



Town of Jay
Former Livestock Market Project
Report of Findings

Submitted by the
West Florida Regional Planning Council

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Background

The former Jay Livestock Market (pictured below) is located at the corner of Commerce Street and Coleman Avenue within the limits of the Town of Jay. The market opened in 1940 and served as an auction site for livestock until it closed in the 1990s. The site is currently owned by the State of Florida Department of Agriculture; however, the Town of Jay has a long-term lease for use of the property.



The site is roughly ten acres in size and contains three structures. The newest building, the auction house, is located in the center, and consists of an arena and stadium-style seating (pictured right). The other two structures are barns, historically used to house cattle and hogs during auctions.





Because the site has been vacant for over fifteen years, the site is deteriorating and many repairs will need to be completed before the buildings are functional. The barns will require the most extensive repair, including the replacement of rotting wood, and installation of new roofs (pictured left). The auction house will require minor repairs including repairing the doors, replacing insulation in the roof, and installing a new HVAC system.

The project to revitalize the site began as a community-led initiative. Later, the West Florida Regional Planning Council (WFRPC) was contacted and asked to collect community feedback and ideas for the site, and to research possible funding sources for repairs.

In order to collect community feedback, WFRPC staff completed a broad range of outreach activities. Surveys relating to the needs of cattlemen raising livestock for sale were distributed at a meeting of the local Cattleman's Association. In addition to this livestock-specific survey, a survey for the general community was developed and made available online for the two-month period that WFRPC was gathering feedback. A link to the survey was included in Press Releases sent to local newspapers and invitations sent to community members informing them of the community meeting. The WFRPC held a community meeting on Tuesday, April 15, at the Jay Community Center. Community members were encouraged to attend the meeting, provide ideas for the site, and to offer feedback about proposals made by other residents at the meeting.

The results of the surveys, as well as a summary of the community meeting notes, can be found below.

Summary of Findings

WFRPC staff developed two surveys to gather community feedback on the project. The first survey was specific to livestock farmers, and was submitted to the Cattleman's Association at their meeting on March 6, 2014. The second survey was more general and was used to gather information regarding the community's perception of the site, the former use as a livestock auction, and ideas for the best use of the site today. This survey was distributed at the community meeting on April 15, 2014 and was made available online from March 26, 2014 until May 23, 2014. Copies of both surveys can be found in the Appendix. In addition to the surveys, citizens had the option to call WFRPC staff and provide feedback over the telephone.

Surveys

The results for the surveys and community telephone calls to WFRPC have been summarized in Table 1, below. This table includes all stated preferred uses of the site, however, respondents were not limited to one preferred use of the site, and many provided multiple ideas. Each mention of a specific idea has been counted in the table below.

The three main project ideas that resulted from the survey are a farmers' market; a livestock use, focusing on a traditional livestock auction; and a meeting place for a variety of groups. The completed surveys contained strong emphasis that the new use for the site maintain the original use for farming-related purpose. Additionally, a number of the surveys suggested that the site could be used for both a produce farmers' market and a livestock auction site, either holding the events on separate days, or having them at the same time, but separated on the property.

Table 1: Summary of Preferred Use of Site

Use of Site	Number of mentions
Market Space	
Farmers' Market	16
Flea Market	2
Yard Sale	1
Craft Sale / Household goods sale	2
Antique Sale	1
Livestock Use	
Livestock Auction	12
Livestock / Large animal clinic	3
"Other" items auction (tools, equipment, antiques, swap and trade)	2
Livestock storing space	1
Meeting place	
Social gatherings, town meetings, church groups	5
Parties / receptions / weddings	2
Artist space (gallery night)	2
Teaching Center - 4-H / FFA	2
Value-added processing (peanuts, cotton)	2
Demolish site	3

Community Meeting

In addition to the surveys, a community meeting was held to gather feedback and allow community members to discuss and comment on proposed ideas. The community meeting, facilitated by WFRPC staff, discussed three sets of questions. These questions were used to gather community ideas for the site, the perceived benefits and challenges that may arise from the various proposed projects, and strategies for implementing the final project idea. The three sets of questions were:

1. How can you use this property to benefit the community?
2. What challenges would the community face in using this site? What benefits would the community receive from using this site?
3. How can we make this project work?

Summary of the community meeting is as follows:

1. How can you use this property to benefit the community?

For the first question, community ideas and comments revolved around four main project ideas. These ideas include a farmers' market; a use for livestock; a teaching facility for 4-H and FFA; and a multi-purpose event space. All ideas are listed below:

A. Farmers market

- Focus on locally grown / locally owned market
- Hold market every other weekend
- Focus on the trend to "buy local"
- Produce transfer area to sell to local restaurants and stores
- Produce processing center for farmers to join together in contracts with large buyers

B. Livestock Use

- Monthly / quarterly livestock auction (current auctions are far away)
- Livestock transfer station for small farmers
- Livestock clinic – public access working area for livestock health
- Meat processing facility

C. Multi-purpose event space

- Platform or stage for music events
- Artist retreat and space for art or design classes
- Meeting space for clubs, community, or church groups
- Facility for Farm Service Agency (FSA)
- Bartering facility for equipment auctions or trades
- Have a gin in the cattle barn from October to December

D. Teaching Facility

- Bridge the Gap between current farming generation and youth
- Area for 4-H and FFA students to house and show livestock
- Current FFA has programs in schools, but there are no facilities for the students to keep animals
- Green house environment for teaching agricultural practices

2. What challenges would the community face in using this site? What benefits would the community receive from using this site?

Challenges for Redeveloping the Site

- Identifying funding
- Seasonality of the use (farmers' markets are more active in summer than winter)
- Lack of parking near the site
- Costs for liability insurance
- Cost of complying with regulations of the final use
 - Ex. for livestock use: Federal packers' restrictions; stockyard and livestock requirements
- Sustainability of the project
 - Getting to breakeven point for funding
- Determining who would manage the site
 - Determining if the manager would keep potential profits, or if it would stay with the site
- Moving from planning phase to action phase
- High costs of repairs (for example, HVAC system needed in auction hall is expensive)

Benefits of Redeveloping the Site

- Economic development
 - Could be profitable endeavor, or at least sustainable
 - Increased traffic through town will result in job creation
 - Could be used to promote working with "Panhandle Fresh"
- Place making and community beautification
- Promotes youth sustainability
 - Place for youth development
 - Place for education
 - Bridging the generational gap of farmers – through agriculture
- Promotes agriculture
 - Promote animal health and welfare
 - Could help bring a new food source to community

3. How can we make this project work?

- Need a narrowly defined mission – specific project idea
 - Should build on what already exists
 - Currently in place: youth network 4-H / FFA, local farmers and livestock functions
- Need community involvement and public support
 - Community needs to support project by getting involved
- Need a skilled manager
 - Manager needs to have the right personality and incentive (adequate pay)
- Need to market the final project
 - Hold an anchor event to promote the new site
 - USDA has a \$100,000 marketing grant available
 - Advertising
 - Reach out to churches, chambers of commerce and get them involved
 - Have banners at red lights
- Need a full accounting of the repair work needed and cost estimates
 - Currently known: need to replace tin roofs for barns; need wood floor work
 - If agriculture use: need a cooler

Need to determine available funding:

How will the required repair work be paid for?

What grants are appropriate for the final project idea?

Form a committee of community members to fully develop final project idea

Four Project Ideas

The four main project ideas that resulted from the surveys and the community meeting include a farmers' market, a livestock use, a multi-purpose event space, and a teaching facility. Discussion of the possible projects can be found below:

Farmers' Market

The idea of using the site as a farmers' market was popular both throughout the surveys and in the community meeting. In order to determine the potential customer base for a farmers' market in Jay, WFRPC staff reviewed current research and compared it to the Town of Jay.

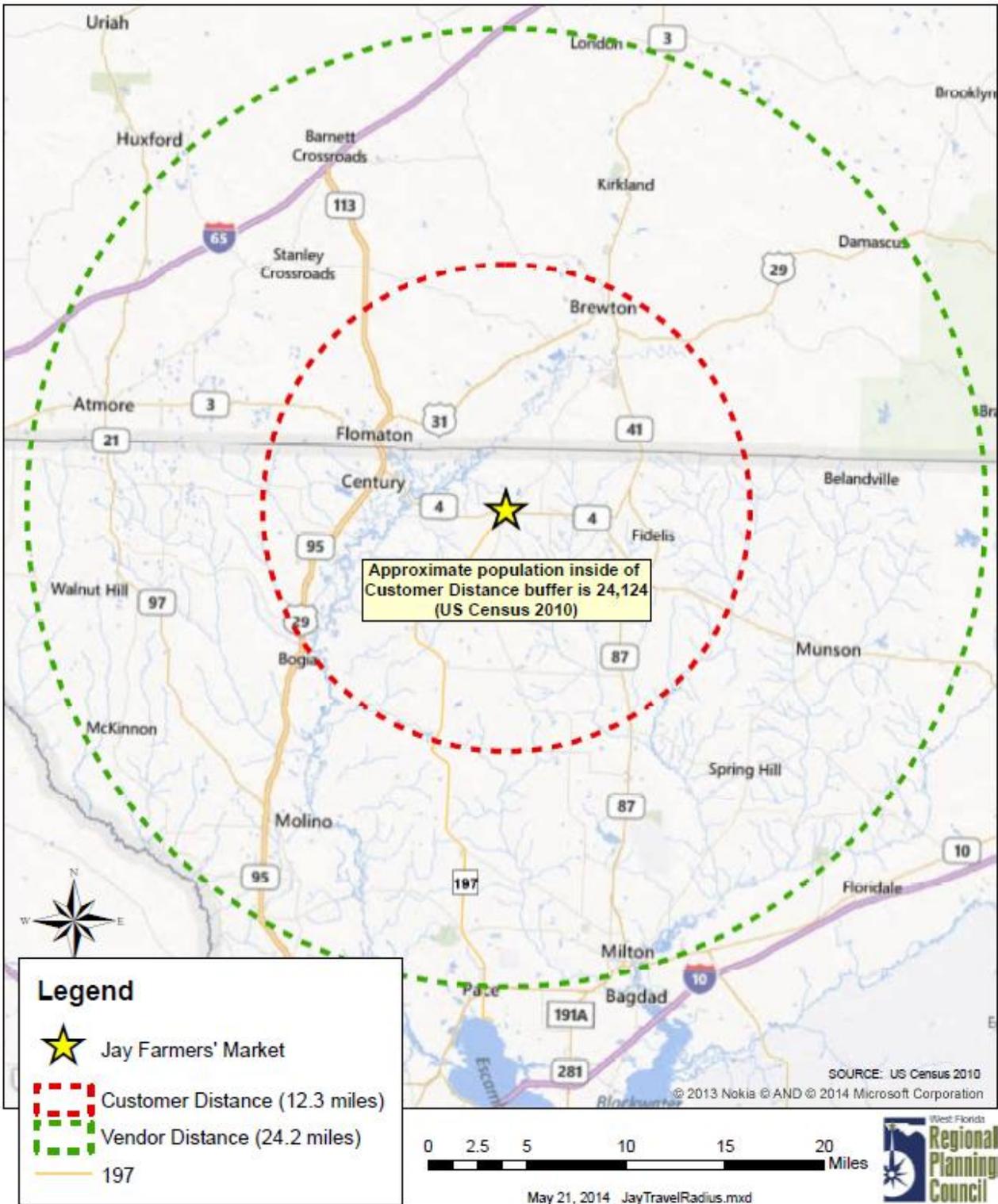
In 2011 the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agriculture Marketing Service¹, studied the viability of farmers' markets based upon local competition from other markets. One aspect of this study was to determine the average distance that both a vendor and a customer will travel to farmers' markets. This study classified areas based upon population, and determined the average distance that these two groups would travel to farmers' markets within the various classifications.

In this study, all of Santa Rosa County, Florida is classified as "Metro – population 1 million – 250,000." In this classification, the average distance traveled by a vendor is 33.1 miles, and the average distance traveled by a customer is 12.0 miles. Due to Jay's location at the northern border of Santa Rosa County, Florida, staff also reviewed the classification in Escambia County, Alabama. Escambia County, Alabama is classified as "Urban population 2,500 – 19,999 adjacent to metro area." In this classification, the average distance a vendor will travel is 24.2 miles, and the average distance a customer will travel is 12.3 miles. Because the demographics and economy of the Town of Jay more closely resemble Escambia County, Alabama than other areas in Santa Rosa County, Florida, for the purposes of this analysis, staff has chosen to consider the Town of Jay as "Urban population 2,500 – 19,999 adjacent to metro area."

Map 1, below shows the Town of Jay with potential average traveling radius for both vendors and customers to the Jay Farmers Market. The population for the area within the 12.3-mile traveling radius is 24,124 people. This map is to illustrate the area around the Town of Jay that the average farmers' market customer would travel from.

¹ Lohr, Luanne, Adam Diamond, Chris Dicken, and David Marquardt. Mapping Competition Zones for Vendors and Customers in U.S. Farmers Markets. U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service. September 2011. Web. <<http://dx.doi.org/10.9752/MS042.09-2011>>

Map 1: Farmers' Market Average Travel Distances



Livestock Use

The second idea for use of the site was to maintain the original function for livestock use. In order to determine the demand for a livestock function for the site, both surveys included questions regarding perceived demand for a livestock auction, as well as questions relating to the respondent's current sale of livestock, and potential to sell at an auction in Jay. Table 2, below, summarizes the perceived demand for a livestock auction in Jay. The table of survey results shows that of the respondents surveyed, there is a perceived demand for a livestock auction in Jay, and that the respondents would use the auction if it were reopened.

Table 2: Demand for Livestock Auction

	Yes	No	"Not Sure"	No Response
Do you believe there is demand for livestock auction in Jay?	15	6	1	6
Would you use a livestock auction in Jay?	16	6	1	6
Do you currently buy livestock at auction?	16	12		1

Multi-Purpose Event Space

The third idea for the site was to repurpose it as an event space, to be used by a variety of groups. Specific groups mentioned included church and community groups, music events, weddings and other receptions, and use for artists including a haven to develop art, and a place to showcase work. Because the ideas suggested for using this site as a multi-purpose event space were so varied, this idea will need further analysis to determine the feasibility.

Teaching Facility

A final idea for the site is to develop a teaching facility. At the community meeting, a number of participants spoke on behalf of using the site for 4-H and Future Farmers of America (FFA) functions because the schools do not offer facilities for the students to keep and work their animals. Proposals included using the site to house livestock, show animals, and to learn agriculture techniques in a green house space. The community emphasized the important of the teaching role of farming and in "Bridging the Gap" between the current generation of famers, and the youth that will be joining this profession.

Currently, Santa Rosa County, Florida has an estimated 90-100 youth participating in 4-H groups and 3 High School Agriculture / FFA Departments. Additionally, Escambia County, Florida has an estimated 100-150 youth participating in 4-H groups through the Gulf Coast Agricultural / Natural Resource Association and 2 High School Agriculture / FFA groups. These groups could potentially use this site as a learning facility for livestock and/or agricultural learning.

Potential Funding Sources

At the conclusion of the community meeting, a suggestion was made for a group of community volunteers to work with WFRPC staff in the final project proposal. Contact information for volunteers was collected and this group will help WFRPC staff in determining appropriate funding opportunities and in finalizing a project proposal for grant applications. Below are potential funding opportunities that may be pursued depending on final project selection by the Town Council.

U.S. Department of Agriculture Grant Opportunities

Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP)

The Farmers' Market Promotion Program is a component of the Farmers Marketing and Local Food Promotion Program (FMLFPP), which is authorized by the Farmer-to-Consumer Direct Marketing Act of 1946, as amended (7 U.S.C. 3005).

The goals of FMPP grants are to increase domestic consumption of and access to locally and regionally produced agricultural products, and to develop new market opportunities for farm and ranch operations serving local markets by developing, improving, expanding, and providing outreach, training, and technical assistance to, or assisting in the development, improvement, and expansion of domestic farmers' markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, agri-tourism activities, and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities. The maximum amount awarded for any one proposal cannot exceed \$100,000. Applications for the current grant cycle are due June 20, 2014.

Source: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/FMPP>

Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP)

The Local Food Promotion Program is a component of the Farmers Marketing and Local Food Promotion Program (FMLFPP), authorized by the Farmer-to-Consumer Direct Marketing Act of 1946, as amended (7 U.S.C. 3005).

LFPP offers grant funds with a 25% match to support the development and expansion of local and regional food business enterprises to increase domestic consumption of, and access to, locally and regionally produced agricultural products, and to develop new market opportunities for farm and ranch operations serving local markets. Eligible entities may apply if they support local and regional food business enterprises that process, distribute, aggregate, or store locally or regionally produced food products. Two types of project applications are accepted under LFPP: planning grants and implementation grants.

- LFPP Planning Grants are used in the planning stages of establishing or expanding a local and regional food business enterprise. Activities can include but are not limited to market research, feasibility studies, and business planning. A minimum of \$5,000 and a maximum of \$25,000 will be awarded for any one proposal, and the grants must be completed within a 12-month period; extension will not exceed an additional 6 months.
- LFPP Implementation Grants are used to establish new local and regional food business enterprise, or to improve or expand an existing local or regional food business enterprise. Activities can include but are not limited to training and technical assistance for the business enterprise and/or for producers working with the business enterprise; outreach and marketing to buyers and consumers; working capital; and non-construction infrastructure improvements to

business enterprise facilities or information technology systems. A minimum of \$25,000 and a maximum of \$100,000 will be awarded for any one proposal, and the grants must be completed within a 24-month grant period; extension will not exceed an additional 6 months.

Applications for the current grant cycle are due June 20, 2014.

Source: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/lfpp>

Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG) Program

The RBEG program provides grants for rural projects that finance and facilitate development of small and emerging rural businesses help fund distance learning networks, and help fund employment related adult education programs. To assist with business development, RBEGs may fund a broad array of activities. There is no maximum level of grant funding. However, smaller projects are given higher priority. Generally, grants range \$10,000 up to \$500,000.

Rural public entities (towns, communities, State agencies, and authorities), Indian tribes and rural private non-profit corporations are eligible to apply for funding. At least 51 percent of the outstanding interest in any project must have membership or be owned by U.S. citizens or resident aliens

The RBEG program is a broad based program that reaches to the core of rural development in a number of ways. Examples of eligible fund use include: Acquisition or development of land, easements, or rights of way; construction, conversion, renovation, of buildings, plants, machinery, equipment, access streets and roads, parking areas, utilities; pollution control and abatement; capitalization of revolving loan funds including funds that will make loans for start ups and working capital; training and technical assistance; distance adult learning for job training and advancement; rural transportation improvement; and project planning. Any project funded under the RBEG program should benefit small and emerging private businesses in rural areas. Small and emerging private businesses are those that will employ 50 or fewer new employees and have less than \$1 million in projected gross revenues.

Source: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_rbeg.html

Rural Cooperative Development Grants (RCDG)

The primary objective of the RCDG program is to improve the economic condition of rural areas by assisting individuals or entities in the startup, expansion or operational improvement of rural cooperatives and other business entities. Grants are awarded competitively on an annual basis to Rural Cooperative Development Centers who in turn provide technical assistance to individuals and entities. A maximum award of \$200,000 must be matched with a 25% contribution by the applicant.

Applications for the current grant cycle are due June 24, 2014

Source: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_RCDG.html

Department of Economic Opportunity Grant Opportunity

Florida Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program

The Community Development Block Grant Program is a federal program that provides funding for housing and community development. In 1974, Congress created the program by passing the Housing and Community Development Act, Title I. The national objectives of the program are to:

1. Benefit low- and moderate-income persons
2. Prevent or eliminate slum or blight
3. Address urgent community development needs

The Department of Economic Opportunity administers Florida's Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program. This is a competitive grant program that awards funds to rural areas. The program is an excellent opportunity for communities to obtain funds for projects that the community cannot otherwise afford. Further, it provides a means to implement projects that local governments may not have staff to complete.

Source: <http://www.floridajobs.org/community-planning-and-development/assistance-for-governments-and-organizations/florida-small-cities-community-development-block-grant-program>

Appendix A: Cattleman's Association Survey

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail: _____

Which of the following animals do you sell or buy each year? How many of each do you sell or buy?

Type of animals:	Number you sell:	Number you buy:
<input type="checkbox"/> Cows	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Pigs	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Goats	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Sheep	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Chickens	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Horses	_____	_____

How many times a year do you attend a livestock auction?

What auction do you currently use?

- Brewton
- Robertsdale
- Frisco City
- Letohatchee
- Graceville
- Other _____

Did you use the Jay livestock auction in the past? If so, what did you think of the facilities?

Do you believe there is demand to have the livestock auction in Jay again? Would you use the auction if it was in Jay?

Would you prefer that the site in Jay be used for a local auction, or as a transfer point to other auctions?

Do you have any ideas for a better use of the site in Jay? If so, please list them below.

Appendix B: General Community Survey

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail: _____

What do you think the best use for the site would be?

Did you use the Jay livestock auction in the past when it was used to sell animals? If so, what did you think of the facilities?

Do you buy or sell animals at a yearly auction now, in other towns? If so, how many times a year do you attend a livestock auction?

Do you believe there is demand to have the livestock auction in Jay again? Would you use the auction if it was in Jay?

Do you have any other ideas for the site?
