



Hamilton Farmers' Market Board Meeting

HFM Programming Report Tuesday July 21, 2026

HFM Programming Q2 2026 Review

Programming at the Hamilton Farmers' Market serves as a strategic tool designed in alignment with broader City of Hamilton and Market priorities related to placemaking, economic viability, and community connection.

Strategic Focus for 2026: (Excerpt from Jan 2026 notes)

As discussed at the January HFM Board Meeting, HFM Programming plans are grounded in our learnings from 2025 and will continue to evolve as a strategic asset for the Hamilton Farmers' Market while supporting vendors, attracting visitors, and strengthening community connection.

For 2026, these programming categories have been updated to better reflect current HFM programming goals: **Seasonal/Calendar Driven Events (aligned with seasonal rhythms and City initiatives)**, **Cultural & Community Activations**, **Vendor Centric Activations**, and **Revenue Generation**.

Q2 Review by Programming Category

Category	Individual Program Dates	# of attendees	Average Cost PP	Sample of Programming Events Include:
Seasonal + Calendar Driven Events	5	777	\$4.75	Spring Seed Planting, Easter, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Strawberry Festival
Cultural and Community Activations	14	436	\$2.52	Lil' Kids Club, Hamilton Philharmonic PA Days and Saturday Concert

Vendor Centric Activations	4	237	\$3.59	Paid Catering opportunity: City of Hamilton/Tourism Tour Bus Operator Day, Asian Heritage Month 'Live Market Chats'
Total	23 (Q1 25)	1,450 (Q1 1906)	\$3.62 (Q1 \$2.27)	

For additional context, the **Revenue Generation category** is broken down below by program:

Revenue Generating Program Q1	# of Rentals	Revenue Generated
Market Cart Daily Rental Program	27	\$1937.60
Local Showcase, Seasonal Rental Program	55	\$4830.75
Programming/Event Rental	1	\$ 300.00
Total	83	\$7,068.35

Q3 Preview: Fall Harvest Festival Update

Plans are well underway for our Fall Harvest Festival. Running from Wednesday, September 9th, 2026 (Supercrawl weekend) through Saturday October 10, 2026 (Thanksgiving weekend).

These Fall festivities will include a street-side green-installation (pictures attached for the mini park that runs along the sidewalk on York Blvd), York Blvd. pop-up event space activations (including evening hours), and harvest-focused programming.

The City's Downtown Revitalization Strategy team proudly supports this initiative.

Completed Projects and Projects currently underway include:

- Event space vendor pop-up recruitment:
 - Multiple HFM vendors submitted EOI and will be participating (May)
 - External EOI/recruitment is well underway (June)
- Bienenstock Natural Playground contract completed (green sidewalk activation)
- Local fabricator Art Aggregate contracted (modular event space vender booths)

- Special edition poster and marketing content in process, by local artist Tessa Presta
- Event space infrastructure projects underway: plumbing for vendor handwash sinks, work sink, and additional electrical outlets, overhead lighting purchased and install scheduled
- Harvest themed programming and marketing calendar in development



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HFM Marketing Report

Tuesday July 21, 2026

Q2 Review

Marketing efforts in Q2 focused on increasing brand awareness, growing digital engagement, and expanding the Hamilton Farmers' Market's presence both online and throughout the community.

Key highlights include continued growth across social media platforms, increased website traffic and engagement, the launch of the 'Birks Clock Experience' webpage, the second round of the Market Chats video series generating more than 15,000 views, inclusion in the 2026 Hamilton Visitor Guide, and the first digital billboard campaign across 15 Hamilton locations with 500,000 views (estimate).

Q3 Plans

In Q3, Marketing will focus on promoting the inaugural Harvest Festival as the Hamilton Farmers' Market's signature seasonal campaign while expanding awareness through tourism opportunities, media outreach, influencers, community outreach, event listing platforms, and paid advertising (direct mail, billboards and digital ads).

Market Chats Round Three will be filmed and released during Q3, and the Market will also leverage a new opportunity to promote the Market at no cost through Hamilton Public Library branch TV screens.

Conclusion

Q2 marketing efforts continued to strengthen the Hamilton Farmers' Market's visibility through digital growth, destination marketing, and new promotional initiatives.

In Q3, the focus will shift to executing a coordinated marketing campaign centered on the inaugural Harvest Festival, while continuing to elevate vendor stories, expand

community awareness, and position the Market as a year-round destination for residents and visitors alike.

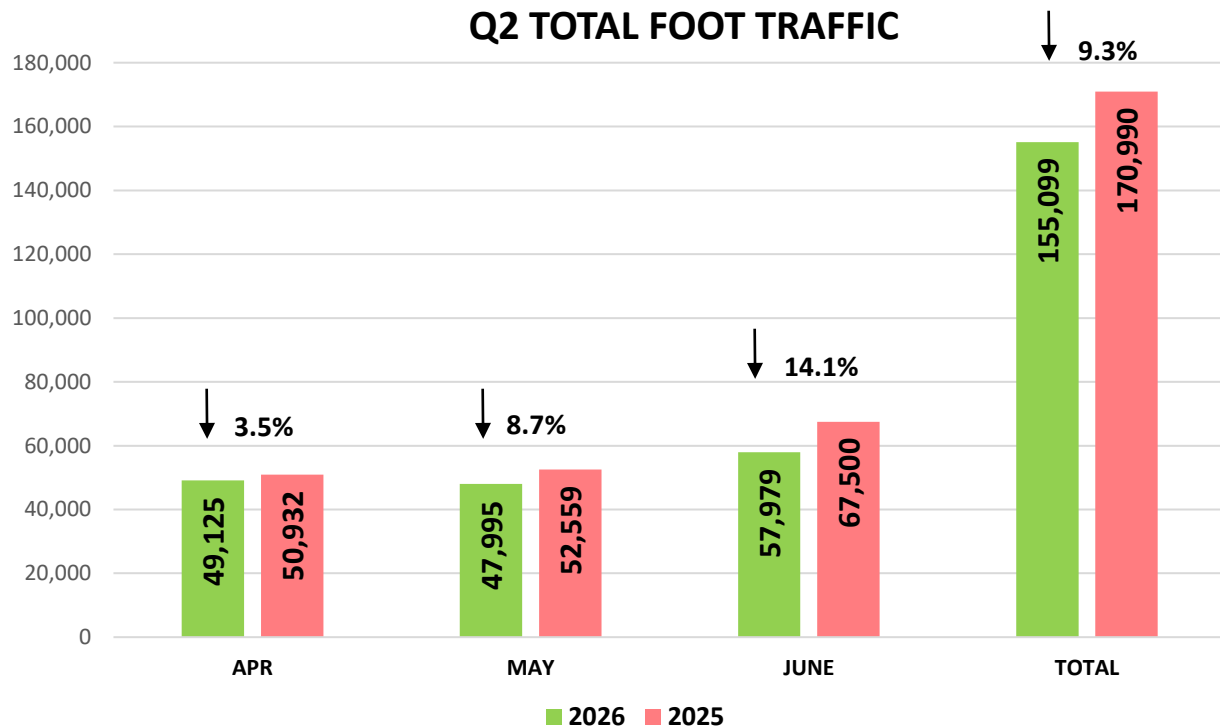


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Q2 2026 Foot Traffic Report

Tuesday July 21, 2026

Q2 2026 HFM Foot Traffic Data

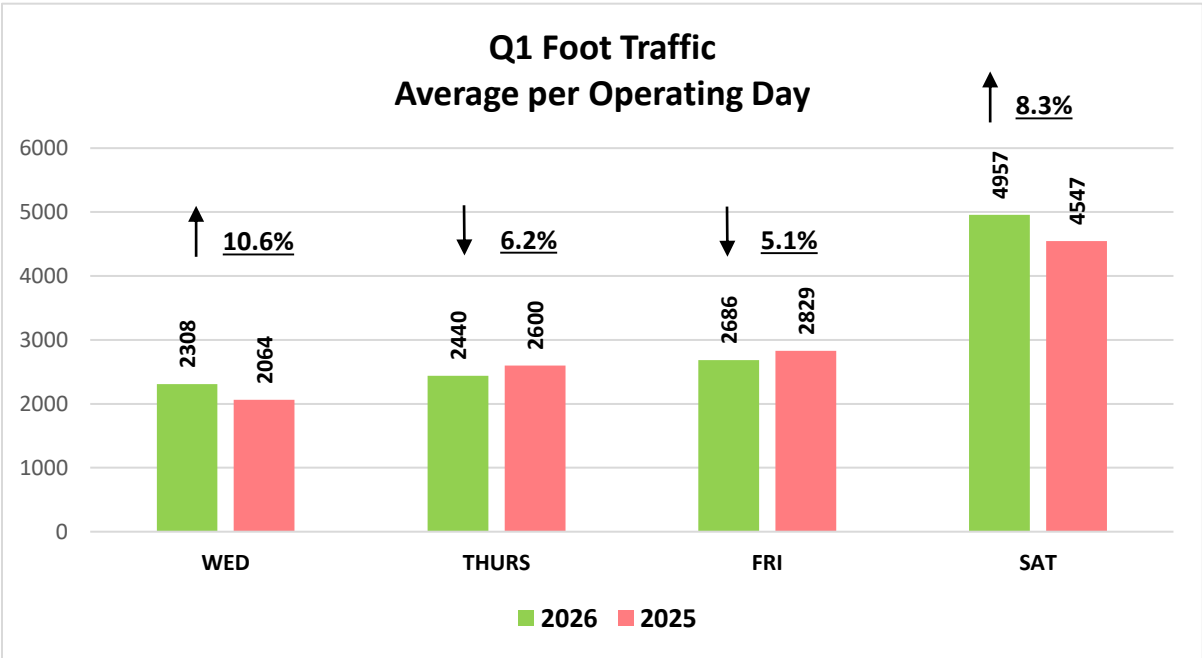


Total foot traffic for Q2 2026 was 155,099 visits, compared to 170,990 visits in Q2 2025, representing a 9.3% year-over-year decrease. Traffic was below prior-year levels in each month of the quarter, with April down 3.5% (49,125 vs. 50,932), May down 8.7% (47,995 vs. 52,559), and June down 14.1% (57,979 vs. 67,500). June experienced the largest decline, accounting for a significant portion of the quarterly variance. Overall, Q2 recorded 15,891 fewer visits than the same period in 2025, reflecting softer traffic trends through the spring months. In spite of external challenges in the immediate area, we attracted more than 155,000 visitors during Q2.

Marketing and programming initiatives remained focused on driving visitation and supporting tenant traffic throughout the second half of 2026.

Daily Foot Traffic

Daily foot traffic patterns throughout 2026 continues to build as the week progresses, with Saturdays remaining our busiest operating day. While Wednesday traffic exceeded 2025 levels in both quarters, softer performance on Thursdays, Fridays, and particularly Saturdays



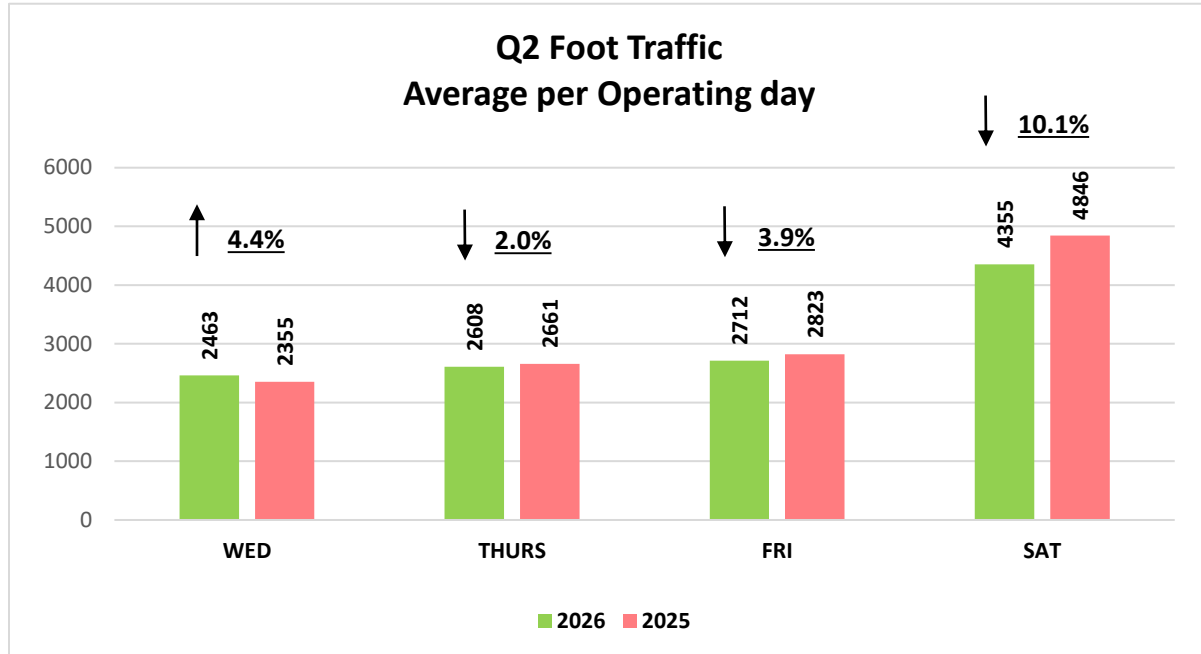
contributed to an overall decline in Q2 attendance.

Q1 Performance

Q1 2026 produced strong year-over-year growth on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Average Wednesday attendance increased 10.6% over Q1 2025, rising from 2,064 to 2,308 visitors. Saturday traffic also grew 8.3%, with average attendance increasing from 4,547 to 4,957 visitors.

Traffic on Thursdays and Fridays was slightly lower than the previous year, declining 6.2% and 5.1%, respectively. Despite these decreases, stronger Wednesday and Saturday performance helped offset the weekday softness during Q1 (Up 2.9% overall).

Q2 Performance



Q2 traffic results were more challenging, with overall attendance declining 15,891 or 9.3% when compared to Q2 2025 (155,099 visitors versus 170,990 visitors).

On a weekday basis, Wednesdays remained a bright spot, with average attendance increasing 4.4% year-over-year (2,463 versus 2,355 visitors). Thursday and Friday traffic remained relatively stable, decreasing only 2.0% and 3.9%, respectively.

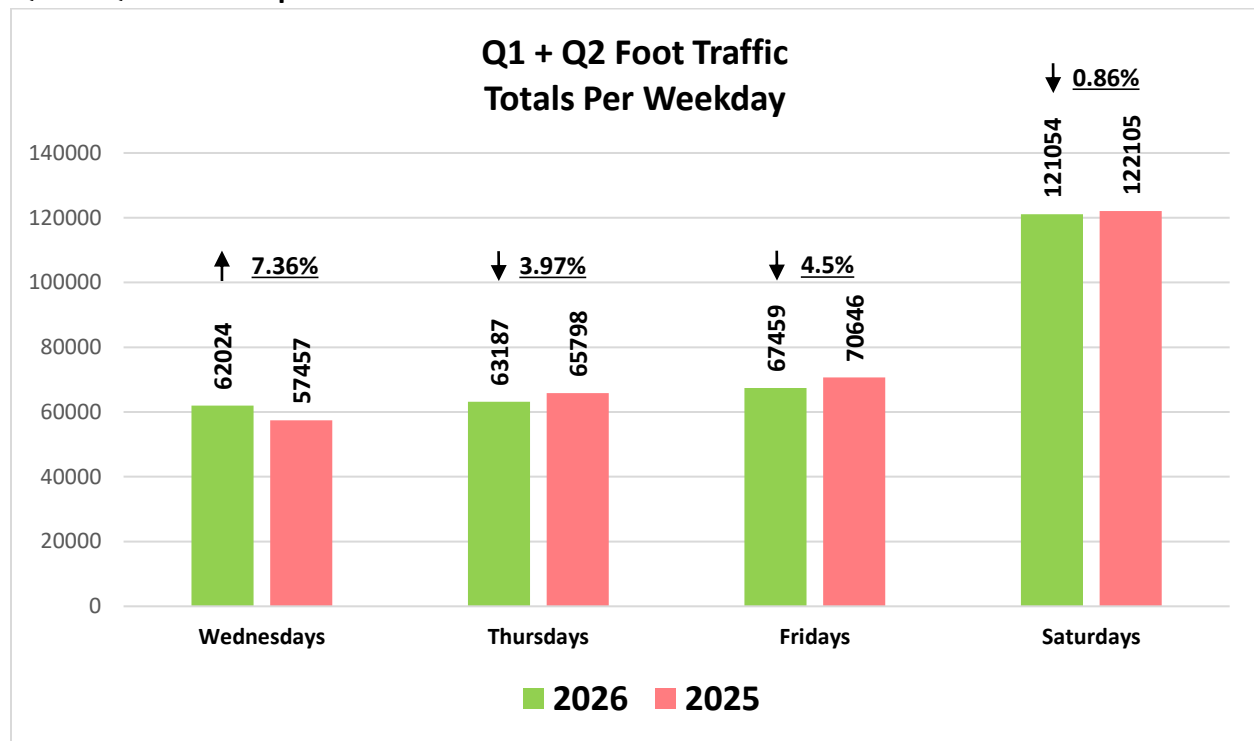
The most significant decline occurred on Saturdays, where average attendance fell 10.1% from 4,846 to 4,355 visitors. Given that Saturdays account for the highest volume of weekly visitation, this decrease had a substantial impact on overall quarterly results.

Comparing the two quarters, weekday traffic remained relatively stable and, in some cases improved,

- **Wednesday:** increased from **2,308** in Q1 to **2,463** in Q2 (+6.7%).
- **Thursday:** increased from **2,440** to **2,608** (+6.9%).
- **Friday:** increased from **2,686** to **2,712** (+1.0%).

However, Saturday attendance declined from **4,957** in Q1 to **4,355** in Q2, representing a **12.1% decrease**. This reduction in weekend traffic more than offset the modest gains seen on Wednesdays through Fridays and was the primary factor behind the lower overall Q2 attendance.

Q1 vs. Q2 2026 Comparison



Year-to-Date Summary (Q1 + Q2)

The first half of 2026 saw encouraging growth in midweek visitation, particularly on Wednesdays, indicating continued strength in our weekday customer base. However, weaker Saturday performance, especially in the month of June, negatively impacted overall foot traffic.

Several external factors have added to the challenge of building Market traffic. Examples include a shooting incident in Jackson Square, and visible homelessness and panhandling in the immediate area, which have added to safety concerns expressed about coming downtown.

On May 29th, we began tracking security encounters in the Market to quantify the incidents we are experiencing. Behavioral issues include drug related activity, theft, panhandling, and confrontational encounters. Over the last 18 Market days in Q2, we've recorded 38 incidents requiring security intervention.

The direction of our various marketing and programming initiatives continue to focus on maintaining weekday momentum while building weekly attendance overall.



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Market Manager's Report

Tuesday July 21st, 2026

HFM Vendor Occupancy On The Rise

We can now announce two new vendors, one of which is in the prepared foods category. Tasha LeBlanc, the owner of **Just Crepe N Around Café**, has recently begun operating in the HFM. Tasha is located on the lower level next to Chaton. As the name implies, Tasha creates a variety of freshly made crepes and is the Market's go to spot for hard scooped ice cream this summer.

Chris Buchan (L-Mart) is a local artist who has recently relocated back to Ontario from Quebec. **Lewis Mallard** counts among the many successes that he's well known for in the City of Hamilton and beyond. Recently featured on the front page of the Hamilton Spectator announcing his return, "Lewis" will be nesting on the lower level of the Market adjacent to the Artisan Market.

Apothecary Kitchen will not be renewing their HFM License. There are ongoing discussions with other vendor candidates, one of which will be replacing this outgoing business. There are two vacant stalls remaining.

Holiday Market Hours

Market staff conducted a survey of all Market vendors in developing operating hours for the 2026 Christmas holiday season. The results of which confirmed the following,

Mon. Dec. 21: CLOSED / Tues. Dec. 22 - Thurs. Dec. 24: OPEN

Fri. Dec. 25 & Sat. Dec. 26: CLOSED / Mon. Dec. 28 & Tues. Dec. 29: CLOSED

Wed. Dec. 30 & Thurs. Dec. 31: OPEN

Fri. Jan 1: CLOSED ... Market Re-Opens on Saturday January 2, 2027

NOTE: On All Open Market days', the posted hours of each vendor will be followed.

Santa Claus Parade will be taking place on Saturday November 14, 2026 @ 2 pm. Market staff is currently researching the resource needs required to enable Market participation. As in 2025, the parade remains on the Hamilton mountain.

Facility Repairs - Update

Updates on Facilities work underway or recently completed in the Market,

- Repairs/replacement to the Market doors at the York Blvd entrance,
 - Repairs to be scheduled with multiple contractors involved.
 - Stage 1: Repairs to the flashing was completed on June 12th.

Animals in the Market

Over the past few months there has been an increase in the number of non-service animals coming into the Market, which is not permitted. This often presents challenges as customers get argumentative. We are working on increasing policy awareness through improved signage.

Market One-hour Free Parking Update

Our One-hour Free HFM tracking data covers all Market days for the following period,

May 6th – May 30th

Weekdays (12): 576 Free Hours / Ave. 46 per Weekday

Saturdays (4): 943 Free Hours / Ave. 236 per Saturday

Total (15): 1519 Free Hours

June 3rd – June 27th

Weekdays (12): 589 Free Hours / Ave. 49 per Weekday

Saturdays (4): 1420 Free Hours / Ave. 355 per Saturday

Total (15): 2009 Free Hours



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Follow-up on April Vendor Attendance Policy Motion

Tuesday June 16th, 2026

Overview

At the April 21st HFM Board meeting the following motion was passed, with staff to report back at the June 16th meeting.

MOTION: Direct staff to report back to the Board addressing delegation concerns about the vendor attendance policy, specifically the consideration of a compassionate clause, optional opening on Wednesdays, and the sold-out clause. Provide clear rationale, evidence, and supporting data for the current policy.

Vendor Attendance Policy Implementation

The HFM Vendor Attendance Policy (VAP) was implemented on May 1, 2026 and staff have been tracking daily vendor attendance on all market days and documented an overall high level of compliance.

The stated goals and objectives of the VAP are:

- Ensure equitable compliance among vendors.
- Restore customer confidence that stalls will be open when expected.
- Improve vendor morale through consistent compliance.
- Build customer traffic through predictability of vendor attendance.
- Support the future vision for the Hamilton Farmers' Market.

The review of these three components of the VAP was undertaken with the focus on identifying opportunities for improvement, while ensuring any changes are consistent with the overall goals of the policy.

Compassionate Clause

Staff have reviewed the option of incorporating a compassionate clause into the VAP and have determined that a temporary allowance can be incorporated without undermining the overall goals of the VAP.

Staff are proposing that a one-time accommodation allowance, up to a maximum of three months, be made available to vendors for extenuating personal or business-related circumstances. Vendors can request this accommodation in writing, providing a rationale for the accommodation, and outlining what days/hours they are requesting to be closed during this period. Permitted reasons for accommodation would include, but aren't limited to, supply or staffing-related disruptions and/or personal health or family-related matters. Market staff will review these requests and will be available to meet with the vendor to discuss the accommodation if requested. Vendors will not be required to provide any personal medical documentation to verify any health-related accommodation requests. The intention of this accommodation clause is to provide adequate time for a vendor to address personal or business-related matters, with the intention that they return to their regular operating hours at the end of the accommodation period. Requests for extension or renewal of the accommodation will not be considered.

The following clause is proposed to be added to the VAP:

"Temporary Accommodation

Vendors may request an accommodation, up to a maximum of three months, to address personal or business-related matters, with the intention that they return to their regular operating hours at the end of the accommodation period. This accommodation must be submitted in writing, providing a rationale for the accommodation, and outlining what days/hours they are requesting to be closed during this period. Permitted reasons for accommodation would include, but aren't limited to, supply or staffing-related disruptions and/or personal health or family-related matters. Market staff will review these requests and will be available to meet with the vendor to discuss the accommodation if requested. Vendors will not be required to provide any personal medical documentation to verify any health-related accommodation requests. Requests for extension or renewal of the accommodation will not be considered."

Optional Wednesday Opening

Staff have reviewed the foot traffic counts from January to early June 2026 to compare Wednesday foot traffic compared to other market days.

Average Daily HFM Foot Traffic January-June 2026 (22 weeks)

Market Day	Average Daily Traffic
Wednesday	2372
Thursday	2529
Friday	2700
Saturday	4773

Wednesday consistently reports lower foot traffic in comparison to other market days, with current Wednesday traffic levels at 94% of Thursdays, 88% of Fridays and 50% of Saturdays.

Although Wednesdays are lower than the other three operating days, based on these numbers, there is still considerable foot traffic in the HFM on that day. It is Staff's position that introducing optional Wednesday opening would run counter to the stated goals of the VAP and detract from the overall vibrancy of the market, and consistency and predictability for market visitors.

Future Considerations

The HFM operates as a four-day/week market with a staffing complement and facility/administrative model that supports this level of operation. Covent Garden Market in London is very similar in size and vendor profile to the HFM and currently operates 6 days/week. Information shared by Covent Garden Market staff indicates that their Sunday traffic is equal to Saturday. In order to address lower foot traffic on Wednesdays, the option exists to explore changing HFM operating days to Thursday-Sunday to remove the lowest performing day and replacing it with a day with much higher traffic potential. A review of HFM operating hours is something that can be undertaken once the new HFM Board of Directors is in place in 2027.

Sold-Out Clause

Section 6.8 of the VAP outlines the requirements related to sell outs:

"Occasional early-departure due to selling out of product will not be counted as an early departure, but will be tracked by the Market Office. A 5th occurrence will result in a mandatory meeting between the vendor and HFM staff to determine options to prevent further occurrences. Incidents of early-departure due to selling out of product beyond the 5th occurrence will be counted towards the vendor's early departure allowance."

The intent of this clause was to safeguard against potential abuse of the policy by limiting the opportunity for additional early departures to take place due to the selling out of product. Upon further review, this additional requirement was deemed unnecessary, and staff propose rescinding this clause.