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Pike Place Market Preservation & Development Authority (PDA)

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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Pike Place Market Preservation and Development Authority Announces New Executive Director Mary Bacarella**

**SEATTLE (December 22, 2017)** – The Pike Place Market Preservation and Development Authority (PDA) Council announced today that Mary Bacarella, former Space Needle executive and managing director of the Seattle International Film Festival, will join the PDA as Executive Director effective January 8, 2018. Ms. Bacarella will lead the public agency responsible for the operations, management, preservation and development of the 9-acre historic public market.

PDA Council Chair, Matt Hanna, said Ms. Bacarella’s experience at key Seattle landmarks and cultural organizations gave her unique insight into taking the helm of the 110-year-old institution beloved by locals and tourists alike for its vibrant mix of fresh produce, artisan producers and independent businesses.

“She has the energy, passion and drive that is essential to be successful as the head of this complex public agency and dynamic community,” said Mr. Hanna, adding that Ms. Bacarella’s depth of experience and proven commitment to other major Seattle institutions was a major plus. “She has proven skills in managing operations and marketing that will serve us well as the historic Pike Place Market meets a rapidly changing city scape.”

In her 14-year career at Space Needle LLC, Ms. Bacarella was a key member of the executive team, overseeing the marketing and operational aspects of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2012; responsible for increasing attendance and revenue at the landmark’s restaurant, retail operation, group sales and banquet facility; and played an instrumental role in the success of a \$24 million remodel of the Space Needle.

Additionally, Ms. Bacarella was a key member of the team that spearheaded the plan to develop *Chihuly Garden and Glass*, a 30-year stand-alone exhibition of Dale Chihuly art works, encompassing eight galleries, a garden, café, theater and bookstore that opened May 21, 2012.

At the Seattle International Film Festival (SIFF), a year-round film organization managing fundraising, operations, management and hundreds of volunteers, Ms. Bacarella's accomplishments included securing the funding for and negotiating the purchase of the Uptown Theatre, a three-theater venue the organization was leasing. She was also instrumental in securing the RFP and lease to operate the Egyptian Theatre as a year-round cinema, in addition to increasing revenue and reducing overall expenses.

The chair of the Executive Director hiring committee, Rico Quirindongo, said the search committee was dedicated to finding the right candidate to lead the more than 100 employees that operate and manage Pike Place Market for more than 15 million annual visitors, and a historic district that is home to farmers, craftspeople, merchants, social services and several hundred residents.

"As with any major decision made by the PDA Council, it was very important to us that the search for a new Executive Director be an open, equitable and public process," said Mr. Quirindongo. "We engaged a large group of stakeholders and offered multiple opportunities for public comment, in order to obtain feedback from our diverse community. We believe the process has served the Market well."

The PDA Council contracted with local executive search firm, Herd, Freed and Hartz to find candidates for the Executive Director position.

***Pike Place Market** is Seattle's original farmers market, founded in 1907, and is one of the oldest continuously operating public markets in the U.S. The market operates within a 9-acre historic district and is a bustling neighborhood of hundreds of vendors, residents and businesses, including farmers, craftspeople, independent shops, buskers, and residents, many of whom are low-income seniors, and five social service agencies. [www.pikeplacemarket.org](http://www.pikeplacemarket.org)*

***The Pike Place Market Preservation & Development Authority (PDA)** is a not-for-profit, public corporation chartered by the City of Seattle in 1973 to manage the properties in the 9-acre Market Historic District. The PDA's charter is to preserve, rehabilitate and protect the Market's buildings, increase opportunities for farm and food retailing in the Market, incubate and support small and marginal businesses, and provide services and affordable housing for low-income people.*

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