



CHURCH STREET MARKETPLACE

Church Street Marketplace District Commission Meeting Minutes Wednesday, April 16, 2025

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners: Mark Bouchett, Becky Holt, Linda Magoon, Sam Tolstoi, Erik Monsen, Sarah Beal (Zoom), Cara Tobin (Zoom), Chris Haessly

Absent: Romeo von Hermann

Staff: Kara Alnasrawi - Executive Director, Stephanie Shohet - Administrative Assistant, Andrew Bacher - Church Street Marketplace Coordinator, Jessica Dudley - Marketing Manager, Aida Washburn - Projects & Event Specialist, City Attorney Emmet Wood

APPROVE AGENDA

- Chris makes the motion to approve, Erik seconds, and approval is unanimous.

APPROVE MINUTES

- Linda makes the motion to approve, Becky seconds, and approval is unanimous.

PUBLIC FORUM – GENERAL

none

FY 26 COMMON AREA FEES

- PUBLIC FORUM ON ITEM
- VOTE ANTICIPATED

- Kara recommends keeping common area rates unchanged for FY26.
- The City Assessor's office has audited some historical spaces and has notified property managers. This audit will result in an additional \$34,000 in common area fees.
- Linda makes the motion to leave the fees unchanged, and Sam seconds this.
- After a brief discussion about costs going up and the fact that the Marketplace will soon need to find additional sources of income, the motion is unanimously approved.

FY26 BUDGET

- PUBLIC FORUM ON ITEM
- VOTE ANTICIPATED

- Kara shares her budget presentation for FY26 (which was included in the agenda packet).

- Kara confirms that the additional \$200,000 from the City to help cover maintenance costs will be included yearly going forward.
- She highlights a few changes such as the need for a new plow, but that she is expecting to provide less private security.
- Kara also explains that we will need to raise fees eventually because we can not keep up with inflation, and the budget is unsustainable.
- Discussion follows about possible ways to get donations from visitors.
- Erik makes the motion to approve the budget, Becky seconds this, and approval is unanimous.

IMPACT OF POTENTIAL LOST TOURISM

- a. DISCUSSION ITEM
- b. NO VOTE ANTICIPATED

- Kara explains that Vermont tourism organizations are no longer reaching out to Canadians for various reasons related to the current political climate.
- She points out that campgrounds and marinas are suffering as well and that we need to try to attract visitors from other New England states instead.
- Discussion follows about how to attract younger visitors and how we target our advertising based on the audience that engages in our social media.
- Further discussion ensues regarding the loss of office workers downtown, the need for a larger event venue, and problems with construction traffic and parking.

TREASURER'S REPORT

- Sam says that Kara's presentation about the FY26 budget covers everything that he had planned to present.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Kara reports about a very successful Maple Madness event and updates the group on upcoming April and May events.
- She mentions that while construction is still challenging, the Main Street project is on time overall. Construction will close in November and remain closed until spring 2026.
- Kara explains the new temporary parking program.
- She updates the group on the City Place hotel and apartments opening this summer.
- Discussion follows about new businesses opening soon and storefronts that are under contract as well as possible ways to market to UVM and Champlain students as well as to veterans.

CHAIR'S REPORT

- Mark notes that warmer weather has been bringing out more visitors downtown.
- He mentions that commission should start discussing the governance of the Marketplace.
- Discussion follows about encouraging people to use Front Porch Forum, Reddit, etc. to tell of positive experiences downtown.

Regular meeting is adjourned.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a. DISCUSSION OF DIRECTOR'S PERFORMANCE



BURLINGTON

Downtown Parking Update

MAY 21, 2025

FY25 DID Assessment Allocation

FY25 DID Assessment Allocation

5/15/2025

Programs supported by the Downtown Improvement District

Program	DID Tax Contribution (Estimated)	Program Cost (Estimated)	% Subsidy	Future Estimated Program Cost
2 Hours Free Parking at the Downtown Garage	\$65,000	\$65,000	100%	\$150,000
99 Cent Parking Promotion	\$40,000	\$40,000	100%	\$50,000
Free Employee Parking* (Restaurant/Retail Only)	\$54,000	\$600,000	8%	\$500,000
Total	\$159,000	\$705,000	23%	

*The "Free Employee Parking" program was expected to be financially sustainable based on increased revenues at the MPG with the removal of "2hrs Free." However, revenues realized are running at about \$200K (less than a third of expected based on pre-pandemic opportunity cost of "2 hrs Free") threaten the viability of the program, which is estimated to cost ~\$900,000. This graph shows an estimate of 2/3 this cost based on estimated usage.

2 Hours Free Parking – Downtown Garage

- FY25 YTD: 25,480 Transactions have utilized the free parking
- >10,000 different license plates
- High School Students using often

99 Cent Parking Promotion

99 Cents all day in the core (5803) for the 5 weeks between Thanksgiving and January 5th .

Old promo was 2 hours free Fridays and Saturdays.

- 27,720 Transactions almost the same exact amount as 2023
- Revenues were also similar to 2023 – within \$2,000

Rate Change in January 2025 will challenge this promotion

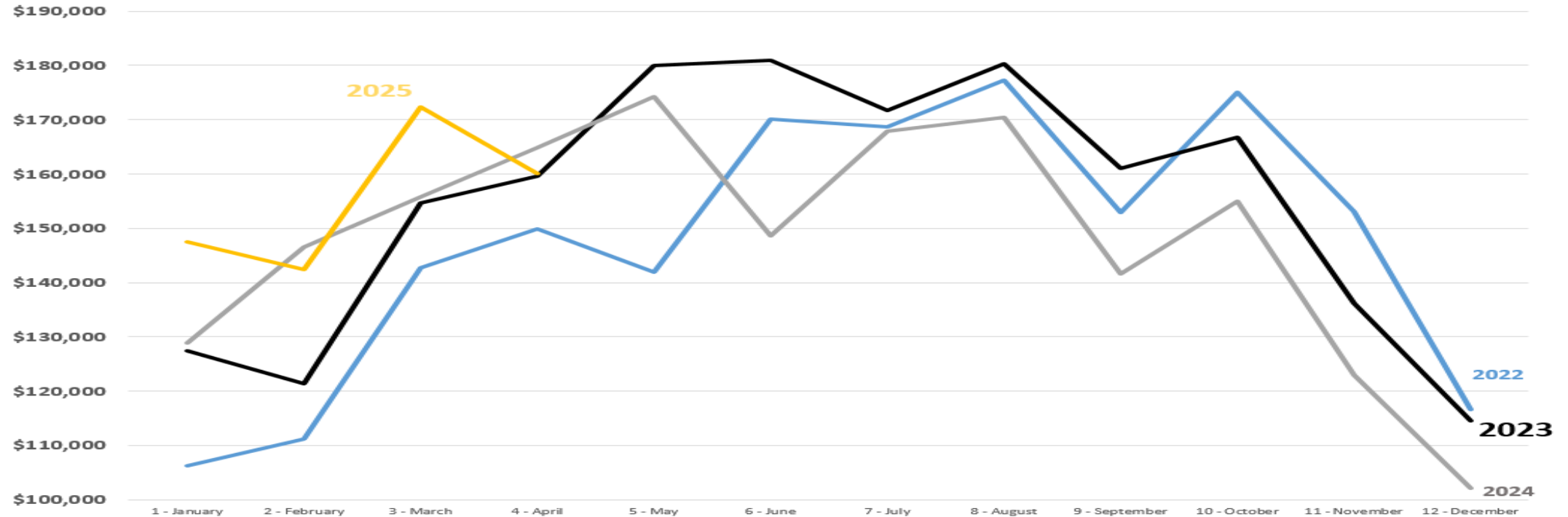
Free Employee Parking Program

- Currently 765 Active permits
- 65 Employers sending monthly lists in
- Feedback to DPW is that this is an important program to support downtown retail and restaurant employees
- Future discussion - \$ cost for each permit

On Street Revenues:

On Street Meter Revenue Year on Year

Monthly, Retail Only, No Meterbags

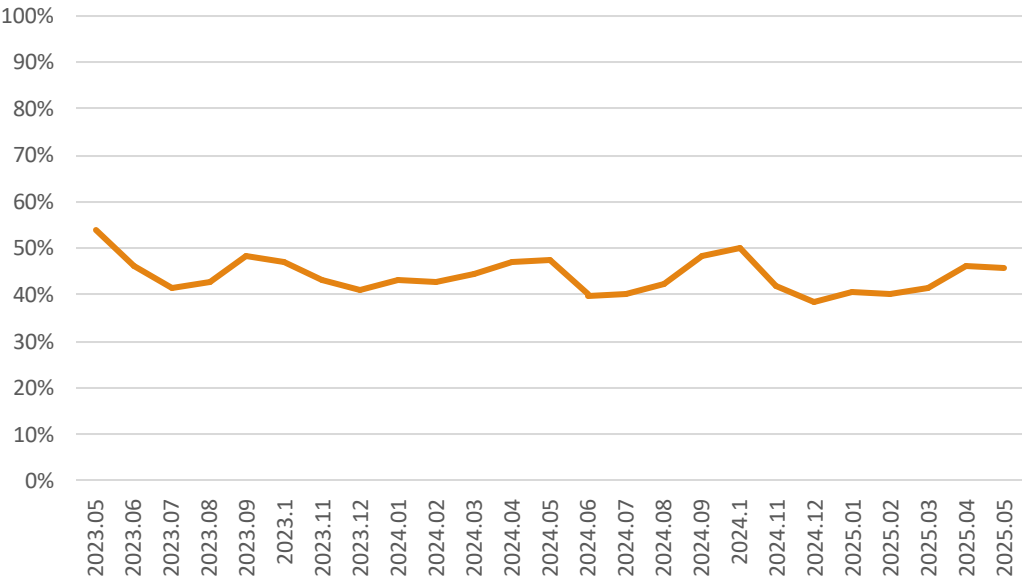


year/year retail, no meterbags

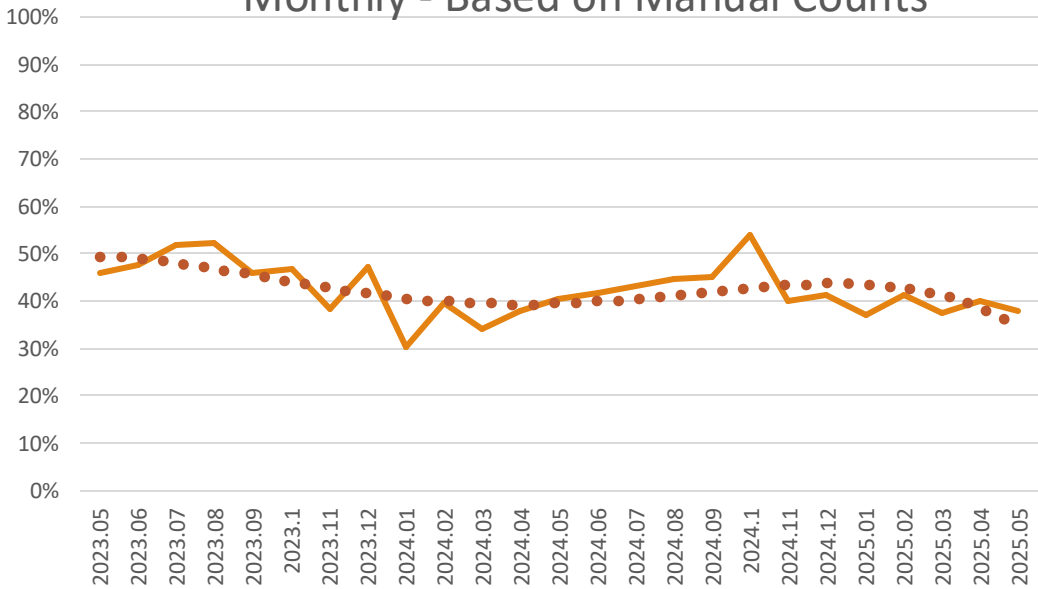
Garage Occupancy:

Average Monthly Occupancy

Average Occupancy
Downtown Garage
Monthly - Based on Manual Counts



Average Occupancy
Marketplace Garage
Monthly - Based on Manual Counts



Financial Update

Traffic Fund (264)

Expected to incur a net loss this Fiscal year

Looking to Grants to help with crosswalk painting, RRFBs

Received a grant to upgrade Signals along Main Street, East of Great Street project

Upgrading Meters into Kiosks

On Street Rate Change – January 2025

Parking Facilities Fund (265)

This fund was net positive (\$40k) last year for the first time since at least 2018 - ~\$300k net positive this year

\$750K loan in process to cover capital repairs

\$2.5M loan executed to cover operational losses due to Covid

Other Updates

ParkMobile Contract Renewal

General Status of garages

- Security
 - Sheriff
 - CSO directive
- Elevators – Lakeview Garage and Marketplace







DID Rate – Historic and Future

Fiscal Year	DID Amount	Tax Rate
2026	\$159,733.00	\$0.035/\$100
2025	\$159,733.00	\$0.035/\$100
2024	\$159,733.00	\$0.035/\$100
2019	\$302,043.53	\$0.07/\$100

We're proposing to remain the same through FY26

Questions



Downtown Parking Update



CHURCH STREET MARKETPLACE

To: Church Street Marketplace Commission
From: Andrew Bacher, Marketplace Coordinator
CC: Kara Alnasrawi, Director; Samantha McGinnis, Assistant Director
Date: May 15, 2025

Re: Changing Mathew's Montreal's Famous Food Cart Schedule

On January 21, 2025, Mathew Panetta, owner of *Mathew's Montreal's Famous*, submitted an application to participate in the 2025–2026 Church Street Marketplace Cart Vending Program. As part of his application, Mr. Panetta proposed a menu change to incorporate Indian dishes provided by his business partner, *Maharaja Spice*.

On Wednesday, March 19th, 2025, the Church Street Marketplace Commission reviewed the application and denied the proposed menu change, determining that it would directly compete with *Laliguras*, an established brick-and-mortar Indian restaurant located across the street from *Mathew's Montreal's Famous* vending location.

Appeal and Revised Proposal:

Following the Commission's decision, Mr. Panetta submitted an appeal to the Church Street Marketplace Cart Vending Committee. In his appeal, he proposed a revised operating schedule that would limit his vending hours to after *Laliguras* closes, thereby mitigating concerns regarding direct competition.

Committee Recommendation:

After reviewing the revised proposal, the Church Street Marketplace Cart Vending Committee recommends that the Commission approve the application for *Mathew's Montreal's Famous* under the condition that the vendor adheres to the following operating schedule:

- **Hours of Operation:** 10:00 PM – 2:00 AM

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval by the Commission of *Mathew's Montreal's Famous* application, contingent on adherence to the specified operating schedule.

Appeal for Menu Modification

I would like to propose operating our food cart from **10PM to 2 AM**. Given that our menu may be seen as competitive, we believe this schedule is a fair solution that avoids any direct overlap.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mathew Panetta

04/16/25



To: Church Street Marketplace Commission
From: Andrew Bacher, Church Street Marketplace Coordinator
CC: Kara Alnasrawi, Executive Director
Date: May 21, 2025

Re: Cappadocia Bistro Custom Table

The Church Street Marketplace allows outdoor dining in the public right-of-way during the summer months for approved food and beverage businesses. Outdoor dining allows food businesses to seat more customers and improves the economic vitality of the street.

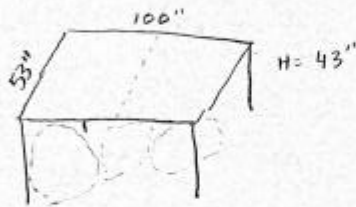
Cappadocia Bistro, a new restaurant on the Marketplace located at 92 Church Street, has requested to place a custom-built table in their patio space for the 2025 season. This table will be large enough to fit over the stones located within their patio, thus allowing for more seating. Cappadocia Bistro has requested to secure the legs of the table into the bricks for added stability. The table would remain fixed on the street for the duration of the summer season. Previous lessees of this space have requested to remove the rocks from this patio to allow for more seating. Marketplace staff appreciates Cappadocia Bistro's creative thinking around this problem and their willingness to adjust their plan based on our feedback.

When the business is closed, Cappadocia Bistro will pile their chairs and other tables around the fixed table to prevent its use outside of business hours. In the fall, Cappadocia will remove the table and footings fully, leaving no trip hazards.

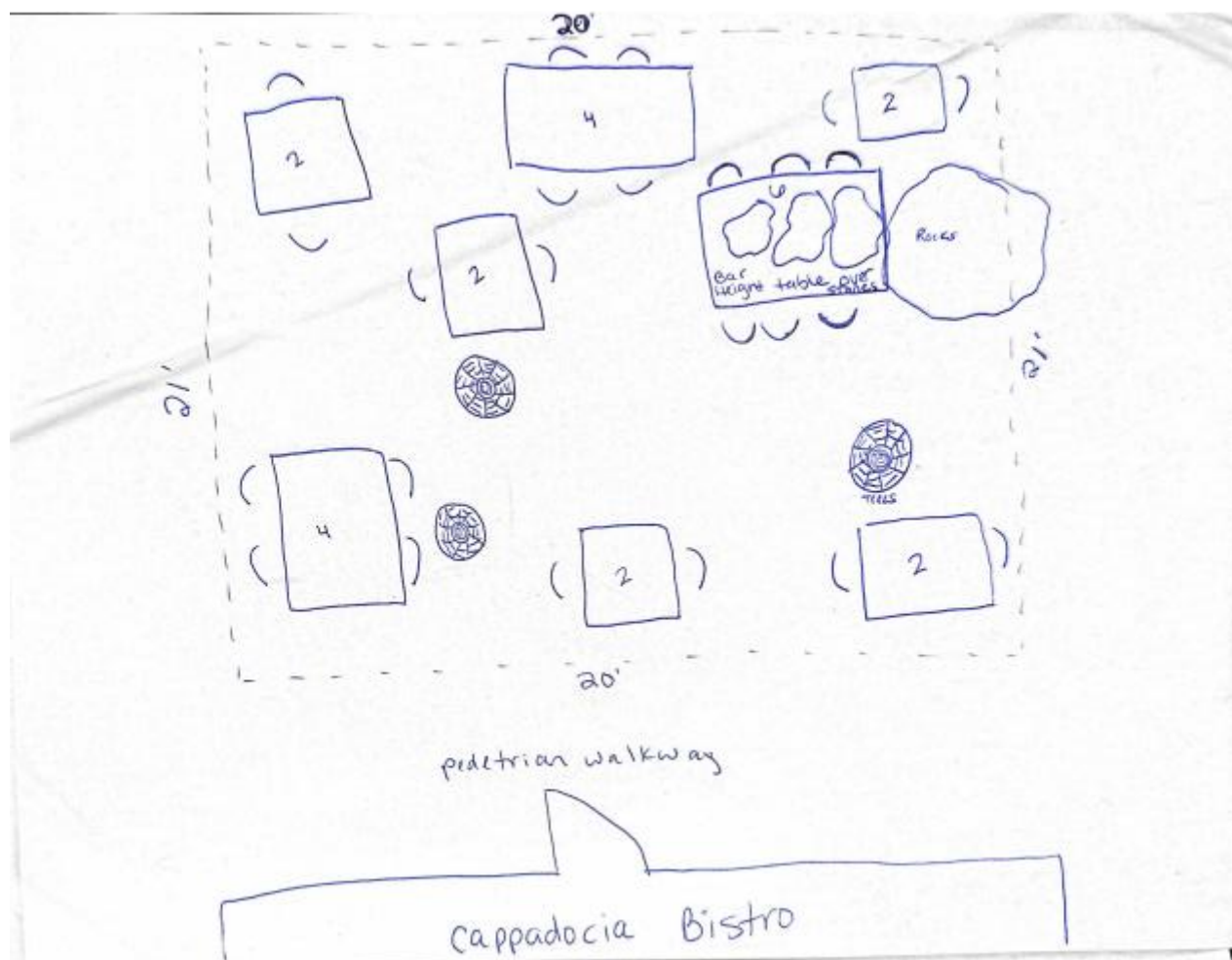
The dimensions and drawings of the table and footings are included in this memo.

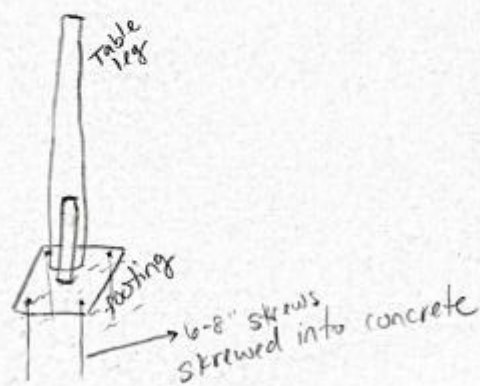
Marketplace staff recommends approving this table design given that it will help activate the street during the summer and will be removed for the off-season.

Outdoor Table over Stones



- Two pieces or one piece
- legs will be metal $\rightarrow$ screwed into ground
- Since this a large table, we may have it built as 2 pieces that latch together.
- we would like to anchor the legs to the sidewalk. we don't want to have to move this table around. It will be put out in spring and taken down in fall.





we will remove 2 bricks per foot. Pour 6-8" deep by 4" x 4" square concrete.

• Footing will be a metal plate screwed into the concrete with 6-8" screws.

• In winter metal footings & plate will be removed, only concrete surface will remain.



CHURCH STREET MARKETPLACE

To: Church Street Marketplace Commission
From: Andrew Bacher, Marketplace Coordinator
CC: Kara Alnasrawi, Director; Samantha McGinnis, Assistant Director
Date: May 15, 2025

Re: Early Termination of Whim Boutique Lease

Whim Boutique was a Burlington-based women's clothing retailer established in 2007 by Melissa Desautels. Since 2010, Whim has operated out of the City-owned property at 62 Church Street. Ms. Desautels has been an exemplary tenant - paying rent on time and investing in the upkeep and improvement of the space.

As of April 30, 2025, Whim has vacated the 62 Church Street property and relocated to their new space at 50 Church Street where Ms. Desautels has combined Whim with her other business Dear Lucy. Ms. Desautels has formally requested an early termination of her lease, on June 1, 2025 which is currently set to expire on July 31, 2025.

Below is a table outlining the financial impact the termination of this lease would have on the Church Street Marketplace Budget. The impact is separated into rent, tax, and common area fee revenue in FY 25 (June) and FY 26 (July).

FY 25

Rent	\$1,468.52
Taxes	\$330.13
CAF	\$132.95
Total	\$1,931.61

FY 26

Rent	\$1,468.52
Taxes	\$330.13
CAF	\$132.95
Total	\$1,931.61

In her request, Melissa cites a 15% downturn in business revenue and expressed that the financial burden of maintaining the lease would affect her ability to continue operating. Despite the multi-faceted challenges impacting the Marketplace she reaffirmed her commitment to the Church Street Marketplace by renting a new and larger space on the street and she has been a strong advocate for local business. These statements are supported by her 15-year history of active engagement within the community.



CHURCH STREET MARKETPLACE

A Request for Proposal to identify potential new tenants for 62 Church Street is currently being drafted and expected to be posted no later than 5/26/2025.

Action:

Marketplace staff recommends the Commission approve the early termination of Whim Boutique's lease, effective May 30, 2025. Staff would welcome a discussion regarding CAF and taxes which are invoiced separately from rent. Commission should be aware that the Marketplace will need to reimburse the City for the property taxes.

Pending commission approval, this decision will need to be approved by the Burlington City Council at their next meeting on Monday, June 2, 2025.

May 5, 2025

Dear Church Street Commission,

As of April 30, 2025 I have vacated 62 Church Street- Whim's home for 15 years. I would like to ask you for early termination of the lease effective my move-out date.

Remaining in the lease will cause me further financial hardships. Upon closing I have a large amount of debt due to being down a considerable amount in 2024 (15%).

I have closed Whim but merged it with my other store Dear Lucy (also down:18%). I have signed a new lease at a new location which will hopefully lower all expenses in the future. I remain deeply committed to the marketplace & a strong advocate for local businesses.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best,

Melissa Desautels

Resolution Relating to

RESOLUTION_____

THE LOCATION OF THE PROPOSED
OVERDOSE PREVENTION CENTER

Sponsor(s): _____
Date: _____

CHURCH STREET MARKETPLACE COMMISSION

In the year Two-Thousand Twenty-Five.....

Resolved by the Church Street Marketplace Commission, as follows:

1 That WHEREAS, there are a number of individuals currently living within the City of Burlington who
2 are struggling with an untreated substance use disorder; and

3 WHEREAS, a number of service providers for individuals struggling with substance use disorder
4 are located in or within close proximity to downtown Burlington; and

5 WHEREAS, there exists a syringe distribution program located near the Church Street
6 Marketplace which provides free syringes to individuals struggling with substance use disorder; and

7 WHEREAS, the accumulation of syringe litter has created a public health and safety issue that
8 has been identified as a major problem for city residents and business alike; and

9 WHEREAS, downtown residents and businesses have been adversely impacted by the behaviors
10 of individuals struggling with substance use disorder; and

11 WHEREAS, the public use and consumption of illegal drugs and narcotics has contributed to
12 negative perceptions about downtown Burlington; and

13 WHEREAS, an Overdose Prevention Center may help to reduce the public use and consumption
14 of illegal drugs and narcotics and the accumulation of syringe litter; and

15 WHEREAS, an Overdose Prevention Center may help to prevent overdose deaths and provide a
16 safe space for individuals to seek treatment and receive medical care; and

17 WHEREAS, Substance Use Disorder is a medical condition that requires medical treatment; and

18 WHEREAS, the delivery of medical treatment is best achieved at a designated medical facility;

19 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Church Street Marketplace Commission
20 hereby supports the establishment of an overdose prevention center; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Church Street Marketplace Commission believes that the
22 best location for the proposed Overdose Prevention Center is on the premises of a designated medical
23 facility; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Church Street Marketplace Commission vigorously
25 opposes the establishment of an Overdose Prevention Center within the downtown core or the Central
26 Business District; and

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Church Street Marketplace Commission calls upon the
28 City Council to establish a local ordinance that prohibits the public use and consumption of illegal drugs
29 and narcotics; and

30 FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that the Church Street Marketplace Commission calls upon the
31 State Legislature to increase the number of treatment beds available for individuals who wish to receive
32 treatment for substance use disorder but are unable to do so due to the lack of resources.