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# Marketplaces: Prospects for Social, Economic, and Political Development

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## Abstract

This article summarizes what we know about marketplaces in the United States, relates that knowledge to a research agenda on the subject, and makes suggestions for planning practice. This review accomplishes these three goals beginning with a historical review of marketplaces, focused mostly on the United States. The research literature on marketplaces is reviewed from political, economic, social, and health perspectives with suggestions for further basic and applied research. In short, the article shows how marketplaces were once tools of nascent planning and public policy, describes the reasons they should be again, and shows how planners and policy makers can advance public purposes through markets.

## Keywords

marketplaces, community development, food systems, economic development, placemaking, public participation, public health

Marketplaces, locations where vendors gather periodically to sell merchandise, indoors or out, have been central to historical political, economic, and social revolution in the United States and remain central to the political, economic, and social prospects for people and places across the nation. Vibrant “third places” attractive to “creative” classes have been the subject of novelists, photographers, poets, and musicians. Yet, markets have been castigated for corruption and sheltering illegal activities. Today, they are popular because of their role in food systems, placemaking, and community economic development (Morales, Balkin, and Persky 1995; Morales 2009a). Marketplaces of various types—public markets, farmers’ markets, and the like—are at a crossroads; in them purposes, old and emergent, are rediscovered and realized.

Local policy makers recognize the potential opportunities markets present but may have little experience with them or consider them marginal uses (that could be embraced, Fainstein 2005, 16). Marketplaces manifest people’s purposes and perceptions. Ostensibly, they are periodic and place-based events hosting small businesses and consumers. But if we focus only on the economic we miss political, social, and health-related purposes. Though attractive for these policy purposes, their spontaneous feel, and the sense of small scale they provide, we should recognize that markets are not natural; though no more spontaneous than a political candidacy, they can be as inspiring; since even seemingly unregulated markets have social scaffolding academic research has revealed.

(1961) did as well in his history of cities, debating the French historian Pirenne (1925) about whether the market or the city was more important to reestablishing trade in medieval Europe. Spufford (2002) reconciles these positions by discussing intercity trade and improvements in infrastructure, including markets. These writers underscore markets’ role in economic history while emphasizing how law served to create markets and how marketplaces integrated distinct ethno-cultural groups. In the U.S. books were written about markets (Sullivan 1913; Goodwin 1929) and their role in feeding cities (Hedden 1929),<sup>1</sup> and government reports described their impact (Chicago Municipal Markets Commission 1914).<sup>2</sup> Contemporary research includes histories by Spitzer and Baum (1995) and Tangires (2003) and their importance to immigrants is well documented (Deutsch 1904; Eastwood 1991; Eshel and Schatz 2004), as is how their history informed commercial redevelopment in the 1960s (Sweet 1961), their importance in food security (Donofrio 2007; Baics 2009), and in employment (Morales 2000).

By the early twentieth century, cities created nascent city planning bodies to establish markets that would tackle social, economic, and food regulation problems, even while retail stores were becoming increasingly common (Morales 2000; Donofrio 2007). For instance, Chicago formally established its Maxwell Street Market in June of 1912, the same year Walgreens first opened its doors in Chicago. The city established a Municipal Markets Commission, the composition of which

## Our Academic Understanding of Markets

### *Historical Context, Definitions, and Differentiation*

No less a scholar than Ferdinand Braudel (1979) attributed a central role to markets in early modern Europe. Mumford

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clearly anticipates contemporary planning bodies. It was composed of three City Council members, three representatives of social settlements, one representative of the Chicago Association of Commerce, one representative of the City Club of Chicago, one representative of the Women's "City Club," and one transportation engineer. Through this body's research, the city discovered the market's usefulness in ameliorating unemployment, extending low-cost food to underserved areas, and socializing new immigrants (Morales 2000). In evaluating the market, the Commission found that

1. Maxwell Street Market can be maintained without interference with the ordinary business and traffic of certain streets.
2. The experience of other large cities, both at home and abroad, has shown that indoor, outdoor, and street markets add greatly to the convenience and health of the people residing in large districts.

Finally, the evaluation noted that gathering large numbers of dealers within a circumscribed area

3. ... makes inspection and enforcement of ordinances related to cleanliness and health more practicable ... (City Council Reports 1912, 2326).

Clearly, marketplaces have a long history in integrating communities, economically and across ethnicity, while enhancing the health of marginalized populations.

By the middle of the twentieth century, markets took second place, if that, to the burgeoning grocery store industry (Pyle 1961; Mayo 1993). However, they remained a part of the landscape and became important again at the close of the twentieth century into the twenty-first century (Hamilton 2002). Over the last thirty years, cities have been rediscovering, revitalizing, and reconstituting their public markets through public/private partnerships. An example of this historical ebb and flow is the farmers' market created in Ann Arbor, Michigan, in 1921. The City moved it in 1940 to a space designed and constructed by the Works Progress Administration. By the 1950s, the market languished in the shadows of grocery stores and malls. However, it was a critical element of the Kerrytown redevelopment effort in the 1970s. Despite popular support, the City ignored the market and it dwindled in the 1980s. In the middle 1990s, the city recognized a need to integrate the market into various city plans. Thus, a farmers' market commission was created in 1998 to advise the city on the market from all perspectives. In 1999, the city decided, based on commission advice, to take an active role in market management and gave the Department of Parks and Recreation jurisdiction. The market has enjoyed great popularity, become the fulcrum for mixed-use development, and influences other land use planning. This example briefly illustrates how marketplace governance has responded to changing economic considerations, to citizen hopes and demands for local products and business opportunities, and to prospects for economic development and regional economic

policy. Today, people are reinventing markets for many purposes, but before we examine those purposes, some definitional questions demand our attention.

### *Defining Marketplaces<sup>3</sup>*

Consider the different names, functions, governance, and settings for marketplaces. Common names include public markets, municipal markets, farmers' markets, street markets, flea markets, craft markets, and swap meets. Among the functions performed are sales, promoting tourism, encouraging business formation, socializing and integrating the youth or the immigrant, and enlivening places. Typical governance is by public, private, and public/private partnerships that might involve hiring staff or engaging merchants in management. Settings include the public right-of-way, indoors in a variety of buildings, outdoors in parks, parking lots, or covered sheds, and elements of these integrated into market districts. This variety of names, functions, governance, and settings provides considerable opportunities for policy practice.

Regardless of their name, organization, or location, one thing is eminently clear: marketplaces promote multiple uses—social, political, and economic. Five elements intersect in identifying a marketplace: buyers, sellers, merchandise, a place, and, especially, a recurrent time or periodicity—the last of which distinguishes marketplaces from itinerant vendors or from trade shows or fairs held semiannually, annually, or even biannually.<sup>4</sup> Using this functional definition, we can distinguish between different types of merchants, merchandise, or governance strategies and combinations of these serve to support economic, social, political, or other purposes.<sup>5</sup> Academic research on markets is extensive and a boon to planners and policy makers using markets to achieve public goals.

### *Academic Considerations for Planners*

Marketplaces are multifaceted. Like parks or other multifunctional facilities, markets serve many purposes appropriate to their context and participants, but like parks, they can also be fungible and responsive to emergent purposes. Research on marketplaces can be separated by discipline, but doing so belies the interconnections between the various activities producing and evolving from markets. For instance, a private insurer, Kaiser Permanente, organizes farmers' markets at its facilities where farmers can sell produce. At the same time, Kaiser Permanente personnel can promote healthy habits of exercise, cooking, and eating, and the effects on obesity and other health outcomes can be measured in the clinic. But this public health purpose, though it motivates the market, is an incomplete summary of the market's benefits, since other benefits—enhanced psychological well-being from interaction, income for vendors, and organizational capacity accruing to vendors and the clinic or hospital, and so on—may not be measured. Thus, we need to understand and then integrate disciplinary knowledge about marketplaces to harness them to our purposes.

## Disciplinary Knowledge of Marketplaces

Markets have long been the subject of scholars working in less developed countries. This effort summarizes what we know about markets in the United States. The disciplinary knowledge is condensed into four topical sections—political, social, economic, and health. Following the four sections is the article's third part describing a research agenda and an integrative planning approach to implementing markets.

### *Political Considerations Associated with Markets*

In this context, "political" implies no reference to arguments for how marketplaces or other public services should be provided. That debate is ongoing (Savas 1987; Sclar 2000), and being fungible, markets are not tied to one or another position. Here, planners, as representatives of state regulation *and* civil society, should be aware that marketplaces offer diverse entrées to advance the agendas planners support. Markets benefit our political and public life by expanding people's experience of each other across race, ethnicity, or gender and by providing new venues and opportunities for program and organizational participation. Paraphrasing Jacobs (1961, 72), market interaction, lowly and random, is the small currency from which the wealth of public life grows. Consider the "public" component implies government, laws, ordinances, and the costs of enforcement as well as represents civil society in all its diversity and how they all combine in different ways to order social life. The "life" component implies process and interaction, often unpredictable and generative of new ideas, time both joyfully wasted and purposefully mastered. Our examination includes four sections, each distinctly manifesting "public" and "life."

*Safe and vibrant places.* Research indicates that markets often give rise to safe and vibrant public spaces. Surveys and ethnographic research from over three decades reveal that visitors enjoy the shopping and social interaction found in markets (Maisel 1974; Belk, Sherry, and Wallendorf 1988; Sherry 1990a; Morales 1993; Project for Public Spaces 2002; Alkon 2007). Generally speaking, markets contribute to public safety by adding dimension to how a place is used, thus increasing interaction between people, and so improving community relations. These perceptions come about via increasing and varying the "eyes on the street" and fostering "public responsibility." In other words, markets can "catalyz[e] and nourish [the] close-grained working relationships" among diverse uses that give each other "constant mutual support" (Jacobs 1961, 14). The physical design of a place or market can also contribute to public safety (Zahm 2007), but the presence of activity on the street (Whyte 1988; Duneier 1999; Sampson 2001) is well known for enhancing public safety. In short, markets begin to remake the image of places as welcoming and safe, thereby reducing the need for policing.

*Market governance*<sup>6</sup>. Different constitutional and organizational choices, distinct regulatory frameworks, and varying

degrees of enforcement all influence the roles markets play for merchants and for the public. The role structure influences economic costs to the city or enabling body. In the 1960s and 1970s, middle-class consumers created farmers' markets (Friedlander 1976; see more recently Brown and Miller 2008). More recently, markets are being reconstructed by public/private partnerships to repurpose a building, revitalize a neighborhood, or enhance the feel of a place (Fisher 1999; Tie-mann 2008; Project for Public Spaces 2002).

Discussions of market organization in the United States include Eckstein and Plattner (1978); Belk, Sherry, and Wallendorf (1988); Morales (1993); and ongoing discussion on the Farmers' Market Coalition Listserv. Basically we know that like other organizational settings, an existing market combines explicit rules found constituting documents and/or city codes and the like and the tacit knowledge of merchants and others. Clearly, over time, market governance will change. Take, for instance, Chicago's Maxwell Street Market discussed above. Until 1912, it was not formally recognized; merchants milled about west-side neighborhoods or situated their pushcarts at particular places waiting for customers. After recognition and regulation, the market management became authoritarian and corrupt. In the 1970s, the city replaced the management structure with a simple permit scheme and merchants self-regulated their access to vending space (Morales 2010). Finally, in the early 1990s, the city replaced self-regulation with a private management firm that reduced vendors' participation drastically and increasing the costs associated with maintaining the market (Morales 1993, 2006; Brookstein 2001). Constitutional and organizational choices structure merchants' behavior toward each other, consumers, and government. Good governance enables markets to embrace new goals and practices, responsive to opportunities and problems.

*Forging civil society.* Ellin (2006, 103) asks how cities can enable a citizenry that demands, for instance, a market. Certainly, planners can foster public development of markets as opportunities for more inclusive and participatory civil society in public places, giving citizens control over public services—an idea proposed by Arnstein (1969). By promoting markets on federal property, the federal government is, indeed, providing the space to realize different public goals.<sup>7</sup> Markets often privilege local, fair trade, organic, handmade, or other particular products. Shopping at a market promotes awareness and even transformative attitudes among shoppers, who, through connections to merchants and markets, see themselves not simply or only as rational or hedonistic consumers but also as actively concerned with their personal health, their neighborhood, and their community (Spitzer and Baum 1995; Project for Public Spaces 2002, 2003; Alkon 2007; Rosenkrantz 2009). Relation building "heads-up" consumption (Sommer, Herrick, and Sommer 1981; Fulford 2005) makes for interaction and levels social distinctions, hence integrating populations across race, ethnicity, class, or lifestyle (Project for Public Spaces 2002).

**Regional impacts.** Markets are part of regulatory remedies to forge, improve, or stabilize regional food systems (Project for Public Spaces 2003; Hardesty 2008) contingent on their rules and connections to the rural economy. Research (Spitzer and Baum 1995; ICMA 2006) reveals connections between markets and regional land uses. For instance, the City of Ann Arbor reframed its languishing farmers' market, invested in it, and began playing a greater role in market operations by hiring a market master and sponsoring an advisory board. The advisory board convinced the city that a vibrant market included protecting the region's farmland, and so, in 2003, the city implemented a thirty-year tax increase to fund the purchase of farmland through the "purchase of development rights" (PDR). In 2004, the city formed a commission to advise about purchasing farmland. This kind of visionary policy affects the economic viability of farmers and markets by protecting farmland and helping to keep farming affordable. Markets are long-term investments, not just in particular neighborhoods but in the regional food system they help establish. Thus, as McGrath, Sherry, and Heisley (1993) advocate in their work on a farmers' market, policy makers should promote ecologically significant bioregions or foodsheds to connect markets self-consciously to other parts of the food system and the larger economy.

### *Economic Considerations*

Markets can be exciting and historic cultural amenities. Besides becoming tourist destinations, markets can serve as cultural inspirations. Chicago's Maxwell Street Market is celebrated around the world for being the home of blues music. The goodwill or intangible value attached to such associations can be significant but goes unmeasured. Or a market's reputation clearly affects its business potential. Multi-method research has discerned economic and noneconomic benefits of markets and merchants (Morales, Balkin, and Persky 1995), and economic impact assessments describe the immediate and tangible as well as the distant and diaphanous effect of markets on the economy (Otto and Varner 2005; Econsult 2007; Bubinas 2009). Five categories of economic considerations follow. Each relies on a sociopolitical scaffolding, layering meaning and providing structure and multiple purposes to the economic activity.

**Marketing, sales, and income.** Markets throb with activity, moving to the beat of many drummers in a polyrhythm unique to each market, each city, and even each day. Maisel (1974) is among the first of contemporary authors to celebrate markets as "action scene," and many authors in business schools have conducted excellent research on the retail marketing aspects of markets (Plattner 1984; Sherry 1987; Miller 1988; Sherry 1988; Belk, Sherry, and Wallendorf 1988; Belk, Wallendorf, and Sherry 1989; Sherry 1990a, 1990b; McCrohan, Smith, and Adams 1991; McGrath, Sherry, and Heisley 1993), identifying marketplaces as significant sources of retail trade. These authors have discovered that beneath a market's exciting complexity lies an interwoven framework of relationships cutting across

business and social life, supporting economic transactions, and providing merchants and customers with working rules for participating at the market and relationships they use to learn about the activity (Spitzer and Baum 1995; Morales 2009a, 2009b).

By all estimations, the sales in markets are increasing rapidly. Estimates of sales are more common for farmers' markets (Project for Public Spaces 2003; Brown 2002) but are ongoing in flea market research also (Sherman, McCrohan, and Smith 1985; Rosenkrantz 2009). Survey research shows an increase in sales at farmers' markets from about \$500 million in 1997 to \$1.2 billion in 2007 (Payne 2002; USDA 2006). Recently, local food purchases from farmers and at farmers' markets are drawing attention as a component of consumer spending (Thilmany, Bond, and Bond 2008; Guptil and Wilkins 2002). Morales' (1993) ethnographic research produced reliable estimates of merchants' earned income, and numerous reports indicate that the incomes earned by merchants are considerable and important to their livelihoods (Morales, Balkin, and Persky 1995; Project for Public Spaces 2003; Rosenkrantz 2009). Furthermore, other survey research indicates that many vendors are satisfied with their income (Govindasamy et al. 2003).

**Business formation.** Markets provide merchants with income and employment, and although these financial assets are insufficiently documented, research indicates their importance to vendors (Balkin 1989; Morales 1993, 1998; Project for Public Spaces 2003). We know that barriers to becoming a merchant are typically low, which facilitates business creation, in turn permitting people to develop skills incrementally and providing time to form capital for expansion or to invest in other economic opportunities (Eckstein and Plattner 1978; Balkin 1989; Sherry 1990b; Morales 2006). Both men and women create businesses, but they do so in different ways, responding to unequal circumstances. Merchants develop relationships and networks as well as various skills (from money management to customer service) and knowledge that they can transfer to forming storefront businesses or to improving the quality of their social and economic decision making (Morales 2006, 2009a, 2009b). Inter- and intragenerational economic mobility is made possible at markets (Spitzer and Baum 1995; Eshel and Schatz 2004; Project for Public Spaces 2003; Morales 2009a, 2009b).

For some merchants, vending is a full-time occupation, but for others, it is important part-time income (Morales 1993; Spitzer and Baum 1995; Project for Public Spaces 2003). North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) categories indicate relatively few people are employed in non-store retail (category 454390).<sup>8</sup> However, this aggregate category fails to comprehend the relative importance such self-employment may have to particular demographic groups or localities or stages of business formation. Markets create small business and employment opportunities for farmers, vendors, and suppliers (Spitzer and Baum 1995; Project for Public Spaces 2002; PolicyLink 2008), and for relatively unskilled or undercapitalized individuals (Balkin 1989; Morales, Balkin, and Persky 1995; Cross and Morales 2007; Morales 2009a, 2009b).

**Business organization and expansion.** The merchant's internal business organization can be divided into three parts associated with merchandise acquisition, human resource questions, and operations. Vendors and storefront businesses experience similar product life cycle considerations, including establishing viable supply chains and lateral cycling (Prus 1984, 1986; Sherry 1990b; Morales 1993, 1997). Many market vendors remain content with and never expand beyond selling at markets (Tiemann 2004). Though, human resource matters, such as employee benefits, and operations decisions may seem foreign to marketplace merchants; Morales (1993) has shown successful merchants are sensitive to such issues.

Recent research examines business outcomes associated with markets. We have learned a number of lessons from failed farmers' markets (Stephenson, Lev, and Brewer 2008). Feenstra and colleagues (2003) investigated business outcomes and enterprise size in farmers' markets in New York, Iowa, and California. They found that most vendors are small scale and sell part-time from small farms or recreational gardens. But historical and contemporary research indicates that some merchants grow to become relatively large-scale storefront business. As businesses grow, they prepare for expansion by taking on more of the accounting and other administrative trappings of storefront business (Hinrichs et al. 2004).

**Integration with the larger business environment.** Markets have a synergistic effect on local businesses. Though conflict can arise between street vendor and storefront (Kettles 2007), the inevitable "spillover" from the marketplace stimulates sales at neighboring businesses (Spitzer and Baum 1995; Project for Public Spaces 2003; Otto and Varner 2005; Bubinas 2009). For this reason, big businesses are increasingly making an effort to partner with markets. Many large retail activities are also allowing farmers' markets to set up in their parking lots and even inside their stores (Burros 2008). An example of these interconnections includes an entire class of restaurants buying from local markets and growers and changing their menus to reflect seasonal changes in produce. Thus, because merchants adapt swiftly to changing conditions and because markets are fungible and adaptable, cities and community organizations can utilize different kinds of markets and different ways of organizing markets to complement their economic development strategies (Berk and Associates 2004). Additionally, vendors often use professional services and connect to other business activities, thus vending bridges to other employment opportunities, including wage labor and entrepreneurship (Raijman 2001). Clearly, markets can function as a hub of spokes, anchoring and serving store/restaurant-based activities. Markets can repurpose buildings and public spaces. They boost tourism, furthering a typical economic goal of many communities (Berk and Associates 2004; Project for Public Spaces 2002).<sup>9</sup> Markets can play in diversifying business activity and creating multiuse and multi-scaled economic environments.

**Other economic questions.** Income earned from vending might not be completely reported for a variety of reasons (Morales

1998).<sup>10</sup> Developers who utilize historical preservation tax credits often revitalize markets, and sometimes cities subsidize market operations (Wojno 1991). However, according to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), about 80 percent of farmers' markets are self-sustaining, meaning managed solely from fees charged to merchants. The other 20 percent of farmers' markets use grants or other sources of funding to manage operations (USDA 2008). City-organized markets often charge vending fees to offset the costs of market management. Merchants reduce the costs associated with management by self-organizing some aspects of markets. Markets are not only a link in an international (or local) merchandise supply chain; besides providing a low-cost sales outlet for local and regional products (Diamond, Barham, and Tropp 2009), they are also places that inspire or host a variety of other creative activities and uses.

### *Sociological Issues of Markets*

Markets are tools for integrating activities, people, and spaces. Historically, they encourage acceptance of the stranger and immigrant into society (Simmel 1950; Reiss 1964), and contemporary research expands these concerns into public space (Balkin and Mier 2001), the sacred and the profane (Belk, Wallendorf, and Sherry 1989; Sherry 1990a), risk taking (Morales 1997), the quality of the work environment (Govindasamy et al. 2003), and most every other human concern. Markets are liminal places where social rules or expectations are suspended or replaced in favor of a variety of experiences inclusive of trade but also where identities are explored and noneconomic agendas are promoted. In this environment, expectations, relationships, and roles are negotiated and recreated.

"Third place" is the term coined by Oldenburg (1989) to capture the variety of places where community is practiced in spontaneous interaction. Markets are increasingly being described as sites of informal association in that they bring together disparate groups, exposing them to distinct interactions, renewing community spirit, and reconstituting public spaces by producing fluid places that promote interaction, level social hierarchies, and encourage experimentation (Sherry 1990a; Chase, Crawford, and Kaliski 1999; Project for Public Spaces 2002; Watson 2009). Further, we can expect markets to develop their own personality (Baber and Frongillo 2003; Tiemann 2008).

Gender roles in markets provide fascinating studies useful for expanding the pool of entrepreneurial talent. Recently, Watson (2009) describes the variety of recreational and shopping purposes women have for markets in Britain. Various reports describe women as consumers (Moon 2006, Lee et al. 2008). In the United States, women are not often described as merchants (Belk, Sherry, and Wallendorf 1988, 461). Recently, survey research in Los Angeles, however, finds women and men equally represented as vendors in area markets (Rosenkrantz 2009), but we know little about how they became merchants or the outcomes associated with vending. The clearest examples of how women become vendors are found in Morales (2009a, 2009b). That research indicates that occasionally

women merchants practice a variety of gender roles, from stereotyped and marginalized practitioners to proactive and strategic negotiators of economic opportunity.

Ethnicity and immigration status remain salient features of marketplaces, but the conditions of that participation surface in different ways at different markets (see, for instance, Alkon 2007, Alkon and McCullen 2010). Ethnicity suffuses marketplaces, making them attractive to co-ethnics and others alike. As found by Eckstein and Plattner (1978) and Alkon (2007), race or ethnicity are not so determinative of initiating street businesses as are economic history and socioeconomic circumstances of the place and the potential vendors. Thus, no one should be surprised that members of any local ethnic groups will have representatives selling at a market. It is, however, important for planners to recognize two things—first, that markets are a social opportunity that can bridge ethnic groups and, second, that flexible governance structures can accommodate ethnic variation in household/business organization.

### *Health and Food Connections with Marketplaces*

Clearly, markets are attractive opportunities to develop local flavor and a distinct taste of place. But markets, especially in the form of prepared food or farmers' markets, are also useful vehicles for individual and public health (Ashman et al. 1993; Treuhaft and Karpyn 2010). Even as vendors are rightfully castigated for providing unhealthy food choices (Goetz and Wolstein 2007; but see Morales and Kettles 2009b), many other authors describe the general potential of markets and vendors to provide safe and healthy food (Morales and Kettles 2009b). Some market/vendor initiatives have been developed by the private sector, notably Kaiser Permanente, but many come from the public sector, for instance programs developed by the USDA Agriculture Marketing Service. Planners can address food-related inequalities by helping establish markets as cities did until the early twentieth century.

A century ago, nascent planning bodies developed terminal and public markets to help wrest regional food systems into being;<sup>11</sup> today, health, environment, and economic development planners can help correct some of the egregious failures of the global food system by focusing again on local and regional food systems.<sup>12</sup> "Food deserts" (Eisenhauer 2001; Wrigley, Guy, and Lowe 2002; USDA 2008) result in part from the market-driven decisions of major corporations and in part from the supply-chain economics of small business. Regional chains fled inner cities in the 1960s and 1970s. Inner-city supermarkets frequently have higher prices and a smaller selection of fresh, nutritious foods than do stores in wealthier neighborhoods (Sloane 2004). The reemergence of farmers' markets is tied to the middle class and often to suburban environments and interests in healthy food, but cities are redeveloping ordinances promoting markets and connecting them to health goals (Morales and Kettles 2009b).

Markets are great resources for community health through creating more sustainable, environmentally friendly living spaces. Food policy advocates (for instance the Robert Woods

Johnson Foundation; The Food Trust; and The Project for Public Space) are making farmers and other markets part of multi-pronged strategies (inclusive of supermarkets and corner stores) for improving urban health and food equity (Flournoy and Treuhaft 2005; Treuhaft and Karpyn 2010). Demand from farmers' market merchants and support from the federal government has increased the use of electronic benefit transfer machines, allowing consumers to spend federal food program benefits at markets.<sup>13</sup> Markets are a conduit for health and nutritional information, services, and products. Several markets have incorporated health services and nutritional education such as health screenings, immunizations, and cooking classes that would otherwise never reach community members.<sup>14</sup> Markets, especially farmers' markets, are among the popular tools for supporting public health (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation 2008; Lee et al. 2008) because they make healthy food readily available, thus treating obesity and reinforcing the idea of good nutrition. In short, markets can increase physical activity, social health, and emotional well-being (Health Care Without Harm 2007; Project for Public Spaces 2002; Moon 2006; Fried 2005).<sup>15</sup>

Finally, emerging research exists on markets' environmental health and ecological impact. Bentley and Barker (2005) report research comparing the food miles and greenhouse gases produced transporting food to Toronto's Dufferin Mall No Frills Supermarket and the Dufferin Grove farmers' market. Significant differences were found: about six times more greenhouse gases were produced moving the food to the supermarket than to the farmers' market. This report did not discuss the amount of greenhouse gases associated with producing the foods but should comparative research generate similar results, then clearly markets represent a novel means for reducing greenhouse gases. In short, environment planners should realize that the health impacts of marketplaces extend far beyond individuals' health.

This disciplinary review has uncovered many points of entry to marketplaces; the planning opportunities integrate political/legal/regulatory, economic, social, and health potentials of planning markets (Plattner 1989). These many points of entry offer opportunities for practice but also for research. Though marketplaces are among the oldest, even the most obvious of entities, we have much to learn about them. The next section develops a research agenda for scholars interested in the topic.

### **A Research Agenda for Marketplaces**

This is an exciting moment for scholarship on marketplaces because markets bridge plans and policies and, at the same time, are policy tools that integrate both basic and applied research across many academic disciplines and planning sub-disciplines. Generally, research should explore how economic practices are embedded in social organization, given form by that organization, and practiced according to social and economic goals and purposes. These many perspectives and purposes imply that no single metric can capture the market experience; in fact, much of what is accomplished in markets

cannot be captured by quantitatively and requires qualitative research. Ragland and Tropp (2009), Tropp (2008), and Tropp and Barham (2008) present some research questions for farmers' markets; however, the agenda that follows is more comprehensive, beginning with historical considerations and concluding with health.

The recent history of sidewalks (Loukaitou-Sideris and Ehrenfeucht 2009) indicates the scholarly potential for further historical research on markets and vendors. Some obvious opportunities include comparative work on the diffusion and location of markets in the United States and comparisons of historical regulation and uses of markets as well as social history associated with markets. Scholars would do well to emulate for the United States the work done by Braudel on markets and their location and dispersal in England (1979, 25-80). We need historical work on how markets emerge in different institutional environments, with respect to distinct cultural traditions, and in different spatial contexts.

In terms of political or constitutional considerations, we cannot assume that all marketplaces work the same way. Regarding governance, a market may appear disorganized, but underlying the seeming chaos are multiple sources of structure.<sup>14</sup> On the face of it, there are three types of governance or ways to constitute a market—private, public, and hybrid. None of the three is well understood nor have we a good picture of the roles they play in producing policy-relevant benefits. Consider the private marketplaces found around the country: outdoors they are repurposing racetracks and other venues or indoors repurposing vacated big box stores. How are these markets organized? What goals and missions do they have? What local purposes are these missions tied to and how? How do merchants discover these venues or how are they recruited? The same questions can be asked about publicly organized markets and marketplaces organized by hybrid combinations of public and private. Basic research on these questions would reveal the ways markets are constituted; applied research would inform policy makers and others about how to create markets and options for governance. Another research question is how markets serve political ends, of organizations, and of persons interested in expressing their views. Observational, survey, and interview research can help us understand who uses markets for political purposes, why they do so, and to what effect.

Governance is likely related to economic, social, and legal questions. How, for instance, is governance related to the types and degree of benefits, jobs for instance, created in a market? Is governance related to the types and degree of costs associated with a market? Though the jobs created at privately organized flea markets are potentially as valuable as those produced in a public market or in other private or public organizations, we should expect that the costs and benefits may be distributed differently in self-organized, public, or private markets. Thus, though any market might be serving the public interest, we need to learn the mechanisms and processes that produce benefits and how to refine those mechanisms and processes to optimize the flow of benefits. We should expect the degree to

which the public interest is served would vary significantly depending on governance and structure. For example, a farmers' market can allow all foods or just locally grown food, with differences in community economic development and jobs. Finally, two food-specific questions: first, how do producers/merchants in markets manage interstate commerce? More than fifty million people live within twenty-five miles of a state line, so the merchants/markets in these areas demand our attention. Second, we need basic and applied research that locates markets in food systems and advocates for both. Such research relies on assessing and changing various land use ordinances, investigating the potential for regional allies, and bringing those allies into relationship with each other.

Certainly marketplaces, like most any economic activity, can run afoul of law and regulation, and we need to know more about the problems markets produce and discern opportunities to transform problems into challenges and even benefits for vendors, consumers, markets, and jurisdictions (Austin 1994; Jacobson 1994; Morales 1998). This will require experimentation with law and evaluation of those experiments in licensing, taxation, and other legal regulations. At the same time, we need to ask how markets contribute to safe and vibrant places, following through on ongoing work on environmental design (Zahm 2007) and public spaces generally (Nemeth and Schmidt 2007). Work on markets would investigate safety in and around them and how social and physical design enhances that safety. These questions also address the larger debate on public space—debates planners engage in with great interest (Bannerjee 2001; Schaller and Modan 2005).

Economic research is central to understanding markets. Measurement is at the core of economic activity. Indeed, every seven seconds, the New York Stock exchange ticker provides a barometer of the economy. Street sales are mostly considered part of the "underground" economy. Our aggregate estimates of such activities are substantial (8 percent of U.S. gross domestic product [GDP]) and have been stable over twenty years (Smith 1987; Pozo 1996; Bajada and Schneider 2005). But little is known about the contribution of street vending to the underground economy; estimates are needed. Economic statistics should comprehend the reemergence of this important activity. Until 1940, "peddler" was a census occupation category. Perhaps, it should be so again. We should certainly investigate the work conditions of the men and women employed in this category and develop a comparative sense of work conditions by gender and age across the range of employment activities. Multi-method research should investigate the employment practices of market businesses and especially the influence of employment on the children of owners or child employees of these businesses (Estrada-Loy and Hondagnue-Sotelo 2011). Further research should specify opportunities for community or neighborhood redevelopment. Reintegrating merchants and markets into national statistical measures would facilitate such research.

Not every merchant seeks intergenerational mobility; preexisting habits can constrain such investments and subsequent mobility (Morales 2009b). Nonetheless, some vendors



transform income into investment in families, homes, or businesses. We need systematic comparative and longitudinal investigations to discover the range of skills merchants develop, how those relate to intra- and intergenerational mobility, and the trade-offs between investments in human capital and uncompensated/undercompensated family labor required for vending. In this research, we might expect gender to be an especially salient variable. Ethnographic research is eminently suited to investigate questions of economic mobility because it connects context for initiating business-to-business organization and outcomes. Paired with a longitudinal survey design, such research would provide us with a powerful understanding of the trajectories from business inception to wealth formation and the barriers to those processes for both men and women of different ages, labor market experiences, and ethnic groups.

Existing survey research on sales and income common in farmers' markets should be extended to public markets in general, whether publicly or privately organized. Additionally, existing data collections should be reanalyzed and disaggregated if possible for data from markets. Survey research on income is plagued by questions of reliability, and further ethnographic research is needed as a check on the reliability and validity of survey measures. Economic measures, like NAICS codes, are insufficiently fine grained and should be disaggregated into component categories and analyzed for their insights. Currently, we know NAICS code 454390 is classified as direct selling non-store retail. In 1997, 117,461 people were employed in 14,867 businesses with sales of more than \$14 billion and almost \$2.5 billion in payroll. Five years later, employment increased to 148,702 in 22,416 enterprises with more than \$22 billion in sales and \$3.7 billion in payroll. The tax-related research questions here include the three-way trade-off to merchants between paying tax, expanding business, and "consumption" practices that may include investing in children's education. Applied research on tax policy can discover modifications that encourage small businesses and enhance the common good.

Economic analysis should extend to property values. Voicu and Been (2008) have found a positive impact from community gardens; such impacts should be estimated for markets. Multiplier effects should also be estimated. Econsult (2007) has estimated multipliers based on the number and type of businesses found at markets, but more work is needed. More research on supply chains of merchants and innovation in retail practices is needed. Relevant policy is only possible through the actionable knowledge from quantitative and qualitative sources. With multi-method research we can better realize the economic policy potential of markets.

The Department of Commerce should join the USDA in investigating small business creation at markets. These aggregate data would be central to tracing the contours and importance of the sector. Further ethnographic and survey research would help local-level practitioners understand how best to enable markets. Additional research on merchandise might involve marketing professionals and would help planners connect business formation in markets to economic and

community development. Applied research can use existing and develop new market evaluation tools,<sup>17</sup> business management programs, and professional development training programs for merchants and market managers or other professionals. Such applied research can investigate the effectiveness of farmers' market advertising and promotion. This research must be produced in user-friendly formats. Furthermore, in terms of farmers' markets, research on season-extending technologies enables growers to enjoy a longer sales season.

To advance both applied and basic research agendas, we have a number of research/data collection needs. First of all, we need a census of markets. We need to understand some basic features that allow us to distinguish between marketplaces by governance, geography, location in the rural or urban fabric, clientele, origin of food, seasonality, supply, and so on. The Department of Commerce should join the USDA in enumerating markets of all types around the country. The country last counted every public market in 1919, and although we began tallying farmers' markets in 1996, we need a full-scale enumeration of markets (Brown 2001, 2002 discusses farmers' markets). The proximate goal is to identify how markets are created, organized, and managed, how households relate to markets and markets to management structures, and to identify the scope of market benefits accruing to other community stakeholders. Other research topics would include the temporal flow and changing structure of relationships and detailed examination of public encounters. This research would be important for discovering variation in the degree and kind of such relationships required for a smoothly functioning market.

Finally, there is considerable research ahead for humanities scholars and social scientists interested in artistic production (e.g., Gadwa and Markusen 2010). Markets generate artistic activity, in some cases giving rise to new genres of music (the Maxwell Street Blues, Herzhaft, 1992) or being substantial outlets for novelists, photographers, painters, and other artists.<sup>18</sup> We need research that describes the artistic productivity of all types developed in markets or from experience with markets. Thus, collaboration between humanistic and other scholars is not only warranted, but of great use for understanding the social organization of the arts, their social and economic impact, and how marketplaces are woven into the fabric of artistic endeavors.

Comprehensive and comparative basic and applied research on marketplaces and health using qualitative and quantitative methods clarifies and enlarges relationships between markets and access to healthy food, nutrition, and other elements of individual and public health. The relationship between market design and walkable neighborhoods should be explored and design principles to achieve various objectives should be developed, practiced, and amended according to experience. Further research on the role of markets in systems of food production and distribution (Morales and Mukherji 2010) and the associated consequences for greenhouse gas mitigation (Bentley and Barker 2005) demand participation from planners and scholars of different disciplines. Only a multidisciplinary and binocular approach will reveal the breadth and depth of interconnections

and the policy impacts marketplaces can have. Ongoing research should join ongoing experimentation with planning for markets, our next, and final, subject.

### Planning and Creating Markets: Stakeholders and Goals<sup>19</sup>

Implementing marketplaces is a subject for both research and practice. Atkinson and Williams proposed markets serve to connect rural and urban interests (see Atkinson and Williams 1994), and Shakow (1981), argued markets would improve urban service delivery. This foresight is in full swing today. Markets epitomize public participation in planning and public service provision and collaboration among planners, allied professionals, and the public is vitally important in planning, implementing, practicing, and evaluating marketplaces. Maintaining a tight relationship responds to Dewey's warning about experts becoming detached from the public's concerns, "In the degree in which they become a specialized class; they are shut off from knowledge of the needs they are supposed to serve" (Dewey 1927, 206). Instead of a public concern, planners should engage the public in mutually instructive dialogue to capacitate, discover, and use a range of policy and management tools. Thus, planners deploying markets as policy tools will do well to recall both the many ways people use markets and the expertise people bring to the activities in which they engage.

Since most new markets have no historical connection to previous entities, planners can move boldly to integrate a variety of purposes. This review finds that no matter the original or ongoing activities found or purposes served, markets *perforce* bridge diverse purposes and, thus, can integrate distinct policy arenas. It is this multifunctionality that makes markets attractive policy tools. Thus, an integrated planning approach for markets, sharing many commonalities with general planning activities, will include identifying stakeholders and their goals and expectations, comprehending the local politics, and examining different designs of place, relationships, and organizations in order to identify the outcomes made possible when establishing a market. Varied planning modalities will be of use; advocacy, transportation, housing, health, food systems, design, and communicative modalities come to mind.<sup>20</sup> Contingent on the scale of the project or jurisdiction, these modalities might be represented in a multidisciplinary planning team or an individual planner might move between the skills implied in these modalities.

Initiating the planning process begins with gauging community interest, organizational capacity, and goals and purposes for the market, assessing market infrastructure is key (Tracey-White 1999). From this will emerge an understanding of ownership/sponsorship options and the degree of involvement desired from the distinct stakeholders. Roles in public markets may include a board of advisors, a "friends of the market"-type of supportive organization, and a market master or a body performing the administrative functions of market master (Andreatta and Wickliffe 2002). These functions may include overseeing or providing for timely setup and accommodating

temporary vendors, fees collection, and cleanup. How a market is governed, who will vend, and what they will sell and when will vary. Partnerships can connect the market to other local activities, like regional land uses or to other local business, civic, government, or nonprofit organizations.

Simultaneous with discerning interest should be an evaluation of the regulatory regime. The regulatory regime includes examining relevant codes and ordinances as well as gauging how strictly they are likely to be enforced. This is not an argument or means for avoiding regulations; rather, in the words of the great legal scholar Willard Hurst, the "legal order should protect and promote the release of individual creative energy . . ." (1956, 6). Accordingly, understanding the existing codes is required for discovering whether they are appropriate or should be amended. Examples of codes and how they are used in different jurisdictions are found in Morales and Kettles (2009a) and in the sample code promulgated by the National Policy & Legal Analysis Network.<sup>21</sup>

In the course of growing a market, participants will also develop a feel for it, and from these impressions will emerge concepts including names for the market, the types and mix of activities it could host, and its place in the larger neighborhood context. Yet because the different participants will have a variety of uses and purposes for the market, no one concept will accommodate all.<sup>22</sup> One way to disseminate design ideas would be to produce a pattern book for markets like those long useful to architects and designers. Though in some respects, every market is a unique occurrence and should be celebrated as such, a pattern book shows the various ways to assemble distinct design elements. In the way architectural pattern books help organize and orient different stakeholder expectations, a market pattern book could describe examples of physical and organizational design, as well as potential connections markets can realize in their particular context.

This question of context concerns the interface between market and bordering neighborhoods or uses. The interface may be important and created by both time and physical dimensions like streets, or it may be insignificant in the case of daily markets nested in a neighborhood or in part of the rhythm of a public place. Accessibility to the market by bridging such interfaces in all the contextually appropriate ways is essential. In almost every case, there will be a combination of "bridges" including mass transportation, pedestrian walkways, bicycle routes, or automobile parking. A vibrant social context flows from a variety of participants with their distinct interests as well as a clear integration of market and related activities into the area's rhythms. As a result, most markets require no "brand" identification because they will develop an identity, one flexible for and adaptable to the users and goals.

Raising the profile of markets requires some attention to incorporating local organizations into the design process. Local business can refer to the research that shows how markets attract new consumers. Nonprofit organizations could become decisive stakeholders since participating in markets might extend their service reach in incubating business, contacting their clients, or supporting the community. As a general matter,

developing alliances between organizations could address market governance, but should also include other community connections, while remaining open to new purposes that new players bring to the marketplace.

When planning for marketplaces consider buyers and sellers in the concrete, rather than in the abstract, as we might be prone to do. In particular, we need to see buyers and sellers as nuanced actors anchored to places, their households, and other people, consumers or not, and accept that market actors are not always the “rational” decision makers economic analysis might suggest. Remember that markets can be constituted by multiple stakeholders, created and governed by merchants, government, and profit-seeking and nonprofit organizations. Through demographic and organizational analysis, planners should comprehend the existing structure of these various relationships and projected changes therein, as well as the various *perspectives* and *intentions* actors have when they constitute or participate in markets. Bear also in mind that markets can accommodate changing circumstances and public goals. Markets are dynamic responses to altered circumstances, and it is the dynamism by which they energize individuals and communities that makes them attractive policy tools.

### Conclusions: Markets—Tying Together Economy, State, and Society

Marketplaces represent the community, epitomize the community, and are symbols in the community. Markets release the creative, recreational, civic, and economic energies between the community and the individuals who compose it. The “magic” of the marketplace is in how people respond to their perception of the place/activity and how that response renews both person and place. Markets connect the natural world to the urban environment, and the two-way connection raises hopes in both that communities will develop economically, that farmland and food systems will be protected, that individual health will be improved, and that the natural and local will supplement the engineered and global urban environment. The market provides a halo effect in a community, and a vibrant market is autocatalytic, producing positive feedback loops in civic, economic, and social life. Although the market represents the community, its connections, and its aspirations, it takes relationships between outsiders and insiders to catalyze these aspects of community and to make operational symbolic hopes individuals have for themselves and their community. The market becomes a hinge connecting multiple perspectives to concrete practices in the services of many types of purposes.

In my view, the marketplace represents one route to community redevelopment in the broadest sense. In a prior generation, marketplaces might have exemplified a “wicked problem” (Rittel and Webber 1973), in that their complexity makes them difficult to comprehend from any one single perspective. However, in our time, I believe marketplaces present a “wicked opportunity” for practicing planners interested in creating multiuse districts that support multiple purposes. For practitioners, markets are full of extra-economic possibilities. For academics,

marketplaces are a source of important intellectual and policy-related research questions. Predicting *all* the uses and outcomes associated with markets is not possible, but it is the case that this unpredictability represents the creativity and energies people devote to achieving their various purposes. Planners should avail themselves of the marketplace as a tool to advance our research and to achieve our objectives.

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### Notes

1. According to the 1918 census of public markets, the U.S. population was about 105 million, and in 128 cities with populations above 30,000, there were 237 municipal markets. These markets had 17,578 open-air stands and 7,512 stands enclosed by market structures with the total value of market property in 1918 estimated at \$28,000,000 (Sherman 1937).
2. Notably, various sections in the 1937 *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* refer to markets, their history in Europe, and their roles around the United States.
3. This article focuses on physical marketplaces that planners would be interested in. I grant that there are many nonphysical markets (e.g., Craigslist), which are quite local but exist only online.
4. Planners consider markets a candidate for temporary uses (Gerend 2007).
5. This review will not discuss drug markets like those identified by Coomber and Maher (2006). Design-oriented planners can use examples from the Center for Problem Oriented Policing, <http://www.popcenter.org/> to reduce the number of such places and mitigating their ill effects on surrounding uses.
6. Besides the work cited in this section, interested readers can discover model ordinances for markets developed by Public Health Law and Policy at <http://www.farmlandinfo.org/documents/37866/farmersmarketpolicies1.pdf>.
7. See the instructions at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC5079490>.
8. This industry of other direct selling establishments is comprised of establishments primarily engaged in retailing merchandise (except food for immediate consumption and fuel) via direct sale to the customer by means such as in-house sales (i.e., party plan merchandising), truck or wagon sales, and portable stalls (i.e., street vendors). In 1997, 117,461 were employed in this category; in 2007, 140,330 were employed in this category.

9. Markets and street vendors are frequently found the Top Ten Places lists described in *Planning Magazine*, see also Fried 2008.
10. The clash between tax regulators and the taxed is discussed in Braithwaite (2009), Morales (1998), and Braithwaite and Wenzel (2008). The more generic problem is discussed in Wright's interesting book *Does the Law Morally Bind the Poor?* (1996).
11. Cities built terminal markets to expedite the delivery and distribution of food to cities and in some cases viewed the elimination of peddler markets as a progressive step toward providing healthier (and regulated) food for residents (Tangires 2003); other cities saw otherwise (Bluestone 1991).
12. See Raja, Born, and Russell (2009) for a general report on food system planning.
13. The Food Trust is at the forefront of this effort; see the research and outreach at <http://www.thefoodtrust.org/>.
14. An excellent example is Kaiser Permanente's system of farmers' markets at health clinics. See [http://www.pps.org/markets/info/market\\_profiles/food\\_insecurity/kaiser](http://www.pps.org/markets/info/market_profiles/food_insecurity/kaiser), last accessed November 16, 2009.
15. See [http://www.pps.org/info/newsletter/october2005/markets\\_health](http://www.pps.org/info/newsletter/october2005/markets_health), last accessed November 16, 2009.
16. Despite the appearance of disorganization or spontaneity, a number of authors—Commons (1934), Polanyi (1944), Granovetter (1985), and more recently Hinrichs (2000)—recognize the social and political scaffolding underlying economic markets and marketplaces.
17. The SEED tool (The Sticky Economic Evaluation Device) is one useful approach to evaluation deployed by markets around the country, see <http://www.marketumbrella.org/index.php?page=seed>, last accessed May 17, 2010.
18. The novels of Willard Motley, the essay by McPhee (1979), and the children's book by Merrill (1964/1995) are notable examples.
19. The Project for Public Spaces is a leading organization in the creation and evaluation of markets. See its work at [www.pps.org](http://www.pps.org).
20. Marketplaces are being established near public housing projects and mass transportation stops (Chan 2006). See also Massachusetts Department of Transportation at <http://www.mass.gov/agr/markets/farmersmarkets/docs/dot-2010.pdf>, last accessed May 17, 2010.
21. See the code at <http://www.nplanonline.org/nplan/products/establishing-land-use-protections-farmers-markets>.
22. For instance, a "Redesign Your Farmers' Market" competition was held by *Good* magazine. The contest stimulated many concepts (see <http://www.good.is/post/redesign-your-farmers-market-winners/>).

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**Bio**

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