



City forms partnership with Downtown BIA to manage Farmers' Market

Port Colborne, ON (April 16, 2021) – The City of Port Colborne has formed a partnership with the Downtown Business Improvement Area (BIA) to manage the Farmers' Market for the 2021 and 2022 seasons.

Approved by Council early March, the Downtown BIA will manage the popular Friday morning Farmers' Market as part of a two-year pilot project. As the City plans creative and strategic ways to boost the local economy, this is an opportunity to partner with key players like the Downtown BIA to expand and attract new businesses.

"We are committed and passionate about our local business community," said Downtown BIA Chair, Jesse Boles. "Our strategic plan is to take the market and help it grow. We want to use the market as a baseline catalyst for all our downtown efforts and help drive economic growth for the city. We look forward to welcoming both vendors and visitors this year."

The City will work closely with the Downtown BIA to provide support throughout the transition, including ensuring the market abides by all Public Health protocols related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Downtown BIA will also continuously monitor provincial legislation and guidelines and are prepared to alter operations based on provincial direction. A joint Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is being drafted to confirm key issues and responsibilities to ensure a successful Farmers' Market and partnership moving forward.

"This is a great opportunity to partner with the local business community to take the Port Colborne Farmers' Market to the next level," said Mayor Bill Steele. "The current COVID-19 climate has impacted markets throughout Ontario and City Council recognizes the importance of revitalizing ours."

With more than a decade of market and event management experience, the executive team at the BIA is ready to take the market to the next level. The new Market Manager, Mary-Lou Ambrose-Little has successfully founded and managed several markets across Ontario for more than 20 years. And Jesse Boles, BIA Chair, is a Niagara College Culinary Institute graduate and has owned and operated successful catering and event management companies for more than 12 years. Their combined experience will help elevate the local business community's profile across Niagara and beyond.

The local downtown business community is already confirming local farmers and food vendors. To date, more than 25 vendors have been confirmed, with the goal of having more than 35 vendors by opening day, if current provincial legislation allows. If anyone is interested in being a vendor, they can reach out to the Downtown BIA for more information.

"We are really excited about this season's market," said Downtown BIA Market Manager, Mary-Lou Ambrose-Little. "This is our opportunity to build on the already existing foundation and add some new twists like food demonstrations, buskers, and special events. We will work closely with City staff and community volunteers to make sure we are ready to go for the 2021 season."

For more information, follow the [Downtown Port Colborne BIA](#) on social media or visit our [website](#).

About City of Port Colborne

Located on the south coast of the scenic Niagara Region, Niagara's Port of Call has found the perfect balance – successful industrial and commercial sectors, comfortable and scenic residential areas, white sand beaches, unique culinary choices, the world class Sugarloaf Marina, fishing, golfing, trails, shopping districts along the historic Welland Canal and an energized festival and entertainment scene that includes live theatre – truly a community that adds to the overall Niagara Experience.

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