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# ST LAWRENCE MARKET

*District*

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◀ STRATEGIC ▶

PLAN

2023-2027



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	Introduction & Planning Process.....	3
	About the Plan.....	3
	The Planning Process.....	5
2.	Key Findings.....	8
	Key Findings to Strategic Plan Development.....	9
3.	Vision statement.....	11
	Vision .....	11
4.	Mission Statement.....	13
	Mission .....	13
5.	Strategic Goal & Guiding Principles.....	15
	The Strategic Goal.....	15
	The Goal .....	16
	Guiding Principles.....	17
6.	Actions .....	19



# INTRODUCTION & PLANNING PROCESS





# 1. INTRODUCTION & PLANNING PROCESS

## ABOUT THE PLAN

The St. Lawrence Market Precinct is a complex of public assets managed by the City of Toronto under the jurisdiction of the Corporate Real Estate Management Division. Bound by King Street to the north, Market Street to the west, Wilton Street to the south and Jarvis Street to the east, the Precinct is comprised of the municipally-owned and operated St. Lawrence Hall, the North St. Lawrence Market (under redevelopment), the South St. Lawrence Market and a Temporary Market Building, Market Lane Park and the abutting pedestrian right-of-way.

Heritage, history and the South St. Lawrence Market largely characterize the Precinct. Established in 1803, the South Market is not only one of Toronto's most notable landmark buildings but one of the last strongholds of independent food merchants bringing people together around shared values and experiences of food, community, and culture. The South Market along with the other assets are the contributors to the Precinct's success as a key economic generator for the city and the broader region, creating economic opportunities, jobs, and networks for local independent businesses.

The Precinct and its constituent assets are managed by City of Toronto staff working in collaboration with the St. Lawrence Market Precinct Advisory Committee (SLMPAC). This public committee serves as an advocate and provides advice on the direction, growth, planning and operations of the Precinct.

Over the last five years, the Precinct has been guided, in large part, by the City Council approved vision, strategic goals and objectives as set out in the Precinct's 2017-2021 Strategic Plan. Since the development of the plan and the years to follow, there has been tremendous local and global change – physical, environmental, and social – that has both positively and negatively impacted the Precinct.

Given the impact of these changes and as the current plan concludes the need for a new strategic plan is needed to help guide the Precinct toward a new future. To that end the City of Toronto commissioned Lord Cultural Resources to facilitate and develop a forward-looking five-year plan that will conclude in 2027.

The new plan includes a new vision, a single strategic goal supported by six guiding principles and a series of actions to achieve the goal. The plan is a result of extensive consultation and engagement with stakeholders, thought leaders, Market vendors and residents, the experience of other market districts across North America and insights and feedback from senior staff at the City of Toronto and SLMPAC members.

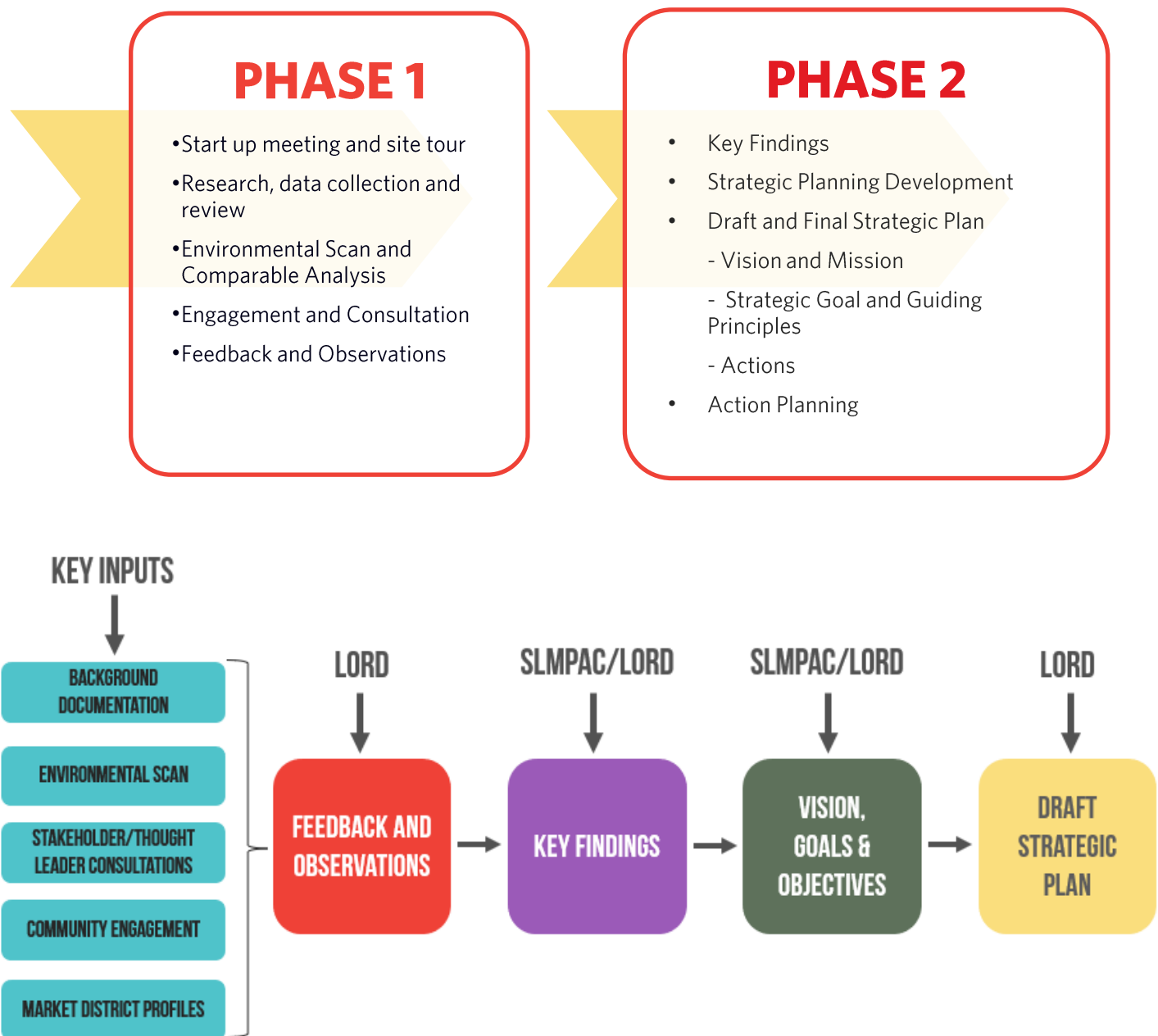




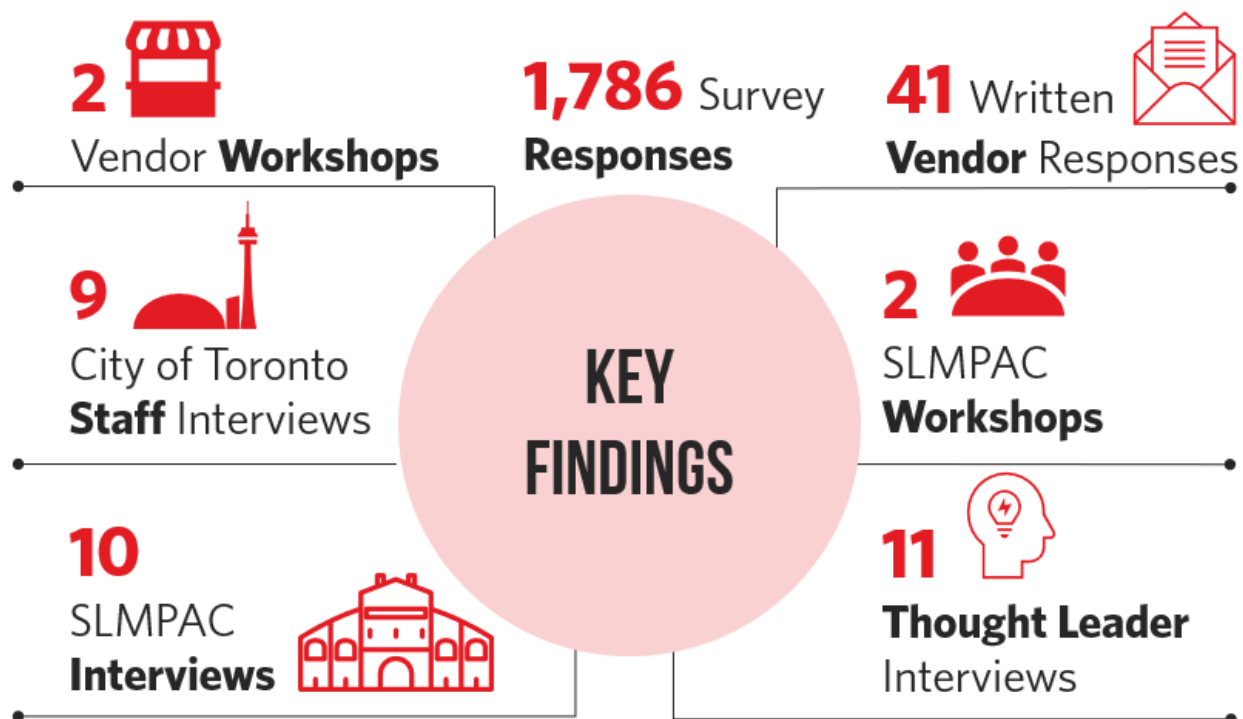
## THE PLANNING PROCESS

Lord Cultural Resources worked closely and collaboratively with the City of Toronto and SLMPAC to develop this Strategic Plan. The consultant team conducted a wide-ranging and thoughtful process of research, engagement, discovery, and planning. The process was iterative, responding to needs and insights uncovered throughout the planning period, ultimately leading to a plan unique to the Precinct.

The Planning Process was conducted in two phases over an 8-month period as illustrated below:



Consultation and engagement were key elements of the planning process. Consultation and engagement included stakeholder, thought leader, internal and vendor interviews and workshops involving 80 participants. A community survey was conducted which received 1,786 responses. Through consultation and engagement, a series of key findings were determined which ultimately helped to inform the vision, strategic goal and guiding principles.



# KEY FINDINGS





## 2. KEY FINDINGS

A series of key findings were derived through the feedback and insights from the consultation and engagement process. Information gleaned through the examination of comparable market districts and input from the City and SLMPAC also contributed. The findings include strengths and challenges as well as potential opportunities that will inform the vision, the strategic goal and guiding principles.

### The key findings are as follows:

**1.**

The Precinct should not be defined by “hard boundaries” but rather dictated by the history, character, and activities of the area.

**2.**

People do not identify with the term “precinct” to describe the area. Toronto is more known for its districts and neighbourhoods.

**3.**

The Precinct should be about linkages, not about creating boundaries. There should be more permeability within the Precinct, and edges should be blurred.

**4.**

The South Market and the Precinct have a very important history and should be highlighted to a much greater extent. History enhances the authentic experience that drives visitors to the South Market.

**5.**

There is very little Indigenous presence in the South Market specifically and the Precinct more generally.

**6.**

Public programming should be an important part of the Precinct. It is one of its biggest opportunities.

**7.**

The Precinct needs to grow its value in terms of placemaking.

**8.**

The Precinct must find ways to enhance the visitor experience.

**9.**

Food is at the heart of the Precinct.

**10.**

Partnerships with other organizations and institutions in the neighbourhood and beyond will strengthen the Precinct’s position and extend its draw.

**11.**

Outdoor experiences are an essential part of the Precinct.

**12.**

There is a lack of a diversity of offerings in the South Market.

**13.**

The South Market needs to find ways to make it more inclusive and accessible to both future customers and potential new vendors while still recognizing the tension between it, the City, and other stakeholders with respect to change.

**14.**

The South Market should serve as a cultural hub for the Precinct and surrounding area.

**15.**

The governance structure and mandate of the Precinct is unclear, making it difficult to focus on larger strategic initiatives.

**16.**

The South Market/Precinct should foster entrepreneurship and innovation and leverage its position as a champion for social good.

## KEY FINDINGS TO STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The Key Findings, as well as other inputs including background research, the experience of comparable districts, insights from the City and SLMPAC and the knowledge and experience of the consultants have led to a strategic plan model specific to the St. Lawrence Market Precinct context illustrated here.



# VISION STATEMENT





## 3. VISION STATEMENT

### VISION

The following vision statement articulates the aspiration for the St. Lawrence Market Precinct. Developed in collaboration with the City of Toronto and SLMPAC, it describes the future of the Precinct – what it wants, where it wants to go, and the impact it will have on stakeholders and the community.

To be recognized as a community of cultural, social, and commercial places and spaces that inspires, connects and enriches residents and visitors and provides opportunities for merchants, vendors and creators to thrive.



# MISSION STATEMENT





## 4. MISSION STATEMENT

### MISSION

The vision, goal and principles provide guidance for the future of the Precinct, while actions are the tools to achieve them. Once defined, the mission statement then succinctly describes the Precinct's reason for existence, its purpose and intention.

A welcoming and vibrant destination that offers unique, culturally diverse, and authentic Toronto experiences rooted in history and food heritage.





# STRATEGIC GOAL & GUIDING PRINCIPLES



## 5. STRATEGIC GOAL & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### THE STRATEGIC GOAL

The key findings revealed a number of challenges and issues (in addition to strengths and opportunities) with respect to the current Precinct. Establishing strategic goals is the mechanism to address these challenges within the framework of the Strategic Plan.

Chief among the challenges were:

1. People do not identify with “precinct”. District is more understandable and more well-known in the Toronto context.
2. The current Precinct is too restrictive in terms of defined geographical boundaries.
3. The Precinct is more a complex of municipal assets than a unified, cohesive community. It does not share many of the attributes of other successful market districts in North America or Europe and does not have many of the qualities that people would want or expect for a market district.

Given the singular focus of the key challenges, it is recommended that the plan moves forward with one overarching strategic goal.

# THE GOAL

## To Create A Market District in Toronto.

**The City of Toronto will work with stakeholders, civic thought leaders, and the broader resident community to define, establish and formalize a market district in Toronto.**

The District will be anchored by the South Market and will include other municipal assets including the St. Lawrence Hall, the new North Market complex, Market Lane Park and other social and cultural institutions that align with the vision.



# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Goal will be directed by the following Guiding Principles that will enable the City to define and develop the District

## Diversity, equity & accessibility

Ensure the District, and the places and spaces within it, are diverse, equitable, inclusive, and accessible to the greatest extent possible

## Environmental best practices

Commit to environmental best practices, financial sustainability and protection and stewardship of the District's built heritage.

## Market leadership

Empower the South Market to take a leadership role by leveraging its status as the anchor of the District to create greater value within the Market and beyond.

## Community

Create, facilitate, and program spaces and places that foster social cohesion and promote community health, happiness, and wellbeing

## History & heritage

Highlight to a greater extent the District's expansive and broader history.

## Social good

Provide opportunities for local entrepreneurship and innovation and establish priorities for social good.

# ACTIONS



## 6. ACTIONS

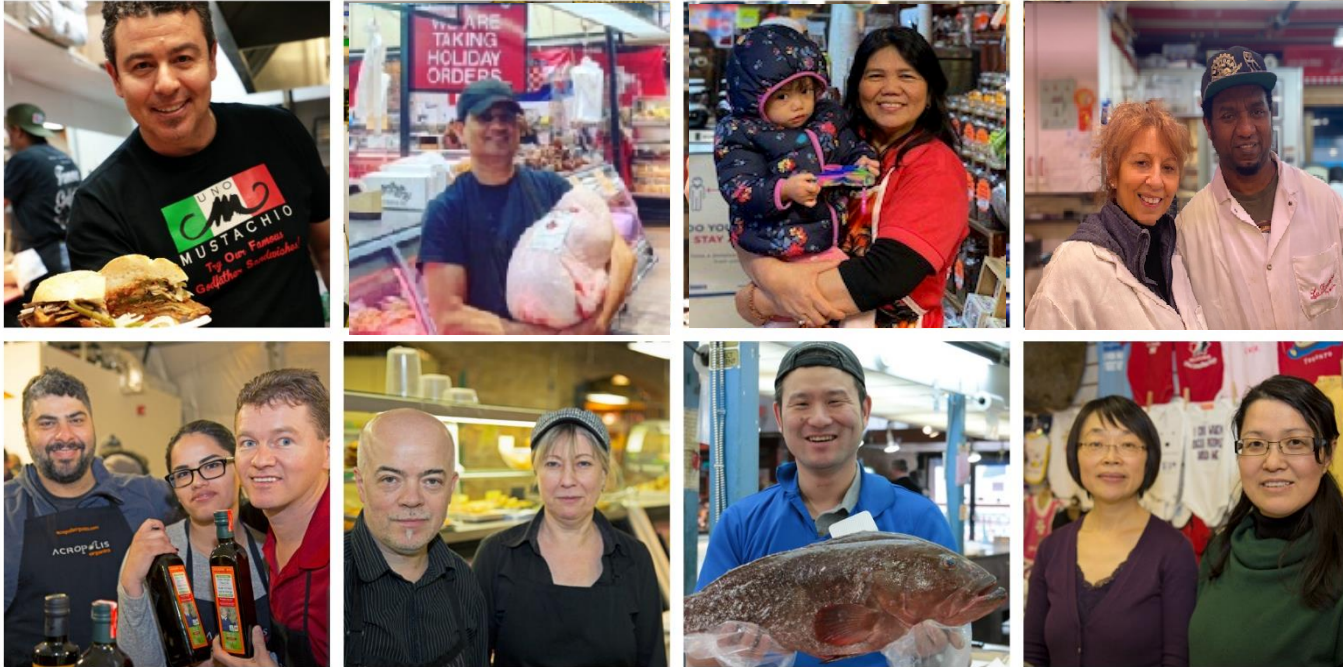
Actions are the high-level tasks necessary to achieve the strategic goal. The actions below are organized within general planning categories.



### Governance, Operations, & Management

- Seek and implement, if warranted, alternative governance and operating models that best supports the vision of the District.
- Initiate strategic partnerships and alliances with organizations, institutions, associations and private sector businesses within the District and beyond to strengthen the District's position and extend its draw.
- Develop a business model for the South Market that seeks to create a greater diversity of offerings, services and programs and optimize all the spaces within the building and its immediate surroundings.
- Explore digital tools, processes, and technologies that will both enhance visitor experience, maximize commercial opportunities, and optimize district operations.





## Diversity, Accessibility, & Inclusivity

- Establish a greater Indigenous presence in the District through meaningful and ongoing dialogue and engagement with Toronto's Indigenous communities.
- Explore incentives such as grants, tax abatements and subsidies for food and food-related start-ups to establish themselves at the District.
- Reduce barriers such as permitting, bylaws and other municipal tools to encourage greater activation and participation of the District.
- Using the South Market as a platform and working with community partners, examine the potential to develop a city-wide food network that would share food resources and help marginalized communities and those living in poverty.



## District Experience & Positioning

- Provide open, inclusive and accessible space for activities and events such as pop ups, performances, food-related events and exhibitions.
- Create a plan that will communicate the District's history and heritage through objects, artifacts, signage, interactive and multi-media, and other means.
- Establish an operating model to produce and/or present public and educational programs, events, and activities in the District.
- Align the uses, operations and management of the City's current and planned physical assets within the District with the vision of the District and the core principles.
- Seek ways to make the District more pedestrian and cyclist friendly.

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**STRATEGIC**



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