**Proposed Vision Statement**

Our vision is a community in which:

• A vibrant, well-organized, year-round market is fully supported by the community;

• Local production is economically viable and meets local needs; and

• Locally produced goods are people’s first choice.

**Proposed Mission Statement**

The Bulkley Valley Farmers’ Market Association provides an opportunity for people to buy and sell products that have been locally made, baked or grown; and enjoy a quality experience that facilitates community education and development.

**Goal Area 1: Community Integration**

The Farmers’ Market is a vibrant community institution that facilitates economic development and builds social capital, community learning, and regional food security. As the market grows and becomes more successful, it is imperative that it develops strong working relationships with the Town of Smithers and other important stakeholders (Central Park Building Association, Downtown Merchants, etc). Regular, proactive, effective communication with these stakeholders and the larger community will ensure market growth is based on shared interests, and that the success of the market contributes to the success of the community as a whole.

Goal 1.1: Establish a Community Liaison Committee

The purpose of this new committee is to maintain relationships with local community organizations and the Town of Smithers. The intention is to form the committee at the 2010 Annual General Meeting (AGM) and have it active during 2010 market season. (See notes about committees, in Section ?.5 below). A key task will be to join the Central Park Building Association and attend its meetings.

Another aspect of the role will be to develop a ‘market presence’ outside of market hours such as a table for community events that would include information such as Vendor offerings and upcoming Market events.

Goal 1.2: Develop a marketing strategy (“Market the Market”)

The marketing strategy will be a one-page document outlining ways in which the BVFMA can increase the profile of the market within the broader community. This includes paid advertising, posters, brochures, trade show displays, and the BVFMA website. The strategy will need to be adopted by all BVFMA members to collectively market the market. The intention is to have the marketing strategy completed sometime during the 2010 market season. See Appendix ? for a Generic Communications Planning framework.

Goal 1.3: Designate a Special Events Coordinator

Special events are an important way to attract specific segments of the community to the market. The role of special events coordinator has in the past fallen on the BVFMA executive and Market Manager. Designating a member as the coordinator will assist in more broadly distributing the market planning workload, and will ensure this function receives adequate attention. The job description involves organizing special market days (e.g. Kids’ Day, Seniors’ Day) and recruiting volunteers to assist with implementing them. The Coordinator will be appointed at the 2010 AGM.

**Goal Area 2: Infrastructure**

As the market has grown, its infrastructure needs have changed. There has been much discussion over past years regarding the best location for the market. Important factors include overall size, location relative to highway (and easy access for people on foot), parking, availability of electricity, access to washrooms and storage. Although opinions vary, most members involved in the planning exercise agreed that the current space adjacent to the Central Park Building remains the best location for the market. The BVFMA feels that, with some minor modifications, this space will continue to meet the market’s needs for the next several years.

Goal 2.1: Secure a use agreement for the current Central Park location

The BVFMA seeks to renew its agreement with the Town of Smithers for use of the Central Park Building parking lot. While recognizing that all Town leases and agreements are subject to cancellation, the BVFMA seeks an agreement in principle that will make the current space available to the market over the longer term.

Goal 2.2: Secure adequate power supply to accommodate growth

Several vendors, as well as the market’s coffee stand and musicians, require electricity at the site. To date, power has been obtained from the Central Park Building and the Lions rail car, as well as a gas generator. These sources are no longer adequate to meet the needs of a growing market.

The BVFMA plans to seek Town and the Central Park Building Committee’s support to move forward with installing an additional electrical service on the site (initial meetings have indicated a willingness to explore options in this regard). Installing a number of exterior-grade electrical outlets around the parking lot perimeter would meet vendors’ needs and allow Central Park Building patrons to plug in their vehicles during winter months.

Special grants would likely be necessary to provide funding for this project. Power infrastructure could potentially be paid for in partnership with other key stakeholders. For example, a 50/50 or a ??/??/?? cost share with the Town, Granting body and/or the BVFMA. Please see Appendix ? for potential Granting bodies.

Key tasks:

• Develop partnerships with Town and Central Park Building Committee

• Investigate BC Hydro grants

• Investigate Regional District support (Megan)

• Strike Infrastructure Committee (2010 AGM)

Goal 2.3: Secure/Build storage space to accommodate growth

The BVFMA has an agreement with the Lions Club to store various market supplies in the compartments on the outside of the rail car. The iron lids on these compartments are extremely heavy, making them difficult to use safely and efficiently, and the space they provide is not large enough. A more optimal storage solution would be a small, aesthetically attractive shed on wheels or skids that could be moved to the site for the market season and removed for the off-season. It is thought that an 8’ x 12’ shed would suffice.

Key tasks:

• Contact Northwest Community College about potential for building a shed through one of its programs

• Present shed option to Town Council for support and approval (February 2010)

**Goal Area 3: Organizational Health**

A seven-person board governs the activities of the BVFMA and its membership, which is comprised of all market vendors. A part- time Market Manager is hired each year to organize the market and handle logistics.

The current model has served the market well to date, however, it relies heavily on members of the executive (“Do what needs to be done”), and does not allow for current executive members to easily pass the torch to others. To become a healthy, sustainable organization, the BVFMA seeks to formalize its structure, distribute the workload to a larger number of better-defined roles, and secure adequate financial resources to meet the needs of a growing market.

Goal 3.1: Become a registered society under the BC Societies act by spring 2010

Becoming a registered society will allow the BVFMA to more easily apply for grants. The application is a straight forward, inexpensive process.

Key tasks:

• Write draft bylaws (Lesley, Megan, Bob)

Goal 3.2: Increase revenue to support future growth

The current fee structure for market vendors does not provide adequate revenue to expand the Market Manager position (see above), or pay for additional marketing activities. At the same time, increasing vendor fees would present a significant barrier to vendors, particularly those with low sales volume.

Options were discussed for increasing revenues. These include applying for grants and soliciting corporate sponsors (to be recognized through signage at the market). Both options are likely to be topics of discussion at the 2010 AGM. If sponsorship is considered, members present at the meeting felt the BVFMA should develop criteria for sponsorship to ensure sponsors were consistent with the organization’s values.

Goal 3.3: Expand Market Manager Position

If additional revenues can be found (for a total of approximately $8,000 - $10,000) the Market Manager position can be expanded to include some of the roles currently filled by volunteer members of the executive.

The Market Manager’s current responsibilities over the course of the market season include:

• General market day logistics and heavy lifting

• Collecting fees from vendors and handling cash

• Fielding calls from vendors throughout the week

• Coordinating ongoing adjustments to market structure and layout

• Advertising of special events

• Enforcing market rules

If additional funding was made available, this position could be expanded to include:

• Music planning

• Serving as the primary contact for the market (currently secretary/treasurer)

• Creating advertising (posters, ads) and serving as lead of the marketing committee

• Handling the bank deposit (currently secretary/treasurer)

• Administering special programs (such as the BC Coupon Program)

• Delivering in-market educational programs and information

• Represent the BVFMA at the BC Association of Farmers’ Markets AGM

• Coordinate market-day volunteers

Goal 3.4: Finalize an annual market calendar by February each year

This is a straightforward task that Mark Fisher has already begun. The draft calendar should be ready by the time of the AGM.

Goal 3.5: Finalize an organizational structure

The following organizational structure has been proposed:

*Elected directors*

Four directors at large are elected each year from the general membership.

*Executive*

Three executive positions currently exist: president, vice-president, and secretary/treasurer. The secretary/treasurer is currently elected, but there was a discussion about changing this to an appointed position to allow for continuity over time. There was also discussion of splitting this position into separate positions for secretary and treasurer, however this was not seen as a priority for the 2010 season.

*Committees*

Five board committees were discussed: a Constitution Committee, a Community Liaison Committee, an Infrastructure Committee, a Marketing Committee, and an Education Committee. Committees would be made up of directors and members, and each would ideally have at least one director. Committee chairs would report to the executive periodically at tailgate meetings held after each market.

*Market Manager*

The expanded Market Manager position would effectively serve as the organization’s Executive Director. Under the proposed structure, this is the only paid position.

*Special Events Coordinator*

A volunteer position responsible for planning and implementing special days at the market, such as Kids’ Day or Seniors’ Day. This person would report to the Market Manager.

Proposed organizational structure:

Market Manager Special Event Coordinator

⭥ ⭥

President Vice President Secretary/Treasurer Treasurer\*

Director at Large Director at Large Director at Large Director at Large

 ⭥ ⭥

Constitution Community Liaison Marketing Education Infrastructure

Committee Committee Committee Committee Committee

**Goal Area 4: Vendor Base**

As of the 2009 market season the BVFMA had ?2 members. Of these, ?? percent are selling farm product. There is a desire to support new vendors through education and outreach, particularly those who are offering farm product.

Goal 4.1: Update the vendor orientation package (rules, background, advice, etc.) by the time of the

Annual General Meeting

The vendor orientation package provides new vendors with an overview of what it means to participate in the market, including the market rules. Updating the orientation package to reflect recent changes is a relatively straight forward task. Megan has agreed to do this in time for the 2010 AGM.

Goal 4.2: Work with identified partners (One Sky, Northern Roots, Community Futures) to deliver a

new vendor workshop (series)

Each year there are several inquiries about what being a market vendor involves. Holding a workshop (“Farmers’ Market 101”) in partnership with local community economic development agencies would allow long-time vendors to share their experience with prospective vendors. If new vendors are educated prior to market season, there will less need for the Market Manager to play this role at the start of the season. April was discussed as the best month for the workshop (post AGM and pre-market).

Megan has agreed to propose the idea to Community Futures, design a workshop outline and work with the marketing committee to promote the workshop.

**Appendix 1: Business Licensing for Vendors**

The BVFMA purchases a Town of Smithers business license each year, under which the market vendors operate. It has been suggested that this “umbrella” licensing structure gives market vendors an unfair advantage over other local businesses that each must purchase a full business license.

This issue was discussed at the January 12 strategic planning session. While the BVFMA recognizes that conventional businesses contribute important community benefits through taxes and business licensing, the following are a few reasons to retain the market’s existing business licensing structure:

Most conventional businesses operate approximately ?00 days per year (assuming six days per week, minus holidays), while farmers’ market vendors operate approximately 20 days per year, amounting to 6 percent of full-time operation (? percent if you account for the fact that each market is only four hours long).

The current fee structure is already a barrier to some small-scale vendors. Increasing the cost of participating in the market will limit entry to professional vendors and will significantly change the feel of the market.

A survey of 12 municipalities between Valemount and Prince Rupert showed that, without exception, markets vendors operate under a single business license granted to the market as a whole. The results of the survey are as follows:

Prince George: Blanket license: $?15/yr

Vanderhoof: Blanket license: $?5/yr

Fraser Lake: No Market

Fort St. James: Blanket license: < $100/yr

Burns Lake: Blanket license: $100/yr

Hazelton: Blanket license: $50/ yr

Kitimat: No market

Terrace: Blanket license: $?25/yr

Valemount: Blanket license: $?5/yr

McBride: Blanket license: $220/yr

**Appendix 2: Community Feedback**

As part of the community engagement process, the facilitators set up display boards featuring the draft plan at the two final markets of the 2009 season. We asked market goers to comment on the ideas presented in the draft. Here is a summary of their feedback:

**Comments on Proposed Vision Statement**

• “Continues to offer only locally produced or value-added products”

**Comments on Proposed Mission Statement**

• “Fully Approve and Support”

**Comments on Goal Area 1: Community Integration**

• “I love the music”

• “I like your special days: Seniors & Youth”

• “Maybe other special days to celebrate what we are proud of: salmon run, berry season, garden

planting, river, etc. ”

• “Encourage folks to try a booth – first timers fee. Esp. Youth”

• “Integration with Good Food Box, Innovation Foods etc. ”

• “Love the music! More seating?? ”

• “Manage vendors car parking”

• “Sync up with Central Park artists, dancers etc. and integrate their shows into weekly market

(performance, bulletin board, etc) ”

**Comments on Goal Area 2: Infrastructure**

* “Farmer’s Market in Telkwa on Wednesday night”
* “Centrally located with easy pedestrian access”
* “Relocate to Main Street”
* “No! Do not relocate to Main street, current space works & created a distinct place”
* “Permanent market square in the centre of town (check mark)”
* “Market in the winter x2 with good facilities for more food
* “You should have it every second week”
* “Extend the weekly market to include an indoor Winter Market
* “More Indoor markets [winter] ”
* “Year Round Venue for Farmers Market and vendors and other local producers to distribute their

products”

* “Yes Please!! Year Round is needed! Thank you all. ”
* “It’s fine the way it is, why grow? Cap the # of vendors – rotate when over limit”
* “It would be useful to have cold storage for vegetables in winter for residents of Smithers”
* “Please Change the 8:00-12:00 to 9:00-1:00”
* “YES! 9-?”
* “YES”
* “YES, YES”

**Comments on Goal Area 3: Organizational Health**

* “Volunteer Plan and roster”
* “Set up as a Cooperative! ”
* “Possibly expand to a Buy BC section to include fruit direct from growers”
* “$10,000 not enough – you need $100,000”
* “Plan for multiple scenarios – keep market structure flexible with low infrastructure costs”

**Comments on Goal Area 4: Vendor Base**

* “Lots of vendors makes a great market – but I don’t know how it is for the vendors”
* “One Co-op table for Rotating craft collective”
* “The Town of Smithers should add support! ”
* “Subsidize an espresso machine (YAH! : ) ) ”
* “Include Artisans through the Northwest”
* “Partner with the community college (NWCC) to market and host the Vendor Workshop Series”

**Appendix 4: Potential Funders**

* BC Hydro - it has a few community funding programs, such as HYDRECS which powers the work of charities in the health or social services sectors. however they cannot provide the cost of electricity services or equipment (prohibited by the B.C. Utilities Commission)
* BV Credit Union
* The Vancouver Foundation
* Northern Development Initiatives Trust
* Nechako-Kitimaat Development Fund
* Community Futures
* Omineca Beetle Action Coalition (OBAC)
* Enterprising Non-profits

**Appendix 5: Background and Operating Rules**

The Bulkley Valley Farmers’ Market Association operates the Bulkley Valley Farmers’ Market each summer in Smithers. The association has the exclusive use of the Central Park Building parking lot at 1?25 Main St. (at the corner of Highway 16) on Saturdays from 8am to 12pm. The Town of Smithers requires all vendors on the site during that period to follow the BVFMA rules.

The objective of the market is to educate and encourage local production by providing an outlet for local farm produce, crafts and products of cottage industry.

The Association charges membership and stall rental fees which pay for liability insurance, a business license, promotion, special events, musicians, canopies, a part-time manager and membership in the B.C. Association of Farmers’ Markets.

**Vendor Rules and Guidelines: Make, Bake, or Grow It**

1. Products sold at the market must be grown, raised, made or baked by the vendor. Each vendor will display a sign showing the name of the farmer, farm or craftsperson and its location.

2. The BVFMA reserves the right to refuse vendors selling items not suiting the flavour or theme of the market.

3. Vendors are encouraged to offer high quality produce and crafts.

4. Stall sharing is acceptable for vendors from neighbouring farms which do not have enough produce to justify renting their own stalls.

5. Produce sold as Certified Organic must be produced at a farm certified under the BC Food Choice and Disclosure Act Organic Agricultural Products Regulations.

6. Used goods of any sort will not be sold at the market.

7. Vendors of food are advised that health regulations may apply to their products. Guidelines are available from the Market Manager.

8. Collusion among vendors to raise or lower prices or to pressure other vendors to raise

or lower prices is forbidden.

9. Anyone interested in coming to the market with educational materials (compatible with the market objectives) must book one week ahead with the market manager. A stall near the centre will be allocated for this purpose. No petitions, raffle tickets, etc. will be permitted.

**Operation of the Market**

10. The market operates each Saturday morning from early May (Mother’s Day weekend) until the end of September. The first market will be on May 9th this year.

11. Vendors should expect to set-up any time after 6:?5am.

12. Selling will start at 8am (no early sales please so that all vendors have the opportunity to set up, vehicles can be removed from public area and reduce danger to customers).

13. The market ends at noon, when a vendor is sold out, or rain forces closure. Vendors who intend to leave before noon should ask to be located near the market entrance so she/he can leave without interfering with the operation of the market. No vehicles are allowed to enter or leave the inner market area between 8am and noon. Vendors located away from the entrance area who wish to leave early must carry out their stand etc.

**Stall and Canopy Rental**

14. Vendors requiring canopies must pick them up from the market trailer on the site and erect and dismantle them themselves. Erecting and dismantling canopies without risking damage requires two people. Please help your neighbour and she/he will probably help you. Also, please take care when storing canopies.

15. Vendors who pay stall rental fees in advance for a minimum of four consecutive weeks will have specific space and canopies reserved for them. Reserved space not in use by 8am on market day will be allocated to occasional vendors. The BVFMA appreciates that vendors with reserved space who are unable to be at a market notify the manager so the market layout can be adjusted and the canopies re-allocated.

16. All space not reserved under rule #? is available on a first-come-first served basis to eligible vendors.

17. The market manager will direct the placement of vendors and collect fees. Do not set up your stand until the stall spaces have been marked out and a site assigned to you.

18. Vendors will keep their sales areas clean and tidy and remove all equipment, produce, trimmings, wrappings, containers etc. when vacating them.

19. Vendors are discouraged from smoking in their booths.

**General Rules for Vendors and Customers…**

20. No dogs are permitted within the market area.

21. Selling or giving away dogs, cats or any type of livestock at the market is not permitted.

These rules will be reviewed annually by the Association.

**Membership & Rental Fees**

Membership in the BVFMA:

• $25.00 per year ending April 30, 2009 (voting member)

• $15.00 per year ending April 30, 2009 for associate (non-voting) members

Market Stall Space Rental:

• BVFMA members $15.00 week

• Canopies: $15.00 per week (members have first priority, otherwise canopies are allocated on a

first-come-first-served basis)

• Plug rental: $?.00 per plug per week

• Children under the age of 16 with products meeting the criteria in #1? may share space at the

centre of the market for $5 each, first-come-first-served as space is available.

• Community groups selling items meeting the market rules pay ½ price if they take a space

remaining vacant at 8am. By paying the full rental rate they can rent any unreserved market

space prior to 8 am.

**The Benefits of Joining the BVFMA**

* participate in setting rules and policies and making decisions on the Market’s future
* liability insurance
* increased exposure for advertising

**BVFMA Directors for 2009**

President Mark Fisher (8?6-90?5)

Vice-President: Manfred Wittwer (8?6-5168)

Secretary-Treasurer: Megan D’Arcy (8??-88?2)

Directors:

Arlene Huisman (8??-?5??)

Nancy Duursma (8?6-5?11)

Robin Hawes (8??-8?6-59?6)

Alicen Keamarden (8??-?119)

Franzi Cody (8?6-5??6)