

✓ Farmers Market faces tough row to hoe downtown

Merchants may plow it under

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SANTA CRUZ — Social problems popping up like weeds around the downtown Farmers Market may be choking the life out of the popular weekly event.

Members of the Downtown Association's board of directors are expected to vote this morning on a plan that could end their sponsorship of the open-air market by the middle of July.

"There's a distinct possibility the market will close," said Linda Steinau, executive director of the Downtown Association. "Nobody has found a place for us."

But Mayor Mike Rotkin said he believes the City Council will not allow the market to die. If the association refuses to sponsor it, he said, the council could find someone else to take

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The market was started to pull people downtown; after the earthquake; merchants now say it's attracting the wrong element to their doorsteps.