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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**West Broadway Farmers Market Celebrates Five Years of Success this Friday,
September 25, 2015**

The West Broadway Business and Area Coalition invites elected officials and community members to honor five years of growing local food businesses, social capital and public space in the heart of North Minneapolis.

September 22, 2015. The [West Broadway Farmers Market \(WBFM\)](#), a program of the [West Broadway Business and Area Coalition \(WBC\)](#), was founded in 2011, the result of community engagement that identified a farmers market as a strategy to address limited access to healthy food options, build wealth in the local food economy and increase neighborhood vitality. Over the past five years the market has grown its average number of vendors from 4 to 14 weekly and quadrupled customer counts, with 9,000 visitors in 2014 and 10,000 and counting in 2015. The WBFM runs from June–October on Fridays from 3:00–7:00pm at 1000 West Broadway.

This **Friday, September 25th at 3:00pm at 1000 West Broadway**, Mayor Betsy Hodges will join WBC Board President Dr. Tara Watson, Project/Market Manager DeVon Nolen, market vendors, volunteers and other supporters for a ceremonial “tomato cutting” to honor five successful seasons. A 30-minute program will include drumming from [Voice of Culture Drum and Dance](#) and a cooking demonstration from [Breaking Bread Cafe](#).

“Access to healthy food choices is critical for the wellbeing of every community,” said Minneapolis Mayor Betsy Hodges. “For five years, the West Broadway Farmers Market has not only contributed to raising food standards in North Minneapolis, but it has also built an economic environment that empowers Northside growers and creates a public space for the community to come together. Congratulations on five years of prosperity and thank you for your strong commitment to economic and social justice.”

Looking towards the future, the WBC is pursuing acquiring a permanent structure for the market. DeVon Nolen, Project/Market Manager for the WBFM, shared, “Our staff’s recent participation in a research learning trip to Barcelona, Spain for the 9th [International Public Markets Conference](#), hosted by New

York-based [Project for Public Spaces](#), greatly informed the way we are approaching the next five years. Permanent structures create greater stability and visibility for markets, allowing them to better serve as a source of community and economic development. Strong markets create reliable sources of vendor income. We saw in Barcelona that a permanent space for our market will bring economic benefits that extend to the surrounding business community, as the market synergistically shares and creates a customer base for and with local business ventures, increasing sales for all parties.”

The WBC has leveraged its success with the West Broadway Farmers Market to create other marketplaces that serve Northside entrepreneurs and shoppers. The annual West Broadway Pop Up Holiday Boutique, a weekend market in December, began in 2013. The WBC is also piloting **the city of Minneapolis’ first flea market on Saturday, September 26th (12-6pm at Penn and Lowry) at Harvest Fest/Open Streets on Lowry Avenue North**, with a second market planned for October 17th (12-4pm at Penn and Lowry). The flea market, called Northside Treasures Bazaar, will feature used goods, antiques, original art, crafts and prepared food.

“The West Broadway Farmers Market and our holiday and flea market efforts are an important component of the [West Broadway Business and Area Coalition’s mission](#) to create a more distinctive and vital West Broadway business district and to create opportunities for Northsiders to build wealth locally,” said Dr. Tara Watson, President of the WBC Board of Directors. “We are pleased with the growth we have seen, and committed to continued success and leadership in the field.”