



# News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Cooperative Extension

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## **Farmers Market Study Presented, Available Online**

FAYETTEVILLE – Consultants hired by Cumberland County Cooperative Extension presented their farmers market feasibility study findings today.

Cooperative Extension used grant funding from the N.C. Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund to hire The Earthwise Company to research and assess the best options for locating, re-organizing, managing, marketing, and operating a larger, more responsive farmers market in the county. The consultants gathered community input through public meetings, stakeholder interviews and an online survey.

Mike Ortosky, Tony Kleese and Buddy Milliken presented their report to a group of about 70 people in the Cooperative Extension Center's auditorium.

At this time, the study does not recommend funding or building a “bricks and mortar” structure for a farmers market, but suggests using “pop-up” type markets that are “established, marketed, and managed by a dedicated, salaried manager, possibly expanding to more than one location.”

The most suitable location, the consultants said, is in the downtown area, near the current market location at the Transportation Museum and a short distance from Hay Street. They suggested four downtown area sites, with the ground floor of the Franklin Street Parking Deck topping the list. The deck would provide “an all-weather, shaded, well lit, and ventilated area of 30 or more spaces” and provide easy access for growers and vendors.

“While the parking deck is not specifically set up for a farmers market, it is designed with first floor retail in mind. Power, water and rest rooms are available in the area,” the study said.

The second downtown option is the Center for Economic Empowerment & Development site across Russell Street from the Transportation Museum. It is the proposed site for the CEED Training Center, intended to include a kitchen incubator, pop-up café, farmers market and greenhouse. The two other downtown sites mentioned are the Hope VI Project Area and the Salvation Army's vacant lot at the corner of East Russell and Alexander Street.

Once the market is ready to expand, suitable secondary locations were cited in the study for pop-up markets along Ramsey Street and Raeford Road.

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Additional findings include establishing a new Farmers Market Association, funding a market manager position and developing an advisory committee to provide guidance to the association and market manager.

“Since the location is suggested to be downtown, we recommend that the advisory committee discuss initial funding and housing of the position with the City of Fayetteville,” the study said.

The parking deck is civic infrastructure that is versatile and will allow the community to leverage money that has already been invested to get a market up and running, the consultants said.

The full Cumberland County Farmers Market Feasibility Study is available online at [http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/CCFM\\_final\\_report.pdf](http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/CCFM_final_report.pdf).

For more information about the study or Cooperative Extension, call 910-321-6860.

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