

FEEDING  
PHILADELPHIA'S

# HEART AND SOUL



2024  
—  
2029

**STRATEGIC  
PLAN**

*Fresh into the future.*





“The magic of the Market is that it feels like it’s never changing even though it is.”

“Reading Terminal Market is Philadelphia at its best.”



“This is the Everyman’s Market and **accessible to everyone** financially, geographically, and socially.”

“We’re here, together.”



Dear Friends of Reading Terminal Market:

We are thrilled to share our strategic plan for growth and sustainability with you. As the dedicated stewards of Philadelphia’s historic public market, the **Reading Terminal Market Corporation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit**, is committed to preserving and nurturing this beloved community treasure. Our pride in this responsibility is reflected in the title of our plan: **Feeding Philadelphia’s Heart and Soul**. Within these pages, you’ll discover our rich history, present impact, and future vision for keeping the Reading Terminal Market resilient, vibrant, and an integral part of our city for generations to come.

The Market means something different to everyone: fresh, affordable, accessible groceries; the perfect work week lunch spot; economic opportunity for small, family-owned businesses; a must-see location for visitors; and generational traditions of shopping and dining in this National Historic Landmark building. Our Market makes us all neighbors — out-of-towners and locals alike, across race, age, ethnicity, and economics. Amid the fish and meat stands, near the ice cream, cheesesteak, and craft counters, we foster the ordinary connections that strengthen our diverse and vital community fabric.

“ Together, we can make sure the Market continues to Feed Philadelphia’s Heart and Soul year after year, meal after meal, generation after generation.”

This strategic plan incorporates feedback that will inform our next chapter.

To make sure this plan would include the diverse voices that make our Market special, we sought input from community members, Market merchants, city partners, and other key stakeholders here and across the globe. The Market needs support from communities in every corner of the city and beyond to ensure our path forward is one that addresses emerging needs and leverages opportunities for positive impact. We can’t do this without you.

Consumer habits change, new options arise, technology propels us forward, and generational shifts make way for new perspectives. We welcome these changes to ensure that the Market remains competitive, creative, and community-oriented.

One thing that never changes, however, is our commitment to the mission. Reading Terminal Market is authentically Philadelphia. The Market is one of the region’s great treasures: a place to gather together, to make memories, to experience community, to share in the joy of food, and to enjoy a slice of humanity — Philly style.

With this plan, we are launching a comprehensive strategy that embodies the traditions of the past while positioning the Reading Terminal Market for a vibrant future. I hope that you’ll join us on this exciting journey so that, together, we can make sure the Market continues to **Feed Philadelphia’s Heart and Soul** year after year, meal after meal, generation after generation.

Sincerely,

*Annie*

Annie Allman  
CEO and General Manager  
Reading Terminal Market Corporation





# OUR HISTORY AND LEGACY

## A PHILADELPHIA ICON THAT NEVER STOPS EVOLVING

Reading Terminal Market has been a vibrant hub of commerce and a welcoming public gathering space for generations of Philadelphians and visitors.



**DID YOU KNOW TRAINS ONCE RUMBLED ON TRACKS ABOVE THE MARKET?**

### THE MARKET OPENS FOR BUSINESS

Merchants at the nearby Butchers' and Farmers' Market and Franklin Market moved into the new Reading Terminal Market.



### PRESERVATION OF THE MARKET

Preservationists who wanted to save the Market battled with those who wanted to demolish it to advance the East Market Redevelopment plan.



### NEW MARKET EAST STATION

The new Market East Station, now Jefferson, with rail and subway lines connecting all major transportation routes, opened underneath the Reading Terminal building, making the Market accessible to all corners of the city.



### COVID-19

The Market remained open and operated as an essential business throughout the COVID-19 pandemic ensuring Philadelphians had continued access to fresh, affordable food.



### VISION

The Market Corporation launches a comprehensive strategic plan to ensure the Market's thriving future and its ongoing contribution of tangible public benefits to our City.

1892



1913

### THE SOURCE

Reading Terminal Market advertised itself as the "Main Food Supply of Philadelphia and Adjacent Territory" with 250 specialized dealers and 100 farmers occupying the stalls.



1975

1984

### LAST TRAIN

The last train left the Reading Terminal.



1985

1994

### NONPROFIT CORPORATION ESTABLISHED

The Reading Terminal Market Corporation was created to manage the Market and to preserve its legacy and public purpose.

2020



2022

### FILBERT STREET TRANSFORMATION PROJECT

The streetscape outside the Market was enhanced to create a curbside "festival street" aimed at increasing public use of the 1100 block of Filbert Street.

2024



**BASSETTS ICE CREAM, NOW RUN BY THE 6<sup>TH</sup> GENERATION OF THE BASSETT FAMILY, IS AN ORIGINAL TENANT AND IS STILL GOING STRONG 130+ YEARS ON.**





1

**WE BRING FRESH FOOD WITHIN REACH**

of everyone — bus, train, and trolley riders, bikers, and walkers — strategically positioning us as one the largest redemption sites for government — provided food benefits and fulfilling a critical need for fresh food accessibility.



2

**WE CREATE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY**

empowering local entrepreneurs, creating jobs, and contributing to the financial sustainability of our city.



3

**WE PRESERVE HISTORY AND TRADITION**

in our building — a National Historic Landmark — filled with architectural charm and the authentic flavors of Philadelphia that make it so special.



4

**WE ARE A WELCOMING PUBLIC SPACE**

where human connection flourishes and people of all backgrounds can come together under one roof.

BY THE **NUMBERS**

**131**

YEARS OPERATING AS A PUBLIC MARKET

**78**

LOCAL SMALL BUSINESSES UNDER ONE ROOF

OVER **5**

MILLION SHOPPING VISITS ANNUALLY

**700+**

PEOPLE DIRECTLY EMPLOYED

**28%**

BIPOC, AAPI, OR HISPANIC OWNED BUSINESSES

**53%**

WOMEN-OWNED/ CO-OWNED BUSINESSES

**>150K**

SQUARE FEET OF INDOOR SPACE, REQUIRING 11 MAJOR BUILDING SYSTEMS TO OPERATE AND MAINTAIN

**6.8**

TONS OF ORGANIC WASTE COMPOSTED WEEKLY

**#1**

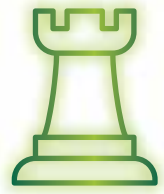
READING TERMINAL MARKET IS BELIEVED TO BE THE LARGEST EBT/SNAP REDEMPTION SITE IN THE COMMONWEALTH

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is an invaluable resource ensuring access to nutritious groceries for those in need. SNAP provides vital food assistance to individuals and families facing financial challenges.



Numbers based on 2024 metrics.



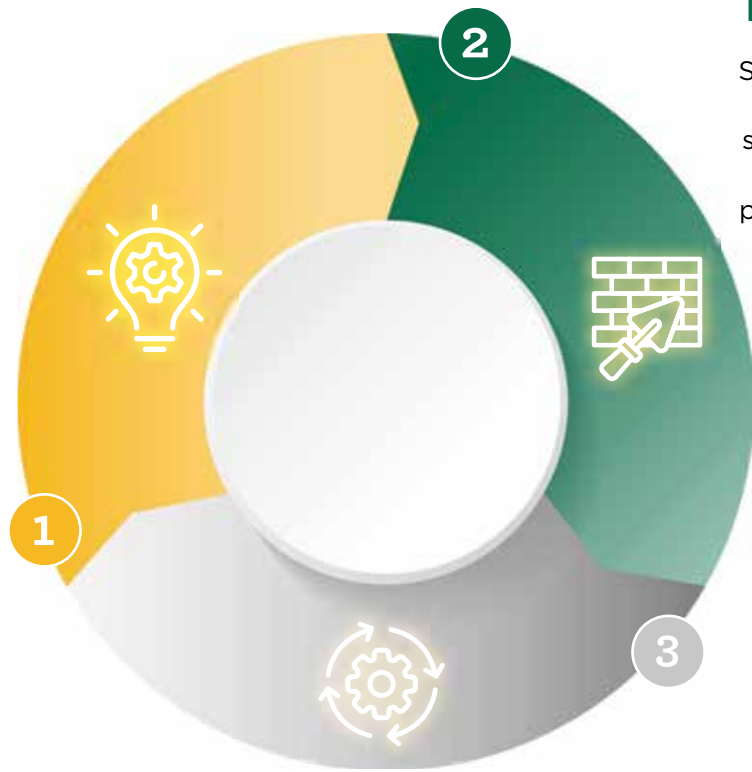


# OUR STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

We collaborated closely with the community to develop this strategic plan, conducting an extensive and thoughtful process of research, engagement, discovery, and planning. Over a 6-month period, our approach was guided by our Strategic Framework, ensuring that the mission remained at the heart of our planning efforts while driving towards our organizational goals.

## INNOVATION

Foster a culture of forward-thinking practices that maintain Market relevance, adaptability, and capacity to deliver tangible public benefit.

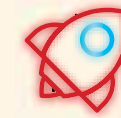


## PRESERVATION

Safeguard the architectural, historical, and cultural significance of the Reading Terminal Market to preserve its unique mission, heritage, character, and functionality.

## ACTIVATION

Catalyze a sense of shared pride and ownership, generating excitement, investment, and revitalization.



## OUR MISSION

- **TO PRESERVE** the architectural and historical character, and function, of the Reading Terminal Market as an urban farmers' market.
- **TO PROVIDE** a wide variety of produce, meat, fish, bakery and dairy products, and other raw and prepared food, brought to a public market in the center of the city by farmers, growers, producers and chefs.
- **TO MAINTAIN** an environment that recognizes and celebrates the diversity of our citizens and fosters their interaction.
- **TO STRENGTHEN** the historic link and mutual dependency of our rural and urban communities.
- **TO ACHIEVE** this, while preserving the financial viability and achieving self-sufficiency for the Market.





## OUR VISION



HARNESS THE POWER OF FOOD TO BREAK DOWN BARRIERS AND BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER, DRIVE ECONOMIC VITALITY, AND ACTIVATE THE MARKET DISTRICT.

## PRIORITY AREAS



PHILLY LOVE AND LOYALTY



INCREASING "MARKET SHARE"



STRONG FROM THE INSIDE OUT

Vinnie & Jimmy Iovine, owners of Iovine Brothers Produce and Molly Malloy's Kitchen & Bar, with 3 generations of the Iovine family.





# PHILLY LOVE AND LOYALTY



## VISION

Grow our actively engaged and fiercely loyal local customer base dedicated to shopping regularly and finding inspiration in the Market's authentic and diverse offerings.



“The Market is a symphony of sights, sounds, and scents, but it’s the people that make it truly special. I visit every day, not just as an avid photographer capturing moments, but to connect with the diverse souls who turn this place into a living, breathing tapestry of Philadelphia. It’s where I find my joy and inspiration.” - Will Klein, Philadelphia Resident (pictured above)

## GOAL

Create shoppers — not just eaters — by fostering a customer-centric culture that prioritizes the local customer base, values personal service, and capitalizes on the Market as a community hub and public space.

## INITIATIVES

1. **ENHANCE THE SHOPPING EXPERIENCE** including specialized assistance for differently — abled shoppers, personalized services, and e-commerce solutions.
2. **LAUNCH A MARKET VOLUNTEER PROGRAM** to elevate community engagement and enhance the shopping experience.
3. **ACTIVATE & PROGRAM THE FILBERT STREET SIDEWALK** with arts and entertainment so it becomes a must-see destination.
4. **EXPAND SUBSIDIZED NUTRITION INITIATIVES** to increase access to healthy food and further meet the needs of our community.
5. **INVEST IN THE NEXT GENERATION** by expanding educational programming focused on K-12.
6. **DEVELOP A STRATEGY TO ENGAGE AND RETAIN LOCAL SHOPPERS** by leveraging market research, customer feedback systems, and food-focused content highlighting our unique offerings.
7. **DEFINE OUR MODEL OF CUSTOMER SERVICE** ensuring all staff and merchants are trained to deliver exceptional personal service.

“Reading Terminal Market is a Philadelphia treasure, a place where people from all walks of life and backgrounds can come to enjoy great food, shop for their weekly groceries, and enjoy a safe and welcoming space that feels like a home away from home. The Terminal is a go-to place for me and I hope it remains so for Philadelphians and visitors to our great city.” - City of Philadelphia Mayor Cherrille L. Parker





# INCREASING “MARKET SHARE”



Robust community partnerships that extend the Market’s presence and influence beyond our four walls to invite support and investment in the Market so the Market can, in turn, help build a stronger community.



“Nowhere is Philadelphia’s cultural melting pot more apparent than at Reading Terminal Market. At the heart of the Center City District, it’s a United Nations of food; 75 stalls laid out, like the city itself, on a grid.” - National Geographic

## GOAL

Increase support for the Market’s preservation and growth while utilizing its unique standing to make positive and impactful contributions to the Philadelphia region.

## INITIATIVES

- 1. DIVERSIFY REVENUE STREAMS** in support of the nonprofit’s mission of sustaining the Market’s architectural, historical, and cultural significance.
- 2. ESTABLISH A VIBRANT FUNDRAISING PROGRAM** that builds an all-in culture of giving among people who treasure the Market.
- 3. COMMUNICATE OUR NONPROFIT IMPACT** effectively through impact data collection, reporting, and a comprehensive communications strategy.
- 4. BRING MARKET OFFERINGS DIRECTLY TO PHILADELPHIA NEIGHBORHOODS** through mobile outreach that increases access to fresh food, fosters meaningful connections, and increases awareness of the Market brand.
- 5. EXPAND SUSTAINABLE PRACTICE INITIATIVES** uniting efforts across individual businesses and raising public awareness of these initiatives.
- 6. CREATE A FILBERT STREET COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP MODEL** to drive collaborative initiatives focused on revitalizing the Market District and enhancing community engagement.

“Reading Terminal Market has something to offer for everyone. For over 100 years, Reading Terminal Market has been a top destination in Philadelphia, with millions of visitors entering its doors every year — all while creating economic opportunity for small businesses and workers who showcase the best of what the Commonwealth has to offer. With all eyes on Philadelphia as we prepare to host our country’s 250th birthday in 2026, Reading Terminal Market will help to make Pennsylvania a central hub of economic activity and tourism over the next several years to show the country what we are all about.”

- Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro



# STRONG FROM THE INSIDE OUT



A well-preserved and maintained Market space and thriving Market community united and invested in its mission, common purpose, and values.



“I started with just a cart and a dream, but the support from this community helped me grow into something more. Being part of the merchant family here is more than business — it’s a chance to grow together, inspire each other, and show that anything is possible when you have the strength of community behind you.”

– Iliyaas Muhammad, Owner, Really Reel Ginger (pictured above)

## GOAL

Foster a mission-driven Market culture rooted in the highest standards of quality while enhancing infrastructure for sustained growth and resilience.

## INITIATIVES

- 1. INTRODUCE SHORT-TERM LEASING & DAYCARTS** to incubate small businesses, ensure a consistent pool of viable merchants, and keep Market offerings fresh.
- 2. INCREASE STRATEGICALLY-PLACED SIGNAGE** to improve wayfinding, tell the Market’s story, and increase visibility and foot traffic from Market Street.
- 3. IMPLEMENT AN ORGANIZATIONAL STAFFING STRUCTURE & VOLUNTEER STRUCTURE** to bring this strategic plan to life.
- 4. ATTRACT MORE GROWERS & PRODUCERS** to increase direct access to fresh produce and products.
- 5. CREATE & FUND A FIVE-YEAR COMPREHENSIVE CAPITAL PLAN** to bring Market systems up to date and position the building for growth.

“The Market makes them remember where they got it and what they liked about it. When you order it online, it shows up on your door. There’s no connection to the person who made it, or designed it, or anything. We’re still face-to-face. We get to do that today and that’s priceless.”

– Martin Giunta, Owner, Martin’s Quality Meats & Sausage





# OUR GRATITUDE

We extend heartfelt gratitude to our community of planning partners whose generous contributions of time and expertise have been invaluable in guiding our process.

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Theresa Spencer  
Toyin Ogunfolaju  
Y.E. Smith



And all the Merchants, Customers, and Reading Terminal Market Fans and Supporters who have shared their hopes, their worries, and most of all, their Market love.

Photos courtesy of Russ Brown Photography



Alex Bassett Strange and Michael Strange, 6th and 5th Generation Merchants, Bassetts Ice Cream, since 1892.





## SHOW US **YOUR LOVE**

### **OUR FUTURE LIES IN THE HANDS OF THOSE WHO VALUE OUR MARKET AND OUR CITY.**

Together, we can preserve Philadelphia's most vibrant public space and shape its future.

**DONATE** Your tax-deductible donation will help sustain Reading Terminal Market for years to come.

**VOLUNTEER** Join us in fulfilling our mission by becoming a vital part of our volunteer team.

**SHOP** Become a loyal shopper and support our Market and its Merchants.

**SUBSCRIBE** Stay updated on our progress by subscribing to our updates.

**COLLABORATE** with us on plans and strategies that will drive the future of the Market we love — today, tomorrow, and always.



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Reading Terminal Market Corporation is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.