and consistently promote the Market as Melbourne's premier art and craft market in an iconic location. b) Ensure uniform promotion and communication of the brand from all stakeholders and across all media types, including elimination of old branding confusion	Monthly through advertising bookings – Market Manager
3.3 Develop an effective e-marketing plan.	a) Improve the Market's on-line presence and identify e-marketing and communication opportunities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for on-line sales. - Social media marketing opportunities and giveaways - Opportunities to develop an app - Opportunities to work with QR codes - Opportunities for promotional videos or vlogs 	Annually through marketing review – Market Manager
3.4 Identify opportunities to create beneficial partnerships.	a) Create partnerships with other stakeholders to maximise the impact of marketing activities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tourism organisations and businesses 	Ongoing as required – Market Manager

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Events - Local/State Government marketing campaigns (Tourism and others) - Local traders/businesses - Transport authorities (e.g. Trams) 	
	<p>b) Develop partnerships with organisers of major events to maximise the positive impact and spend from event visitors – e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advertising in event promotions - Integrating the Market experience into the event experience 	Ongoing as opportunities arise – Market Manager and Vibrant & Creative City Department

10. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Strategy	Measure	Baseline 2015/16	Target 2016/17	Target 2017/18	Target 2018/19	Target 2019/20
Strive to maintain a mix of products with broad customer appeal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of new stallholder applications per year - Average vacancy rate of stalls 	280 10% Summer 44% Winter	300 5% Summer 40% Winter	350 0% Summer 35% Winter	400 0% Summer 30% Winter	450 0% Summer 25% Winter
Attract and retain stallholders with quality art and craft products, and position the Market as the “market of choice”.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of selection rounds per year 	12	12	12	12	12
Build a positive culture within the Market where collaboration and stability is valued.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Newsletters sent to stallholders 	Each week	Each week	Each week	Each week	Each week

Create a vibrant Market site to maximise yield, visitors' experiences and length of stay.	- Average length of time visitors spend at Market	TBD (to be measured in market research commencing 2017/18)	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Remain up to date with best practice in markets, shopping and art/craft sectors.	Ongoing research to determine best practice	Irregular	Quarterly at Committee Meetings	Quarterly at Committee Meetings	Quarterly at Committee Meetings	Quarterly at Committee Meetings
Develop a Market Infrastructure, Access and Amenities Plan	Percentage of stallholders "satisfied" or "very satisfied with Market amenity	42%	50%	55%	60%	65%
Improve Market stallholders' infrastructure and servicing	Staff attendance at Market	3 hours per Sunday	Full day attendance	Full day attendance	Full day attendance	Full day attendance
Ensure appropriate standards of risk and safety are implemented during Market operations.	Elimination of "high" and reduction of "medium" risks as identified in Market Risk Management Plan	0 "high" 9 "medium"	0 "high" 5 "medium"	0 "high" 5 "medium"	0 "high" 4 "medium"	0 "high" 4 "medium"
Maintain a balance between attraction of tourism and a locally loved attraction	Percentage of Market attendees that live within the City of Port Phillip	TBD (to be measured in market research commencing 2017/18)	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Investigate opportunities for site development and activation	Number of "special event" Market days	2	4	5	6	7
Ensure Market needs and issues	Number of collaborations	5	5	5	5	5

are known by Council and other relevant authorities.	within Council					
Continuously improve marketing and communications to promote the Market.	Market research (visitor surveys) conducted	0	0	1	1	1
Strengthen the Market's brand and position.	Ways by which visitors have heard about the Market	TBD (to be measured in market research commencing 2017/18)	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Develop an effective e-marketing plan.	Number of Facebook "likes"	8500	9000	9500	10000	10500
Identify opportunities to create beneficial partnerships.	Number of collaborations with external events	2	3	4	5	6

11. STRATEGIC REVIEWS

The Strategic Plan will be reviewed annually in conjunction with the Reference Committee to ensure the Market is well positioned to respond to current and emerging challenges, alongside Council's annual review.