# Grassroots Groups and Local Government: Exploring the Dynamics Between the Coquitlam Farmers' Market and City of Coquitlam

by

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# Abstract

This study investigates the history of the Coquitlam Farmers Market (CFM) as it established itself in Coquitlam in 1996. This project is an examination of citizen-led, bottom-up city building in a neoliberal and suburban context. Through six in-depth interviews with CFM leaders and City of Coquitlam (City) staff this project explores dynamics in the collaboration between the CFM and the City. This study finds that the CFM and the City hold different assumptions regarding public participation in city building, which leads to both cooperation and challenges in their work together. These dynamics are unpacked by exploring a series of conceptual, spatial, and relational factors. This project contributes to better understandings of the often contentious relationships between grassroots community groups and local governments.

**Keywords**:  Citizen participation; temporary urbanism; Coquitlam, BC; farmers markets

# Dedication

To Carolyn and my family.

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I want to acknowledge my amazing wife Carolyn who has been patient and supportive in all ways, including patiently and lovingly teaching me the difference between "its" and "it's".

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# Chapter 1.

# Introduction

This project is an examination of citizen-led, bottom-up city building in a neoliberal and suburban context. Through a case study of the Coquitlam Farmers Market (CFM) and the City of Coquitlam (City), this project identifies themes and unpacks dynamics to understand the often contentious relationships between grassroots community groups and local governments. This project seeks to answer the question: What are key dynamics that shape the relationship between the Coquitlam Farmers Market and the City of Coquitlam? This study finds that the relationship between the CFM and City of Coquitlam is shaped by the CFM's bottom-up and the City's top-down approach to urbanism coming into contact. This project explores the history of the CFM through conceptual, spatial, and relational factors to unpack the dynamics between the two. Exploring these factors provides opportunity for insight on both synergies and disconnects that occur in their relationship.

The CFM has been creating a space in Coquitlam for residents to purchase locally grown fruits and vegetables for close to 20 years. Coquitlam is a suburban community roughly a 20-minute drive outside of Vancouver, and is built on the foundation of automobile-centric and suburban planning sensibilities. Located in a parking lot in a quiet Coquitlam neighbourhood, the CFM is carving out space for a different type of urbanism in Coquitlam based on commitment to a human scale of development, vibrant walkable streetscape, an orientation towards the local economy, and is guided by sustainability priorities. Something unique has been growing in a nondescript Coquitlam parking lot, and it provides an opportunity to examine much larger contemporary urban challenges.

In order to study the complex relationship between citizen-led initiatives and cities in a neoliberal context, I am using the CFM and its 20-year relationship with the City of

Coquitlam as a case study. The work of the CFM is taking place in the context of a wider shift towards neoliberalism in cities. As this local group attempts to shape the form and function of their community, their relationship with the City of Coquitlam is, in–turn, being shaped by global forces.

### *Rationale and Significance*

The rationale for this project is to provide a critical analysis to lead to more productive collaborations between local government and grassroots groups. Through greater understanding of the complex set of factors and forces at play in the relationship between the CFM and the City of Coquitlam, this study seeks to provide insight to support more informed and intentional relationships between local government and community based groups. A more intentional approach is built through understanding both actors' prerogatives and driving perspectives, the impact of the broader context, and the reasons behind decisions and actions. By understanding the factors and dynamics at work in this case study, I believe that it is possible to better understand the struggles and challenges faced by grassroots groups like the CFM. This leads to a greater ability to understand and meet the needs of community groups working in contemporary urban environments.

Why is it important to understand and support grassroots groups? How grassroots groups work within neoliberal cities is an immediate and relevant issue. The CFM and the City of Coquitlam both exist in a world that is increasingly shaped by global economic forces, broadly defined as neoliberalism. Neoliberal thought and policy has defined the broad trajectory of urban restructuring and urban form in contemporary planning over the last number of decades (Kamvasinou, 2015; Peck, Theodore, & Brenner, 2013; Tonkiss, 2013). Cities are increasingly shaped by this ideology, bringing increased emphasis on flexibility in the name of economic advantage, rolling-back of public services, and a focus on the economic bottom line in city building. In the wider neoliberal context cities play an important role as a point of interface between the local and the global. Being spaces with a foot in both worlds, they are sites of connection between local issues and global forces, and play a key role in moderating this relationship (Groth & Corijn, 2005).

Neoliberal economic forces are not the only influence that shapes cities. Awareness of the urgent imperative to embrace principles of sustainability in planning and

life is also shaping life in cities.  Cities have become key fronts in the battle for our lives to take on a more sustainable shape.  Much attention has been paid to sustainability projects in large urban centres (Stokes, Mandarano, & Dilworth, 2014), but increasingly questions around a more sustainable future for suburban or "exurban" spaces are appearing in academic literature as an emerging focus for study  (Falk, 2006; Grant, 1999).

In both urban and exurban settings, efforts towards sustainability are being led not only by government and institutions, but also by a vast collection of formal and informal local actors committed to remaking their communities - and by extension the world - in a more sustainable design.  The role of upstart community groups in restructuring cities in a more sustainable way have formed the basis of many studies (for example, Portney & Berry, 2013; Tonkiss, 2013; Wesener, 2015).  These groups are important actors in the struggle for a sustainable future, as they often embrace sustainable perspectives that come from outside of the dominant neoliberal economic ideology. The term "temporary urbanism" has been increasingly used to refer to the insurgent bottom-up urbanism that has emerged to reshape the urban environment through direct appropriation and re-use of urban spaces (Iveson, 2013).  The label of "temporary" can be deceiving, since although their claims to urban spaces may be temporary, fleeting or insecure, these groups hope to bring about permanent change in the urban environment. The CFM is one of these groups working locally to create a more sustainable and progressive city through temporary urbanism.  Established in 1996, the CFM has been on the leading edge of farmers markets and local food ideas in the Metro Vancouver region.  Based out of a parking lot in the Poirier Sports & Leisure Complex, this market has been at the forefront of infusing ideas about food security, sustainability, and local economic development into Coquitlam.

### Unpacking Dynamics

By all accounts, the CFM has been very successful over its 20 years of activity. Those involved in organizing the market are proud of their work, and feel that it is successful.  Current and former staff at the City of Coquitlam also repeatedly referenced the many positive contributions of the market to the community, describing how it is a successful project and a good partner to work with.  The CFM has received awards and recognition at the local and national scale. Despite these accolades, staff and volunteers

at the CFM describe challenges in becoming a fully legitimate and permanent community institution. After 20 years of activities, they feel that they have not achieved the level of permanency as a community institution in the eyes of the City that they should have. The dynamics between the CFM and City of Coquitlam in a neoliberal context will be examined in the context of this disconnect.  Understanding how this disconnect has been produced between the CFM and the City illustrates the challenges of bottom-up grassroots groups working within a top-down neoliberal environment

I will argue this disconnect is caused by the friction produced by the interaction of top-down and bottom-up approaches to city building.  These contradictory ideas are a bottom up urbanism guided by a sustainability perspective, and top down urbanism driven by neoliberal priorities. This friction plays out through how the CFM and the City of Coquitlam construct meaning of spaces in cities, utilize public space, and work with each other.

Much of the literature on temporary urbanism speaks to how grassroots city builders challenge neoliberalism and monolithic definitions of space.  It does not always explain the shape of this conflict down at a front line level. This project and its focus on the relationship between the CFM and the City will provide local insight to these wider conversations about neoliberalism, temporary urbanism, and different visions of public participation.

By understanding and unpacking the dynamics between the CFM and the City of Coquitlam, this project will help inform more intentional relationships between community groups and local government.  This project will not attempt to produce a recipe for perfect work between community groups and local government. Rather, by gaining a better understanding of the challenging relationship between cities and community organizations, I hope to provide insight on key challenges that will lead to new potential pathways for better collaboration.

### *Thesis Outline*

To understand the 20-year relationship between the CFM and the City of Coquitlam I have structured a narrative based on organizing my findings into three threads

of interrelated factors. These three threads are conceptual, spatial, and the working relationship between the CFM and the City.

The first thread of conceptual factors explores how ideas and meanings have influenced the relationship between the CFM and the City over its 20 years of activity. The meaning of urban space is important; how a space is conceptually framed can affect its use. Spaces where grassroots movements can add new ideas to meanings of space is one way they can affect local discourse and the future of cities. Such activities produce the opportunity for "clashes in urban meaning" can manifest themselves(Groth & Corijn, 2005, 506). The CFM is a community driven project that the City responds to. The emergence of new conceptualizations of the market's space has the potential for long-term impacts.

The second thread of physical space factors explores the more concrete aspects of the CFM's use of public space. This thread deals with how the CFM has physically used public space, and is closely interconnected with the conceptual factors in the previous thread. This thread concerns the more practical task of managing and mediating access to the space the market occupies. How the CFM has been able to get access to the use of public space, and the City's perceived role in managing access to that space, plays a significant role in the story of the CFM. The CFM's claim to public space is built on bottom-up perspectives on civic participation, whereas the City operates with a top-down view of civic participation. When these top-down and bottom-up perspectives come into conversation dissonance is produced (Chaskin, 2005). This dissonance around space provides a window into understanding the dynamics between the CFM and City of Coquitlam.

The third and final thread this project follows are the systemic factors which structure the interface between the CFM and City of Coquitlam. People and their roles have shaped the relationship between the CFM and the City in the municipal system. These people and the system in which they work are in turn affected by broader ideological frameworks. This thread explores how the nature of the front-line working relationship between the market and City changes as people, systems, and political regimes change. The shifting priorities of the City have raised questions about how the market can find its

permanent home within the City's systems.  There is often a fine line between co-optation or successfully creating change in a system (Tonkiss, 2013), and this project will make some observations about this challenge for the CFM.

These three threads will be followed in two different time periods: the initial years of the market and the middle growth years of the market.  I divided the chronology of events this way due to dominant themes that emerged.  Chapter 4 focuses on the early years of the market, roughly from 1996-1998.  This is when the market was first introduced into Coquitlam, and the City responded to it.  This period was marked by the initial concerns from staff and the pushback from the business community, which the CFM and its champions needed to navigate. Chapter 5 focuses on the middle years of the market, from approximately 1999-2012.  In this period the market was established and growing, leading to a shifting relationship with the City.  This was a period marked by the growth of the market, challenges and tensions related to public space, and changes in personnel at the City of Coquitlam. This period was framed by an ongoing series of challenges that revolved around how the City and CFM worked together when it came to the use of public space. Chapter 6 serves as the main analysis section of this project where I identify the key dynamics between the market and the City and contextualize them in the broader temporary urbanism literature and neoliberal setting.  This chapter serves to describe and understand the market in the present as the product of its history.

This project begins with a literature review that contextualizes the ideas of this project within scholarship on civil society, temporary urbanism, and civic participation. Chapter 3 provides an overview of my research methods and analysis.

The CFM currently runs multiple seasonal farmers markets in Coquitlam throughout the year, as well as a market in Port Moody.  This study is focused specifically on the history of the summer farmers market that originated in the parking lot outside of the Coquitlam Recreation Centre in 1996 and is now located outside of the Dogwood Pavilion.  At its inception, that market was referred to as the "Coquitlam Farmers Market." Now it is referred to as the "Poirier Street Market."  For the purposes of this study I am referring to that market consistently using its original name, which many refer to it as still.

# Chapter 2.

# Literature Review

There are a number of bodies of literature that can help provide a conceptual framework to help explore the question of what factors have shaped the relationship between the Coquitlam Farmers Market and City of Coquitlam.  This literature review will examine the wider neoliberal context of contemporary cities, the forms and functions of civil society, the practice of temporary urbanism, and public participation in local government from a top-down and bottom-up perspective.

## 2.1.  Situating Coquitlam in the Global Context

The relationship between the City and the CFM is shaped by a broader neoliberal context. Globalization and neoliberalism have affected the shape and development of cities since the 1970s and 1980s.  As Peck, Theodore & Brenner (2013) observe:

> For three decades now, neoliberalism has defined the broad trajectory of
> urban restructuring, never predetermining local outcomes on the ground as
> if some iron law, but nevertheless profoundly shaping the ideological and
> operational parameters of urbanization.

Many of the "operating parameters" that are driven by a neoliberal agenda are relevant to this study, which includes social-state retrenchment, increasing privatization, market logic driving urban development, a delinking of land-use from popular-democratic control and accountability, an emphasis on image marketing, and a strategic orientation to courting mobile global events (Peck et al., 2013). In general, urban neoliberalism subordinates locally based notions of place and territory to speculative strategies of profit-making at the expense of use values, social needs, and public goods (Peck et al., 2013). Often neoliberal urban policy is driven by external pressures, while local concerns become secondary.

Neoliberal urbanism subordinates local concerns because the orientation of cities to the world has shifted.  In the transition to a neoliberal "flexible accumulation regime"

cities have had to reorient themselves to be more globally focused in nature; connecting and competing with other cities across international boundaries (Groth & Corijn, 2005). Saskia Sassen described how global cities are in competition for globalized capital, and are key points of economic command and control (Sassen, 2005, p. 40). Cities have oriented themselves more globally in their quest to capture world interest.

### 2.1.1. More Complex Contestations of Space

There are two observations about process of creating and contesting space in a neoliberal era that help provide context for the story of the CFM and the City of Coquitlam.

The first dynamic is the local vs global contestations of space in cities. Cities are home to a complicated set of voices and concerns, but globalized ideas and economic bottom-line thinking dominate decision making in cities. Globalized neoliberalism drives a normative perspective on life in cities and is based on sanitizing and streamlining the urban environment, driven by global economic considerations (Haussermann & Siebel in Groth & Corijn, 2005). Jacqueline Groth and Eric Corijn find that social priorities are subordinated to economic priorities, and "entrepreneurial approaches in city planning aiming at increasing mobility, international competition and image marketing, all too often tend to homogenize space on consumerist and aestheticized grounds"(Groth & Corijn, 2005). This external influence leads to conflict between local and global ideas on how life in cities should be formed.

The second observation about creating and contesting space in a neoliberal era is the increase in the diverse actors and disparate views that produce life in cities. The rise of globalization and associated interconnectedness has brought more attention to the complex nature of urban environments. City planning in Fordist cities was seen as a task of providing for a relatively uniform society in a system of mass production and mass consumption (Groth & Corijn, 2005). In the postmodern city, urban governance is based on a range of contradictory and multi-faceted ideas, actors, and priorities that make up cities. Questions about the 'divided city' characterized by inequality, segmentation and alienation and what values drive urban life are increasingly under debate (Kamvasinou, 2015).

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In the Fordist era conflict and arguments about urban futures were between large institutions who were "clearly definable with antagonistic positions confronting each other" (Marris, 1998). These confrontations are much more fragmented in the neoliberal city. The battle for the future of cities has shifted from large institutions with clear positions to smaller and more diversely fragmented ideas and conflicts playing out in urban settings. The contemporary city is subject to, "a multiplicity of struggles and confrontations, involving a wide range of constituencies and social actors, with many of these struggles, in fact relating to the cityscape" (Westwood & Williams, 1997, p. 5). In Coquitlam the CFM is an example of one such community actor among many others who may all be driven by different priorities.

This is the broad context in which the CFM operates in Coquitlam. Contemporary city building is guided by a neoliberal philosophy, which drives a very specific agenda focused on economic-based priorities. The CFM holds its own agenda and vision for the city, and is contesting these imperatives. At the same time the CFM needs to work within a system constrained by the neoliberal context and is just one of many other urban projects. The CFM and other organized civil society groups and associations are all actively advocating and pursuing their priorities for the City. The role of civil society groups in creating spaces in cities is the subject of the next section.

## 2.2. Civil Society

The Coquitlam Farmers Market is a civil society group. Civil society refers in general to the collection of public social organizations, associations and institutions that exist beyond the direct control of the state's sphere of influence (Friedman, 1998, p. 21). Civil society plays an important role in cities because it is through civil society where global forces and local ideas meet. Peter Marris describes the context in which contemporary civil society exists – that we are in a time period of the consolidation of global capital where many of the changes being wrought in the world are been driven by and benefit the global elite (1998, p. 10). Many authors have identified how these global forces exert influence on local government and communities, and that civil society plays an important role in creating and expressing alternate visions for cities (Defilippis, Fisher, & Shragge, 2009; Eversole, 2011; Mayer, 2009). Neoliberal priorities that shape cities from a globalized

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perspective promote a uniform picture of cities. An alternative to this uniform agenda can be found through the varied and fragmented goals of civil society groups. Within the heterogeneity of civil society come a variety of alternative perspectives and ideas. This is a source for the development of new practices and narratives about belonging to and participating in society (Holston, 1998). The ideas produced out of civil society provide an alternate path for that are separate from more globalized visions.

Many thinkers are careful to emphasize the point that for many civil society groups, their opposition to globalized forces is a function but not always the sole reason they exist. Civil society movements and groups form for their own purposes, and are fundamentally engaged for themselves (Friedman, 1998, p. 28). This opposition is also not necessarily a confrontation, but rather an expression of an alternative future based on local visions. In other words, civil society exists to mobilize on its own issues and needs. Community development scholars John Kretzman and John McKnight describe associations of people in the community as the vehicles through which citizens can solve problems (1996). These problems could be local issues like needing more greenspace, getting a cross walk installed on a busy street, or accessing local food and supporting the local economy in the case of the CFM. Often these local projects are the local manifestations of challenges to larger global regimes. Increasingly, academics are looking at how, through temporary use of space, civil society groups are showing local alternatives for urban development.

### 2.2.1. Temporary Urbanism

Within civil society, there is an emerging vein of urbanist practice that falls in to the category of "temporary urbanism." This is not a particular type of civil society group with a specific form, but rather an approach to organizing actions and realizing goals in an urban environment. The CFM falls into this category of urban activity. There are a number of elements of temporary urbanism that provide insight on the work of the CFM and its relationship with the City of Coquitlam. First I will provide an overview and definition of this field of practice.

There have been many terms given to the range of formal and informal groups that are creating "temporary" change in urban environments. Some studies focus on the ability

of these groups to find space in the nooks and crannies of the planned city. Fran Tonkiss (2013) uses the term "crack-urbanism" to emphasize how temporary urbanism works its way into the cracks of the urban environment, finding unused or forgotten space and setting up in it.  This includes not just physical cracks and forgotten spaces, but "a mode of urban practice that works in the cracks between formal planning, speculative investment and local possibilities" (Tonkiss, 2013, p. 313).

Other urban thinkers focus on the human element in this form of urbanism. Leonie Sandercock refers to "insurgent urbanism" – a practice that embraces uncertainty, potential, radical openness and experimental culture (1998).  Douglas (2013) refers to insurgent urbanism to describe radical appropriations of space, which takes the form of many things including guerilla art, street furniture, pop-up parks, yarn bombing or the midnight appearance of homemade urban infrastructure. Gorth and Corijn (2005) focus on how temporary urbanism is driven by informal actors from outside the traditional planning regime and processes.  DIY (Do It Yourself) urbanism is another common term, which explores actions of people expressing their right to the city and taking action themselves (Larsen & Gilliland, 2009).

Other relevant scholarship focuses on the intersection between temporary urbanism and economics. Ella Harris (2015) uses the term "pop-ups" in her discussion of how temporary urbanism is increasingly being employed as a business strategy, and the intertwining of civil society and economics that builds on the ability for upstart projects to be flexible and work in insecure spaces.

### 2.2.2.    Elements of Temporary Urbanism

In this emerging field of study there is discussion about the nature and impact of temporary urbanist projects.  There is a growing critical analysis of temporary urbanism and how this form of urbanism works towards a different city, if at all.  While urban thinkers are finding the potential for radical change in these informal and innovative practices, there is also a sense of uneasiness with how quickly and enthusiastically this approach has been brought into the mainstream and championed by cities and developers (Tonkiss,

2013).  What follows is an examination of the nature of different elements of a temporary urbanist approach to urban development.

### *Interstitial Space*

The temporary occupation of space is a critical piece of this form of urbanism. Urban thinkers have been paying attention to the types of space in cities where temporary urbanism projects can emerge. "Interstitial" space, or "in-between" space, provides opportunities on the margins of formally planned space for temporary projects to occur (Colomb, 2012).  These are spaces existing in the cracks of dominant urban orders, or 'residual spaces' left out of time and place (Harris, 2015, p. 596). There are a number of ways a site can be "in-between."   Interstitial space can be leftover, surplus, or forgotten spaces in between other significant planned places.  One fertile type of site is buildings and land left vacant due to dereliction or abandonment (Colomb, 2012; Groth & Corijn, 2005; Kamvasinou, 2015). As they are not the focus of urban planning, these physically interstitial sites are often temporarily, or permanently, forgotten by the planners and developers; therefore, other less formal uses are able to occur. Interstitial sites can also be sites that are temporally "in-between" such as being in the middle of a development process.   Spaces in formal planning processes typically have a seamless "before development" and "after development" state (Colomb, 2012, p. 135).  A disruption or pause in that linear process creates room for experimentation. Sites can also be indeterminate because they do not have official plans. If they are not claimed by market-led urban development with a predetermined end-state in mind the opportunity is created for intervention from individuals outside of formal urban space power hierarches (Groth & Corijn, 2005).

Temporary urbanism can emerge in more than just empty or vacant sites, temporary projects have also taken over billboards, streets, parks or other parts of the used urban environment (Iveson, 2013).  By taking over these existing sites and showing new uses, temporary urbanism challenges the envisioned use of these spaces.  The CFM did just that by introducing a farmers market – and a new vision of urbanity for Coquitlam – into a parking lot envisioned as having one function.

It is the vague nature of these in-between sites that provide an opening for new ideas. Often interstitial sites are "weak" in their spatial terms due to their indeterminate character (Groth & Corijn, 2005, p. 503), which make them ripe for being claimed and given character. The parking lot the CFM first was able to utilize was interstitial in nature. It was a parking lot in between civic facilities, without much attention being paid to it by the City. Furthermore, at the time of the market's founding, the City had no plans in place for the parking lot that conflicted with the market.

### *Changing the Meaning of Space Through Use*

Temporary urbanism projects are able to change the meaning of a space through active use. This is what occurred when the CFM used a parking lot not as a space for cars, but rather as a home for a farmers market. This shift in perspective brought a whole different set of ideas about what could be happening in that site. When temporary urbanism brings new meaning and ideas for a space, it can create debate about the purposes and plans for space. Temporary spaces create opportunity for clashes in 'urban meaning' to manifest themselves (Groth & Corijn, 2005).

Temporary urbanism challenges the purpose of a space through the active use of space in unintended or (officially) unplanned ways. Temporary urbanist approaches to space articulate a vision for that space through "minor practices and ordinary 'audacities' that remake urban space in immediate, if impermanent, ways" (Tonkiss, 2013, p. 313). It is the hope of those engaged in Temporary urbanism that by creating things that are happening on the ground, it will contribute to a "habitude of use" where something might stick (Tonkiss, 2013, p. 320).

The focus on future change through challenging meaning in the present goes to show that for those involved in "temporary" activities, many temporary urbanists do not consider their activity all that temporary. Fran Tonkiss makes the observation that the "polite language of interim use belies the tenacity of use" of temporary urbanism practitioners, whether they are gardeners or the organizers of a farmers market (2013, p. 320).

*A New Path to the Possible City*

Temporary urbanism also challenges how we think about planning for the future city, and provides an alternative to utopian thinking or top-down master planning. This provides an alternate path to follow when working towards a better future in cities.

Temporary urbanism emphasises the potential of the present. Temporary projects are able to trace out some of the contours of a possible city, grounded not in some better future to come, but found within current conditions (Tonkiss, 2013, p. 321). Temporary projects are able to show possible futures for the City that are seen in the present. Kevin Lynch wrote:

> Dealing with the existing city is the search for underused space and time, and its readaptation for a desired activity. We can explore the use of streets as play areas, or the possibilities for using roof tops, empty stores, abandoned buildings, waste lots, odd bits of land, or the large areas presently sterilized by such mono-cultures as parking lots, expressways, railroad yards, and airports (Lynch, 1995, p. 776).

Temporary urbanism is emergent in nature, another quality that runs counter to top-down planning. Contemporary top-down master planning emphasises large development projects and comprehensive plans. Alternatively, temporary urbanism asserts the flexibility of urban sites, suggesting they can be continuously transformed by a series of different temporary uses (Harris, 2015, p. 594). Temporary projects are places where tests can happen of the possibilities of other models for a better way of life (Tonkiss, 2013, p. 316).

*Bringing End Users Forward in Time*

Temporary urbanism challenges assumptions about time scales of urban development. Development and city building under neoliberalism makes "incessant appeals to the future" (Tonkiss, 2013, p. 318). The standard mode of urban development is that a developer will come into a space and develop the space for a future user. Temporary uses of space work against this approach by claiming space in the present according to the direct actions and use of those involved (Tonkiss, 2013). This brings forward in time the "end users" of space as people who are using that space in the present (Andres, 2012, p. 772). Tonkiss writes: "It may be a basic urban error to think about

spatial interventions in terms of end-users. These elusive objects of planning desire—given to bicycling through shared space schemes while maintaining a life/work balance—are less easy to spot beyond their stock architectural renderings"(2013, p. 320). The tangible presence of temporary projects, such as farmers markets, and the community members who participate in them, are powerful statements about who should be included as a user of a space in the future.

Contemporary development's focus on end users also creates a division between those who create space and those who are the users of space (Tonkiss, 2013, p. 320). In business-as-usual development, the developer is generally separate from the end user. Temporary urbanism projects challenge this separation. The CFM is both the creator and user of the space in which it is active. This temporary perspective suggests a rethinking of a number such orthodoxies of urban development of usual (Kamvasinou, 2015).

These different elements of temporary urbanism contain the potential for alternative paths towards a better city. It has the potential to radically redefine not only what space is used for, but also how space is produced. However, there are also critical perspectives on temporary urbanism that point out problematic ways in which it can complement a neoliberal agenda, rather than provide an alternative to it.

## 2.2.3.    Temporary Urbanism and Neoliberalism

Temporary urbanism can also be complementary to a neoliberal agenda. Temporary urbanism is embraced by cities and developers as a solution to economic and urban development woes. "Pop-up" and other forms of temporary and interim uses have become a "panacea for many urban ailments"(Ferreri, 2015, p. 181). Temporary urbanism's ability to work in collaboration, or even thrive, with neoliberalism raises critical questions about temporary urbanism approaches to creating new and more sustainable futures. What follows are some of the challenges identified with temporary urbanism approaches.

Temporary urbanism can further a neoliberal agenda by covering up the failings and negative outcomes of the contemporary economic system. Pop-up urbanism is valued as a cheap, fast response to the 'blight' of empty properties and stimulus for

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regeneration during economic downturns (Harris, 2015, p. 592).   Temporary projects offer a solution as a visual and experiential filler in vacant and disinvested urban environments, helping to transform stalled or vacant projects into interesting spaces.  It can put a polished look on failed, ugly or poorly designed spaces in the city. Temporary projects often are backfilling activities that once would have been be provided by government, providing quality spaces and quality development that the government no longer directly supports (Tonkiss, 2013, p. 315).

Temporary urbanist projects can also keep up the pretense of ongoing and successful development, even when that may not be taking place. Introducing temporary animation and vibrant activities to spaces are a way of giving the pretense of consistent urban growth, or the illusion of better places than actually exist, for the ultimate aim of a climate encouraging development (Ferreri, 2015, p. 184).   Temporary urbanism and economic downturns work well together: "Temporary projects are integrated into an austerity agenda so as to keep vacant sites warm while development capital is cool" (Tonkiss, 2013, p. 318).

Increasingly, temporary urbanist projects are used as a tool to aid urban regeneration programs, and critics fear that they can act as the thin edge of the wedge for redevelopment. Temporary projects are flexible and have insecure access to space, this makes them able to be brushed aside. "It is important to note how quickly the pop-up can become the tear-down, and the fine margin that at times separate the pioneer use from the urban land-grab, or the creative incubator from the developer demonstration project" (Tonkiss, 2013, p. 315).  Low-cost and low commitment uses of space can stimulate the economy by providing spaces to people in the hopes that they can develop a profitable business  or otherwise renew the urban environment (Andres, 2012, p. 760). Temporary urbanism, Mayer writes, has lost its edge and principles:

> Principles such as self-management, self- realization and all kinds of unconventional or insurgent creativity ... have lost the radical edge they used to entail in the context of the overbearing Keynesian welfare state— in today's neoliberal urbanism they have been usurped as essential ingredients of sub-local regeneration programs (Mayer, 2013, p. 12).

The problematic aspect is not that temporary projects are helping to support the local economy, but who is driving the program- and for what end?

Another observation of temporary urbanism is that one of its core attributes and strengths is its approach built on flexibility and scarcity. This flexibility of temporary use can work very well with the flexibility of neoliberalism (Tonkiss, 2013). The nature of many temporary uses rely on low-cost labour (often free volunteers) and highly unstable claims to space. Development interests benefit from flexible temporary projects which can "pop up" and be beneficial to the economy, then pop-off when space becomes valuable for development once again (Ferreri, 2015).

Many practitioners of temporary projects are beginning to embrace and describe their work in economic terms. The benefits of flexible temporary activity that produces economic benefit is a mantra that has been adopted by many professional and practitioner networks in the field of temporary urbanism (Ferreri, 2015). By expressing temporary urbanism's value in those terms reinforces the view that economic development is the ultimate goal, and other outcomes are secondary. This leads to questions of if, in broad terms, this approach is unintentionally reinforcing the status quo under neoliberalism.

> In the 'meanwhile' discourse, space can be transformed in only one temporal direction, i.e. a trajectory of never ending urban economic and real estate development, while social, artistic or political projects of common use and re-appropriation, being an exception to this mainstream imaginary, are relegated to inhabit the space of temporariness (Ferreri, 2015, p. 187).

Temporary urbanist experiments to show and eventually realize alternative futures to neoliberal systems continue to take place. This is the challenging journey that the CFM takes as it tries to drive change in an urban setting while having to work through the existing neoliberal system. A key part of the CFM's challenge in working with the City is that it views its role as a participant in creating urban space in a very different way than the City of Coquitlam.

## 2.3. Perspectives on Civic Engagement & Participation

The story of the relationship between the CFM and the City of Coquitlam is also a story about how citizens and residents are involved in city building. Underneath temporary urbanism's explorations of driving change in cities are questions and assumptions around who can and should drive the urban agenda. The CFM's struggle to claim and create space in Coquitlam can also be examined through a lens of civic engagement and participation. This concerns questions on how the public can and should be able to have impact on the urban agenda. Differences in worldviews on this issue create the opportunity for disconnects between the CFM and the City.

The academic literature on public participation is vast, but for this study there are two broad ways of understanding citizen participation in city building that underscore the relationship between the CFM and the City: top-down and bottom-up approaches.

### 2.3.1. Bottom-Up View on Participation

The Coquitlam Farmers Market is an example of a bottom-up approach to producing life in cities. This perspective holds citizens and residents as being important initiating agents of urban space and meaning. This perspective is aligned with temporary urbanist approaches that involve people claiming space and utilizing it for their own purposes in cities.

The concept of the "right to the city" has had a large impact on the discourse surrounding power and agency in cities since its introduction by Henri Lefebvre in 1968 (Sorensen & Sagaris, 2010). The right to the city can be understood as a call for increased urban resident involvement in city building. At a fundamental level, the claim is that cities are shared spaces and that citizens collectively have the right to influence decisions to create more livable places (Sorensen & Sagaris, 2010, p. 302). Rather than having a secondary role of a participant or client participating within government processes, this perspective views residents at the centre and as having agency to produce and create life in cities.

This right to the city is practiced not only through influencing decision making (though meaningful involvement in participation processes) but also through the more direct approach of citizens initiating change themselves. Lefebvre's conception of the right to the city sought to restructure power relations in two ways – both in the right to participate, and in the right to the appropriation of urban space (Fisher, Katiya, Reid, & Shragge, 2013). Lefebvre's concept of the right to the city 'reframes the arena of decision-making in cities towards a radical form of enfranchisement based on nothing more than inhabitance of the city (Iveson, 2013, p. 945). This radical form of enfranchisement are rooted in the day to day lived use of space in cities, and a critical idea behind temporary urbanist activities.

Bottom up activities, such as the CFM, are able to introduce new ideas to cities that do not exist within the dominant ideology and agenda. The right to the city is not just the right to have access and a claim to what exists, "but also to change it after our heart's desire (Harvey, 2003, p. 939)." It is a right to look beyond the present shape of cities and find a new vision. Unsurprisingly, given the radical roots of the concept, many initiatives that identify with a right to the city approach can end up being oppositional to the state and established power structures. In these opposition-based movements, the right to the city is presented as a transformation of society and everyday life by creating rights through social and political action. In this way it is expressed less as a "right" based in law, and more of an oppositional demand (Mayer, 2009). This "demand" however, is not always overt, and can be expressed not as a direct oppositional position, but rather a presentation of an alternate idea originating from community drives.

## 2.3.2. Top-Down Views of Participation

The City of Coquitlam holds a view of citizen participation in city building that is top-down. Top-down perspectives on citizen participation emphasise the importance of citizen voice and participation in city planning, but unlike bottom-up perspectives, power is held and processes are initiated by the government. Questions about the role of the public and its participation in city planning emerged in the 1970s. Thoughts on public participation took on new importance in response to growing trends of public opposition to

major urban planning and development projects, causing planning theorists to begin rethinking the relationship between planning and the public (Sorensen & Sagaris, 2010).

As part of this rethinking of power and control over decision-making, ideas about new roles for planners began to emerge. Planning was examined as a task not of just laying out master plans, but of understanding and working with a diverse range of interests. Staff at the City of Coquitlam mediate between competing interests as they manage the use of public space that the CFM and others make use of. Thinkers such as Paul Markoff argued for advocacy planning - that the role of planning needed to make efforts for a plurality of voices to be involved in determining policy, and the role of planners was to represent ideas of many interest groups rather than be a detached expert (1965).

Critical perspectives of planning practice have elevated the notion of public participation in planning to greater significance. It is the expectation of contemporary planning that the public should be engaged and consulted in decision making in cities. Top-down public participation is institutionalized within government policy (Innes & Booher, 2004). A vast vocabulary of participation methods have been created for the public to participate in various ways in policy decision making including: open houses, design charrettes, advisory committees, working groups, delegations to council, many types of review and comment procedures, and other such opportunities. These commonly used forms of consultation have become the established method for cities to promote engagement. However, some argue they have become counterproductive because people have grown disillusioned and frustrated with their utility in enabling citizens to effectively have an impact on policy process (Innes & Booher, 2004). Local government, as the initiator and holder of power in the process, is able to determine who is to be involved in the engagement activity, and also sets the terms of participation (Sorensen & Sagaris, 2010, p. 298). Top-down approaches do not share the same experimental and emergent approach to producing space found in the grassroots, but are more based on grand plans that are developer-driven, bring large-scale change, and sudden massive influxes of investment to cities (Németh & Langhorst, 2014).

The City of Coquitlam's top-down perspective on public participation extends to the way that it manages the use of public space. The top-down approach of the City

affects how it mediates between groups use of public space, controls resources, and manages engagement with citizen groups.

### 2.3.3.    Top-Down Meets Bottom-Up

This project studies a bottom-up temporary urbanism initiative, the CFM, and its relationship with the top-down City of Coquitlam. Top-down conceptualizations of public participation that frame citizens as advisors or clients of government come with a very different set of assumptions than more bottom-up approaches that views the public as producers and initiators.  There is a disconnect when these two perspectives meet, and this is a key area of analysis for this study.  Many authors have identified how tension can be created when these approaches come into contact (Andres, 2012; Chaskin, 2005; Kamvasinou, 2015).

One such source of tension can be due to different working styles.  The adherence to bureaucratic approaches common to the world of government top-down-engagement is very different than practices of associational action and local democracy associated with grassroots movements and temporary urbanism. When these different worldviews meet, dissonance and challenges often are the result (Chaskin, 2005, p. 408).  Groups that thrive on dynamism and flexibility naturally run into challenges working with bureaucratic and regimented systems.

Another tension can relate to changes in urban spaces.  The CFM has been operating for close to 20 years.  Many spatial changes have taken place during that time in the recreation complex and neighbourhood in which they are located.  Conflicts have the potential to emerge as interstitial sites that host temporary urbanism activities transition to more planned-for spaces.  As sites transition from undevelopable dormant areas open to temporary re-appropriations, "tensions and conflicts appear as power shifts from temporary place-shaping users to formal place-making decision-makers. This process challenges the distribution of powers between various stakeholders (Andres, 2012, p. 763)."

Finally, there is an inherent natural tension in bottom up groups' search for space in perpetuity, between their grassroots, unplanned character, and their inevitable

encounter with top-down planning and urban development processes (Colomb, 2012). Top-down and bottom-up perspectives each contain different ideas on what constitutes legitimate claims to space and creation of space. From that dynamic tensions can arise.

This project will try to parse apart how these tensions manifest in the story of the CFM and the City, and how these organizations have been successfully navigating them.

## 2.4. Farmers Markets

This projects primary focus is not on issues pertaining to food security or farmers markets, but is rather is using the CFM as a case study of a grassroots bottom-up temporary urbanist project. Still, it is useful to provide a brief overview of farmers markets to contextualize the CFM in the broader context of urban environments and global economic systems.

Farmers markets are recurrent markets at fixed locations where some if not all of the vendors are also the producers of their wares (Brown, 2001). There are a variety of different types of markets, and they vary based on their frequency, relationship to producers, the type of goods for sale, and types of customers (Brown, 2001).

Farmers markets were once a vital component in urban food systems, but were deposed of this role by the advent of new technologies enabling globalized food production and wholesale distribution (Brown, 2001; Morales, 2009). There have been a number of studies which have identified how farmers markets exist outside of the global food production and distribution system (Brown, 2001; Shakow, 1981; Spilková, Fendrychová, & Syrovátková, 2013). Authors have identified the tension between public markets tendencies for self-organization amid top-down planning regimes in cities (Morales, 2010). There has also been research about how local government can support markets – through flexible regulatory systems, acting as an information broker, providing assistance in finding a suitable location, and connecting the market with other economic sectors (Morales, 2009, 2010).

Consistent with the CFM's efforts to create a more sustainable Coquitlam, farmers markets have positive benefits to the communities in which they are located.  This includes a positive impact on access to affordable food in low-income or "food desert" communities (Larsen & Gilliland, 2009; Ruelas, Iverson, Kiekel, & Peters, 2012), as well as supporting local farmers (Shakow, 1981).  Beyond their impact on local food systems, farmers markets are also identified as providing important social, political and economic benefits to communities – contributing to place-making and livability of cities (Morales, 2009).

For the purposes of this study, I am interpreting the introduction of the CFM into Coquitlam through the lens of temporary urbanism.  There are a number of aspects to the CFM that situate it within the type of projects described as temporary urbanism. First, it is a citizen led bottom-up initiative.  Temporary urbanism projects are spearheaded by people outside of official regimes of planning and development (Kamvasinou, 2015).  Second, an underlying topic throughout this project is the market's access to space, and in particular, underutilized space.  The parking lot in which the market was able to gain a foothold in the community is an example of a "mono-functional" (Groth & Corijn, 2005) space to which the CFM is bringing new meaning and uses.  Finally, the CFM is struggling with the same challenge faced by other temporary urbanism projects in grappling with how to make a lasting claim to space and change in the urban environment.  In this way the CFM walks the balance of offering a new vision for space in the city, while at the same time having to work within a broader neoliberal context, a situation many temporary projects find themselves in (Tonkiss, 2013).  The founders, staff and volunteers of the CFM would most likely take umbrage at being described as a "temporary" project because temporary does not describe the intended long-term impact of the market.  The CFM is temporary only in the sense that they have sprung out of a space they have temporary claim to.

# Chapter 3.

# Methods and Analysis

My research methodology for this project is an inductive qualitative approach, based on two components: a review of documents related to the CFM and semi-structured interviews.

## 3.1. Document Review

A review of documents related to the CFM formed an important foundation for this project. Documents included newspaper articles, council reports, contracts, proposals and other publications related to the CFM. The document review helped to establish a reliable timeline of the history of the CFM. The CFM's 20-year history is a long period for interview subjects to recall specific timelines and dates, and the document review helped develop an accurate accounting of key times and dates. The document review also helped to identify 'critical incidents' which would be explored in subsequent interviews. Having a sound knowledge of the research subject is a key part to successful qualitative interviews (Valentine, 2005, p. 119).

I found documentation related to the CFM through searching online council and City of Coquitlam online databases, as well as the CFM's archives. I began my research by searching through the City of Coquitlam council database and archives. This approach unearthed some documentation, including some corporate reports, proposals, and with the help of Coquitlam archives staff, some old photos of the market - but this data was of limited utility because it was quite superficial in terms of City-CFM dynamics. Thankfully, I was had the good fortune to be able to access the archives of the CFM. The CFM had kept an archive of newspaper articles, newsletters, contracts between the market and City, and other artifacts. This information stretched from the very start of the market in 1996 up until 2010. For newspaper articles past 2010 I searched online though the local papers, the Tri City News and Tri-Cities NOW (now defunct).

I analyzed the documents though scanning them into Nnivo and tagging them for specific themes.   While providing some good jumping off points or points of inquiry, the deeper exploration of the history and relationship between the CFM and the City took place through interviews.

## 3.2.  Interviews

Semi-structured interviews constituted the bulk of my research and provided the majority of data that I analyzed.  I interviewed people who played a significant role in the history of the CFM, in terms of their involvement in decision-making or direct actions that affected the public market's implementation and continued work, or helped to shape the relationship between the CFM and City.  Who was significant to the history of the market was in part defined by the interview subjects themselves, an approach used by other researchers who have used semi-structured interviews in their projects about the workings of public organizations (Gough & Accordino, 2013).

In total, I conducted six interviews.  I interviewed three current and former staff members at the City of Coquitlam, and three individuals involved with the Coquitlam Farmers Market.

**Table 3.1      Interview Participants**

| Role | Pseudonym | Affilliation | Years active |
|---|---|---|---|
| Market Founder | Sue | Coquitlam Farmers Market | 1996-2000 |
| Market Employee | Anna | Coquitlam Farmers Market | 2006-present |
| Market Founder | Jane | Coquitlam Farmers Market | 1996-present |
| Former Senior Manager in Recreation, Parks & Culture | Jim | City of Coquitlam | 1996-2010 |
| Former Manager in Recreation, Parks & Culture | Mark | City of Coquiltlam | 1999-2006 |
| Facility Coordinator | Janet | City of Coquitlam | 1987-present |

The current and former City staff I interviewed held different levels of seniority and connected to the market in different ways.  Janet is currently a day-to-day contact for the

CFM. Jim was a former senior manager responsible for department wide policy. Mark was in the past both a day-to-day contact and a manager.   For the CFM, I interviewed Jane, a founder who has stayed highly involved throughout the history of the market, Sue was another founder who moved abroad after a number of years with the market, and Anna a current market staff person who started in 1996.

I interviewed Participants using a semi-structured format.  I developed an interview script that provided a guide for the conversation.  Probing and clarifying questions were used to follow potentially significant paths.  As interviews progressed, themes and ideas began to emerge which I then incorporated into my questions.  Interviews ranged from 30 minutes to 1.5 hours.

To analyze my findings, I transcribed the interviews into NVivo and coded for different themes and ideas.  I sought to look for similarities and dissimilarities in the perspectives of those interviewed, utilizing a grounded theory method of qualitative analysis, in which theories are generated from an examination of data, through the constant comparing of unfolding observations (Babbie & Benaquisto, 2014, p. 376).

## 3.3.  Privacy and Ethics

I followed the SFU Office of Research Ethics methods which were approved for my project.  I obtained informed consent to interview all participants.  I received permission to record all interviews that I requested, as well as received permission for follow up interviews with all participants.  Consistent with a snowball sampling method, I asked participants if there was anyone else I should speak with as part of this project.   To connect to these individuals, I provided my initial contact a letter of introduction to forward to any third party that asked the third party to contact me if they were interested in participating in the research.

The nature of this study and the limited number of actors involved made it challenging to provide anonymity to participants. Interviewees were advised in person and on the consent form that due to the small size of the number of people involved in the CFM and at the City, it would be impossible to have participants be completely

anonymous.  I also advised participants to let me know if the conversation strayed into sensitive subject matter.  I used pseudonyms for the individuals I interviewed.

# Chapter 4.

# Findings: Initial Years of the Coquitlam Farmers Market

This chapter will examine my research findings from the initial years of the Coquitlam Farmers Market.  This section focuses on the introduction of the CFM into Coquitlam, and the response that the City had to this new initiative.

First this chapter will explore conceptual factors.  This chapter explains why the CFM was a new idea, how it challenged globalized food norms in Coquitlam, and the response to that challenge from the City and business community. Second, this chapter will turn to spatial factors.  Why the CFM leaders' request for use of public space was successful, and the City's guiding principles for managing the use of public space will both be explored.  Finally, themes that emerged in the relational factors between the City and CFM will be reviewed.  Staff contacts at the City played a key role in helping to interface between the CFM and City.

## 4.1.  Conceptual Factors

This section explores how the City responded to the CFM and the local food ideas that it represented.

### 4.1.1.    A New Idea in Coquitlam

The CFM was a new idea and a new use of urban space for Coquitlam, emerging from outside of City Hall.  A group of students in a Sustainable Community Development class at Simon Fraser University were given the task of coming up with a plan for a financially sustainable community economic development project.  They came up with the idea for a farmers market, and after considerable hard work this idea jumped out of their notebooks and onto the pavement in the parking lot outside the Poirier Recreation Complex.

At the time of the market's founding in 1996 there was only one other farmers market in the region, at Trout Lake in Vancouver. The CFM was on the leading edge of the local return of the farmers market since the decline of farmers markets in the urban landscape in the early 20th century (Brown, 2001). Jane, one of the original students connected to the market and founder, remembered: "it was very new, [the Trout Lake Market] in Vancouver was the first to officially set up shop with this more modern wave of returning food and urban agriculture to the city."

The "wave" that the CFM was part of was the idea of "local food." Local food is a movement which aims to connect food producers and food consumers in the same geographic region in order to develop more secure food networks, support local farmers, improve local economies and make positive health or social impact in a community (Feenstra, 2002; Martinez et al., 2010). In the overview in their proposal, the students outlined their vision for the market:

> The primary purpose of the Coquitlam Farmer's Market project is to develop food security by bringing together the producers and consumers of food. Currently, access to locally grown food in the Tri-City area is limited and sporadic. By having a centralized market in the Tri-City area, consumers gain access to quality food and the farmers who grow it, and are educated about the cycle of food production from "field to table." Establishing a farmers' market in the Tri-City area will also strengthen the local economy. In supporting local farmers and direct marketing, the Tri-City area not only strengthens local food security, but also keeps dollars circulating in the community. Above all, the farmer's market will be a social gathering place for the community and a place where people can interact and build meaningful relationships. (*Coquitlam Farmers' Market Proposal*, n.d.)

As a leader in the resurgence of farmers markets, the CFM's leaders found themselves in a challenging spot. Jane recalled that because of their newness, there were few examples for the City to draw on to provide a reference point: "There weren't many places people could look around anymore, at least not in Metro Vancouver, to say 'oh that's just farmers bringing in their food'." Local government did not know exactly what to do with them.

City Staff remembered this challenge. Mark, a Recreation Manager in Coquitlam, recalled farmers markets being "a new concept." He recalled that the idea "made sense

on a lot of levels, but we didn't think about food security as an issue." Despite its unfamiliarity, staff at the City saw value in the broad goals of the market, in particular the community enhancement elements of the project.

## 4.1.2.    Local Challenges to Globalized Ideas about Food

There was some initial pushback and concerns expressed by different parts of the community towards the farmers market, in part due to unfamiliarity with what the group was trying to accomplish.  The CFM challenged norms around food and uses of public space. This challenge to the assumptions regarding the form and function of life in cities is a central piece of temporary urbanism challenges to dominant thoughts about cities (Tonkiss, 2013).

The CFM challenged the globalized food system, which is structured on producing food far away and flying it across the world for distribution out of supermarkets.   Instead, the local food movement encourages the consumption of food grown locally, brought by farmers to the city to sell it directly to consumers.  The ideas that underpinned the CFM can be understood as an expression of a local idea that came into conflict with more dominant perspectives based on globalized understandings of urban food systems (Defilippis et al., 2009; Eversole, 2011; Mayer, 2009).  Through the CFM the proponents of the market were claiming the "right" to a food system based on their local needs and desires.

The conceptual challenge the CFM represented produced real world push-back. Food retailers and other local businesses expressed to the City their uneasiness about competition from the CFM.  Although these concerns did not stop the market, they did play a significant role in how the City worked with the CFM.  Jane recalled, "People had a lot of questions over who would be selling at these places … and there was a lot of concern that there would be widespread wholesaling."  This was not unique to Coquitlam, concerns about farmers markets having a negative impact on businesses occurred in other communities as well. Mark recounted that:

> [It was] less of a Coquitlam thing, more of - these markets were being established in a lot of communities. There was pushback from private retail

sector in all of those locations. That was just part of when these kinds of programs get a foothold there is often a bit of pushback - if you talk to folks at Trout Lake, that's a pretty common resistance.

This pushback and fear about the impact of the CFM drove how the City responded to the community idea.

### 4.1.3.    Making the Idea Fit

Staff at the City of Coquitlam were aware of concerns about the farmers market, and these concerns drove how they handled their response. In the market's initial period, in order to support the market, staff needed to manage how it was perceived within the City and within in the community.  Staff responded by guiding the market to fit in within the City's existing conceptual framework.

Jim was a senior manager of recreation in Coquitlam at the time the CFM began in 1996.  He recalled there being a very strong concern that the City would receive complaints if it was seen to be subsiding a "market" that was in competition with business, in particular if the non-profit market was perceived as receiving perks available to community groups but not businesses. Mark recalled that the business community feared that farmers markets did not have to pay the same taxes as businesses, the market space was being subsidized by the city, and that there would be a negative impact on sales in the area where a farmers market would be located. Concern was not limited to businesses. A Councillor was "skeptical" about what would be sold at the farmers market, expecting "crafts from Taiwan" to appear at the market (Bach, 1997).

Jim recalled that due to these concerns, the senior management team sat down together to discuss the upstart market, to figure out what the City's role in supporting a project like it would be.  Jim recalled how the City was uncomfortable with the group even using the term "market" to refer to the project.  There were concerns if it was called a market, that it would then be crossing a line with the private sector and would set off alarm bells.  The solution that staff recommended to the market was to make efforts to frame the market as a festival or a generic "event."  This advice led to the full official name of the farmers market becoming the "Coquitlam Farmers Market and Agricultural Festival."

Being a festival was not at the core of the CFM founders' vision, but they understood that this framing made the idea more palatable to the City.

Emphasizing the temporary elements of the CFM, being seasonal, and only once a week, made it a far less intimidating idea to the City. Temporary projects are more readily embraced by cities and land owners, because they can provide significant animation and improvement of spaces but not require giving over permanent ownership (Ferreri, 2015).

This section recounted how the City and local business received the idea of the CFM. As a project that emerged from outside of official power structures, it ran into pushback from the City because it was perceived to work against business interests. As a result, from the market's beginnings in Coquitlam, it was intentionally framed as a temporary event. With this framing the CFM was not a threat to the business community, more palpable to the City, and as the next section will discuss, fit in with how the City managed access to and use of public space.

## 4.2. Spatial Factors

If you were to visit the Coquitlam Farmers Market on a summer Sunday, you would see what on other days is just a parking lot turned into a vibrant space full of tents, tables, produce, farmers and customers (See Figure 4.1). Depending on the week you might see a cooking demonstration or a musical performance. If it is an election year you might see a hopeful politician glad-handling patrons and demonstrating appreciation for vibrant community activities and spaces.

**Figure 4.1    Flowers and festivities take over the parking lot at the CFM on a Sunday afternoon. Copyright 2016 David Sadler.**

The CFM transforms a parking lot space into a hive of activity, from being a mono-functional parking lot into something more vibrant and interesting.  The primary use of the parking lot space is not for a farmers market but was, of course, designed to provide parking for patrons visiting the ice arena and other city amenities in the immediate vicinity. In the early years the CFM was located in the parking lot outside of the Poirier Recreation Complex. The space that the market is located on is public land owned by the City of Coquitlam, and the City is very deliberate in how it provides access to the use of public space by community groups.

The first part of this chapter showed how the market represented a "new idea" in Coquitlam that posed challenges to City staff and the CFM in navigating meaning and perception.  The physical presence of the market also created challenges for the City in the practical task of providing the market the use of space.  This was partly because the CFM was asking to use space in a way that it was never used before, and also because of deeply rooted guiding prerogatives and perspectives that drive decision making on community uses of public space - farmers markets or otherwise.

This section will explore these City staff perspectives. These norms affected how the City responded to the initial ask for space from the market, and left and imprint that shaped the ongoing relationship between the City and CFM.

### 4.2.1.     Finding a Crack in Urban Space

The idea of local food needed a place to take root in Coquitlam, and it was in a parking lot that it found that place. Temporary urban projects need to find a space in the urban setting that it is able to take root in – a "crack" in the city (Tonkiss, 2013).  The parking lot was an available crack into the landscape of the city for the CFM. At the time of the CFM's founding, the parking lot was only being used for parking; no group had ever wanted to use it for anything else. Jane remembered the response that they received from the City when they asked about using that space for the CFM: "When we first got started, people were like, 'why would you want to do this in a parking lot?'."  Jane remarked that they were, "using space that otherwise the city didn't really have much use for beyond the single use of parking." When the market first started, the City of Coquitlam had no rental fee or method for renting out the parking lot.  Mark recalled having to add a rental procedure and cost to the City's fees and charges policies in order to be able to rent it to the market.

The relative stability of the wider neighbourhood also made the temporary use of the parking lot site amenable to the City.  "Development was cool" (Harris, 2015, p. 595) in the neighbourhood, not due to an economic collapse or a recession, but rather because the neighbourhood was older and well established. City staff and the CFM leaders made a number of comments about the wider neighbourhood context of the market. As a fully built-out low density suburban setting it was not experiencing redevelopment pressures driving investment and putting a premium on space.  Jane spoke about the location: "Because we are in a suburban location that is predominantly residential, and really with not much around us other than recreaction facilites, they've been amenable to us increasing our space as needed."  Jim remarked that in the present the market would have had trouble finding the ability to find space in other parts of Coquitlam where developments like rapid transit expansion is raising pressure on land.

Beyond space and setting, another reason the parking lot was available to the CFM was that there were no other people wanting to use the space.  Mark recalled how this made it much easier to provide the space to the market, as opposed to if they had been requesting space in a more sought after location.  No one was requesting the use of the parking lot space, and the weekend morning was a "downtime" for the arena's parking

needs as well. Sue, a founder of the market, remembered that City staff "saw it as an opportunity for them too, and it just seemed to work mutually, the Sundays weren't really in the way, it was convenient."



**Figure 4.2    Poirier Recreation Complex in 2004**
Poirier Recreation complex in 2004.  The CFM was located in the large parking lot below the Coquitlam Recreation Centre (3 part building to right hand side of image). (Map data: Google, DigitalGlobe 2004.)

The underutilized space, the lack of competing interests, and the lack of imminent development plans for the parking lot enabled the space to be opened up for uses originating from outside of the official plans.  The market found space that was open to experimentation, but its use of the space was still greatly constrained by the City's top-down approach on managing and producing space.

## 4.2.2.    Guiding City Perspectives on Public Space

Despite there being no procedure for specifically renting the parking lot space to the market, the City held some deeply rooted perspectives on its role in managing public space.  Understanding some of these perspectives can help explain the City's approach to the CFM.

In interviews with former and current staff at the City, a number of themes emerged on how staff felt they needed to manage providing public spaces to community groups.

What these themes had in common was the tendency for staff at the City to be very careful to retain ownership, ensure flexibility and avoid conflict. These perspectives remained consistent over the 20 years of the market, even intensifying in more recent years.

Every current and former staff person I spoke with touched on the idea that staff needed to avoid committing any resources or space to a group over the long term or in perpetuity. Each budget year they need to treat independent of the last, and each year they need to take into consideration the needs of the community. This ensures they have the ability to allocate space based on the current need rather than historical precedent. Jim, who did not work hands on with the market but rather provided oversight on agreements with the CFM and other community organizations, outlined the challenge from the perspective of the City:

> I don't know if you're familiar with, allocation of space in any of our facilities…. You do not want to commit to long term relationship, as soon as you do you have no flexibility when the next group comes along. So you wanted to have a clear slate all of the time and then whoever is interested in an ongoing basis you bring them together you talk, you try to allocate to meet the needs of whoever is there now and you deal with it. And next year, there may be 2 or 3 new actors involved and you sit down with that new group and you do the same thing. It was that sort of allocation issue and long term commitment that I was a little concerned about.

Because future demand for spaces is unclear, the guiding principle is to not make long-term commitments. Part of the rationale for this is ensuring equity of access to space. Jim gave the example of the annual allocation of ice time in Coquitlam's arenas and the rise in popularity of women's hockey. He noted that if all ice bookings were solely based on historical precedent, then women's hockey would never have been able to get space as it rose in popularity.

This holds the potential for a disconnect with community groups, since community groups do not see themselves as existing year to year but rather as ongoing and growing projects. In the case of the CFM, even after 20 years they struggle with the fact that they remain on a year-to-year contract with the City. For a 20-year-old organization with a track record of success, the CFM's leaders wonder why they do not merit special consideration or rights to space more so than a new group. This illustrates a core challenge of collaboration between the City and the CFM; the City and the market leaders have a

different set of perspectives on the market in space and time. The City sees it in the present - in the context of all the other needs in the community – while the market volunteers see it in the context of its history and future growth.

Another guiding perspective held by staff at the City were concerns about giving groups perceived or real ownership over space. In the experience of staff, groups become attached to space, and this makes it difficult for the City to keep that space flexible. Janet shared a story of a user group that was very attached to the use of a hall facility in Coquitlam. This group had helped fundraise to build the space and for many years had a vibrant and active membership who used it up to its capacity. As time went on, participation in the group began to decline steadily until just a handful of people were regularly involved and using the space, a fraction of what it could host. Even though the space was clearly more than it needed, this group resisted giving up the space because they perceived it as being theirs and had attachment to it. As new groups emerged that needed the large amount of space, City staff felt frustrated that they were not able to effectively provide the space where they felt it was most needed. Such a situation creates conflict and challenging relationships - something that all former and current staff interviewed made statements about the need to avoid. In order to avoid conflict City staff avoid creating that sort of situation to begin with, and part of that is not giving ownership over space.

The last element of staff's perspective that emerged during interviews was a staff's understanding of City staff's role and duties to the community and organizing fair use of public space. The relationship was not just between the CFM and the City, but was a relationship between the City and all community stakeholders. The staff people I interviewed all spoke about the importance of taking into consideration the context of the area, and being responsible for managing relationships between groups. For City staff, the act of supporting the CFM is not as simple as just supporting the market. The City needs to take into consideration all the other user groups in the area such as patrons of the seniors centre or ice hockey parents. Partly this was seen as their duty to provide fair access to all, and partly it was wanting to avoid complaints. Anna, the market director, noticed the fear of complaints, "There were complaints before, and they were trying to stop the potential of complaints [from] happening." This perspective of managing space with

the interests of all in mind is representative of the City's view of public participation in a top down manner, viewing patrons as users or clients of the recreation facilities, and controlling the process of distributing resources for the benefit of all.

In the interviews with both City staff and CFM leaders, they often remarked how it was important to the City to avoid complaints and unhappy people. The City's approach was underscored by risk aversion related to wanting to keep things on an even keel in the community.  This is an example of a strong force of inertia of keeping the status quo in Coquitlam.  Fear of pushback from the business community was another example of the City's risk aversion. Jim recalls that, "It was a new concept, which is probably why we were careful about the whole business relationship thing, because it was new and it wasn't a lot to go on." Janet reflected more generally: "I think taking that risk sometimes is really important, and I almost think that government is afraid of risk."  The market picked up on this feeling as well, and felt as though there is a risk averseness to the City in its dealings with the market, Jane felt that their original ask for space wasn't a big risk and that is a reason why they were successful.

These guiding ideas; not wanting to commit to resources in perpetuity, the importance of not giving groups ownership over space, and the mediation role of the City in controlling access and use of space resources are key guiding principles for the City in how it manages space from a top-down perspective.  These norms have set the foundation for the long-term working relationship between the City and the CFM.

### 4.2.3.    Impermanent Access to Space

The effects of the City's guiding norms on public space can be seen in the shape of the agreement between the CFM and the City.  Because the City wanted to preserve its flexibility over using space, limited-time seasonal or annual contracts were its preferred method of giving out space.  The CFM was a one-time experiment in its first year, therefore not a large commitment for the City.  When the market proved to be successful, this created the need for a longer term agreement between the market and City.   Jim recalled:

> Our staff rented it to them. I knew this had happened and this first go at it
> was really successful, people liked it, and of course then next thing I know

people are talking and my staff are saying they want to do this on a more permanent basis and so my concerns are, that's difficult.

The difficulty was the ongoing nature of the market's request. An agreement had to be made.

What resulted was a "participation agreement" between the CFM and City that is revisited and signed off on by both parties on an annual basis. This agreement outlines the nature of the agreement between the City and Market, and speaks to the responsibilities of each party. The City carefully considered the nature of this contract. Jim recalled that the senior staff had concluded that they could not just do a regular rental contract to provide space to the CFM. Jim recalled:

> So our senior management team had a chat about if we do this, what do we want it to look like? What are the conditions, I was very clear we cant just make this a business relationship where they pay us a fee and they use the facility or we give them access to the parking lot at a next to nothing rate, and that's what I think it was 10 bucks or some nominal rate, because then we will be accused of supporting this business, or subsidizing this business, we can't be seen to be subsidizing one particular business as opposed to another, so this has to be something different than a business proposition.

The solution was to develop a partnership agreement which would speak to the benefit that the market would provide to the community. The CFM understood why this was important to the City to able to justify the use of public space by the market. Jane recalled that they needed to justify their use of public space, and as part of the contract made the argument that the market would have benefit to the public good and local economy. This is consistent with other temporary projects which are embraced because of their positive social and economic impacts (Harris, 2015).

The CFM appreciated having this contract be structured to speak to the benefit, value and responsibilities of the market; the CFM felt that it gave them more legitimacy and acknowledged them as an entity within the community. Jane recalled, "Being able to have this partnership agreement, that sets out expectations and responsibilities, was a very progressive step, and also gave us some credibility that we were a legitimate entity." Jane also felt the contract legitimized the way in which the CFM was using space, "for me

it was significant, it gave us credibility and we were seen as a group that was a little bit different in how we used space in the city than other groups."

The participation agreement also reinforced that the CFM was a temporary event, which would have long term effects. Jim recalled that,

> It became clear that we needed to turn it into a program, an event an activity, a community building thing, where the business aspect was only one portion of what was happening .... so we really focused on community access, entertainment, activities, children's activities, music, and that went into those negations as to what the contract would look like.

Being framed as a temporary event helped navigate the initial worries of pushback from the business community, but because the agreement is revisited annually, it is at odds with the market's desire for a sense of permanency, legitimacy, and ownership over space. The contract having to be annually reviewed normalizes the CFM's temporary claim to space as well.

So far this project has discussed the introduction of the farmers market idea into Coquitlam as both a new idea and a new use of public space. The CFM was able to find an underutilized parking lot as a home for its bottom-up effort at city building. It was able to secure space for its experiment, and its access to that space was modulated by the City' approach to handling access to public space. The next section in this chapter will turn to the working relationship between the CFM and the City, and explore more in depth the role played by the people involved.

## 4.3. Relational Factors

Because the CFM was new, it did not initially have a point of connection with the City. There was no farmers market department or policy. Just as the CFM needed to find a "crack" to find its way into the city as an idea and into the physical landscape, it needed to find a way to connect with the policies, systems and bureaucracy of the City. This chapter on the early years of the market will conclude with an exploration of how the market connected with the priorities held by the City, as well as different departments.

Volunteers ran the CFM in the initial years. Volunteers organized the vendors, set up the tables and tents, advertised the market, and were responsible for running all aspects of the market. The CFM volunteers also needed to work with the City to secure space, and solve problems as they arose. This necessitated working closely with the City and particular staff people. These staff played a role in interfacing between the ideas and intent of the market and the City's systems. Often in interviews the market described these staff as "champions" because of the supporting role they would play.

## 4.3.1.  Finding Cracks in the Ideas of the City

The CFM needed to align itself with the priorities of the City. The CFM and City held different worldviews, priorities, and assumptions around life in cities. Staff at the City played a role in helping the CFM to navigate this challenge.

City staff described how part of their role in supporting the CFM was to align it with City priorities in order for it to gain support. Not only did they advocate on behalf of the market, but they also gave guidance to the CFM on how to approach the city and talk about the market in language that the City would understand and respond positively to. This is something that staff interviewed recalled doing often in the early years of the market. For example, some of the advice that Jim had for the market was:

> Talk about it as a community building as opposed to a market, talk about the community benefits, talk about why it will add life and energy and enthusiasm to your city, and make your city a better place to live, quality of life, talk about all those things rather than whatever your particular marketing needs are.

Jim's advice shows that he understood the impact and purpose of the market, but also the importance of communicating ideas in a way that the city will respond to, because food security was not a municipal priority.

Staff and volunteers at the CFM felt that understanding the ideas behind the market were very important in order to support the market. "Getting it" was important, as Jane explained, "We did have a champion and he sort of got it. He understood the connection between food and health, the enlivening of space within a community, the

opportunity that creating liveliness and connection in a predominantly residential area would allow." The importance of "getting it" was also highlighted by Anna, who emphasized the importance that the staff she works with "gets" the market.  Anna described, "[we] benefit from the fact that she likes the farmers market, she is already in line with that. She loves what it does; she gets what a farmers market is."

"Getting it" was important for the staff person to help translate the market ideas to the City context.  Terry recalled Mark being able to do this quite effectively, even with departments other than his own, "He was able to take that message and those connections and help with whatever issue he needed to go talk to engineering, or traffic. We seemed to have very good relations with him." Other departments would have different priorities and ways of thinking and the staff champion had to be aware of all those dynamics. There were of course people who did not "get" the market as well.  CFM leaders described that when the staff they were working with would run into problems elsewhere within the City, it was often because others did not "get" what the market was.  Jane described, "And that's one thing that she'll often say, people don't 'get' what a farmers market is.  And that's where when she is working internally where she runs into problems."

Staff in the early years were a key point of connection who helped the market idea work its way into the City of Coquitlam.  Supporting the idea of the market was one task, another task was helping to navigate the systems that existed within the City.

## 4.3.2.  Finding Cracks in the Systems of the Cities

To establish itself the CFM had to find a way to fit in with the ideas and priorities of the City.  This was not the only challenge; the CFM also had to navigate the various departmental structures of the City. City staff played a key role in helping to navigate this environment as well.

The staff champion played an important single point of contact role.  Mark recalled that he "was [the CFM's] only point of contact, in the role I had I could solve all their issues then delegate through staff what needed to happen from a City of Coquitlam perspective." In order to run the CFM needed support in a variety of ways - things like getting access to electricity, confirming parking lots and permits, storage, staff help, and permission for

signage were all pieces of running the weekly market that needed some manner of support or cooperation from the City. Rather than having the CFM talk to all the associated departments separately, it was the role of the staff contact to navigate and get things done for the market. This role played by the staff person was greatly appreciated by the CFM. Anna described, "Instead of us having to call permitting and then bylaws and then the signage people and all that, [they are] that one contact so she can navigate all that." This system makes working together easier for both the City of Coquitlam and the CFM. This is invaluable to the market, as they avoid having to stumble through the maze of jurisdictions and roles.

Staff articulated their role of working with the market in very similar terms. Mark described his relationship with the market, or any community group, as a "community touch point." Janet described her work with the market as, "[being a] point of contact, sign off on agreement, work on location of market for the year, any type of changes like storage, recycling or garbage, special event use, connect them with any issues that might happen e.g. electricity, connecting to parks for garbage pick up."

Important to this interfacing role of staff was the ability to get things done for the market. The CFM recognized that it was not just enough for the staff person to know the system, but also to have the expertise and ability to successfully work with people. Jane recalled their early champion as having those skills: "This guy was also the kind of guy with some skill at working across silos. Coquitlam has still got a lot of silos in how they deal with things." Navigating the system requires knowledge not just of how the City is organized, but also how to work within that system, where leverage can be found and how to get things done.

The significance of the working relationship between the City and CFM shows how important the interface between community groups and the City is. The impact of individuals on the relationship between the CFM and City was key. The policies and staff systems that make local government run are complex. Local government is not just monolithic entities of single-minded purpose, but a collection of individuals who are interpreting a policy framework and operating from their learned behavior. Jim explained that, "Every staff member is different in what they think the organization (the City) wants

from them" when community groups were working with the City, they were not just working with the City, they were working with an individual. The individuals and relationships changed in the growth years of the market, where this paper will now turn.

# Chapter 5.

# Findings: Growth Years of the Coquitlam Farmers Market

Through the 1990's the Coquitlam Farmers Market continued to thrive in Coquitlam.  The market established itself in the community, and built credibility in the eyes of the City.  The middle years of the market were an exciting time.

The volunteers and staff at the CFM felt that the market was successful and growing during this period. People from the CFM I spoke with recalled feeling as though the market really had become established in the community. For those involved in the market, this was a period when they could begin to count on consistent customers and see a good turnout at the market, even on a rainy day.  In this period the market began experimenting with different food related programming and educational activities.  Other changes took place as well, the market's location changed, they experimented with spin-off markets in different settings, staff came and went, and the operation continued to grow in capacity and complexity.

City staff support for the activities of the market was growing as well.  Staff had confidence in the market and its ability to successfully organize a weekly event, and could see that it was contributing to the community.  When asked when he felt the market established itself, Mark described that there was, "nothing specific, a relationship of confidence was developed, people saw the need, I think the City saw that there was a long term thing that the volunteer base was there to make it happen."  The credibility of the CFM in the eyes of the City was built on its consistency and success in organizing the weekly market on Poirier Street.

In this period the CFM was expanding and finding its place in the community.  For temporary urbanism projects that begin in the cracks of the city, navigating growth and moving out of the cracks into a more permanent presence has posed challenges (Ferreri, 2015).  The previous chapter looked at the beginning of the CFM as it first found its place

in the urban landscape in Coquitlam. This chapter will we will explore what took place as the market sought to move out of the cracks and expand.

First, this analysis will explore the growth in the City's understanding of the ideas behind the CFM. This growth in understanding of the market by the City was caused by the emergence of the wider "local food movement", and through increasing familiarity with the activities of the market. This knowledge led to increased City scrutiny of the CFM's activities.

Second, the spatial context was changing. A number of new civic facilities were added to the area, and this directly affected the CFM, leading to its relocation. This section will explore what happened as the need for space by both the market and the City changed, and how this illustrates some of the dynamics between the two.

Finally, this chapter will examine the nature of the relationship between the CFM and City. In this period there were changes in staff at the City while the core group of people behind the market remained more stable. Exploring this trend can shed some light on dynamics of their collaborative work.

## 5.1. Conceptual Factors

In this period of time, the CFM idea became less foreign to the City, and the City began to understand more what the market was trying to accomplish. This had a number of impacts for the organizers of the market, and provided both new opportunities and challenges.

### 5.1.1. Growing Understanding of the Market

City staff and the CFM identified two reasons why the City better understood the local food movement and the work of the CFM. The first reason was due to the activities of the CFM, and second was the increasing awareness of "local food" movement in society.

The CFM was doing many things that raised awareness about its work. The market organizers were very diligent in how they articulated the purpose of the CFM.  Jane remembered the creation of the market's slogan of "make, bake, grow" as an important way to distill the complex ideas behind the market to something easily understandable – that market was a venue for selling and purchasing things that were made, baked and grown locally.  The CFM created newsletters and advertisements to share information about the market throughout the community.

An important way that the CFM increased awareness and understanding of itself was simply by holding the market.  The market activities were a highly visible part of the Poirier neighbourhood. Through the act of running the market and changing the use of space they were articulating their mission and vision through innovative action that attracted attention.  The "minor practices, small acts ordinary audacities" of the CFM contributed to a new idea for how to use the parking lot space as a market (Tonkiss, 2013, p. 323). The CFM was also visible beyond its immediate physical presence, because the market benefitted from extensive local media coverage. Every year the local papers would herald the start of the market and highlight what products to expect, cover the market's events and promotions, and near the end of the season, warn people when there were only a few weeks left to get out there and buy their vegetables.

The CFM also benefited from the growth in the popularity of farmers markets in general.  Mark felt that one of the primary reasons that the CFM made gains was that it benefitted from "farmers markets as a whole having gained more understanding."  In this period the broader idea of food security began to become more popular and gain traction, which helped the CFM find support in the community and the City. The CFM was also able to draw on more research and resources.  Anna recalled the importance to the CFM of the rise of popularity of farmers markets in general, and the associated research that came on the positive impacts of farmers market, all of which they were able to use in their advocacy work.  Both market volunteers and City staff felt strongly that that the wider growth in the popularity of markets helped the CFM become more established.  Mark remarked that for attractive communities, "it is almost a requirement to have a farmers market nowadays."

The market started as an outlier that the City was not sure how to react to, but eventually the market became part of the community.  When asked about the initial pushback the market had received, Janet - the current staff contact at the City of Coquitlam- remarked that it was, "bizzare to hear about that response."  Janet's reaction shows just how far the market has come in establishing itself.   Even though the market had established itself and had wide support, it ran into increasing challenges in working with the City in these years.

## 5.1.2.    Whole and Siloed Views of the Market

The City better understood the work of the CFM, but it still perceived the market in a different way than the market perceived itself. Because of its organizational structure the City held a fragmented perspective on the market – staff from different departments understood discrete pieces of it, not the whole.  The CFM leaders understood their work and their market in more holistic terms. The shape of these different perceptions of the market emerged in the interviews.

The people behind the CFM are deeply passionate about their work, and because of their close connection to the market they have a deep understanding and knowledge about the market.  People I spoke with at the CFM see the market and associated food security activities as a "multifaceted" whole; it is a single entity with a number of dimensions to it.  Anna considered:

> Its kind of understanding how multifaceted the market is and how many
> different places it operates in the community.  One of those things where
> it's so simple, a gathering of all these people once a week – but what comes
> out of that is so much more.

To the people associated with the market, the CFM is more than just the sum of its parts. The vegetables, farmers, tables, tents and people added up to something much bigger.  That bigger thing was their vision for the resilient community that the CFM and food security represented. Anna described the complexity of the market trying to fit into a more categorized system:

> Because if you look at it beyond the commerce and people selling goods
> and look at it more like the health of the community, you're getting local

food at the micro level, you got an economic impact that's happening and strengthening the resiliency of your community, so shouldn't something that strengthens the resiliency of your community hold more weight than an event? But you don't have a category to capture all that.

The holistic view that the market holds of itself is different from the fragmented view that the City holds. The City understands it in terms of separate categories: a small business, or as a rental user-group. Anna described how working with the City is challenging because different elements of the CFM are regulated by different parts of the city, "That's how cities operate – put things into categories." Sue agreed, remarking that "cities seem to silo things." This perspective on the market is apparent in Mark and Janet's observations of the different departments of the City that the market needed to connect with for various reasons, including bylaws, planning, parks and recreation and engineering. A side effect of this division of authority and oversight is that things tended to be handled in fragmented ways.

The CFM found itself in between different areas of City regulation and oversight. This is part of the CFM's interstitial nature, the in-between space that temporary urbanism projects work in are physical but also can be found in the cracks between the regulatory regime. Because the CFM occupied a space that touched on many different department areas of oversight, this created challenges for the market.

### 5.1.3.    Results of Increased City Knowledge

Regulatory scrutiny from the City increased as the City became more aware of the scope of activities. My assumption going into this project was that if the City had a better understanding of the market, the market would benefit, but it was not that straightforward. The City began to understand the CFM beyond its role primarily as an "event" and began seeing the business and economic elements. This turned out to be problematic for market organizers. Anna reflected on why this caused challenges,

> They're gaining a better understanding what a farmers market is, but at the same time as they gain that understanding, then they're like "well you're kind of like a business, you should have a business license" and [in reference to market vendors] 'all those are small business, then they should have licenses too'

The market is multifaceted but where it interacts with where the City has interest in it, interest has started to peak … they see what we have been advocating for is economic generation in the community, and markets are great incubators for small business.

By this Anna meant that the market's work is complex, but where specific pieces of the market connects to areas that the City understands and is invested in, in this case the economic benefits, regulation and oversight has increased.

In an ironic twist for the CFM, the greater understanding of some of the positive roles the CFM can play in supporting small local business has actually made the regulatory environment for the market organizers more difficult.  Anna describes:

So now we are getting hit with oh you need a business license, oh you need this now you need that now, whereas before when it was just a bunch of people with tents and table and fruits and vegetables and some music. That was something that wasn't really on their radar.

Being on the City's "radar" created new hoops to jump though and challenges for the market to navigate.

The CFM also added new components to their market in this period of growth. One such element was having food trucks at the market. The CFM was pushing the boundaries of what the space could be used for, and this posed challenges for the City. Mark recalled that "as the market grew, we needed to be involved, they started to push some of the lines of the agreements so bringing in food vending, that created a need that public health was contacted."  As the market was adding new uses to the space, this was coming up against established rules and regulations.

It was only once the market was growing that it made it on to the City's radar as having a for-profit element to it.  Mark recalled:

The food trucks that come in are not non-profit, they are for profit, that changes the whole rules.  The market started as fully non-profit - people selling their craft things and thing like that- its not like they were a retail outlet.  As soon as food trucks arrive, you're bringing a business on site, so its no different than the ice-cream guy who wants to come to the water spray park.

The CFM within its mission always had a "for-profit" element to it because it was geared towards local farmers selling their produce for income.  The CFM did after all originate from a class on Sustainable Economic Development. However, this for-profit mission was included with the other priorities of the market that were not about business. By contrast, the City defined food carts as being a traditional for-profit business; therefore, from their perspective, this element of the CFM needed to be regulated.  Mark's statement also implied that because the CFM's vendors were not making a large profit, they were not actually a for-profit business.  This blurs the line between business and non-profit, and implies that the economic activities of the CFM were not taken seriously when it was small. Once the CFM reached a certain threshold of growth, that ambiguity between non-profit and business venture disappeared.  It was not small potatoes anymore.

## 5.2.  Spatial Factors

The middle years of the market were characterized by the growth of the CFM and changes in its setting.  The CFM grew in size; between 1998 and 1999 it doubled its attendance levels (Strandberg, 1999).  The market also extended its season to last later in the year, increasing the time it used the parking lot space ("Farm Market is Back for Holiday Shopping," 2000).  In this period, the City constructed new civic facilities in the area surrounding the market.  This combination created challenges for the CFM in using "its" space.  The market's use of public space is the central part of the relationship between the CFM and the City, so it is not surprising that many of the challenges between the City and market were centered around the market's access to space. This section will introduce a number of the space-related challenges in the growth years of the CFM.

How the City and CFM navigated these challenges provide insight into their assumptions and perspectives on public space and community. The CFM and City hold different guiding philosophies on public participation in shaping cities. The market's approach to producing space in cities is aligned with bottom-up "right to the city" perspectives on the role of residents in shaping the urban environment.  The City holds a perspective on public participation aligned with top-down perspectives of city-led processes of consultation and engagement.  These perspectives emerged in this period and shaped the interaction between the CFM and City in navigating challenges.

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## 5.2.1.  The 2005 Market Relocation

In 2005, the CFM changed locations. From 1996 to 2004 the CFM was located in the parking lot of the Coquitlam Recreation Centre (Since expanded and renamed to the Poirier Sports & Leisure Complex).  At this original location the CFM was located directly on Poirier Street, a busy local arterial road. In 2005 the City began construction of a new arena complex in the parking lot where the CFM was located.  The construction of this facility displaced the CFM, necessitating its relocation.  The CFM ended up on the opposite side of Poirier Street and down a side street (Winslow Avenue) in its current spot in the parking lot of the Dogwood Pavilion.



**Figure 5.1      Poirier Recreation Complex in 2006.**
Early construction of the new arena is visible where the CFM was located.  The CFM was relocated to the parking lot directly below the square green lawn bowing field. (Map data: Google, DigitalGlobe, 2006)

This relocation process provides insight on the top-down and bottom-up dynamic between the CFM and the City.  The facility construction and subsequent moving of the market was a top down process initiated by the City.  The City of Coquitlam initiated a plan for the neighbourhood, and they engaged community members as stakeholders and advisors in that process.

The CFM was a key stakeholder; it was important to staff at the City that they work closely with the market to find an alternative spot.  Staff I interviewed shared a good understanding of the problems that the CFM faced with the move.  Janet recalled many

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challenges, including the removal from a major thoroughfare, the importance of supporting the market with promotion as a result, and the potential damage brought on by the disruption of people's usual patterns. Mark described needing to take a very hands-on approach in challenging times of change with lots of meetings and check-ins with the CFM as an affected community member. Jane recalled going on a number of walking tours with City staff to identify potential alternative locations. Through these walks and site assessments the City was attempting to find a new location that would work for the CFM and fit into the plans for the area.

Within this process, the CFM was not the only group whose needs the City needed to consider. There were a number of groups that were affected by the changing structure of space in Poirier. As a moderator and mediator of public interest, and by extension public space, the City took all perspectives into account. As staff worked with the market to identify potential alternative locations, Mark recalled also needing to consult with other user groups. This consisted of, "talking to the other user groups … just mak[ing] sure they're aware of how it will impact them." Taking into account the needs of other groups in the area did end up affecting the options for relocation for the market. The CFM had hoped that they would be able to stay on the same side of Poirier close to their original location and close to the front of the new facility. However, the City did not like that spot as an option because they felt that location would interact negatively with other user groups. In particular, parking was an issue of concern. Anna recalled, "Their biggest concern was parking, and parking as close to the front door as possible, and you can't put the farmers market there because you'd take up all the parking spots."

The CFM had a number of concerns about its new location. The space it moved to was further off of Poirier Street and therefore had less natural exposure to people driving on Poirier. Jane remembered some of the CFM's specific concerns: "At the time we were really not happy about that because, part of the farmers market is to make it visible to people, so they can see it, so that liveliness can be a magnet to get people to stop." These concerns were well founded, after the relocation the CFM experienced a drop in customers. Anna remarked that the market took 5 years to recover the number of customers it had had prior to the move.

On the upside, the new location for the CFM was more physically pleasant. Jim felt it was a much nicer environment for the market to be in from a quality of space point of view, with more trees and nicer surroundings, but he also agreed that the good exposure to Poirier was lost. Sue agreed with the observation about space and felt that the new location was nicer. Sue felt that the new spot was "more treed and more appropriate" and that the "first site was pretty hot and pretty open."

Whether the space was better or worse for the CFM, there was no going back. The permanent infrastructure of the new Poirier Sports & Leisure Complex was in place at the CFM's old site, which precluded the use of the original parking lot as a farmers market. Janet recalls having thought about the possibility of the CFM moving back, but to no avail, "Now with the reconfiguring the parking space area is not conducive to a market, we've looked at it many times to see if we could get them back on Poirier either on this side or the other side of the street." With the growth of official uses of space there were no cracks for the market to fit into at their original location.



**Figure 5.2    The original location of the CFM, now a sports complex. Copyright 2016 David Sadler.**

The relocation of the market was the result of investment and construction of space in the Poirier neighbourhood. This investment has changed the spatial context for the neighbourhood, and has contributed to intensifying other dynamics of parking and special events, which has further affected the CFM's use of public space.

## 5.2.2.   Parking as a Source of Space Challenges

Issues connected to parking were a reoccurring challenge in this era, and still are an ongoing issue in the present.  The construction of the new arena as part of the Poirier Sports & Leisure Complex put more pressure on the available parking spaces by increasing demand as the new facility brought with it an influx of people in cars on a regular basis to the area.  In 2005 the arena expansion was the first significant new piece of civic infrastructure into Poirier since the start of the CFM.   Since 2005, there have been additional expansions to the civic infrastructure in the area.  Jane provided an overview of some of the parking tensions in the area:

> We've had a lot of interactions with the City because the school next door has been undergoing renovation, and they may be building a school on a different part of the property - so there has been some parking stress. The city built a new lacrosse box, it's a big indoor multiuse facility only used for lacrosse.  And so that also took up a portion of a higher parking lot. At one point Anna was saying how the mayor was physically moving barricades so that people could park in a lot that was available where this box was being constructed.

If the Mayor was personally out in the streets moving traffic barriers so that people could park, that speaks to the attention and pressure the space was under.

In this context of space under pressure, the CFM was pushing the boundaries of their space.  The City was concerned about the impact of a growing CFM on parking.  The market had allotted space in the parking lot, and staff were concerned that if they overstepped that, other groups would be affected.  Mark recalled the challenge, "If they creeped past that defined area it would have an impact on parking for other user groups. It might be minor hockey telling us that they are spilling into the space they're not supposed to be."  The CFM was well aware that they were pushing their space boundaries in this period, and saw that as part of the way they needed to work. Jane described how the market was making claim to space in the City, "The work we do means that we have to try to kind of overtake space."   The market was actively trying to bring in more space, sometimes challenging the amount they had allotted to them.

The market was also pushing conceptual boundaries of space.  This continued the trend of the early years of the market where they first used the parking lot for an activity

other than parking. The success of the market was leading to it continued growth, not just in physical size, but also in the scope of activities they were wanting to hold in the parking lot.  Mark recalled,

> As the market grew, we needed to be involved, they started to push some of the lines of the agreements so bringing in food vending.  That created a need that public health was contacted, if that kind of stuff happens on private lands there's no one really watching that, as is the case, if vending food trucks want to come into parks space there are policy and procedures they need to follow."

The City was concerned about protecting the public interest in public space.  There were rules for using space, and certain activities that could happen in certain places. Jane saw the CFM intentionally pushing boundaries, "We are trying to get at space that people don't imagine the functionality in the way we'd want to use it."  By driving change, this way the CFM ran afoul of prescribed uses of space.  As more buildings and users came into the space, the CFM ran into more challenges navigating parking issues than when they first started.  Jane described the change that has taken place, "[The neighbourhood was] still a bit of a sleepy town back then, it wasn't such an overriding concern about parking and the demand for it as there is today."



**Figure 5.3      The boundary between the space being used for the market and parking lot space is quite apparent.  Copyright 2016 David Sadler.**

### 5.2.3.    Special Events and Shutting Down the Market

The construction of new civic facilities in the area created new opportunities for the City to host events, and new challenges for the CFM. Attracting large events is an important part of the economic agenda for neoliberal cities (Peck et al., 2013).  The civic infrastructure in the Poirier Sport & Leisure Complex hosts a number of large special events – these included things such as sports tournaments, festivals, conferences and trade shows.

The CFM was affected when large events came to the area. The issue of what happens to the market when space is disrupted in some way is a reoccurring theme throughout the history of the market. Large events were something that Jim considered during the 2005 facility construction and market relocation, he recalled being "Concerned about when the market was on, and how does it relate to events in the other facilities, if we have a big event in the arena, even our lacrosse team gets into the cup, and those generate enormous parking issues."

When large events happened, and the City was concerned that the CFM would be in the way, the standard response was to ask or tell the market to shut down.  As Mark recalled: "From time to time we'd need to cancel because of a major special event that was going on or maybe challenges in the defined area."  Staff were aware that it would have an impact on the market, but took it as a given that it would need to happen to enable large events to take place.  It is notable that the CFM is framed as an event, but its use of the parking lot space is trumped by other larger events.

Being asked, or commanded, to shut down is extremely frustrating for the CFM. Jane describes that she has heard many times staff say to just shut down the market, "[we] had other people say similar thing to council, if there was a problem with building the lacrosse box, then the market can just shut down. Why we are not taken more seriously?" The CFM developed the sense that the City felt the market days were expendable.

This section has given an overview of changes that took place in the public space in the middle growth years of the market.  Growth in the neighbourhood and growth of the market made for some challenges between the CFM and the City.  The City considered

parking issues as a key element in many decisions, which included where the market would be relocated if the market expanded boundaries, or what would happen to the market if a large event came to the area. Parking is the formal use of the space that the CFM was located in, and when the pressure was on, the City considered parking its primary concern. This is consistent with the literature, that finds as official visions for areas come on line, temporary uses are challenged or brushed aside (Andres, 2012).

Through these growth years, the negotiation of public space use between the CFM and City took place through relationships between people at both organizations. There were also critical changes that occurred to the people, which this paper will now turn to.

## 5.3. Relational Factors

Changes in the working relationship between the CFM and the City also took place in the growth years of the market. Just as the space shifted and changed in the middle years of the market, so did the people who were involved. The interviewees identified that City staff changing frequently, while people involved with the CFM remained more consistent. Many comments were made in interviews about the turnover of City staff. Mark remarked, "People in our roles change very regularly." Anna, who handles much of the CFM's day-to-day relationship with the City had the same observation, she reflected that one challenge of working with the City is that "staff turnover is huge."

Jim occupied a senior management role in parks and recreation when the market started in 1996 and he retired from the City in 2010. Mark was initially the frontline connection to the market when he started with the City in 1999, but he eventually was promoted to a managerial role that was wider in scope until he left the city in 2006. Janet has worked for the City in many capacities for close to 30 years, and is currently in a facility supervision role and is the CFM's main contact. Other staff who served as front line points of connection to the CFM also came and went at the City during the 20-year period of the CFM.

The shifting staff and roles at the City stand in contrast to the relatively stable team behind the CFM. Over the 20 years of the market, many of the key volunteers and key

staff people have remained consistent. Jane, one of the founders of the market, is still highly involved and has taken on different staff roles at different points in the market's history. Anna has been in her staff role with the market for ten years. It was not just the leadership, but also volunteers were highly committed in the early and growth years of the market, Sue remembered, "for the market, the volunteer base stayed very stable, 80-90% stable, the same people every year, every Sunday." This continuity of people at the CFM was a source of strength for the market. Sue added, "I think that volunteer base staying so stable was a large part of [the success of the market] as well." The consistency of people led to a rich knowledge and skill bank for the market to draw on.

### 5.3.1.    Relationship Dynamics

Both City staff and CFM people shared in interviews that relationships are important to the success of the work between the CFM and the City. Changes in staff at the City affected the relationship in a number of ways.

First is that it takes time for strong working relationships to emerge. There has been a strong working relationship between the CFM and the City through the connection between staff people. Janet described there being a "relationship of confidence" developed between her and the market, and that they could communicate both good and bad news directly. When people change this disrupts the relationships that have been built. Anna feels that the people that have worked with the market and are familiar with it are more supportive: "You might be dealing with one contact this year but next year the person is gone completely or they've moved up or they've been shuffled around. So the ones that have maintained are the ones that we have the best relationship with."

The CFM also felt that it takes time for City staff to "get" the market. Anna remarked: "Talking about contacts and champions, those are the ones who keep shifting. You can get great traction with somebody and they really get it, year or two later, they [are] promote[d] or move and you're starting all over again." As discussed in Chapter 4, the CFM felt it was important that their contact staff "get" the market. When a City staff person moved on it caused a discontinuity in the relationship between the market and City. It was frustrating for the CFM to continually rebuild relationships, as Anna remarked, "That

starting all over again you have to have a bit of tenacity for." Anna commented on the idea of institutional memory and that there is not a strong memory within the City because people change, and knowledge and familiarity is lost.

It is not just the City staff who work with the CFM who changed. The siloed nature of the City further exacerbated the challenge of staff turnover. There are multiple departments of the City that have jurisdiction over the CFM, and staff in those departments changed as well. Janet describes how she runs into challenges when staff in other departments change. She describes how during the annual contract renewal previous agreements or decisions can change outside of her control: "Every year, depending on changes that happen on my end when it comes to our building service workers, or parks division, because there's always restructuring on my end." Janet added: "as soon as those players are gone, I have to start again." She acknowledged that it can leave community groups confused: "You know, I think that is the tough part for the public to also understand too – 'It worked for me last year why didn't it work for me this year?'." From the community group's point of view, nothing has changed, but inside the City new relationships and support need to be formed.

A supportive staff at the City for the CFM is not just dependent on the staff being around for a long time; the individual nature of the person matters as well. There have also been times when the CFM's contact at the City had not been as supportive of the market. Jane recalled when it was challenging to work with the City contact:

> The person there before really didn't take us seriously. Didn't appreciate the many different ways we contributed to the City, and the City who has a sustainability mandate, and just thought that we were more of a problem to deal with. Someone to deal with. That pesky mosquito - what do you want now?

Periods of time when the positive relationship is interrupted by a less productive relationship also contributes to gaps in the continuity of relationship between the CFM and City.

A final piece of the working relationship between the CFM and City to consider is changes in seniority of the City staff involved. It was not just people changing, the structure of departments and the responsibilities of staff positions was also shifting. In the

earlier years, the key contact for the market had more seniority within the City system than the person in more recent years.  An observation of Jane's is that their more recent contact has not had the level of authority that their contacts in the past have. As such, the staff are limited in their ability to be an effective champion for the market relative to previous staff.   This is an indicator of another much larger challenge that the market faces in its quest for legitimacy and permanency- that the City's perspective on community development has shifted over time as well.

## 5.3.2.    Shift Away From Community Development

In this period there was also a shift in political orientation at the City of Coquitlam, and this had implications for the relationship between the City and community groups like the CFM. Jim reflected that there has been a more conservative trend originating from Mayor and Council.  This included, as Jim described, a shift away from community development and a move towards business and financial bottom line priorities. The shift also included movement towards more of a top-down approach to public participation, where government drives the agenda.  Jim described, "One thing I've objected to, they've gotten rid of anyone who believes in community development; it's all about what does council want."  This shift is the result of staffing changes and direction from Mayor and Council, as Jim related:

> There has been upheaval in the senior management team in leisure and parks, currently the guy in charge used to be in planning, he is the GM. … Another woman, who comes from an accounting background, very good on business end of the department.  Things are getting much more business-like in Coquitlam, much less community development focused.

This shift in Coquitlam towards economic priorities is consistent with shifts in cities over the past 20 to 30 years to the business-oriented operating parameters of neoliberalism (Peck et al., 2013).

This shift away from community development and towards economic bottom-line concerns was confirmed by Janet, who recalled, "Back in Jim and Mark's time, community development was huge, big part of department… over the years that has definitely changed, and community development is not the big buzzword that it was 20 years ago."

Anna has also noticed a shift, remarking that, "Over the last couple of years there is more of 'if we give it to you we'll have to give it to everyone' mentality. Which wasn't there before, 5 or 6 years ago." The political climate has been shifting at the City and the CFM has found itself caught up in that shift. Anna remarked that: "What the focus of the City at that particular time is, is a huge influence over what the market can and can't do."

This shift in the City's philosophy on community development has had a significant affect as it provides space to community groups. As explored in the previous chapter, the City has always been exceedingly careful of making long-term commitments of space to community groups. Over the last 20 years the City has further tightened its approach. Janet explained how the City has made a conscious shift to providing less ownership over space that many community groups use. Janet described the City's older approach to space and community groups:

> Right before the farmers market the big push for the city was to provide groups more ownership for their space, for example, the little league and slow pitch, they have their signs up where their field of use is, and they take care of their batting cage, and have that level of ownership.

The rationale, as Janet explained, was that if groups had a sense of ownership over the space they would take care of it through activities such as fundraising for equipment or maintaining the space and provide value to the City. The City still retained actual ownership over the space, but was more permissive in giving a sense of ownership to groups. Since that time the City's approach has changed. Janet describes it as a conscious shift, because the City realized that having community groups having ownership over spaces produced limited financial benefits - the improvements and investments that were produced had been limited in value. Janet explained, "these groups were given the 'ownership', but truly they're not owners, they're just taking care of the ground more than the parks people can … so the new direction is we have the ownership; we are in charge." This makes it a much less complicated role in managing space for the City.

The growth of a business perspective in the City of Coquitlam over the last 20 years, and the accompanying effect on the approach to providing public space to community groups is an important development to understand the dynamics in the relationship between the CFM and the City. The next chapter will pull together themes of

factors in my findings and identify some of the key dynamics that shape the relationship between the CFM and City.

# Chapter 6.

# Analysis: Understanding Top-Down and Bottom-Up Dynamics through Conceptual, Spatial and Relational Factors

When bottom-up and top-down worldviews meet, dissonance and challenges can be the result (Chaskin, 2005, p. 408). Chapters 4 and 5 identified many themes in the history between the Coquitlam Farmers Market and the City of Coquitlam. This chapter highlights a series of dynamics that emerge from the conceptual, spatial and relational factors discussed. The disconnect discussed in the introduction, that the CFM is successful but still has not achieved the permanency in the community it seeks, is the result of the dissonance produced when different views on public participation and city building meet. Six dynamics stood out as being particularly relevant to better understanding that dissonance. Through critically exploring what is beneath those dynamics, we can better understand the relationship between the CFM and the City, and ultimately, the complexities faced by a bottom-up temporary urbanism project in a top-down neoliberal context.

## 6.1. The "Temporary" Disconnect in Temporary Urbanism

One dynamic that shapes the relationship between the City and CFM is that they hold different understandings of the "temporary" nature of the market. The City of Coquitlam holds an impression of the market as a temporary event, while the CFM understands itself as a permanent institution. This creates a disconnect between the market and City, leading to divergent thoughts about the market's permanency and relationship to the community. A number of factors are involved in this dynamic.

Both the City and CFM intentionally framed the market as a temporary festival. As discussed in chapter four, the CFM represented new ideas about food and urban environments. The City and community had concerns about the market. One of the ways the CFM and City staff helped the CFM navigate this was to intentionally emphasize the

market as a temporary event. This was achieved through calling it a "festival" and requiring it to include elements that denoted temporary festivals such as live music or performances. The contract between the City and CFM also reinforces this sentiment since it labels the market as a festival and requires features that are indicative of temporary community events. The participation agreement is also renewed annually, because the CFM is using public space that the City will only consider for non-permanent use by community groups. The City's guiding principle of not giving permanent ownership over space to community groups causes the City to *de facto* treat the CFM as temporary.

The Parks and Recreation department is the main point of contact between the CFM and the City, and this is another factor which reinforces the temporary framing of the market. The City staff who are supporting the market are also heavily involved in supporting other temporary events and recreational community festivals. This leads City staff to understand and interpret the market in those terms. To the recreation department staff the market fits in with the wider spectrum of community events that they are offering. Jim recalled: "It fit in with the service delivery package well, we were offering various events, we were doing the Teddy Bear Picnic, Earth Day, that were drawing a few thousand people. The farmers market and agricultural festival was just one more of these community events we were doing, it happened much more regularly than our one offs, but it just got embedded in what we did in terms of community events." The market found a crack in the urban environment and staff to support them, but the terms of that support affected the way in which they were perceived.

It is also in the interest of the City to view the CFM as temporary and for the CFM's claim to space to be precarious. The CFM is an example of temporary urbanism practice, where precarious access to space has been normalized. Ela Harris writes how the rise of "pop-up" urbanism normalizes the idea that some claims to space are provisional and temporary (Harris, 2015, p. 595). She gives the example how in the arts field "temporary" has almost become synonymous with creativity, in effect undermining the need for long-term resources and "glorifying precarious situations."

It is the "temporary" part of temporary urbanism that is embraced most readily by neoliberal urban regimes. Mia Ferrai evokes the term "magic" to describe the idea that

temporary urbanism can reconcile two seemingly incompatible agendas. She writes that the "temporary" in temporary urbanism can assure "practitioners and property owners that this pioneering does not have to create antagonistic tensions with neoliberal urban development, and that pockets of creative autonomy where exploration and innovative praxis can take place outside market dynamics, are possible and even (temporarily) desirable (Ferreri, 2015, p. 183)." It is useful for the City to enable a temporary project that activate and deactivate on demand. This is important to staff at the City, as they like the benefits of the market, but need to have the flexibility to accommodate construction and other large events that take place around the CFM.

The people behind the CFM do not understand the market in temporary terms. They understand that the market has temporary elements that are intermittent and seasonal, but they see their project as something non-temporary that is working towards a permanent presence in the community. Jane describes the market's frustration, "You've been doing something for almost two decades, and it's temporary only in the sense that the City sees it that way. It's not temporary to our customer base, it's not temporary to the growing number of vendors we have, it almost has a permanent function, or at least a seasonal permanency, but we are still seen as a temporary thing that can be moved, relocated, discontinued for a week." It creates immense frustration for people at the CFM when the City treats them as a temporary project.

The temporary label also leads to challenges for the CFM in finding more permanency in the community. CFM leaders find that the City's perception of the market downplays its contribution to the community, and limits what the market is able to get involved in. Jane spoke about the CFM's struggle with not connecting to broader ideas in Coquitlam, and some of the other priorities of the city that the market has tried to align with: "You're still not perceived as something that the city should be actively promoting or making the connection between what we do and other civic priorities such as increasing health or decreasing social isolation." Anna felt that because the market is understood as temporary by the City effectively serves to isolate the market from wider discussions on broader issues, "How they view the market colours how we would fit into any of those conversations. So when they see us only as an event we don't get to be part of any of those conversations."

The temporary framing of the market served not only to make the market successful in establishing itself in the community, but also to create a disconnect between the CFM and City.



**Figure 6.1    The CFM feels particularly temporary while transitioning back to the standard parking lot use.  Copyright 2016 David Sadler.**

## 6.2.  Shared and Divergent Goals of the CFM and City

A second dynamic emerged from the shared and divergent goals of the CFM and the City.  This dynamic concerns the challenge of creating change in a system (i.e. Coquitlam) while at the same time working through that system.  The City embraced the CFM because the market works towards a number of outcomes that are shared by the City. While this synergy is positive for the market, the CFM has still been unable to accomplish their own more extensive goals of a permanent and institutionalized market presence in the community.

The CFM is trying to make changes to the urban fabric of Coquitlam, but at the same time they must work within and through the existing system.   Neoliberalism and temporary urbanism projects can work well together.  Many studies have observed how projects with transformative potential like the CFM are embraced by the current system not because of their potential for change, but rather because they are able to fulfill a need

of the existing economic regime (Ferreri, 2015; Harris, 2015; Tonkiss, 2013).  This is true for the CFM and the City. Mark remarked that "it is not like the goals of this group were polar opposites" to the City's priorities.

The CFM accomplishes a number of outcomes that the City supports.  One goal of the leaders behind the CFM was to promote a vibrant and connected community space, and the City supported this outcome. Staff appreciated that the CFM brought liveliness to an otherwise quiet and empty suburban parking lot.  Mark remembered that the City had the "desire to support a volunteer group that are charged and have this enthusiasm to provide for the neighbourhood."  The CFM needed space, and produced a more vibrant urban environment as part of its activities.  Further evidence of the City's approval of the market's effect on local spaces can be seen in City staff's requests to start markets in other locations. Anna described: "They come to us from time to time and ask us to start a market somewhere."  One such example was at a "Spirit Square" for the 2010 Olympics. Anna remembered that they asked the CFM to run a market there "because from their perspective they were looking for programming for it."  Temporary urbanism is increasingly being embraced by cities as programmatic element that can be activated in order to create vibrant and economically active areas (Ferreri, 2015, p. 186).

The CFM also has value to the City as a marketing tool.  Initially the CFM was not of value to the City because farmers markets were not popular.  Since then, the local food movement has taken off, and farmers markets have exploded in popularity. The CFM has become valuable in how it can help contribute to Coquitlam's brand as a progressive and urban community. Mayer points out how temporary urban projects can become harnessed by cities as "branding assets" that contribute to the image of a "cool city" or "happening place" (Mayer, 2013). One popular branding strategy that cities undertake is "village life" within cities, in which the imagery of farmers and markets fits (Portney & Berry, 2013, p. 401).

The value of the CFM brand is also connected to tourism.  Anna described how the City of Coquitlam would intermittently have a tourism office or staff person, and that she feels that the current tourism manager is a point of connection to get things done for the market. Anna shared that, "He is looking at different ways to market the City and he

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has seen the farmers market is something that the city should be highlighting and marketing so he's been very helpful in terms of helping promote within the City that the farmers market is on." Finding opportunities such as this is important to the CFM, and the market is savvy around how to gain support for their project. Jane shared how the market has been experimenting with the catchphrase "Authentic Coquitlam Experience" to describe their work and its connection to Coquitlam.

Despite this positive collaboration, CFM identified a number of ways in which their collaboration with the City is falling short. Jane feels that the scope and impact of their work is not appreciated as much as it should be. Jane remarked, "I think a lot of people think that we are just a lemonade stand, something that is cute to have, but really doesn't impact the city." Jane does not want the market just to be an adornment to a neighbourhood, but rather to have an impact on the economic landscape and foodscape of Coquitlam, and contribute to making a more sustainable City.

The request for the market to animate spaces also reinforces the gulf between the extent of the impact the market is intending to have, and what the City is embracing it for. Jane commented that the City's requests to set up a temporary market in different places often do not work for the CFM, as "They don't understand the other components you need around the market to make it successful." When staff at the City make a requests for space-animation they are treating the CFM as a programming tool. This does not acknowledge the economic and geographic setting that makes markets thrive, and the impacts the Market has beyond animating a space.

The working relationship between the CFM and the City has led to the successful establishment of the market. Part of this success is because the CFM has been embraced by the City as a tool for neighbourhood animation and vitality. However, the people behind the CFM are interested in achieving deeper impacts related to food security and sustainability, and most importantly, establishing the market as a more permanent institution. The dynamic of the market achieving some goals in collaboration with the City, while other important CFM goals remain elusive shapes the relationship between the two organizations.

## 6.3. Ownership Over Space Through Time

A third dynamic that affects the relationship of the CFM and City is that they hold different expectations of the CFM's claim to public space as the result of its long presence in the community. The CFM feels that its long-term presence gives it a greater claim to space, but the City does not share the same perspective. The City's top-down and CFM's bottom-up perspectives on public participation influences this disconnect considerably.

In interviews, the CFM often referred to its long history and presence in the neighbourhood as giving it a greater claim to space. This perspective is rooted in the CFM's bottom-up approach to civic participation. It fits with an "insurgent" approach to urbanism that works through small acts taking place between the cracks of formal planning to "propose alternative lifestyles, reinvent our daily lives, and reoccupy urban space with new uses" (Zardini, 2008, p. 16). Jane espouses this perspective when she described the CFM's work, "We are showing them how to use space differently, and creating community liveliness, in addition to all the other things we do." This is an emergent approach to driving change in cities, where the possible city can be found in the creative uses of existing spaces in the present (Tonkiss, 2013, p. 321). For the CFM, the act of using a parking lot as a market, gives new meaning to that space and transforms it into something new.

People from the CFM made a number of comments about how their lack of a permanent space is out of step with how long they have been there. Anna describes her frustration, "I think of the insecurity of our location even though we have been in our location for 10 years, we still sign a lease year to year. They won't give us a multi-year lease." The CFM's use of the parking lot is based on annual contracts that must be renewed. The CFM has developed a strong sense of connection and claim to that the space because of their activities in that setting.

The City on the other hand, does not see use of space over the long term giving increased ownership over space to community groups. Janet shared the City's perspective on this issue, "We get gazillions of requests, so how do you make it work. For example, Sunday morning, why does the farmers market get first dibs because they've been here for 20 years? It's the balance we constantly have to work at. We get these requests all the time." The City views this challenge from a top-down perspective,

mediating and controlling the use of public space with all stakeholders. From the City's perspective, revisiting the agreement between the CFM and City every year ensures that the space is managed in a way that accommodates all groups equitably over time.

This disconnect is also present in situations where the City has asked the CFM to shut down. The City has the ability to "shut down" the market in the event of other priorities taking precedence. In the context of an upcoming major event, Jane related, "They said the farmers market basically has to shut down, didn't say we need the parking lot, they just said the farmers market needs to shut down. I said we are not doing that; we've been here for almost 20 years." The market was also warned by the City that they will need to shut down when changes come to the built environment. While staff at the City empathize with the impacts this has on market, they approach it as a given that the market has to acquiesce. Mark describes, "Part of what happened over a 5 year period, Poirier was a mess with facility development, I am sure they got moved all around based on what was available. Probably went through a season of feeling pretty impacted by all of the changes." Jane describes the experience from the market's perspective: "We get something from someone, that says, basically at some point we are going to be redoing this whole parking lot and make it more efficient, and whenever that is happening the farmers market better be prepared to relocate." As a temporary urbanism project, the CFM's claim to space is through its consistent presence over time and use of that space. Being asked to shut down is effectively being asked to relinquish their claim to that space. Anna relates that being shut down hasn't happened, "They've told us this a couple of times now, but it hasn't materialized yet" – but that makes it no less jarring to the CFM, and reinforces the insecurity of their space.

This disconnect is also observable in discussions around infrastructure between the CFM and the City. People connected to the CFM had expected greater infrastructure support from the City over time. When the market was first founded, the CFM did not have an expectation for permanent infrastructure. According to Sue, "You can't really expect permanent infrastructure in the infancy of the market … you have to first earn your chops." One such desired piece of infrastructure is signage. The CFM has long wanted signage installed that would communicate the CFM's connection to the space they occupy. Jane described their aspiration for signage: "Home of the Coquitlam Farmers Market -

something simple as our name included on a sign in Dogwood Pavilion." However, this is a problematic proposition for the City, which does not want to give indications of ownership over space to groups. Jane has noticed this as they get pushback when they make requests for permanent infrastructure. She remarked that when they are "tossing around requests for permanent infrastructure" they get attention. The City does not want to put in permanent infrastructure, no matter how long the market has been there, because the City is concerned with maintaining its ability for flexible management over public spaces. Janet gave the example of a request for a shipping container to store materials in, and that the City's concern was that they would not be able to get rid of it if they needed to: "it's not a particular thing we can say yes to, then get rid of it."



**Figure 6.2      Formal City signage and temporary CFM signage.  Copyright 2016
David Sadler.**

For the CFM, the occupation of the parking lot is both a communication of its claim to space and a snap-shot of how life could be organized in a possible new city. From this perspective, they have been making claims to space through the language of bottom-up urbanism for close to 20 years. However, the City does not speak nor understand that language. The City and CFM holding deeply different perspectives on the role of the public in city building is a key dynamic that has shaped their relationship.

## 6.4. The Changing Neighbourhood

The changing spatial context of the area surrounding the CFM is another important dynamic that affects the relationship between the CFM and the City. The underutilized space that the CFM was able to establish itself in is becoming scarce. The spatial context that the CFM has been operating in is changing, and will create challenges for the CFM in its ongoing search for permanency (See Appendix A for a series of aerial photos that show the changes to the precinct).



**Figure 6.3      Poirier Recreation Complex in 2015.**
In 2015 multiple new civic buildings are visible, including an expanded arena and lacrosse box, with further new construction taking place across the street from the CFM. In this photo the CFM tents are visible in the parking lot below the square lawn bowling green. Compared to 2003, the area covered by parking lots has decreased. (Map data: Google, DigitalGlobe, 2015)

When the CFM first began in 1996 it was able to get space in the parking lot outside of the Coquitlam Sports Complex.  The CFM was able to use this area for the market because it was interstitial space that was open to experimentation from outside of formal plans. The parking lot space was not under high demand as there were enough parking spots to meet the needs of users of the surrounding facilities.  The CFM also requested the space on Sundays, which was not a busy time.  There were also no other groups requesting the space for non-parking related activities.  At the time, the parking lot space was only being used for parking, and the CFM was the first group who wanted to use it for another purpose.

The space was also not under pressure because of the broader neighbourhood context in which the parking lot was located. Jim described the Poirier neighbourhood as a fairly stable and static neighbourhood where there was not a lot of development pressures putting a premium on land. Lauren Anders (2012) describes two states of space and development pressure in cities: weak-planning and master-planning. A master-planning context is when economic and political conditions are aligned to foster large-scale development and top-down production of space. A weak-planning context is an environment in which a formal vision for a sight isn't present or achievable, and a space remains loose and unordered by a planning strategy (Andres, 2012). The neighbourhood context around the CFM was a weak-planning context, and the market was able to take root. Jim felt that other neighborhoods in Coquitlam that were experiencing more active re-development and formal planning would not be a place that the CFM would be able to find footing.

The Poirier neighbourhood has not been the site of large-scale redevelopment, but change has slowly been coming to the area surrounding the CFM. As touched on in Chapter 5, new civic construction is increasing pressure on parking space. The first loss of space occurred when the City of Coquitlam built over the CFM's original location in 2005. Since then, the construction of a lacrosse box, pool and other facilities have created more demands for parking. The trend of new facilities will continue, as the City is engaging in long-term planning for the Poirier Sports Complex area. Janet points out, "This is a much older area, [many] of the amenities are older, need to make changes, need to tear up stuff, freshen up, keep up with the times. I feel for the farmers market because they will have to switch it up over the coming years."

Janet's comment that the market will have to "switch it up over the coming years" shows the City's assumption that the market will have to adjust as new official plans come on. This creates tension with the CFM, that feels as though they have gained ownership over the space through time and should have more ownership over it. Tensions over space start to occur when areas that were once open to experimentation and temporary projects transition to a state of master-planning. This process challenges the collaborative production of space between users who appropriated space and other more officially

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sanctioned uses (Andres, 2012, p. 762). The CFM and City have found a collaborative way for the market to use the space in the past, but that balance will be disrupted.

The CFM is experiencing the same challenges as many other temporary urbanism projects. Examples of the disruption of temporary bottom-up projects when top-down plans emerge due to renewed investment is well documented (Groth & Corijn, 2005; Kamvasinou, 2015). This leaves the CFM to question the space it will be able to find in the future. Jane remarked, "As they have more users and the space around us redevelops, I would have hoped we would have had a lot more interest in the City [in our permanent home]." She continued, "But we know that at some point the space that we operate in now will probably be built over, who is looking out for us? Other than us? Who is the one when that gets put into motion, that says, we need to make sure to consult the farmers market?"

The changes that have been coming to the Poirier Sports & Leisure Complex and Dogwood Pavilion are creating a new spatial context for the CFM. This is a dynamic that produces a disconnect because the CFM has been working within one spatial context for a long time, and the new reality will mean a new context for their relationship with the City. With shrinking availability of experimental interstitial space, the market finds itself in a difficult position in their quest for permanency. As the spatial context changes, the relationship between the CFM and City will change as well.

## 6.5. Shifting City Regime and Same Market

The ideological shift at the City of Coquitlam and the consistent goals of the CFM is another critical dynamic. Over its 20 years of activity in Coquitlam, the CFM has remained consistent in its mission and aim as it has grown in complexity and scope. At its core the CFM is still driven by the same priorities of increasing access to local food, supporting local small businesses and farmers, and building a more vibrant community. The City on the other hand has undergone an ideological shift towards "bottom-line" economic priorities. This includes a decrease in attention to community development programs.

The ideological shift changes the level of support available from the City for community groups, including the CFM.  Jim reflected, "The market just doesn't fit in with the current core services which seem important to the department, and they probably face more challenges today than they did before." Jane expressed a similar sentiment, "We are so far down the list of things that are important to them right now.  We are far down the priority list, and we are still kind of seen as a cute festival."  She continued to reference issues like development projects elsewhere in town and rapid transit expansion as items that are capturing Mayor and Council's attention.

Not being a priority has tangible effects. One policy change was that the City no longer provides storage space to community groups as it once did. The CFM needs to store equipment for its weekly market, and in its original location had access to ample storage space in the adjoining City facility.  Janet recalled that once the market moved to the new facility they had a fraction of its previous space, "They had huge storage space in the olds sports centre, and they've had to trim it right back to a little closet in Centennial Room kitchen.  Even that, as we mention to them every year, …can go away, at any time … for management priorities [storage space] is very very low."  Space in facilities is expensive to build, from a financial perspective it does not make sense to provide it.

The CFM feels frustrated that their storage needs were not taken into consideration in the development of new spaces in the community.  People at the CFM felt they should be consulted by the City to discuss these needs.  Jane remarked, "When the new rec centre was built, no one asked us if we had an interest in storage space, even though we had space at an old one we were tearing down."  The leaders of the CFM have been around for a long time, and this seems like a step backwards in the relationship with the CFM and City.  However, this decision was not just a matter of the CFM not being consulted by the City, but was rather due to a change in wider City policy that the CFM was caught up in.

Another outcome of the conservative shift is a change in the seniority of staff who were the key points of contact with the CFM. In previous years City staff who worked with community groups had more seniority.  This gave them the authority and ability to advocate and meet the needs of community groups.  Mark described how he was able to

"delegate" to make things happen for the CFM. The CFM has noticed this difference, Jane remarked that the current staff person they work with is very supportive, but does not have the same authority or ability to make things happen as previous staff contacts did. This makes it harder for staff to get things done for the CFM.

The ideological shift at the City, and the relative consistency of the CFM leads to different expectations in their work together. The CFM is expecting more support than it is receiving, but City policy dictates less support. The CFM is driven by people with a long history in collaborating with the City. This has given the CFM a strong continuity in experience and memory that stretches back to its early days, but the same memory does not exist for the City. The changed nature of the working relationship creates challenges to navigate in the collaboration between the CFM and City.

## 6.6. Finding the CFM's Place in the Community

A final dynamic that emerged is the challenge of defining the CFM's place and connection to the community. The market may be interpreted as many things: a public good, a private group, or something else entirely. People involved in the CFM and City staff have discussed the market in ways that implies there is some ambiguity around the answer to what the market is. The CFM leaders view the market as a public good, and put forward ways in which it could be connected closer to other public goods provided by the City. The City on the other hand, refers to the market as a private user group that has positive impacts on the community.

The staff and volunteers from the CFM I spoke with had ideas about the future of the market that blurred the lines between the CFM, City, and community. Anna felt that part of the market's challenge is its ambiguity: "[the CFM's] insecurity goes back to that understanding of what is the place the farmers market holds within the community." The CFM's place as a private group or a public good is murky.

CFM leaders made a number of comments about how the market could have a closer connection to the City. They saw benefits to such a change. Jane drew comparisons to other community facilities in how she wanted the CFM to be treated: "Look

at us like you look at your rec centres, or your sports fields or those sorts of things, because what we are doing in the community is as important as that." Anna considered, "If within the City, the market felt like it was a department, held a like a bricks and mortar spot, held some sort of place-maker." Anna also questioned whether the CFM needed to be a priority of Mayor and Council in order to be taken seriously by staff at the City: "[I] Don't want to get bogged down in bureaucracy of it, but if that's what gives [the CFM] legitimacy, that we are to sit on a committee that is all about [food security]. If that is what is making it real for the rest of them, then that is the piece that should happen."

It was significant that all the CFM people I spoke with brought up some level of integration within City systems as a way to bring more security and legitimacy to the market. Often the spectrum of co-optation is raised as a pitfall for more radical groups that align themselves too closely with mainstream interests. For projects like the CFM, it is a much more complicated question than just being independent or co-opted. Sometimes a degree of co-optation is necessary, as Tonkiss (2013) notes: "It is a condition of the work these practitioners do if they want to make space." Embedding the market within the City is one way to embed the ideals of CFM in the community. Kam Kamvanisou found that the legitimization of once radical activates into the mainstream are often welcomed by the group and increases awareness of the core objectives and ideas (2015, p. 18).

The City on the other hand, continues to view the CFM as a user group, and while they see the positive benefit the CFM has on the community, they view it as separate from the City. As to the future of the CFM, Janet described: "I think because of our long standing relationship we've had and their growth as a permanent fixture in our community, I don't think it's something that we ever want to see go away." Janet has respect for the CFM and its work, but still frames the market as something that is being done by an outside group to the City of Coquitlam. When asked about the market finding permanent space in the future, Jim also framed the CFM as an outside group. He noted that the only way the CFM could achieve getting space of their own would be to purchase land themselves, as private groups simply cannot be given public space in perpetuity.

These thoughts on the future of the market in Coquitlam point towards a nuanced disconnect between the CFM and the City. The CFM describes itself as a public market

that is providing a service to the community, while the City views the market more as a user group that also has public benefit. This disconnect, about what the CFM fundamentally is causes the City and CFM to view the current and future place of the market and its place in Coquitlam differently.

# Chapter 7.

# Conclusion

2016 marks 20 years of the Coquitlam Farmers Market in Coquitlam. The longevity and growth of the market from a once-a-week market to multiple locations, multiple seasons, and new programming speaks to the success of the initiative. Over those years the CFM has worked with and received support from the City of Coquitlam in a collaborative relationship. A highly interconnected series of conceptual, spatial and relational factors have influenced the working relationship between the CFM and the City. The six dynamics I identified illustrate in detail some of the complicated dynamics of when bottom-up grassroots groups collaborate with top-down local governments.

This study shows that deeply held perspectives on life in cities affect the relationship between the CFM and City. These are not simple or superficial perspectives, but rather are deeply internalized beliefs about who holds the power to produce space in cities. Both the City and the CFM are driven by strong perspectives that in many ways are difficult to reconcile. This raises questions for the progressive planner or community developer interested in supporting grassroots groups as part of their practice. It implies that supporting these groups is not just a task of reconciling opinions or finding compromises, but bridging between different worldviews. I hope that this project can produce more intentional and informed relationships, and there are a number of implications that merit further consideration.

First is the issue of how the CFM holds on to a "temporary" framing, and implications for how it can establish itself more as a permanent institution in the community. When I asked staff and volunteers at the CFM what would support the development and permanency of CFM, they identified programmatic solutions such as grants or a policy that supports markets. However, this project has argued that there is something deeper going on than just policy priorities. I found that it is in the City's interests to view the CFM as temporary for reasons connected to retaining control over space and neoliberal outcomes. This raises the question of what circumstances would have to exist to make it in the City's interest to view the CFM as a more permanent institution. Described

another way, how can an argument for permanency for the CFM and other temporary urban projects be made that aligns with deeply rooted City perspectives on space and power.

The benefit of framing projects as temporary to make them more palpable to institutions that hold power also raises implications for urban practice.  Staff at cities, including myself, regularly give community groups the advice to frame projects as temporary to make it more palatable to City bureaucracy.  From personal experience this is a common method used to build support for a small radical project that could lead to more substantive progressive change in the future.  A more nuanced look at this approach is needed because this project has demonstrated the tenacity of the "temporary" label in the case of the CFM.  Critical thought needs to be given to if by opening the door for a temporary project, staff are inadvertently closing the door to more permanent change. More consideration needs to be given to the what comes next, after the initial crack in the urban landscape is found.  The importance of this is reinforced by this project showing that the CFM gained a stronger sense of connection and ownership to space through time, but the City did not share that belief. This means that this disconnect between the CFM and City has the potential to grow more pronounced over time, underscoring the need for staff to consider this challenge early in the working relationship.

My study found that the CFM walks a line between working towards a new vision of public space, food and economy in Coquitlam, while at the same time working within the context of neoliberalism.  The CFM was successful in establishing itself in the Poirier neighbourhood, and has since expanded to holding other markets and other food related projects such as a community gardens. How does the CFM's vision of public space and local economy move to shape the mainstream vision for urban space?  This is a question of how the idea moves out of niches and into the mainstream – the challenge of incorporating progressive ideas into a pre-existing context. A key learning from this project is how the wider context affects this task. Coquitlam cannot be viewed without context. Susan Fainstein (2010) points out that "Cities cannot be viewed in isolation; they exist within networks of governmental institutions and capital flows (p. 17). " My analysis views Coquitlam not as a closed system of roads and zonings on a map, but as connected to wider ideology and economic imperatives.  When moving out of the cracks and into the

mainstream, that is not just a task of navigating the local setting, but also navigating the full socioeconomic context.  For me this relates to classic questions about driving change in cities and the "reform or revolution" schools of thought.  Critical analysis on how the work of temporary urbanism projects fit into "non-reformist reform" (Fainstein, 2010) approaches that set the stage for a new type of City in the context of the status quo deserves more attention.

Consistent with the wider literature on temporary urbanist approaches, my project found that as pressures increase on space, opportunity for experimentation from people outside of official planning channels is diminished.  As interstitial space gets tighter in the Poirier neighbourhood, a very timely question for the CFM and its supporters is: how does the CFM carve out a home in the new spatial context?  The volunteers and staff behind the CFM recognize this challenge, as they have made comments about being concerned about who is looking out for the market in the future.  A logical follow up to this project would be to further explore how temporary urbanist projects are able to transition successfully to more permanent occupancy in a newly ordered urban space.

The conservative shift at the City of Coquitlam has had an impact on City policy and support for community development. This produced a disconnect with the CFM because the CFM leaders were used to working in a context where community development was more of a priority. Knowing that these political shifts take place in cities on a regular basis because of election cycles and political trends, what can be done to create resilience for community groups when these shifts take place? It would be useful to consider both what can be done from within city government and be done from outside of city government.

Finally, a theme emerged from this project regarding the CFM wanting to become more institutionalized in the community through a closer connection to the City.  This raised questions regarding the boundary lines of concepts such as the City, Coquitlam, the community and the CFM.  How the CFM is viewed and conceptualized in relation to these categories has an impact.  This project raised questions about how the future of the CFM will be impacted if it is viewed in different ways by the City.  I suspect there will be different outcomes if it is seen as a public good and in the context of the benefits it gives

to the community, or if it is viewed in the context of being a private group organizing a public event. This is a philosophical theme in this study that I feel I was only able to scratch the surface of, and deserves much more critical thought than I was able to give it.

Throughout this project I have explored the case study of a farmers market in a suburban setting. From this emerged a series of observations about the relationship between the CFM and the City of Coquitlam pointing to some key dynamics of their work together. I hope that this work can serve to spur further critical thought and examination of the role of staff and urban professionals in fostering more intentional and productive relationships between grassroots groups and local government.

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# Appendix A.

# Aerial Photos of Poirier Recreation Complex

All images are copyright: Google, DigitalGlobe. Retrieved from Google Earth.

**2004**



**2006**



**2008**

**2014**



**2015**