Farmers' Market at Sandpoint
Rapid Market Assessment Report
July 8, 2026



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FARMERS' MARKET AT SANDPOINT
RAPID MARKET ASSESSMENT
JULY 8, 2026

Market Name:	**Farmers Market at Sandpoint**
Year Founded:	1988
Market Website	Farmersmarketatsandpoint.com
Date of Assessment:	July 8, 2026
Market Hours:	**Wednesdays 3:00 pm to 5:30 pm**
Market Season:	Second Wednesday in May through Second Wednesday in October
Location:	Farmin Park, downtown Sandpoint, Bonner County, Idaho
Market Manger:	Olivia Gonzales, manager@farmersmarketatsandpoint.com
Market Board President:	Kristina Bauer
Fees:	All-Season Pass $100 for a half-booth, $200 for a full booth. Single Day Pass $10 for a half-booth, $15 for a full booth. All vendors pay an annual application fee of $20 and annual membership fee of $50.
Vendors:	12 vendors on July 8. 60% Farm products (most a mix of farm and non-farm products) 33% Prepared Foods 17% Arts & Crafts
Estimated Market Sales:	$10,713 to $13,392
RMA Team Members:	Colette DePhelps, Community Food Systems Area Educator, University of Idaho (UI) Extension, Moscow David Callister, Agriculture, 4-H and Community Development Educator, UI Butte County Extension, Arco Jim Ekins, Water Area Educator, UI Extension, Coeur d'Alene Melissa Hamilton, Community Development & Agriculture Educator, UI Valley County Extension, Cascade Emily Hasz, Hub Coordinator, UI Idaho STEM Ecosystem, Silverton, ID Lorie Higgins, Community Development Extension Specialist, UI Department of Agricultural Economics & Rural Sociology, Moscow Jen Jensen, Horticulture and Small Acreage Farms Educator, UI Bonner County Extension, Sandpoint Lindsey McConnell-Soong, EXCITE Regional Health Agent, UI Extension, Caldwell Kathee Tifft, Community Development, Family & Consumer Sciences Educator, UI Nez Perce County Extension, Lewiston Robi Towfeeq, UI Graduate Student & UI Extension Intern, Moscow Jen Werlin, Community Food Systems Educator, UI Teton County Extension, Driggs Kate Wood, Community Food Systems Program Coordinator, UI Northern District Extension, Sandpoint

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Introduction: On Wednesday, July 8, 2026, University of Idaho Northern District Extension led a Rapid Market Assessment (RMA) of the Farmers' Market at Sandpoint. The assessment had three components: 1) adult customer count, 2) four-question dot survey, and 3) constructive comments and observations by the RMA Team[i]. This report provides a summary of the RMA findings.

Part 1: Adult Customer Count

Market customer counts are estimates. They are derived by counting the number of adult shoppers in the market at opening plus hourly customer estimates. To obtain hourly estimates, RMA Team members are stationed at each market entrance for 10 minutes. For this two- and one-half-hour market, counts were taken 25-35 minutes after the hour for the first two hours the market was open and for a ten-minute period starting one-half hour before the end of market. Using clickers, team members counted the number of adults entering the market in that ten-minute period. The ten-minute counts were then multiplied by six (10 minutes x 6 = 60 minutes) to obtain an estimate of adult customers entering the market during each of the first two hours and by three (10 minutes x 3 = 30 minutes) to estimate the last half hour (Table 1). The number of children entering the market were counted using the same method (Table 2).

Table 1: Estimated Total Adult Customers: 946

Time	Count	Percentage
3:00 pm – at opening	34	4%
3:00 pm to 4:00 pm	504	53%
4:00 pm to 5:00 pm	294	31%
5:00 pm to 5:30 pm	114	12%

As shown in Tables 1 and 2, the peak hour for both adult customers and children appeared to be between 3 pm and 4 pm. The approximately 50% of adults and 64% of children attending the market on July 8th entered the market from Oak Street and 50% of adults and 36% of children entered from Main Street.

Table 2: Estimated Total Children: 412

Time	Count	Percentage
3:00 pm – at opening	4	1%
3:00 pm to 4:00 pm	258	63%
4:00 pm to 5:00 pm	78	19%
5:00 pm to 5:30 pm	72	17%

Part 2: Four-Question Dot Survey

One adult per household was asked to participate in a four-question dot survey. Each survey question was written on a separate poster board. Customers were asked where they live, their primary reason for coming to downtown Sandpoint that day, how much they anticipated spending in the market, and how much they anticipated spending outside the market in the downtown area. Children's dots, distinguished by color, were not counted.

Approximately 18% (173) of the adults who visited the market participated in the dot survey by answering two or more of the dot survey questions. Dot survey posters were changed mid-market, at 4:15 pm, to test whether there were substantial differences between the first and second half of the market. Participation in the survey was significantly higher during the first half of the market, with 112 (65%) adult respondents, compared with 61 (35%) adult respondents in the second half of the market.

Where Market Shoppers Are Coming From

As shown in Table 3, about 27% of all customers who responded to the dot survey reside in Sandpoint and approximately 8% reside in Sagle or Algoma. Forty-six percent (46%) were tourists or visitors residing outside of Bonner (ID) and Pend Oreille (WA) counties.

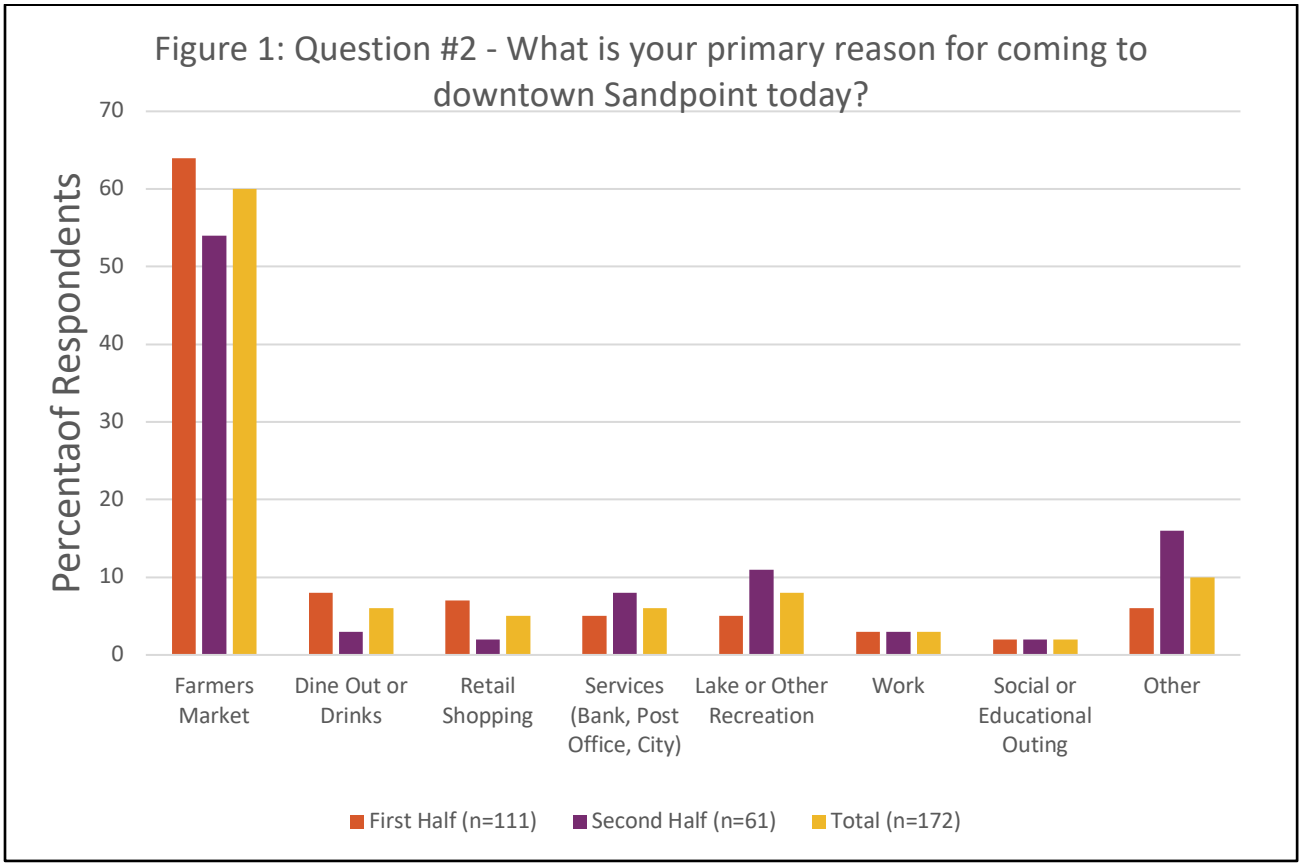
Table 3: Question #1 - Where do you live?

Location	Percent of Respondents (n=173)
Sandpoint	27%
Sagle/Algoma	8%
Ponderay	3%
Hope/Clark Fork	3%
Other Bonner County	8%
Newport/Priest River	3%
Other Pend Oreille County	1%
Tourist / Other	46%

Comparing responses from shoppers during the first and second half of the market, approximately 74% of shoppers in the first half lived outside the City of Sandpoint, compared to 70% of the shoppers in the second half of the market. The percent of shoppers identifying as tourists or visitors from outside Bonner and Pend Oreille counties was the 45% during the first and 49% during the second half of the market.

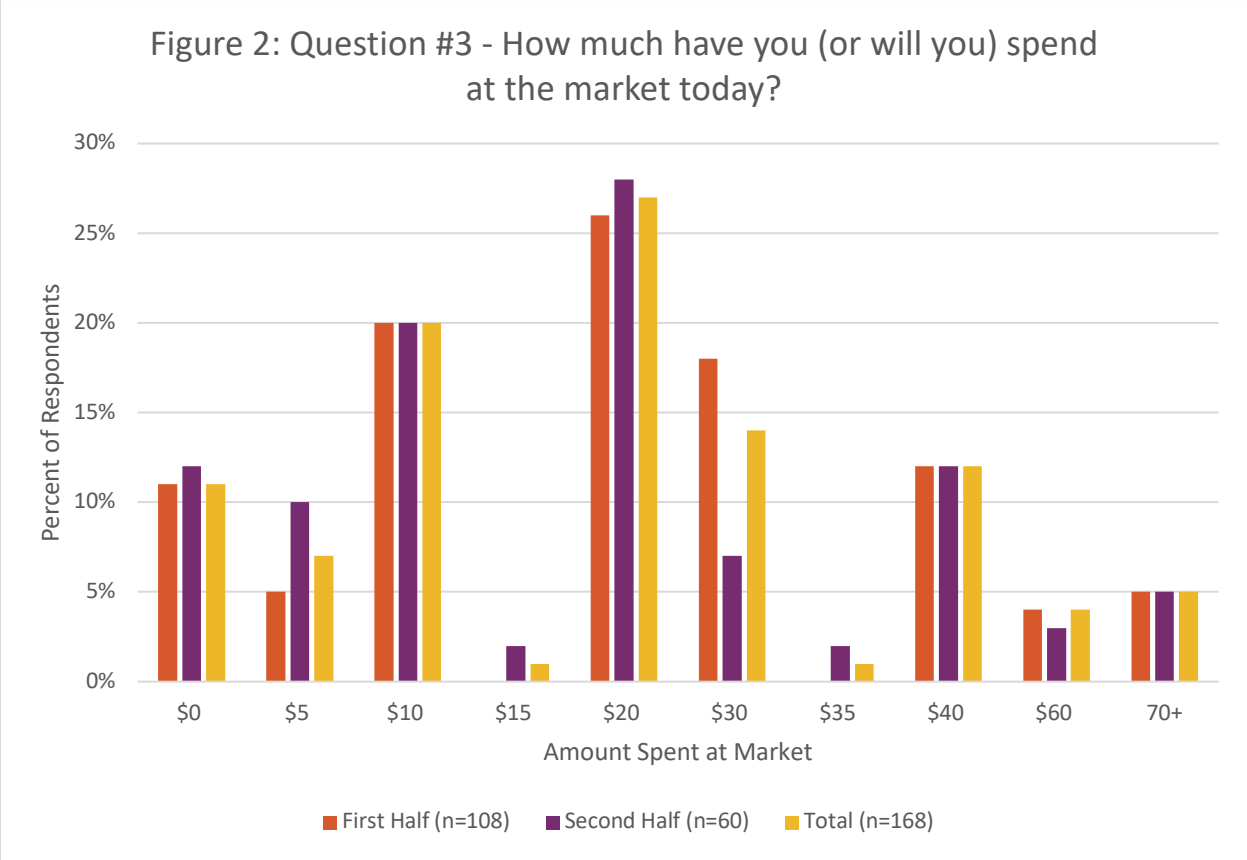
Primary Reason for Coming Downtown

To better understand the draw of the market, customers were asked their primary reason for coming to downtown Sandpoint on July 8th. Over half of the survey respondents, 60%, indicated the farmers market was the primary reason for coming downtown. Looking at the differences between the first and second halves of the market, we see a slightly higher percent of early shoppers (64%) indicated market being their primary reason for coming downtown, compared with later respondents (54%).



Customer Spending at Market

Spending is estimated by "shopping group" – adults who spend from one "wallet." A shopping group is generally one or two adults. A "basket" refers to the total market purchases made by a shopping group. Adults from the same shopping group were asked to answer the survey using one dot per question to avoid over counting. Market customers were asked how much they had or would spend at the market that day. Response categories were provided.



Amounts spent per shopping group were similar between the first and second half of market (Figure 2). Based on survey responses, approximately 54% of total market sales were in baskets ranging in value from $5 to $20.00 while 30% of total market sales were in baskets ranging from $30.00 to $60.00 in value. Approximately 5% of market shoppers spent $70.00 or more. The greatest number of survey respondents, 27%, indicated an intended (or actual) spending of $20.

Overall, the average amount spent per shopping group was $22.65 (Table 4). Spending patterns differed slightly between the first half and the second half of the market.

Table 4: Average Amount Spent in the Market by Shopping Group on July 8, 2026

Time Period	Average $ Spent
All of Market (3:00 pm to 5:30 pm)	$22.65
First half of Market (3:00 pm to 4.15 pm)	$23.01
Second half of Market (4:15 pm to 5:30 pm)	$21.17

Customers shopping during the second half of the market spent approximately $1.80 less per basket than customers shopping during the first half of the market, a per basket decrease of approximately 8%[1].

Estimated Total Market Sales

Using the Rapid Market Assessment methodology, **total market sales** can be estimated as follows:

- Number of shoppers divided by the number of adults per shopping group equals the number of shopping groups.
- Number of shopping groups multiplied by the average amount spent per shopping group equals the estimated total market sales.

The number of adults per shopping group is estimated to range from 1.6 to 2.0. Using 2.0. reflects a more conservative estimate on spending[2].

Table 5: Estimated Total Market Sales on July 8, 2026

Estimated Total Number of Shoppers	Shopping Group Size	Number of Shopping Groups	Estimated Market Sales ($22.65 basket)
946	2.0	473	$10,713
946	1.6	591	$13,392

Estimated total market sales range from $10,713 to $13,392 (Table 5). Since approximately 73% of the survey respondents indicated they lived outside the City of Sandpoint (see Table 3), we can estimate that approximately 73% of Market sales, between $7,821 to $9,776, were to customers residing outside of the City of Sandpoint, assuming there is no difference in average spending between those respondents living inside or outside of the city[3]. Forty-six percent of sales, $4,928-$6,160, were to tourists and others living outside Bonner (Idaho) and Pend Oreille (Washington) counties[4].

[1] The average amount spent per shopping group is calculated by dividing the total amount survey respondents indicate they spent ($3,805) by the total number of shopping groups who completed the survey question (168).

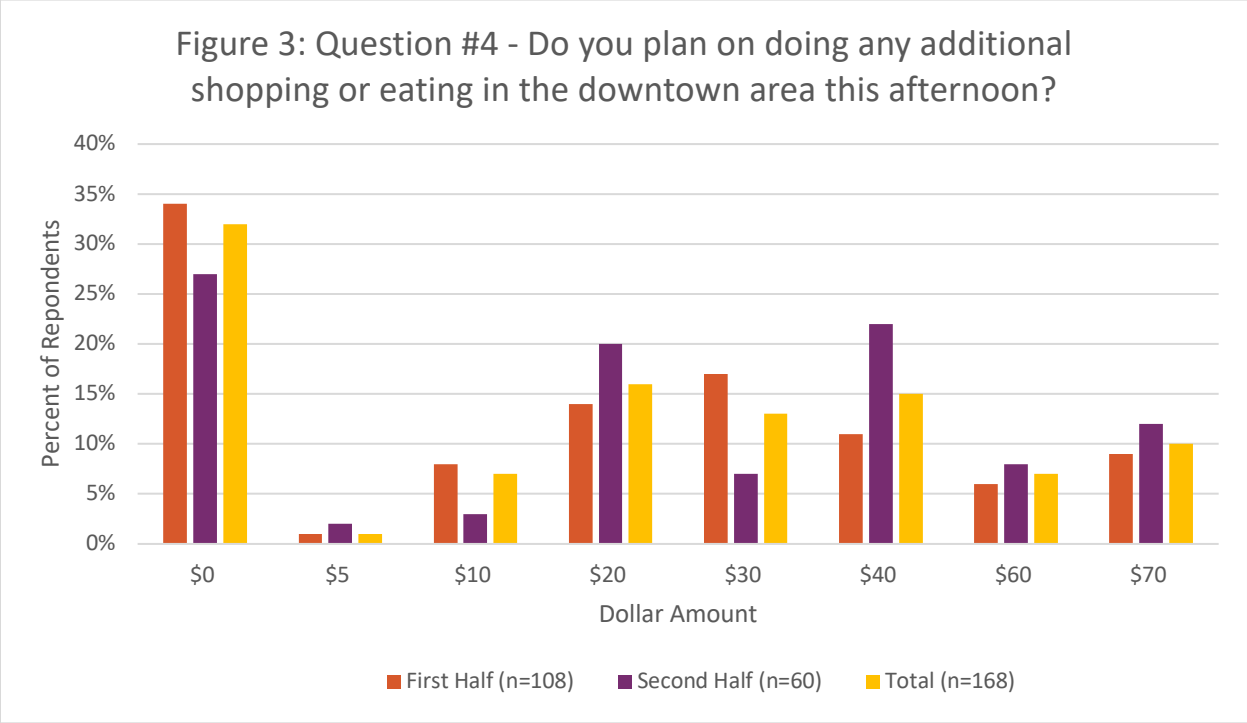
[2] While many people shop at farmers markets alone, effectively being a shopping group size of 1, more conservative shopping group numbers of 1.6 and 2 are used to prevent overestimating market spending.

[3] In the case of this dot survey, cross-tabulations across survey questions were not possible. Therefore, there is no way to determine if there were differences in spending between those living inside and outside of the City of Sandpoint.

[4] The respondent category "Tourist/Other" includes residents of Boundary County, Idaho.

Market Customer Spending in Downtown Sandpoint

To better understand the economic contribution of the Market to downtown businesses, survey respondents were asked whether they planned on doing additional shopping or eating in the downtown area (outside of the market) and, if yes, how much they anticipated spending. Approximately 68% of respondents indicated they would be shopping or eating at other downtown establishments on the day of the assessment (Figure 3).



About 24% of shoppers indicated they would spend between $5 and $20.00 outside of the Market and 44% indicated they would spend between more than $20.00 outside of the Market. The average downtown expenditures anticipated by survey respondents was $22.80 per shopping group. Shoppers during the second half of market indicated they would spend slightly more downtown ($3.00 on average) than those shopping during the first half of market (Table 6).

Table 6: Average Amount Spent Downtown by Shopping Group on July 8, 2026

Time Period	Average $ Spent
All of Market (3:00 pm to 5:30 pm)	$22.80
First half of Market (3:00 pm to 4.15 pm)	$22.92
Second half of Market (4:15 pm to 5:30 pm)	$25.92

Estimated Downtown Expenditures

The estimated total downtown non-market spending by market shoppers ranges from $10,784 to $13,481 (Table 7). Since at least 73% of the survey respondents indicated they lived outside the City of Sandpoint (Table 3), we can estimate that 73% of downtown spending (between $7,873 and $9,841) was by market customers residing outside of the City of Sandpoint, assuming there is no difference in average spending between those living within and outside of the city.

Table 7: Estimated Total Downtown Spending by Market Shoppers on July 8, 2026

Estimated Total Number of Shoppers	Shopping Group Size	Number of Shopping Groups	Estimated Downtown Spending ($20.77 basket)
946	2.0	473	$10,784
946	1.6	591	$13,481



PART 3: CONSTRUCTIVE COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS SUMMARY

The purpose of this section of the report is to provide the Market with feedback about individual aspects of the market observed by the RMA Team. These remarks are not intended to be comprehensive, nor do they provide an overall "grade" to the market. Rather, the feedback provides information as to what team members appreciated about the Market and what they thought might be changed or improved.

Vendors and Products

Product mix, product quality, signage, display, customer service, etc.

Market Strengths

Despite its relatively small size, the July 8th Farmers Market @ Sandpoint offered an impressive mix of produce, plants, baked goods, value-added agricultural products, crafts, jewelry, wood products, personal care items, and community or cultural booths. Produce vendors appeared to be a major draw, with one vendor attracting long lines and what appeared to be repeat customers. The RMA team observed what appeared to be repeat customers, with many shoppers arriving at market and going directly to specific vendors. The balance between food vendors, bakeries, produce growers, and crafts was appreciated.

A standout feature repeatedly mentioned was the musical instrument booth**,** where adults and children could try instruments. This interactive activity was viewed as unique, engaging, and memorable. The RMA team also appreciated the live music, friendly vendors, and the sense of community reflected in regular conversations between vendors and shoppers.

Additional market strengths included:

- Easy-to-shop layout with booths facing the sidewalk
- Visible corner signage and market banners
- Timely market opening procedures, including ringing the bell on time
- A positive and family-friendly atmosphere

Opportunities for Improvement

The RMA team identified several areas of improvement that could strengthen the market experience:

- Improve consistency of vendor signage (a few vendors did not have business signs or prices)

- Provide guidance or training on booth displays and presentation to create a more polished appearance.
- Recruit additional prepared food vendors to encourage visitors to stay longer.
- Better understand and potentially promote connections between nearby food trucks and local farm products.
- Encourage all vendors to remain set up until the official market closing time.
- Ensure vendors breaking down early after selling out do not create the appearance that the market is closing.

Overall Vendor and Product Observations

The Wednesday Farmers Market @ Sandpoint is a vibrant, community-focused event with strong vendor-customer relationships, an excellent variety of products, and a welcoming atmosphere. Produce vendors and the interactive musical instrument booth were particularly notable strengths at the July 8th market. Strategic improvements to signage, booth presentation, and market operations could further enhance the customer experience and strengthen the market's identity.



Physical Site

Access, parking, flow of people, liability issues, organization

Market Strengths

The RMA Team viewed the market's location in the downtown park as a major strength. The Team appreciated the shaded, tree-lined setting, open grassy areas, benches, and covered stage, which create a welcoming atmosphere and encourage visitors to shop, socialize, relax, and enjoy live music. The stage and bandstand were highlighted as distinguishing and valuable features that enhanced the market experience.

The RMA team appreciated the market's accessibility including ample nearby parking, convenient access to an ATM and neighboring food vendors, and wide park sidewalks. The outward-facing vendor layout along sidewalks made booths easy to see and access, especially for older adults and individuals with mobility limitations. The RMA team also observed steady flow of shoppers throughout the market.

Several RMA Team members appreciated the park's role as a community gathering space, noting that community members were able to sit in the grass, enjoy music, and spend time with friends and/or family. The artistic park features, such as the bench in the park center, and abundance of shade contributed to a peaceful and inviting environment.

Opportunities for Improvement

The most common concern was accessibility beyond the sidewalks. While perimeter access to the market was generally good, access to grassy interior areas and some vendor booths could be difficult for visitors using wheelchairs, walkers, canes, or other mobility aids. Participants suggested exploring additional accessible routes through the market, working with vendors to improve booth accessibility and create designated seating areas, particularly near the stage.

Several RMA Team members suggested rethinking the market layout. Suggestions included having all vendors on the perimeter (rather than some on the interior areas) and creating more defined entrances to the market and park interior. Reconfiguring some vendor placement and use of signage could create a stronger sense of entering a market space and enhance customer experience.

Additional suggestions included:

- Adding more seating and picnic-style areas near the stage.
- Evaluating whether recent paid parking changes affect market attendance.
- Enforcement of the market's “no-dogs” policy.

- Considering park landscape improvements to further enhance accessibility (worn grass, dirt patches, and exposed tree roots that may create tripping hazards).

Overall Physical Site Observations

The market benefits from operating in an attractive, centrally located park that provides shade and a community gathering space. Access, parking, and shopper flow were generally viewed positively, and the stage, trees, and open space contribute significantly to the market's appeal. Future improvements could include accessibility, seating, site maintenance, and evaluating layout options that invite visitors more fully into the market space.

Atmosphere

Feel of the market, type of shoppers, conversations, educational activities, color, etc.

Market Strengths

The Wednesday Farmers Market @ Sandpoint has a warm, welcoming, and community-centered atmosphere. Even on a slower traffic day like Wednesday, the market environment was vibrant, positive, and relaxed. The combination of shade from mature trees, live music, friendly interactions, and a diverse mix of shoppers created an enjoyable experience for vendors and visitors alike.

The RMA Team noted the importance of live music in shaping the market's identity and contributing to the market's family-friendly atmosphere. Multiple team members highlighted the quality of the performers and the positive energy the music brought to the space.

The RMA Team also noted strong signs of community engagement. Shoppers of all ages were present, including families, older adults, youth, and groups of friends gathering to socialize. Many visitors appeared to use the market as a regular community meeting place, spending time talking, listening to music, eating, and connecting with others. Several team members commented that the community appears to have a strong sense of ownership and pride in the park and market.

Opportunities for Improvement

While overall feedback was very positive, the RMA Team identified a few opportunities to further enhance the market’s atmosphere:

- Add more educational or interactive activities for children and families.
- Increase visibility of market signage for visitors who may be unfamiliar with the area.
- Continue live music through the end of market hours when possible.

- Evaluate market hours and whether a later closing time could better accommodate people working until 5:00 p.m.

Overall Atmosphere Observations

The Wednesday Farmers Market @ Sandpoint is a welcoming, family-friendly community gathering place that successfully combines shopping, social interaction, and entertainment. Live music, shade, and strong community participation are key market strengths. The atmosphere encourages visitors to linger, connect with others, and enjoy the market experience, making it an important social and economic asset for the community.



General Public Comments Summary

Visitor comments made to and overheard by the RMA Team

This section of the report summarizes unsolicited feedback the RMA team received from market visitors and visitor comments overheard by the RMA Team. It is important to note this section does not convey a generalizable set of visitor suggestions or feelings about the market.

July 8th market visitors who spoke with the RMA Team expressed appreciation for the market's welcoming atmosphere and relaxed pace. Visitor comments reflected strong community support for the market and appreciation for its vendors, atmosphere, and role as a gathering place. One visitor from Virginia commented positively on the market and its value to both vendors and the community. A few visitors noted there seemed to be fewer farm vendors than usual.

Visitor Suggestions for the Market

- Explore adding more experience-based vendors or activities in addition to product vendors.
- Consider personal service vendors, such as chair massage providers, if consistent with market policies.
- Continue monitoring visitor and vendor opinions and concerns about tree health and impacts of the market on the park's grassy areas.
- Communicate clearly with vendors and visitors about the market's impact (or lack of impact) on the park and about options being considered by market management and/or the City of Sandpoint to maintain, protect and improve the park.

[i] The Rapid Market Assessment methodology was developed by Larry Lev, et. al, at Oregon State University. For more information on Rapid Market Assessments, see Oregon Small Farms Technical Report No. 6:
Lev, Larry, Linda Brewer and Garry Stephenson. Tools for Rapid Market Assessments. Special Report 1088-E, Oregon Small Farms Technical Report No. 6. Oregon State University, May 2008.
https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/sr1088