



Michigan Citizen 35th Anniversary

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Half way there: Eastern Market transforming ahead of 125th anniversary

Posted by: [The Michigan Citizen](#) Posted date: [January 20, 2013](#) In: [Fresh Ideas](#) | comment : 0

By [Dan Carmody](#)

Since 1891 Eastern Market has connected residents with food producers. In 2016, Eastern Market will be celebrating its 125th anniversary and we intend to celebrate by working over the next three years to complete the transformation that Eastern Market Corporation (EMC) — the nonprofit that manages the market — has been implementing over the past few years.

What's ahead?

Completion of Shed 5

Currently under construction, Shed 5 will include three distinct features when completed. The heart of our plant and flower sales will be enhanced with better lighting and watering, the Eastern Market Community Kitchen will allow us to increase our incubation of food businesses and our engagement and education offerings with regard to healthier eating, and the Eastern Market Commons Room and the Shed 5 Plaza will provide more space for sitting on busy market days and for community events at other times.

Completion of Shed 5 will also allow the launch of the Sunday Market. It will be the site for the Eastern Market Sunday Brunch one of the three features that will insure that the Sunday Market is a completely different experience than the Saturday Market. The other two features are the use of Sheds 2 and 3 for the sale of Michigan Made Arts & Crafts, collectibles, antiques and flea market items, and the use of Sheds 4 and 6 by area car, truck, tractor and motorcycle clubs for display of their prized possessions.

Healthy Market Hall

Eastern Market strives to be a source of good food seven days a week — not just on the days the market is open. Long on our list has been the development of a market hall that features permanent vendors selling great food all week long. While there are a number of excellent food businesses around the market none of them offer the diversity of fruits and vegetables — found at the Saturday or Tuesday markets.

To make healthy food available at more times throughout the week, EMC is working with the new owners of Gratiot Central Market to expand that great butcher shop. By adding some of the following options into the building just east of that market (purchased recently by EMC) we will be able to help Gratiot Central Market diversify its products:

- Eastern Market Farm Stand — A great selection of fruits and vegetables six days a week.
- Drop In Food Clinic — A joint venture with area health care providers, insurers and MSU Extension to provide information about healthier eating for those with diet related illnesses.
- Community Restaurant — A restaurant with a delicious healthy food menu where patrons pay what they can afford.

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- Gratiot Commons — A flexible space for community events and for use by street vendors on days with inclement weather.

Greenway System completion and streetscape improvements

Federal funding has been secured to complete Phase II of the Dequindre Cut greenway from Gratiot to Mack avenues (a bike trail will continue from Mack to Hamtramck via city streets) and to complete Phase IV of the Midtown Loop from Mack and John R to intersect with the Dequindre Greenway at Wilkins. This will enable walkers, bikers and runners to move between Wayne State, DMC, Eastern Market, the riverfront and downtown, helping connect workplaces with residences, shopping and recreation.


In addition, Phase I of Eastern Market streetscape will improve the pedestrian safety and appearance of Russell Street, Market Street, the Fisher Freeway service drives and the big parking lot at the north end of the market. This will better connect Shed 2 with Gratiot Central Market and provide additional sanctioned street vendor spaces in areas with high pedestrian traffic.

Other projects to be completed include the replacement of three bridges along the Dequindre Cut, better pedestrian and vehicular way-finding systems, improvements to the Eastern Market Parking Garage and a replacement for Shed 4.

Lots of dust will be flying around Eastern Market over the next three and one half years but mark your calendars for July 1-3, 2016 when we will celebrate the midpoint in Eastern Market's 250-year journey!

The next few years will be exciting ones at Eastern Market. If you have any ideas to grow the market please contact me at dcarmody@detroiteasternmarket.com. I would love to hear from you.


Dan Carmody is the president of Eastern Market.

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