



STRATEGICECONOMICS

# SAN JOSÉ BERRYESSA FLEA MARKET ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL IMPACT ANALYSIS REPORT

FINAL REPORT

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# SUMMARY OF ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL IMPACT OF THE SAN JOSÉ BERRYESSA FLEA MARKET

1. The Berryessa Flea Market represents the largest, densest cluster of small and micro-businesses in the South Bay.
  - a. The San José Berryessa Flea Market (alternatively, Berryessa Flea Market or La Pulga) has approximately 450 monthly vendors, each of whom represent an independent small business and employ over 1,000 people at the Market.
  - b. Business density at the Berryessa Flea Market is significant when compared to a traditional shopping mall. Westfield Valley Fair, the largest mall in the region, has 221 businesses, less than half of the Market's total number of businesses.
  - c. Owning a micro-business within the largest retail agglomeration in the region presents a major economic opportunity for self-sufficiency and upward social mobility for low-income people of color who are disproportionately represented in low-wage, service-sector jobs in the Bay Area.
2. The current version of the Berryessa Flea Market is a viable business enterprise with an estimated total annual operating revenue of over \$9 million in 2023.
  - a. Market revenues are generated primarily by vendor rents and customer parking.
  - b. Conservatively, operating costs comprise somewhere in the range of 40 percent of total annual revenues.
3. Post-pandemic, the Berryessa Flea Market drew as few as 836,000 and as many as 1.7 million customers annually, and customer visitations at the Market continue to grow.
  - a. The number of customers visiting the Berryessa Flea Market are comparable to the average American shopping mall.
  - b. The large regional customer and tourist draws to the Berryessa Flea Market are a boon for local and regional retail and other spending generating roughly between \$20.9 million to \$42.5 million in sales annually.
4. Microbusinesses at the Berryessa Flea Market are an essential strategy for developing livelihoods for lower-income communities of color and enabling them to become self-supporting.
  - a. Hispanic or Latinx median household income was 40 percent lower than all households in the city of San José, with larger income disparities in the tri-county regional trade area of the Market. This necessitates the need for economic development opportunities that develop livelihoods for lower-income communities of color.
  - b. The Berryessa Flea Market provides many stable, full-time jobs for such communities.
  - c. Nearly all the vendors represent lower-income communities of color, half of the vendors work full-time at the Market and nearly three-quarters rely on the Berryessa Flea Market as their primary source of income.
  - d. Despite lower incomes than San José's median household incomes, vendors have reported being able to supplement income from another job, quit a full-time lower-wage job, pay off extraordinary expenses and debt, buy a home and put a child through college through income earned at Berryessa Flea Market.
5. Beyond self-sufficiency, Berryessa Flea Market microbusinesses create intergenerational wealth and prospects for upward social mobility for low-income communities.

- a. Berryessa Flea Market vendors generally either hire family members, or local workers, and each business has an average of 2.7 employees.
  - b. In several cases, the profits from the business as well as the business itself can benefit the next generation of the vendor's family. Vendors have reported buying a house and sending their kids to college indicating that they were able to transfer wealth from La Pulga businesses to the next generation and offer them greater economic opportunities.
  - c. Many businesses at the Market are currently run by second- or third-generation family members of the original entrepreneur.
6. The Berryessa Flea Market has low barriers to entry and is an excellent small business incubator.
  - a. At microbusinesses at the Berryessa Flea Market, owners, and the people they hire, typically have educational attainment lower than the community overall. In a region where majority of jobs with living wages are designed for people with higher educational attainment and educational attainment is divided on racial lines, the opportunity to vend at the Market represents a pathway for economic and racial justice.
  - b. The Berryessa Flea Market has significantly low start-up and expansion costs coupled with low investment risk since stall rents are low and varying stall structures and reservation types accommodate the needs of different stages of a business.
  - c. Stalls at the Market are designed to incubate small businesses with low upfront investment capital. The small size of vendor stalls and flexibility to occupy multiple stalls coupled with on-site storage is uniquely suited to the needs of new entrepreneurs who are just starting out, or those experimenting with expansion.
  - d. A few businesses which began at the Berryessa Flea Market have transitioned to marquee brick-and-mortar businesses including Shoe Palace, Ramos Furniture and Calderon's Tires. Shoe Palace is a national brand with more than 2,000 employees and Calderon tires has business locations throughout the Bay Area.
7. The Berryessa Flea Market provides ever-evolving shopping opportunities for its customers.
  - a. Throughout the years, the Market's merchandise mix reflected the changing preferences of its consumers.
  - b. The Market provides commercial opportunities for populations at the bottom of the socio-economic pyramid and integrates them into the economy of the Bay Area.
  - c. The famous Produce Row provides access to fresh, healthy produce options including fruits and vegetables important for people from Asia and Latin America.
8. The Berryessa Flea Market has emerged as a center of public life in San José over the past 60 years.
  - a. Customers are attracted to the diversity of cultures and languages they can experience at the Market.
  - b. For the Latinx community in the Bay Area, the Market or La Pulga is symbolic of the Latin American *mercado* and street vending or *tianguis* and a critical cultural resource. The Market offers a characteristic civic plaza and a gathering place that is familiar to the community but not replicated in other local visitor destinations.
9. The Flea Market's business environment and high-quality placemaking improvements translate to social infrastructure for residents of the city of José and the region.
  - a. Vendors at the Flea Market reported having flexible working hours, enjoying being their own boss, being able to bring children into the workplace to avoid childcare costs and spending more time with their families over the week.

- b. High quality infrastructure – its well-articulated grid of streets, on-site permanent bathrooms, picnic tables, food stalls, adequate parking, security, and a clean and well-functioning business environment – has transformed the Berryessa Flea Market into a family-friendly amenity for residents and tourists in the city.

# I. INTRODUCTION

## San José Berryessa Flea Market

The San José Berryessa Flea Market (or the Berryessa Flea Market) is a festival that happens every week. People come to the Market to shop, eat, play games, listen to music, and feel at home with family and friends. This sense of belonging is especially important for people who have migrated to the United States from places where markets featuring many small vendors selling local foods, household necessities, clothes, tools, toys, and almost everything else imaginable, is a familiar way of life. Even people whose families have lived in the U.S. for generations find the Market a wonderful place to visit because it offers the authenticity, creativity, and vitality that can only happen from combining so many individual small businesses, each of which reflects individual vendor personalities, cultures, and passions through the goods and services being offered.

Since the early 1960s when it first opened, the Berryessa Flea Market became an iconic place that helped put San José on the map, provided countless people with great experiences shopping, eating, and having fun, and offered thousands of small business owners the ability to become successful entrepreneurs. The Market's success is based on the foundation of an interconnected relationship among these three groups: the Market's owner/operator, its vendors, and the customers who come from near and far to spend money and soak up the special atmosphere of the place. For many decades this relationship remained strong because the Market's operator and its vendors continuously adjusted their separate business models in response to changing conditions. These changes were, for the most part, mutually beneficial and continued to draw large numbers of customers.

However, by the early 2000s, regional market and economic conditions changed enough to start weakening the three-way relationship that made the Market work so well. Among many other changes, which will be discussed in more detail in this later in this report, land values in the area where the Market is located began to increase considerably. Looking at all the changes happening at this time, the Market's owner/operator determined that they could make a better return on their land by selling it for development rather than continuing to operate it as a market.

This land value transition began in the early 2000s, when the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) acquired a former Union Pacific rail line for use as a future extension of Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART). The vision would extend BART from its terminus in Fremont into Downtown San José and Santa Clara. The route would take BART directly by the Market, and a station was planned on property directly adjacent to the Market. Recognizing the opportunity for transit-oriented development on a large portion of their land, in the mid-2000s the Market's owner entitled just under half of their property to permit a major mixed-use project. In the mid-2010s, the Market sold the north parcel – earlier used as parking – for development of townhomes and apartments, while also developing a new Safeway-anchored retail center. This land sale required that the Market be consolidated from the once-120-acre Market into roughly 61 acres, which resulted in reducing both the amount of available parking and the number of vending spaces.

The diverging interests between the Berryessa Flea Market's owner/operator and its vendors created considerable tension between the two groups, but the Market continues to operate, and customers continue to shop there. While this current Market configuration appears to still be working the overall situation is not stable. In 2021, the remaining 61 acres where the Market currently operates was also upzoned for residential and commercial uses. In response to intense political pressure from the

vendors and their supporters, the San José City Council imposed several conditions of approval as part of the rezoning that were intended to ease the economic transition for the Market's vendors. These conditions included:

- Set aside a 5-acre site within the 61-acre area for development of a market.
- Provide the vendors with a \$5 million vendor transition support fund. The city also contributed \$2.5 million with input on its use from a Vendor Advisory Group.
- Require the Berryessa Flea Market's owner/operator to give the vendors a one-year closure notice.

This tension between the Flea Market's value as a mixed-use transit-oriented development and the Market's value as an economic engine for hundreds of small business owners and their families, and a shopping and cultural opportunity for a million customers, poses a significant dilemma for the city of San José and others concerned with equitable economic inclusion. As the following report will discuss, the quantifiable fiscal benefit to the City of San José, or to the region's overall economic output may be small, but the Market's overall economic, social and cultural benefits are significant. This report presents these benefits and explains why continued investment in maintaining the Berryessa Flea Market would provide value for San José and the region.

## Economic and Cultural Impact Analysis Research Design

Economic impact analyses evaluate the impacts of a proposed project on the economy of a region. These studies are typically conducted for large-scale projects or activities, such as a new bridge, or the Super Bowl to quantitatively demonstrate what impact the investment may have on regional jobs, incomes, productivity, and competitiveness over time. Cultural impact analyses identify the value that traditional historical and cultural resources and practices embedded in an area bring to that region. However, relative to these more typical subjects of quantitative economic impact analyses, the unique characteristics and scale of the Berryessa Flea Market demand a mixed methods approach to measuring its economic or cultural impact, including a mix of quantitative and qualitative techniques.

This report relies on multiple data sources to construct the fine-grained analyses required to understand the full range of economic and cultural benefits the Berryessa Flea Market provides to its vendors, customers, and community. Combining these multiple information sources has enabled this analysis to capture the Berryessa Flea Market's unique history and character, along with its features that are common to other kinds of multi-vendor markets that operate throughout California and the United States. The process for evaluating this data has been iterative and has relied on input from many sources, including the Market's vendors and customers, its operator, and other stakeholders familiar with the specific attributes that comprise the Berryessa Flea Market.

Although the customers are the largest group served by the Market, the greatest economic benefit is generated by the monthly vendors. Vendors account for most of the Market's total sales, their rents account for approximately half of the Market's operating revenues, and their net revenues generate household income that sustains family members and helps to stabilize their local community. Also, without the critical mass of monthly vendors, customers, who account for the other half of the Market's operating revenues by paying parking fees, would feel less drawn to shopping there.

The economic and cultural impact analysis for the Berryessa Flea Market is part of a larger group of studies which include an economic and cultural study (this report), an evaluation of the business operating models for vendor-driven markets, including larger markets like the Berryessa Flea Market

as well as for a smaller five-acre “urban market”, and an assessment of possible new locations for the Market, including the proposed five-acre site on the site of the existing Market. Each of these studies were conducted concurrently, optimizing the collection, analysis, and utilization of data across the different reports and presentations. The section below discusses the primary data sources used for all three studies.

## DATA SOURCES AND COLLECTION

The data used to conduct this impact analysis comes from a variety of primary and secondary sources. Primary data sources gather information from people directly involved with or having specific knowledge about the Berryessa Flea Market, or data gathered specifically regarding the Market. Secondary data sources provide context and background for understanding the Market, especially with respect to its economic and cultural benefits. These sources included an extensive literature review, demographic information drawn from the U.S. Census Bureau and an analysis of city sales tax information. Combining and connecting data from all information sources provides the basis for the key findings to emerge from this impact analysis.

### PRIMARY DATA SOURCES

Primary sources of data reflect input from people with a direct relationship to the Berryessa Flea Market. Primary sources of information used for collection data include the following:

**Surveys:** Multiple first-hand surveys were conducted in order to gather data for this report. This included multiple vendor surveys and a vendor stall census.

- **Vendor Survey:** One of the primary sources of information about Berryessa Flea Market vendors was a survey administered in the first quarter of 2023. The survey questions were designed to gather basic information about the vendors’ businesses operations to be able to provide an overview of general vendor characteristics and to link these business attributes to the academic literature regarding the economic benefits associated with both flea markets and/or micro businesses.

The surveys were distributed to vendors in multiple ways. City and consultant staff distributed paper surveys to vendors when they came to the Market’s administrative office to pay their monthly rent in January and February. In addition, digital versions of the survey were sent out to vendors who provided contact information to the city via email and text message blasts. The Berryessa Flea Market Vendors Association, a nonprofit that advocates for Market businesses, also amplified the survey through its communications channels. The survey was available in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Responses were confidential, and respondents were only asked to provide their name and contact information on a voluntary basis. All non-English responses were translated into English using professional translators. The full survey in all three languages is included in Appendix A. The results are presented in Section II below.

There were 136 total survey responses with 46 in English, 81 in Spanish, and nine in Vietnamese. Because respondents were self-selecting, rather than selected through a random process, this survey is not considered statistically representative of all Berryessa Flea Market vendors. However, because the respondents represent about 30 percent of



all monthly vendors, a significant sample size, the survey results do provide useful and probably relatively representative information about the monthly vendor population.

- **Customer Survey:** City staff and several members of the consultant team spoke with Market customers who agreed to participate in a survey exercise set up in a special booth at the Berryessa Flea Market in March 2023. The customer survey was designed to determine how frequently respondents visited the market, what transportation they use to get there, items they shop for, preference for other flea markets in the area and basic demographic information. Additional efforts were made to solicit customer information by posting a link to the survey on social media sites maintained by the Berryessa Flea Market Vendor's Association and by sending an email blast to individuals who had signed an online petition supporting the Market with a link to the survey.
- **Stall Census:** Because the Berryessa Flea Market operators have a rule against soliciting information from vendors by going stall to stall and speaking directly with vendors, the consultant and city staff team conducted an in-person visual survey, or census, of every stall in the Market to ascertain basic information including the number or occupied stalls, the type of merchandise being sold, the presence or absence of a structure on the stall and whether the stall was part of a consecutive series of stalls occupied by the same vendor. The census was conducted during February and March 2023.
- **Vendor focus groups:** Focus groups with vendors were held on two days in April of 2023. Each focus group lasted for one hour. One had five vendors present and the other had two. Vendors were selected from a list of vendor survey respondents who had indicated a willingness to participate by including their contact information at the end of their survey. The discussion questions were designed to supplement the responses to the vendor survey and provide more detailed information about vendor business operations and needs. Other discussion topics included changes in customer behavior, Market operations, and preferences for a future market.
- **Key informant interviews:** In addition to focus groups, the consultant team conducted interviews with key stakeholders who were either directly involved with the Market or had first-hand knowledge of the Market from the vendor and/or customer perspective. These stakeholders were selected based on their ability to fill in gaps in the collective understanding of Market operations and the Market's economic and cultural benefits. These interviews took place between November 2022 and August 2023.
- **Placer.ai:** Placer.ai is an online data service that uses anonymized cell phone data to track consumer preferences, analyze retail sales leakage, and provides data to understand trade area demographics. This service aggregates individual cell phone movements into patterns of consumer activity at a high degree of geographic specificity and accuracy. Data from Placer.ai using the Berryessa Flea Market location as the starting point was able to identify where the Market's customers live, customer activity levels over time, and provide general information regarding customer demographics.
  - **Data based on Experian's Mosaic USA:** Experian's Mosaic USA is a households-based consumer lifestyle segmentation system that classified all US households and neighborhoods into 71 (1-71) unique types and 19 (A to S) overarching groups,

providing a 360-degree view of customers' choices, preferences, and habits. Placer.ai utilized this system to create audience or customer profiles for the Berryessa Flea Market and the Capitol Flea Market of San José as will be presented below.

- **City of San Jose Sales Tax Data:** All vendors operating at the Berryessa Flea Market for more than three days per calendar year are expected to hold a seller's permit from the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration (CDTFA). This permit requires vendors to provide the state with their total taxable sales amounts, and to collect and remit sales tax revenue to the state as appropriate monthly. The state then shares this information with the City of San José. Although information for individual vendors is confidential, the City of San José provided aggregated annual taxable retail sales trends for the Market for 2012 -2022. This data was analyzed to both compare year-over-year sales trends, and to compare these trends between the Berryessa and Capitol Flea Markets.

#### Secondary Data Sources

- **Literature review:** Research for this economic and cultural benefits analysis started with a comprehensive literature review regarding multiple topic areas including public markets, immigrant markets, microbusinesses, and minority entrepreneurship. This literature review helped contextualize the economic and cultural benefits of the Market and provided the basis for interpreting the data from the abovementioned sources. References to the literature are incorporated throughout the report and ground the case for La Pulga in the larger context of public markets.
- **Census Data:** American Community Survey data corresponding to the years 2012 and 2022 was utilized to understand the demographic and income composition of San José and the three-county market area (Alameda, Santa Clara, and San Mateo counties) of the Berryessa Flea Market. This information provided the ability to compare Market customer demographics to the Market's overall trade area demographic characteristics.

## Purpose of the Report

This report presents the cultural and economic benefits associated with the San José Berryessa Flea Market. These benefits are significant but are easy to overlook for several reasons. First, the scale of any direct benefits may seem small relative to a conventional shopping center or another type of business. Second, the Market serves small business owners and many low-income people in a region where the focus is typically on the benefits of industries associated with high-wage jobs such as technology and life sciences. Third, as a real estate product, a flea market cannot provide the return on capital that any more intensive use could generate. Fourth, the Market's economic and cultural benefits associated with both vendors and customers are diffuse, accruing to many households, sometimes over multiple generations, rather than to a single entity such as the city of San José, or to a group of investors such as venture capitalists.

In fact, there is a strong case for supporting the Berryessa Flea Market as an economic engine and cultural hub benefiting hundreds of small business owners, workers, and shoppers from low- and moderate-income households. Many of these beneficiaries are San José residents who also represent lower-income communities of color. For vendors, operating a business at the Market has provided them the opportunity to make a livable income, or pull themselves out of poverty. The Market offers

an economic alternative when people lose a job, or need to work part-time so they can spend more time with caring for family members. The Market's long-term stability has enabled vendors to invest in themselves and their families by buying a house or putting children through college – activities that promote upward social mobility in a region where such opportunities are in decline. Supporting the Market is also a matter of economic justice; vendors and customers are predominantly Latinx, reflecting the group's prominence as the second fastest growing racial group in the Bay Area. However, Latinx people are more likely to have lower median household incomes, lower levels of educational attainment, and be renters, rather than homeowners, as compared to their white counterparts. These negative economic trends can be partly offset by strong social networks and the opportunity to run micro-businesses, both of which are key benefits of the Berryessa Flea Market. The data presented in the chapters below make the case for reinvesting in and/or reinventing the Market in a way that it can continue to support its 450-plus businesses, 1,000-plus workers, and up to two million annual customers.

### **A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY**

The following terminologies have been used throughout the report.

- The Berryessa Flea Market is referred to as the Market, or La Pulga (the Flea).
- The city of San José is often referred to as the City.
- When referring to “the region”, the report is alluding to the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area.
- When referring to the “primary trade area”, the report talks about the four counties including Santa Clara, San Mateo, Alameda, and San Francisco counties. The primary trade area will be defined in later sections of the report.

## II. THE SAN JOSÉ BERRYESSA FLEA MARKET AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Vendors at the Berryessa Flea Market come from a variety of backgrounds, although the majority are from communities of color. Communities of color also represent the majority of population growth in the Bay Area region over the last decade, particularly across Berryessa Flea Market's primary trade area which consists of Santa Clara, San Mateo, Alameda, and San Francisco Counties. Despite these population growth trends, economic growth and high housing costs in the market area have often failed to provide wealth-generating opportunities for these communities, including people of color and people with low levels of educational attainment. By far the most significant economic benefit generated by the Berryessa Flea Market is the opportunity for these specific groups to create their own small business with associated wealth-building potential. In addition, vendors are able to control what goods or services they sell and to customize their business hours based on personal preferences and family needs, especially when home ownership, a traditional path to building intergenerational wealth, is becoming increasingly unattainable.

This chapter demonstrates the Berryessa Flea Market's value as a mechanism for fostering economic inclusion by situating the Market in the Bay Area's larger demographic context. Beyond its role as a driver for regional economic development, characteristics of the Market, its vendors and customers further demonstrate the Market's potential for achieving financial sustainability even at a time when the national retail industry faces uncertainties post pandemic. Despite its history of resilience and evolution, the Market's business model has failed to keep pace with skyrocketing land values adjacent to a BART railway station, threatening its long-term existence in its celebrated 60-year-old location. The threat of relocation does not diminish the unprecedented opportunity of the Berryessa Flea Market. This chapter aims to establish the outstanding nature of the Berryessa Flea Market through a discussion of its large facility, its unmatched agglomeration of vendors and millions of customers who visit the Market every year.

### Positioning the Berryessa Flea Market in the Regional Context

Positioning the Berryessa Flea Market in the regional context sets the stage for discussing the importance of the Berryessa Flea Market within its primary trade area. Examination of demographic indicators reveal growth patterns in the region and future demand for economic opportunities afforded to the city of San José and the region by the Berryessa Flea Market. As will be evidenced through the analysis, the demographic composition of the four-county primary trade area of the Market, comprising more than 2 million people, has been changing for some time, with Asian and Latinx communities dominating population growth. Lower-income Latinx and Asian population, with limited opportunity for living-wage employment in the Bay Area, also make up the majority of vendors and employees at the Market, such that the Berryessa Flea Market represents an important regional economic opportunity for the sections of the demographic composition that are growing rapidly.

Data from customer surveys and Placer.ai indicates that the true trade area<sup>1</sup> of the San José Berryessa Flea Market are four Bay Area Counties: Santa Clara, San Mateo, Alameda, and San Francisco, while the remaining 30 percent come from Santa Cruz and Monterey counties. Placer's true trade area is designated as the Berryessa Flea Market's primary trade area for purposes of this analysis, since the majority of customer visitations originate from those four Bay Area counties. Demographic indicators examined in this section include population by race, income, and poverty. No further analysis has been completed for the other 30 percent of customers who come from outside of this primary trade area because, according to Placer.ai, these customers come from widely dispersed locations.

## DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

**Population growth in San José and the primary trade area from 2012 to 2022 is driven by people of color as shown in Figure 1.** From 2012 to 2022, San José gained nearly 80,000 people of color and lost more than 33,000 of its non-Hispanic white population. During the same period, the primary trade area gained nearly 440,000 people of color and lost nearly 127,000 non-Hispanic Whites. People of color made up 76 percent of the population of San José and 69 percent of the population of the primary trade area in 2022.

**Asians represent the largest population group in San José and the primary trade area.** Asians comprise one-third of the total population of San José and one-fourth of the total population of the primary trade area from 2012 to 2022<sup>2</sup>. From 2012 to 2022, San José's Asian population grew by 72,000 people, the primary trade area added nearly 350,000 Asians, as shown in Figure 1. Asians also had the highest median household income among all races and earned almost 25 percent higher than the median household income for San José's and primary trade area from 2012 to 2022<sup>3</sup>.

**Latinx people represent the second largest community in Berryessa Flea Market's primary trade area and are a major driver of population growth.** From 2012 to 2022, the percentage share of Hispanic or Latinx people in the primary trade area grew from 23 percent in 2012 to 24 percent in 2022, due to the addition of 90,000 Hispanic or Latinx people, as shown in Figure 1.

**Hispanic or Latinx median household incomes were 40 percent lower than all households and 70 percent lower than Asian households from 2012 to 2022 as shown in Figure 2.** In 2022, Hispanic or Latinx median household income was nearly \$40,000 lower than all households and \$73,000 lower than Asian households in San José. Similar trends were also seen in the regional trade area. As shown in Figure 2, the Hispanic or Latinx community had the highest percentage of people below the poverty line, in both geographies, in the last decade. As will be detailed later in the report, Hispanic or Latinx people represent the majority of vendors in the San José Berryessa Flea Market.

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<sup>1</sup> According to Placer.ai, the true trade area of a market represents the area from which 70 percent of market customers originate. The remainder of customer visitations likely originate from Santa Cruz, and Monterey Counties, among others, and a very small fraction of visitations (less than one percent) come from beyond a radius of 250 miles (including customers from neighboring states). In case of the Berryessa Flea Market, the total trade area is 150.72 square miles, and covers a population of more than 2 million.

<sup>2</sup> As shown in Figure 1, Asians comprised 307,777 out of 954,379 people, or 33 percent of San Jose's total population in 2012. In 2022, Asians comprised 379,676 out of 1,001,176 people or 31 percent of San Jose's total population. Figure 1 also shows that in 2012, Asians comprised 1,147,704 out of 4,024,712 people, or 23 percent of the total population of the Tri-County Primary trade area. By 2022, Asians comprised 1,501,834 out of 4,334,904 people, or 24 percent of the total population of the primary trade area.

<sup>3</sup> In the City of San Jose, in 2012, Asian households earned \$16,875 or 21 percent higher than the median household income of the City. By 2022, Asian households were earning \$34,308 higher than San Jose's median household income. In 2012, Asian households in the Tri-County Primary trade area earned \$20,068 or 25 percent higher than the median household income of the primary trade area. In 2022, Asian households earned \$33,250 or 24 percent higher than the median household income of the primary trade area. All calculations have been performed with respect to values shown in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SAN JOSÉ AND THE PRIMARY TRADE AREA OF THE BERRYESSA FLEA MARKET

	San José				Primary Trade Area			
	Year		Change from 2012 to 2022		Year		Change from 2012 to 2022	
	2012	2022	Numerical Change	Percentage Change	2012	2022	Numerical Change	Percentage Change
<b>Total Population</b>	954,379	1,001,176	46,797	5%	4,024,712	4,334,904	310,192	8%
<b>Population by Race</b>								
Non-Hispanic White	272,492	239,084	-33,408	-12%	1,452,223	1,325,778	-126,445	-9%
People of Color								
Hispanic or Latinx	315,241	308,307	-6,934	-2%	936,372	1,026,348	89,976	10%
African American or Black	26,550	27,665	1,115	4%	243,302	224,981	-18,321	-8%
Asian	307,777	379,676	71,899	23%	1,147,704	1,501,834	354,130	31%
Others	32,319	46,444	14,125	44%	245,111	255,963	10,852	4%
<i>Total, People of Color</i>	681,887	762,092	80,205	12%	2,572,489	3,009,126	436,637	17%
<b>Median Household Income by Race</b>	\$81,349	\$136,010	\$54,661	67%	\$81,719	\$139,513	\$57,794	71%
Non-Hispanic White	\$93,050	\$147,090	\$54,040	58%	\$93,406	\$153,347	\$59,941	64%
Hispanic or Latinx	\$56,749	\$96,846	\$40,097	71%	\$57,912	\$95,794	\$37,882	65%
African American or Black	\$55,746	\$88,901	\$33,155	59%	\$45,914	\$71,160	\$25,246	55%
Asian	\$98,224	\$170,318	\$72,094	73%	\$101,787	\$172,763	\$70,976	70%
<b>Percentage of Population Below Poverty Level by Race</b>								
Non-Hispanic White	7%	6%			6%	6%		
Hispanic or Latinx	18%	9%			17%	10%		
African American or Black	19%	14%			21%	15%		
Asian	9%	7%			8%	6%		

Notes: The Tri-County Primary trade area of the San José Berryessa Flea Market includes Alameda, Santa Clara and San Mateo counties.

Sources: American Community Survey, 5 Year Estimates, 2008-2012 and 2018-2022; Strategic Economics, 2023.

**FIGURE 2: COMPARISON OF MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOMES OF ALL AND ASIAN HOUSEHOLDS WITH HISPANIC OR LATINX HOUSEHOLDS FOR THE CITY OF SAN JOSÉ AND THE PRIMARY TRADE AREA, 2012 TO 2022**

	2012		2022	
	Numerical Difference *	Percentage Difference **	Numerical Difference *	Percentage Difference **
<b>San José</b>				
Median Household Income of All Households and Hispanic or Latinx Households	\$24,600	43%	\$39,164	40%
Median Household Income of Asian Households and Hispanic or Latinx Households	\$41,475	73%	\$73,472	76%
<b>Primary Trade Area</b>				
Median Household Income of All Households and Hispanic or Latinx Households	\$23,807	41%	\$43,719	46%
Median Household Income of Asian Households and Hispanic or Latinx Households	\$43,875	76%	\$76,969	80%

Notes:

\* Numerical Difference refers to the difference between Median Income of All Households or Asian Households and Median Incomes of Hispanic or Latinx Households.

\*\* Percentage Difference refers to Numerical Difference as a percentage of Median Household Income of Hispanic or Latinx Households.

Sources: American Community Survey, 5 Year Estimates, 2008-2012 and 2018-2022; Strategic Economics, 2023;

## ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF LOW-INCOME COMMUNITIES OF COLOR IN THE REGION

Communities of color, particularly Latinx and Asian communities, drive population growth in Berryessa Flea Market’s primary trade area and make up the lion’s share of employment at the Berryessa Flea Market. The Bay Area region’s economy has often evolved at odds with the needs and welfare of communities of color. Lack of economic opportunities for lower-income communities of color has segregated them in lower-wage occupations with limited resources for upward social mobility. This section discusses trends and characteristics of the Bay Area economy and the conditions facing low-income communities of color. The discussion sets up the stage for an upcoming section about the significance of the Berryessa Flea Market’s role in mitigating the Bay Area economy’s failure to provide quality employment to communities of color.

**Workers of color have disproportionately high representation in low-wage jobs in the Bay Area with minimal opportunities for upward economic mobility.** This can be attributed to the changing nature of jobs and economic opportunities in the Bay Area, particularly the large increases in the number of both high- and low-wage jobs, and the simultaneous decline in middle-wage jobs. Communities of color are disproportionately concentrated in lower-paying service jobs. The Berryessa Flea Market mitigates regional trends of diminishing opportunities for self-sufficiency and upward social mobility for lower income communities. Flea Market vendors reported that income from the Market made them self-sufficient by either supplementing income from another job or by helping them quit a full-time position. Vendors also reported that income from the Market supported wealth-building through homeownership and intergenerational wealth transfer.

**The economic structure of the Bay Area labor force is changing, causing greater racial occupational segregation.** Job creation in the Bay Area is increasingly stratified into two segments – the highly-compensated tech industry employees including engineers and executives and the underpaid subcontracted employees who keep the profitable tech sector running efficiently, including janitors and other service workers. According to a 2023 report by the Bay Area Equity Atlas, workers of color

were disproportionately represented in low-wage, low-quality jobs<sup>4</sup>. The report explained that 74 percent of building and grounds cleaning and maintenance positions in San Mateo County were occupied by Latinx workers despite making up only 25 percent of the total working age population. In contrast, White workers made up 54 percent of management positions while accounting for only 38 percent of the total population. Later sections of this chapter show that vending at the Berryessa Flea Market provides an alternative to for people seeking an alternative to this trend of occupational segregation for lower income communities, by providing an option for small business ownership and a flexible workplace.

**The decline of middle-wage jobs in the Bay Area has decreased opportunities for lower income communities of color, with lower than prevalent levels of educational attainment in the Bay Area, to achieve upward social mobility.** Middle-wage jobs enabled residents with relatively lower levels of educational attainment, including communities of color, to participate in the regional economy and become a part of the middle class. According to a report by PolicyLink there has been a 9 percent decline in middle-wage jobs in the Bay Area, while high- and low-wage jobs have both increased by 30 percent from 1990 to 2012<sup>5</sup>. In a region where skills and educational attainment is divided on racial lines, the loss of middle-wage jobs concentrates workers from communities of color with lower educational attainment in lower-income service positions, without opportunities for income growth and skill building. The Berryessa Flea Market incubates small businesses and provides scaling opportunities at relatively low cost, irrespective of the business owner’s educational attainment, countering the decline of middle-wage jobs with entrepreneurship opportunities.

**The Covid-19 pandemic has increased economic insecurity for low-income communities of color, who were struggling to recover from the 2010 financial crisis up until 2019.** Communities of color were hardest hit during the 2010 recession and continued to face barriers to economic participation including fewer middle-class pathways, racial inequities, and educational gaps<sup>6</sup>. These economic barriers worsened during the pandemic. The Bay Area Equity Atlas noted in 2023 that six in 10 low-income adults and almost half of all adults of color are still unable to cover their usual household expenses<sup>7</sup>. When it came to employment losses during the pandemic, 32 percent of low-income households reported a loss of employment income compared to just 9 percent of higher income households<sup>8</sup>. The report also found that many lower-income workers who supported the health and safety of the region as “essential workers” during the pandemic were laid off post-pandemic as the need for their services declined, undervaluing their efforts, and exacerbating pre-existing economic uncertainty. The Berryessa Flea Market provides the opportunity for these laid-off workers by becoming Berryessa Flea Market vendors.

#### SMALL BUSINESS OWNERSHIP AS AN ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FOR LOW-INCOME COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

Diverging from the trends of occupational segregation in lower-wage jobs and loss of middle-wage jobs, small business ownership offers a path for upward social mobility for low-income communities of color. This subsection discusses why the opportunity for small business creation is particularly important for communities of color and how unique characteristics and qualities make them uniquely suited for

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<sup>4</sup> Robbennolt, S. (2023) “Despite Economic Gains in the Bay Area, Many Workers are Still Struggling to Recover”. *Bay Area Equity Atlas*.

<sup>5</sup> PolicyLink, PERE (2015) An Equity Profile of the San Francisco Bay Area Region: Summary.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Robbennolt, S. (2023) “Despite Economic Gains in the Bay Area, Many Workers are Still Struggling to Recover”. *Bay Area Equity Atlas*.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.



economic success through small business creation. These characteristics make vending at the Flea Market a viable economic opportunity for lower income individuals and households.

**Small business entrepreneurship represents an opportunity to create intergenerational wealth and create upward mobility for communities of color.** The average net worth of a Hispanic business owner is five times higher than that of Hispanic non-business owners<sup>9</sup>. Business ownership reduces the racial wealth gap between Whites and communities of color<sup>10</sup>. Moreover, entrepreneurs of color are more likely to hire from their neighborhood workforce and cater to the needs of their local community, improving equity in job opportunities and providing opportunities for upward social mobility<sup>11</sup>. Money earned by independent retailers is multiple times more likely than money earned by national chains to return to the communities in which small businesses reside<sup>12</sup>.

**Low-income communities of color are particularly well-suited for success at small businesses and are increasingly embracing the ability to own a business as a viable economic opportunity.** Despite the opportunity gap between Latinx and other Americans, Latinx people became the fastest-growing small business owners across the US in 2020, starting businesses at almost twice the rate of their white counterparts<sup>13</sup>. According to a report by the Stanford Latino Entrepreneurship Initiative in 2019, Latinx and Black business owners are more likely to begin their business out of necessity (referred to as necessity entrepreneurs) than non-Hispanic White and Asian business owners<sup>14</sup>. Necessity entrepreneurs are those that are unemployed before starting their business. The report suggests that people who know entrepreneurs are more likely to be successful entrepreneurs themselves; and that Latinx people tend to illustrate the connection between a family history of entrepreneurship and a close family member currently or previously owning a business. While Latinx-owned businesses were smaller on average they reported revenues and employment growth comparable to similarly sized White-owned businesses pre-pandemic<sup>15</sup>.

## The Berryessa Flea Market Facility and Operating Model

The Berryessa Flea Market was started by George Bumb in 1960 and by the 1980s the Market had expanded to 120 acres. By the mid-2000s, plans for extending BART from Fremont through Downtown San José were taking shape. Recognizing the opportunity to redevelop their land, the property owners opted to rezone the property. In the mid-2010s, they began selling off the parcel north of Berryessa Road for residential and retail development.

Today the Berryessa Flea Market occupies 61 acres, of which roughly 24 acres are used as Market space for stalls, and approximately 40 acres are dedicated to parking. Even with its reduced size, the Berryessa Flea Market remains one of the largest outdoor markets in the state including a large produce row that functions like a long linear farmers market. To put the size of this facility in context, even at about half of its former size, the Market is bigger than several prominent Silicon Valley tech campuses, including LinkedIn's North Bayshore site (60 acres), and Meta's proposed new Menlo Park campus (59 acres).

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<sup>9</sup> Quezada Diego (2017) "Small Businesses Serve as a Tool to Reduce Wealth Inequality". *ProsperityNow*.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Gibson, M. and McCotter, Julia (2022) "2021 Impact Report". *The People of Color Small Business Network*.

<sup>12</sup> Theodos, B. and Su, Dennis (2023) "Small Business Ownership and Finance: A Landscape Scan of the Historical Underpinnings of Current Conditions". *Urban Institute*.

<sup>13</sup> Cimini, Kate (2020) "'Puro cash': Latinos are opening more small businesses than anyone else in the US". *USA Today*.

<sup>14</sup> Kramer Mills, et. al (2018) "Latino-Owned Businesses: Shining a Light on National Trends".

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

Even though flea markets and other similar activities are relatively common, especially in California, the Berryessa Flea Market is unique in several ways. A key differentiator is the Market's physical organization which is similar to a village or neighborhood shopping district with a grid of labeled streets, a produce row, a town center, and over 250 picnic tables where people can sit down in the shade and feel like they are in a park. Another highlight of the Market is that vendors can rent enclosed spaces. Some are small buildings, arranged in rows or freestanding, while others are converted shipping containers. These structures perform multiple functions. First, they give the Market a sense of permanence, amplifying the village feeling by approximating shops. Second, these structures provide a better selling space for vendors by allowing for shelves, display cases, or other fixtures. Third, the structures provide secure storage for the business owners so that they do not have to transport their merchandise to and from the Market every day. When the Market is closed, or a business is not operating, each merchant can lock up their merchandise and leave it on site. Not all vendors use these enclosed facilities, although many do. However, the real "secret sauce" of the Berryessa Flea Market is the owner/operator's commitment to maintaining the market as a safe comfortable place for families. This is a core value of the Berryessa Flea Market, and it permeates every aspect of the Market's operation including ample parking, spotless bathrooms, awnings to shade people from the hot sun, comfortable places for people to sit and eat, frequent trash removal, and numerous events and activities that appeal to people of all ages. This last point is especially important as many Market patrons include multigenerational family groups. As a result, the Market's management reports that Berryessa Flea Market has more repeat customers than other similar markets.

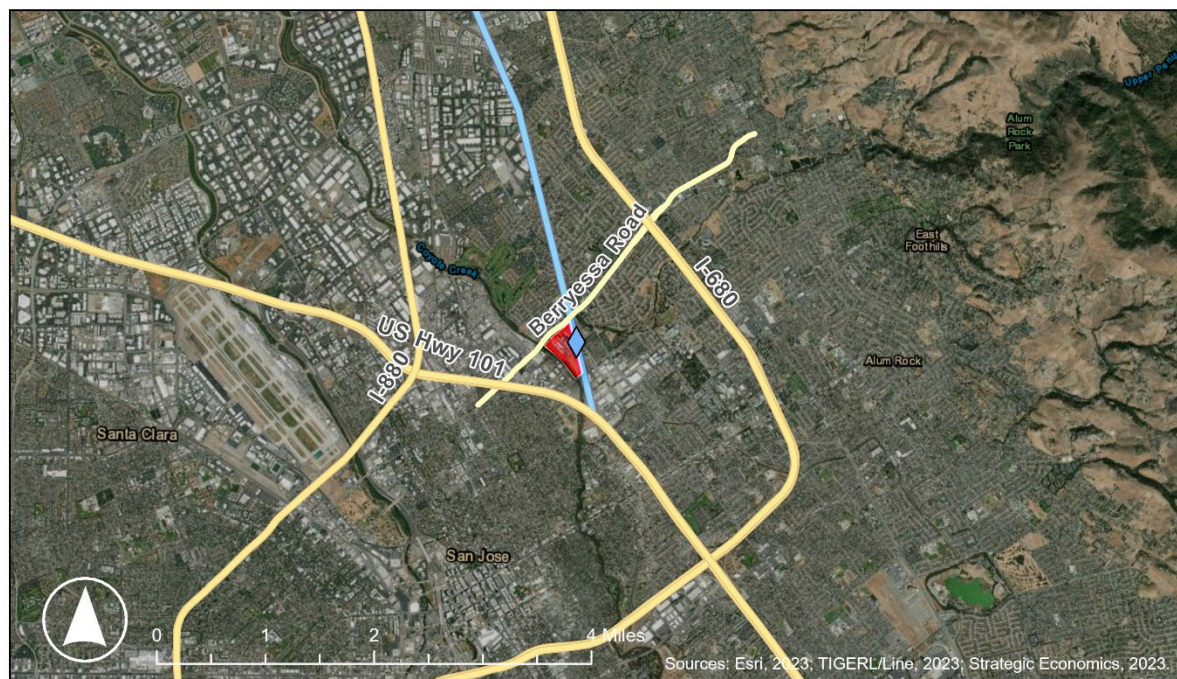
The Berryessa Flea Market's key physical attributes are described in more detail below.

- **Nearly 930 stalls available for rent:** The Berryessa Flea Market has nearly 930 permanent and semi-permanent stalls available to vendors. On average, about 860 of these stalls are rented by roughly 450 vendors who use the stalls on a more or less permanent basis, by paying a monthly rent. The remaining stalls are available for daily rentals and tend to be fully occupied on Sundays. The availability of permanent and semi-permanent stalls and on-site storage facilities offer a degree of legitimacy and reliability to small retailers who vend at the Berryessa Flea Market that is comparable to brick-and-mortar retail locations of small retailers in San José.
- **Flexible, low-cost space:** Stalls vary in terms of size, level of permanence, and location within the Market. Vendors can string together multiple stalls to flex up or down in size as needed. These options can accommodate the needs of a large variety of businesses and the diversity of stalls and storage facilities offers flexibility to accommodate various vendor business models. Also, vendors can rent their spaces on a month-to-month basis or on a six-month basis, but they are not committed to a long-term lease, nor do they have many of the overhead costs associated with running a retail business in a brick-and-mortar space. This flexibility combined with the low real estate costs are two of the biggest advantages Berryessa Flea Market offers to its vendors, making the Market an ideal place for small businesses that operate on very low profit margins.
- **Internal circulation, placemaking and on-site facilities:** Unique facilities, design elements and amenities contribute to the Market's unique sense of place.
  - Permanent stalls at the Berryessa Flea Market are organized into a grid of streets, which provides internal circulation within the Market. The reasonably wide grid of

streets allows vendors to utilize their vehicles to load and unload goods to and from their stalls.

- The Market contains parking facilities for 3,575 cars across two parking lots (East and West). The availability of ample, on-site parking contributes to the Market’s economic advantage in a car-oriented region of the Bay Area.
  - The Market has permanent bathrooms, picnic tables for outdoor dining, ATMs, playgrounds, arcade games and rides for children along with a central park and open area for hosting events.
  - The excellent facilities and placemaking features of the Berryessa Flea Market create the sense of a “city within a city” and allow customers to explore the city of San José’s unique retail and cultural offerings.
- **Excellent regional connectivity:** The Berryessa Flea Market is extremely well-located within the region and is accessible through multiple modes of transportation including transit.
    - The Berryessa Flea Market is centrally located within its larger market area in the East and South Bay. There is a resident population of 570,000 people within a five-mile radius of the Market. Its central location allows many customers to access the Berryessa Flea Market within a short drive.
    - It is located within a network of multiple freeways including the I-880, I-680 and the US 101, and is bound by high traffic arterials including Berryessa and Mabury roads.
    - It is adjacent to the Berryessa/North San José BART Station.

FIGURE 3: THE SAN JOSÉ BERRYESSA FLEA MARKET SITE



**Berryessa Flea Market Site**

- Existing BART Line
- Berryessa Road
- Highways/Interstates
- ◆ Berryessa/North San Jose BART Station
- SJBFM



Note: The location of the Berryessa Flea Market in adjacency to the Berryessa BART station rapidly increased the market value of the land on which the Market sits, pressuring the Market to relocate in order to make way for high-intensity transit oriented housing and commercial/industrial developments. Similar market pressures had earlier decreased the total area available for the Market. In the 1990s the Market extended further north, beyond today's boundary of the Berryessa Road. This part of the land was sold for higher value housing and commercial development, shrinking the Market's footprint to what it is today, and housing a Safeway to meet the retail needs of residents who live in the new development.

## THE BERRYESSA FLEA MARKET OPERATIONS BUSINESS MODEL

**Market Operating Revenues:** While the Berryessa Flea Market vendors earn their revenue from selling their goods and services at the Market, the Market's owner/operator earns revenue from renting stall spaces, charging for parking, charging a modest admission fee for walk-ins, and running several food/entertainment concessions. Current Market revenues were estimated to be close to \$9 million per year<sup>16</sup>.

Although \$9 million is no small amount, this is probably significantly less than what the Market may have generated at peak size and scale. In addition to the Market having only about half of the number of vendors it had during its peak years, which represents a significant loss in rental revenue, the owner/operator also used to run as many as five snack bars, eight drink stands that sold both soft drinks and beer, and multiple mobile beer vending setups. It is likely that these food and beverage sales also generated significant revenue for the owner/operator. But the owner reports that many factors have driven up the cost of labor, especially since the start of the pandemic, and the Market owner/operator either scaled down or outsourced their food-and-beverage concessions. While this opened up opportunities for food trucks to open onsite, substantial owner/operator incomes from food and beverage concessions have dwindled over time.

**Market Operating Costs and Operating Profit:** Running the Berryessa Flea Market is like running any commercial real estate enterprise in that the operator is responsible for paying for and managing all expenses necessary to run the Market facility including staffing, facilities maintenance, insurance, advertising, utility charges, garbage removal, etc. The Market operator directly employed approximately 81 workers as of 2023<sup>17</sup>. Based on interviews with flea markets operators of comparable facilities, operating expenses can range between 35 to 40 percent of gross revenues. By applying a conservative expense ratio of 39 percent to the Berryessa Flea Market's gross revenues, the Market's annual operating profit is estimated to be between \$5 million and \$6 million.

Present-day operating costs of the Market do not include debt service or other costs that were required to purchase the Berryessa Flea Market property, make site improvements like leveling and paving the land, adding utilities (sewer, water, gas, and electricity), and adding buildings and structures. Given that the Market has been operating for over 60 years, it is likely that all such costs have been fully amortized and are no longer being paid off.

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<sup>16</sup> Operating revenues were estimated based on vendor rents and parking data provided to Strategic Economics by Pat De Tar through email correspondence in 2023. The data showed that by July 2023, total revenues from vendor rents approximated \$4.7 million for the year. A similar amount was obtained through parking revenues for 2022. These revenue sources were added to calculate total operating revenues at \$9.4 million per year. Details about operating revenues, expenditures, and the market's capacity to support future debt is available in Section V of the report titled "San Jose Berryessa Flea Market Public Market Operations Research", which is expected to accompany this report.

<sup>17</sup> Based on City of San Jose's business tax database.

# The Berryessa Flea Market’s Vendors and Customers

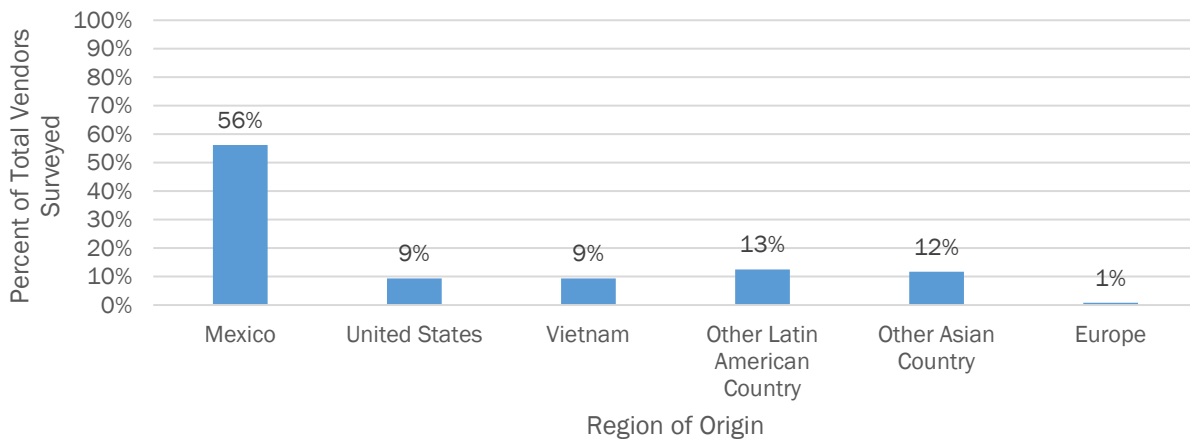
Examining the Market’s vendors and customers reveals insights into the Market’s success as an economic opportunity. Research presented in this section shows how the Market is a bright spot for wealth creation among low-income entrepreneurs. This stands in contrast to broader Bay Area economic trends characterized by shrinking middle-wage jobs and declining upward social mobility for low-income communities of color.

## VENDING AT THE BERRYESSA FLEA MARKET

Results from the Berryessa Flea Market vendor survey provide a profile of the survey respondents and their businesses. The data covers demographic composition, educational attainment, and cultural diversity; highlights which communities are benefiting from the economic opportunity provided by vending at the Market; and vendor business characteristics including the mix of goods sold, competition, and business profitability. Vendors also provided information about the quality of economic opportunity at the La Pulga in terms of their overall experience, income, benefits, and advancement. Operating a business at the Market benefitted vendors with the ability to build family and intergenerational wealth, to have flexible hours, and low entry-level capital needs to start out as a vendor.

### VENDOR RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

FIGURE 4: DISTRIBUTION OF VENDORS SURVEYED BY REGION OF ORIGIN\*, BERRYESSA FLEA MARKET, 2023



Notes: \*Based on vendor responses, the Regions of Origin mentioned in the figure (barring Mexico, United States and Vietnam) correspond to the following countries

Other Latin American Country: Bolivia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Peru.

Other Asian Country: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Taiwan.

Europe: Portugal.

Number of vendor responses depicted in the figure (n) = 128.

Source: Strategic Economics, 2023.

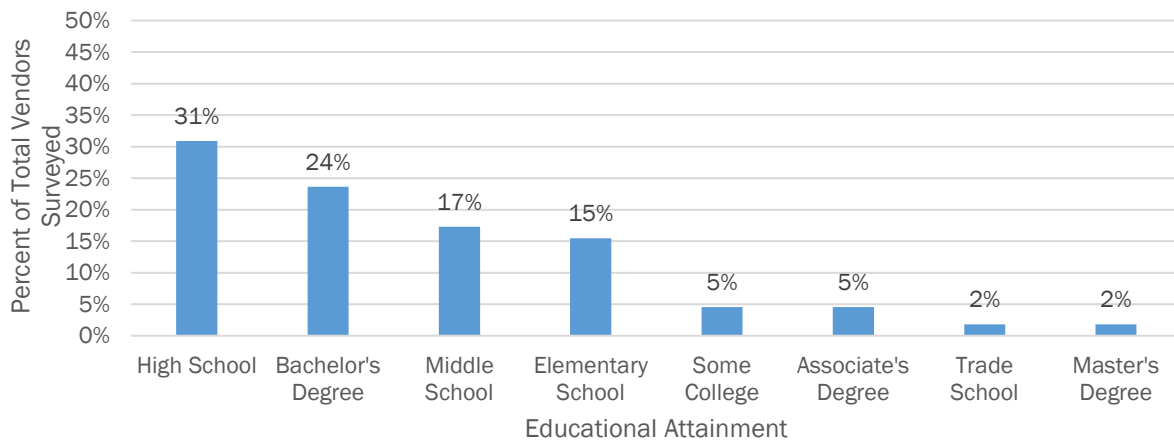
**Vendors represent communities of color and come from diverse cultural backgrounds.** As Figure 4 shows, over half of respondents are originally from Mexico. Vietnam and other Asian countries are also well-represented in the vendor group. In addition to Spanish, English, and Vietnamese, vendors speak Farsi, Russian, Mandarin, Cantonese, Portuguese, and multiple languages representing various

regions of India and Pakistan. This melting pot of vendor backgrounds indicates how the Berryessa Flea Market creates opportunities for immigrants who may otherwise have difficulty finding a job that pays a similar income due to barriers such as poor spoken English or a low level of educational attainment.

**Berryessa Flea Market vendors are primarily local residents.** About two-thirds of respondents live in San José. Another 25 percent live in other Bay Area cities. Only 11 percent live in cities either in the Central Valley, or south of Santa Clara County. As will be discussed further below, having so many vendors both work and live in San José helps amplify the Market’s benefits.

**Most of the Berryessa Flea Market vendors have lower levels of educational attainment than the community overall.** Almost one third of respondents had less than a high school education and another 30 percent only have a high school diploma, as shown in Figure 5. Those rates are about double the percentage of people with a high school degree or lower in the city overall. In a region where the majority of living-wage jobs require college degrees – and educational attainment is divided on racial lines – the Berryessa Flea Market employs people without a bachelor’s degree and enables a path to self-sufficiency and social mobility.

**FIGURE 5: DISTRIBUTION OF VENDORS SURVEYED BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, BERRYESSA FLEA MARKET, 2023**

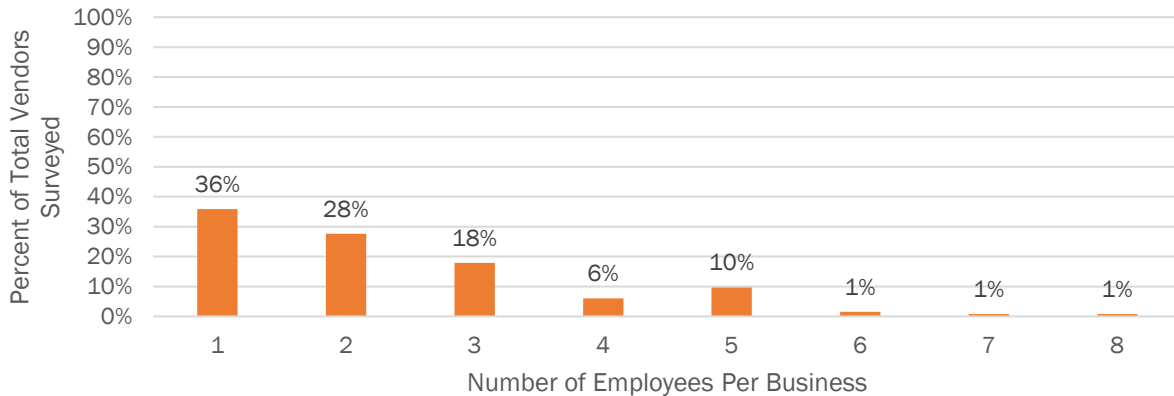


Note: Number of vendor responses depicted in the figure (n) = 110.  
Source: Strategic Economics, 2023.

#### VENDOR RESPONDENT BUSINESS CHARACTERISTICS

**The majority of the Berryessa Flea Market’s vendors meet the definition of micro-businesses.** Micro-businesses are defined as having five or fewer employees. Almost two-thirds of the respondents have only one or two employees. As Figure 6 shows only about three percent of the respondents have more than five employees, and no respondent indicated having nine or more employees, again emphasizing just how small these businesses are. On average, respondents employ 2.7 people, often counting the owner as one employee.

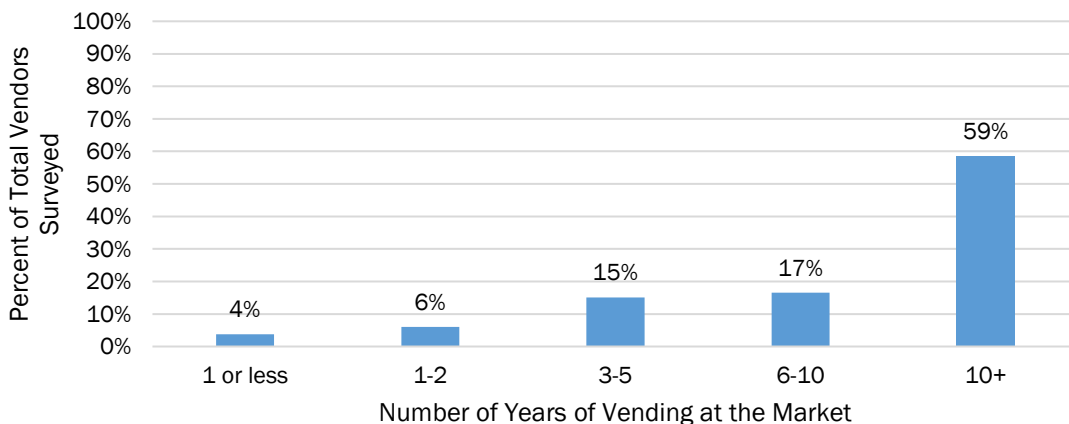
**FIGURE 6: DISTRIBUTION OF VENDORS SURVEYED BY NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES PER BUSINESS AT THE BERRYESSA FLEA MARKET, 2023**



Note: Number of vendor responses depicted in the figure (n) = 134. In some responses, vendors have counted themselves as an employee in their own business. Discrepancies arising from double-counting of the vendor as an employee in the business were corrected whenever subsequent responses to survey questions indicated this double-counting. Owing to challenges associated with identifying vendors who named themselves as employees in their own businesses, part of the data remains uncorrected. Source: Strategic Economics, 2023.

**Berryessa Flea Market vendor respondents are a stable group of businesses.** Nearly 60% of respondents have been vending for at least 10 years, and 76% have been vending for at least 5 years (see Figure 7). These respondents clearly consider vending as a steady and long-term business opportunity.

**FIGURE 7: DISTRIBUTION OF VENDORS SURVEYED BY NUMBER OF YEARS OF VENDING AT THE BERRYESSA FLEA MARKET, 2023**

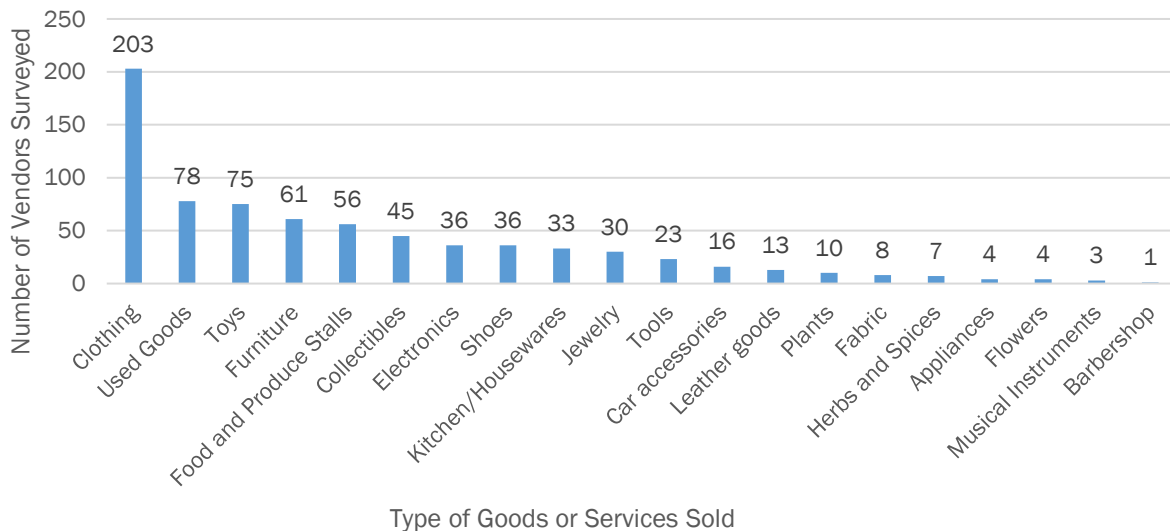


Note: Number of vendors responses depicted in the figure (n) = 133. Source: Strategic Economics, 2023.

**The items vendors sell demonstrate Berryessa Flea Market’s distinct shopping opportunities.** Most survey respondents reported selling more than one kind of merchandise. Figure 8 shows that the most frequently sold types of merchandise include clothing and collectibles followed by food. In particular,

the famous Produce Row provides access to fresh, healthy produce options including fruits and vegetables important for people from Asia and Latin America. The mix of used and new goods, food, produce, and other items are a clear reflection of how different the Market is from a conventional shopping center of any type, and how similar the Market is to markets in many other parts of the world. This mix also reflects a cultural resonance the Market has with so many types of people.

**FIGURE 8: NUMBER OF VENDORS SURVEYED BY TYPE OF ITEM OR SERVICES SOLD AT BERRYESSA FLEA MARKET, 2023**



Note: Number of vendor responses depicted in the figure (n) = 114. Many responses included more than one item sold.  
Source: Strategic Economics, 2023.

**About half of the vendor respondents work at the Flea Market as their full-time job and three-quarters of vendor respondents rely on their Flea Market business as their primary source of income.** Nearly half of the vendors who work full-time at the Market earned less than \$80,000 which is 60 percent of the median household income for San José in 2023, and is considered low income. An online survey of vendor incomes indicated that 65 percent of all vendors earned less than \$50,000 per year, 13 percent earned between \$50,000 and \$100,000 annually and nearly 22 percent of all vendors earned more than \$100,000 per year<sup>18</sup>.

QUALITY OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

**Despite the relatively low profits associated with La Pulga businesses, the revenues appeared sufficient to provide several financial advantages.** Vendor respondents reported being able to quit a full-time job that paid lower wages, pay off extraordinary expenses and debt, put a child through school and purchase a home owing to their business at the Market. Nationally, micro-business owners have almost two and a half times the wealth of non-business owners in lower income communities.

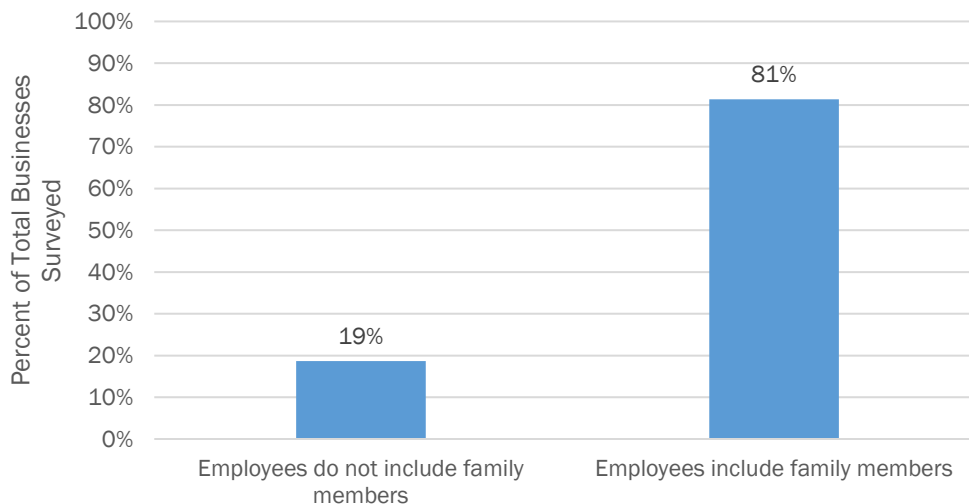
<sup>18</sup> The online survey collected 31 responses. Out of these 13 respondents, or 42 percent, indicated annual incomes from their Berryessa Flea Market business at less than \$30,000. Seven respondents, or 23 percent, of respondents indicated incomes between \$30,000 and \$50,000. Nearly thirteen percent or 4 respondents indicated incomes between \$50,000 and \$100,000. Nearly 22 percent of vendors, or seven out of 31, indicated incomes above \$100,000, of which two had incomes below \$125,000 (or San José’s median household income) and five respondents earned more than \$125,000 from their Berryessa Flea Market business.



**Vending at La Pulga enables people with relatively low levels of educational attainment to build household wealth.** As Figure 5 above shows, while almost two-thirds of the vendor respondents have a high school degree or lower, most of them have been able to achieve financial outcomes such as purchasing a home or putting kids through college that directly correlate to building intergenerational wealth. This opportunity to build household wealth without having attained any post-secondary education is becoming increasingly challenging in the United States, and even more so in a high-cost region like Santa Clara County.

**Businesses at the Flea Market provide more than 1,000 jobs and business operations are typically a family affair.** Businesses at the Flea Market employ an average of 2.7 employees per business. Over 80% of respondents reported having at least one family member as employee (see Figure 9). This illustrates that the income being generated by Berryessa Flea Market vendors is being retained or accumulated within families. There are multiple benefits to this practice, as will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter of the report.

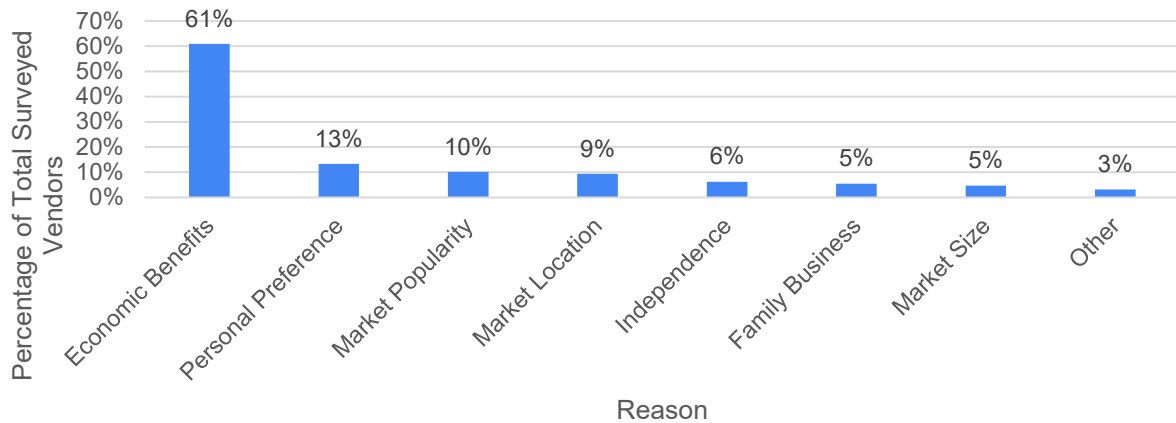
**FIGURE 9: DISTRIBUTION OF BUSINESSES SURVEYED BY PRESENCE OF FAMILY MEMBERS AS EMPLOYEES, BERRYESSA FLEA MARKET, 2023**



Note: Number of vendor responses depicted in the figure (n) = 134. Each vendor represents one business.  
Source: Strategic Economics, 2023.

**Vendors chose to operate in the Market not only for its economic benefits, but for other reasons as well.** When asked why they started vending at the Berryessa Flea Market, respondents gave a variety of answers that are summarized in the categories shown in Figure 10. Of the 128 responses to the question of why operate at the Berryessa Flea Market, 61 percent said that they were vending at Berryessa Flea Market for its economic benefits. Twenty four percent of vendor responses cited the Berryessa Flea Market’s unique characteristics including its popularity with customers, location, and overall size. These responses reflect the synergy between the success of individual vendors at Berryessa Flea Market, and the Market’s overall characteristics.

FIGURE 10: NUMBER OF VENDORS SURVEYED BY REASONS FOR SELLING AT BERRYESSA FLEA MARKET, 2023



Note: Number of vendor responses depicted in the figure (n) = 128. Many responses included more than one reason for vending at Berryessa Flea Market.  
Source: Strategic Economics, 2023.

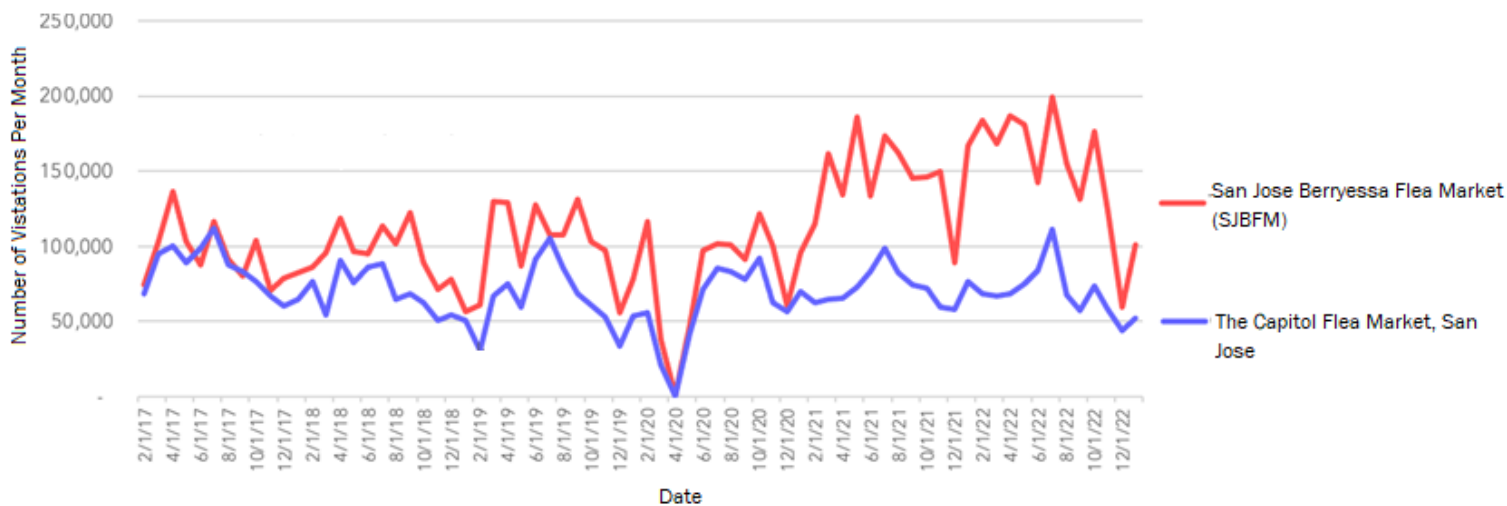
## BERRYESSA FLEA MARKET CUSTOMERS

Customers fuel the Berryessa Flea Market. This subsection examines the number of customers who visit the Market and how the customer base appears to have evolved over time based on the 2023 customer survey and a review of older literature. The subsection then analyses customer profiles to indicate which population groups are being served by the Berryessa Flea Market. It also discusses what makes shopping at the Market unique, including experiential retail qualities that La Pulga offers its customers.

### CUSTOMER ACTIVITY

**Post-pandemic, the Berryessa Flea Market drew as low as 836,000 and as high as 1.7 million customers annually.** These estimates are based on the number of cars that parked in the Market's lots and a range of assumptions regarding the average number of people in each car. Discussion with the Market operator and data from Placer.ai indicate that car occupancy rates are between 2.5 and 5 people per car. The Market is also located next to a relatively new BART station, which does also provide some additional customers, estimated by the Market operators to be about 1,000 people per weekend.

FIGURE 11: NUMBER OF VISITATIONS PER MONTH TO THE BERRYESSA AND CAPITOL FLEA MARKETS, SAN JOSE, 2017 TO 2022



Source: Placer.ai, 2023; Strategic Economics, 2023.

**Customer counts at Berryessa Flea Market have increased over recent years.** Figure 11 shows that customer visits to the Market fluctuate by time of year. To some extent, this is weather related with less activity occurring during the cold rainy winter months or hot summer months, and more activity during the spring and fall. The long-term trend seems to show monthly visitor counts as mostly flat with peaks hovering at between 100,000 and 150,000 monthly visitors for the three years between 2017 and the COVID-related lockdown in 2020. However, once the lockdown ended, customer visits increased, with some monthly peaks approaching 200,000 customers in the summer of 2022. The Market operator suggested that the post-lockdown customer surge represented people’s eagerness to get back out and do things. What is unknown is whether this trend will sustain itself over time.

**Nearly 70 percent of Berryessa Flea Market customers live in the Bay Area, but loyal customers come from further away, and tourists also find their way to La Pulga.** According to Placer.ai, in 2023, 70 percent of Market customer live in Santa Clara, San Mateo, Alameda and San Francisco Counties. This information is confirmed by a 2011 study of the Berryessa Flea Market prepared by the Center for Community Innovation (CCI) at U. C. Berkeley, included a voluntary customer survey<sup>19</sup>. Of the 273 people who participated in the survey, San José residents represented 38 percent of survey respondents, which was by far the most frequent place of residence. Other respondents came from many other cities in the same four counties identified by the Placer.ai data. Vendors also report that they have customers who come from all over California and beyond. This is corroborated by a quick scan of Yelp, which includes positive comments about the Market from people living all over the country including Hawaii, New York, Florida, and Ohio.

**Customer visitations fluctuate based on time of the year and weather patterns.** Customer visitations peak during holidays. Due to the largely outdoor nature of the Flea Market, adverse weather conditions, including the rainy period from December 2022 to March 2023, saw an appreciable dip in customer visitations to the Flea Market. Visitation rates fluctuate by day and by time of year, with most people coming on weekend days. Rain impacts visitation rates, especially during the winter, as most

<sup>19</sup> Campion, S. and Mo, A. (2011) “Transit-Oriented Displacement? The San Jose Flea Market and the Opportunity Costs of Smart Growth”. Center for Community Innovation. <https://www.reimaginerpe.org/files/SanJoseFleaMarket-CR-Campion-Mo.pdf>

people save their shopping for nicer weather. However, regardless of time of year, the Market stays open from morning to dusk, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

**Customer spending at the Berryessa Flea Market is a boon for the local and regional economy.** Based on research, it appears that the average customer spends around \$25 per visit<sup>20</sup>, Using this assumption, the Market could generate anywhere between \$20.9 million and \$42.5 million in sales annually. These expenditures multiply through the local economy when vendors spend money they have earned in local stores or making purchases from local suppliers.

#### CUSTOMER PROFILES

**Customer demographics reflect family-oriented households of color with modest incomes<sup>21</sup>.** Based on the 2011 CCI Report, 78 percent of respondents to the Berryessa Flea Market customer survey reported themselves as Latinx, with only small percentages of people in the Asian or White groups, as shown in Figure 12. The Placer.ai data service seems to generally corroborate this profile based on Experian Mosaic USA lifestyle segmentation system data within the Market’s primary trade area. According to Placer.ai, households visiting the Berryessa Flea Market come from locations represented by diverse racial or ethnic groups, including a high percentage of Latino households and these households tend to have modest incomes.

**FIGURE 12: CUSTOMER RACE OR ETHNICITY, BERRYESSA FLEA MARKET, 2011.**

Race or Ethnicity	Responses	Share of Total Responses
Latinx	215	78%
Asian	20	7%
White	18	7%
Other	14	5%
African American/Black	5	2%
Non-response	2	1%
<i>Total</i>	<i>274</i>	<i>100%</i>

Source: Center for Community Innovation, 2011

**Customer profiles at the Berryessa Flea Market evolved over time to increasingly represent Latinx or Hispanic households.** Interviews with the Market operator<sup>22</sup> revealed that in the early 1990s, the customer base was approximately 60 percent Latinx or Hispanic, primarily hailing from Mexico. The

<sup>20</sup> SalesFuel. *Flea Markets to Score Big Traffic for the Holidays*. <https://salesfuel.com/struggling-economy-increases-flea-market-advertising-and-traffic/>

According to this source, one-third of all customers spend anywhere between \$30 to \$50 during a typical flea market visit. However, most customers manage to spend less than \$30 due to bargaining. Hence \$25 has been used as the average customer spending during the Berryessa Flea Market visit. This data is used for a rough calculation only and does not provide accurate estimates of customer spending in the Market.

<sup>21</sup> Sources of information regarding customer demographic profiles (including race, ethnicity and incomes) were sparse and challenging to line up and corroborate. This report relies on three sources of information to create a reliable profile of Market customers. The CCI report (referenced above) included reliable results from an in-person customer survey that examined demographic and income profiles of customers in 2011. Results from the survey were corroborated with the Mosaic household styles used by Placer.ai to provide additional household insights. The third source of information is a telephone interview conducted by Strategic Economics with the Berryessa Flea Market operator, Pat De Tar, in July 2023.

<sup>22</sup> Strategic Economics (2023) “Interview with the Flea Market Operator: Pat De Tar”.

remaining 40 percent included people of Asian and Middle Eastern decent as well as Whites. The Market operator also reported that over time La Pulga's customer base evolved to become nearly 85 percent Hispanic or Latinx.

**Most customers own cars and drive to the Berryessa Flea Market.** Parking access is of critical importance to the Market since 95 percent of customers arrive by car. The Market's vast parking area serves thousands of visitors each weekend. Data from 2022 indicates that the Market receives on average 6,426 cars each Friday through Sunday. Placer.ai estimated a range of between 2 to 5 people per car, for which the estimate on the low end comes out to be 12,852 and on the high end, 32,130 customers per weekend. The Market's manager calculated the Market's customer attendance by assuming 2.5 people per vehicle, which comes out to be 16,063 customers per weekend, or nearly 800,000 customers annually by car.

#### QUALITY OF EXPERIENCE

**Customers at the Berryessa Flea Market are very loyal, with most being long-time visitors.** The Market is a life-long destination for many customers, who come to the Market for its retail and experiential offerings. Many Market patrons have been coming to the Market since they were children and consider the Market a good place for families.

**While price and convenience are critical factors in people choosing to shop at Berryessa Flea Market, the Market's large size and merchandise variety are also major customer draws.** Customers are very attuned to price and come to the Market because they find great deals there. Vendors indicated that customers tell them that the Market's size is also a significant attraction, noting that it would be difficult to find an equally large Market with similar variety in other nearby cities.

**Customers come to the Berryessa Flea Market to shop for many items, but food is a major draw.** As part of this research, City of San José staff hosted a booth at the Market on multiple occasions in the spring of 2023 to find out more about the Market's customers. People said that they come to La Pulga mostly to buy produce, food, and apparel. Yelp reviews also cite the authentic Mexican food as a significant draw.

**Visitors from outside California travel to the Berryessa Flea Market for its specialty services.** Visitors travel from outside California to utilize specialty services at the Market, as one vendor who specializes in customized embroidery mentioned. These qualitative patterns reflect the specific cultural importance of the Market and its ability to fill a niche that customers cannot find elsewhere.

**People like the social atmosphere, a sense of authentic culture and the experiential aspects of the Berryessa Flea Market.** Customers also say that they come to the Market to walk around, people watch, listen to music, and to be in a place where they feel safe and have a sense of shared language and culture. People also like being able to be outside, especially in good weather. Customers view the Market as a place to be together with friends and family members of all ages. The Market operator reports that Market attendance is higher at times when there are live bands or other forms of entertainment.

#### EVOLVING EXTERNAL FORCES SHAPING THE BERRYESSA FLEA MARKET'S ECONOMIC VIABILITY

The Market does not exist in a vacuum. Economic trends, market pressures and consumer shifts affect the Market's success, and in response it has had to evolve over the last 60 years. This section discusses the nature of challenges affecting the economic viability of the Berryessa Flea Market and sheds light on its historical context.

## IMPACT OF LARGE RETAIL BIG BOX STORES IN SAN JOSÉ AND ONLINE SHOPPING PLATFORMS

**The combined impact of large retail big box stores and online shopping platforms in the early 2000s took their toll on the Berryessa Flea Market, which was at its peak in the 1990s.** Introduction of the value-oriented big box retail store format to San José in the early 2000s created competition for the Berryessa Flea Market vendors by selling commodity goods like clothing at very low prices. Stores such as Walmart, Costco, and Target either entered or expanded their operations in the South Bay market. During this same period, websites like eBay also became popular, with easy ways to buy and sell secondhand products which had been the Market's specialty since its inception. As a result, La Pulga's sales began to decline, and the number of vendors shrank<sup>23</sup>.

## IMPACT OF THE 2008 FINANCIAL CRISIS

**Shrinkage in sales caused a rapid decline in the number of vendors at the Berryessa Flea Market during the 2008 financial crisis.** Many customers had lost their jobs or had less disposable income to spend at the Market. The decline in sales also led to a decline in the number of vendors selling at the Market. The Market operator explained that the Market lost approximately 50 percent of its business during the 2008 financial crisis, as the total number of Berryessa Flea Market vendors shrunk from 1,700 vendors pre-crisis to only 700 post-crisis.

**Car dealers stopped selling at the Berryessa Flea Market.** Prior to the 2008 recession several larger car dealerships sold both cars and trucks at the Market with a focus on high quality used vehicles. These dealers were also able to make loans on the spot. However, banking and credit rules changed significantly following the recession making it impossible for dealers to offer what was essentially instant financing for their buyers. This in turn caused the dealers to stop selling at the Market. Cars and automotive related products had been a significant component of the Market sales prior to the recession, but this business has contracted considerably in the ensuing years.

## MARKET PRESSURE TO UPZONE NEAR THE BERRYESSA/NORTH SAN JOSÉ BART STATION

**A decline in customers and sales encouraged the Berryessa Flea Market's landowner (also the operator of the Market) to pursue alternative uses that would generate higher profits.** The diminution of the Berryessa Flea Market took place through the following events:

- **VTA acquired land for the Berryessa/North San José BART Station:** VTA acquired a Union Pacific Rail Easement running along the edge of the Market's site, and then acquired adjacent industrial property. This enabled VTA to build the Berryessa/North San José BART Station.
- **57 acres of land to the north were rezoned for housing and commercial uses:** Proximity to the BART station sealed the fate of the Berryessa Flea Market – the highest and best use of the land was no more the Market, but rather high density, transit-oriented mixed use. The Bums rezoned the entire Market for low density residential and commercial uses in 2007. By the early 2010s, the Market owner began selling off portions of the north parcel – which functioned as Market parking – for redevelopment. The Market was left with only 61 out of its former 120 acres, which was reconfigured to create a smaller Market south of Berryessa Road. Despite the new

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<sup>23</sup> The interview with Pat De Tar in July 2023, revealed that the Market had 500 shopping carts in the 1990s, which indicates that customers were buying large quantities of food and other merchandise from the Market, similar to what one might expect from Costco or Walmart today. Renting of shopping carts to customers was a thriving business in the 90s. However, the cart rental business eventually closed down as sales from the Market declined or shifted to other merchandise.

development taking place on the rezoned land north of Berryessa Road, producing new townhome-style residences, mid-rise apartments, and a large Safeway-anchored shopping center, Berryessa Flea Market continued to draw thousands of visitors each weekend.

- **The city further upzoned the Berryessa Flea Market for higher intensity, transit-oriented commercial and residential development in 2021:** As revenues from the Market were shrinking, the owners saw an opportunity to make a greater return from developing the remaining Market site. In 2021, despite vehement opposition from many vendors, the City of San José approved the upzoning to provide greater capacity for housing and commercial office space, both of which were in short supply in San José on the Flea Market site. Proximity to a high-frequency rail station would allow redevelopment of the area into a transit village near the BART station.

#### EVOLUTION OF THE BERRYESSA FLEA MARKET IN RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES

**The Berryessa Flea Market has evolved its offerings to meet changing customer preferences.** The relaxed, highly social experience of the Flea Market continued to attract customers despite the appeal of big box retailers or online shopping. The Market also evolved its offerings, in terms of food and beverage, events and specialty goods in order to appeal to a broader audience.

**The Berryessa Flea Market introduced new food and beverage options in response to customer demand.** Over time, as the Market operator decreased its food and beverage offerings, this opened the opportunity for a gathering of food trucks onsite, catering to the diverse cultural backgrounds of Berryessa Flea Market customers. The evolution of La Pulga’s traditional food and beverage offerings into innovative and locally oriented food truck-based offerings has diversified food and drink options at La Pulga, expanded the Market’s customer base and generated substantial customer interest and enthusiasm.

**The Berryessa Flea Market has diversified its offerings to appeal to a broader customer base including younger audiences.** New offerings at the Berryessa Flea Market include Garden at the Flea, Berryessa Night Market and Vintage at the Flea, which are targeted at young audiences to complement the traditional family-oriented customer base. Garden at the Flea operates in a space near the Berryessa BART station and features events and activities including live stage entertainment, food trucks and eatery vendors. The space also hosts a night market every Friday during spring and summer months with a variety of food, art, and vintage offerings. The Market hosts a vintage pop-up market selling thrift apparel, shoes, sports gear, and collectibles during the winter months, creating a niche in “vintage cool” with substantial appeal to younger audiences.

**These changes demonstrate the Berryessa Flea Market’s resilience and adaptability.** The evolution of the Market’s offerings and diversification of its image has not overcome the challenges posed by surrounding rising land values and competition from alternative land use opportunities. However, these demonstrate La Pulga’s ability to remain relevant and the resilience of the flea market business model in the face of market competition. It is expected that contrary to dominant trends in the retail industry, the deeply social experience of shopping at a flea market, coupled with its discount and thrift pricing offerings, live entertainment and food trucks will continue to excite and attract customers to flea markets<sup>24</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> United Flea Markets. Flea Markets will Play an Important Role in 2023. <https://unitedfleamarkets.com/news/flea-markets-will-play-an-important-role-in-2023#:~:text=The%20Flea%20Market%20Industry%20is%20Resilient%20to%20the%20Pandemic&text=Sieban%20said%20they%20were%20deemed,get%20the%20items%20they%20need.>

## THE FUTURE OF BERRYESSA FLEA MARKET VENDORS

While a transit village around the BART Station would generate high ridership and enable the City of San Jose to fulfill its RHNA Goals, it will displace 450 small businesses and 1,000 jobs currently serving low-income communities of color. The displacement risk spurred vendors to organize, with support from the Berryessa Flea Market Vendors Association, a nonprofit organization dedicated to advocating for vendors' interests and preserving the Market in a future form. This advocacy created leverage. During the zoning approval for the Market, the Mayor and the City Council required the following:

- Five acres of land within the 61-acre site be set aside for a public market.
- A \$5 million vendor transition fund paid for by the property owner but managed by the City of San Jose, be established to support vendors who would be displaced by the Market's closure. The City also contributed \$2.5 million to the fund.
- Establishment of a Flea Market Advisory Group to provide recommendations on spending, among other topics. A one-year closure notice so that vendors would have a full 12 months to plan for their future.

**The Berryessa Flea Market could continue to operate through 2025.** In the summer of 2023, the Market operator announced that they would not be issuing a closure notice in October but might do so in January 2024. However, in December 2023, the Market owners announced that the soonest they would close the Market is January of 2026. Therefore, the Market continues to operate, generating multiple economic benefits for its vendors and customers. But it may only be a matter of time before a closure is announced, and the vendors will potentially be displaced. The Market's closure will create a significant negative impact on the lives and well-being of the vendors, their families, and their communities, as well as the Market's millions of customers.



### III. THE ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL BENEFITS OF THE BERRYESSA FLEA MARKET

Despite uncertainty around its future, the Berryessa Flea Market continues to be an important part of the social, cultural, and economic infrastructure for many of San José and the region’s low-income entrepreneurs and customers. It fills a distinct niche in local recreational and cultural offerings and continues to be an important way for entrepreneurs to gain a foothold in the local economy. As such, the Berryessa Flea Market presents a unique opportunity to support economic justice and cultural and ethnic diversity in a region that is becoming increasingly unaffordable and economically homogenous. This chapter examines the economic impact of the Market in the local economy of San José and the larger Bay Area region. It also delves into how placemaking offerings of the Flea Market constitute unique cultural opportunities for a large section of its population. To some extent, it is challenging to tease apart the economic and cultural benefits from the Flea Market. However, for purposes of this discussion, the Market’s economic benefits have been defined as benefits that can be characterized in some numeric or quantitative form based on data gathered from numerous sources. In contrast, the cultural benefits are based more on academic research and while some of these benefits can be measured for individual vendors, other benefits reflect more qualitative considerations regarding the broader societal benefits the Market offers.

#### The Berryessa Flea Market’s Economic Benefits

The primary economic benefits offered by the Berryessa Flea Market stem from its physical and locational attributes that in turn create benefits for its vendors and its customers, the region and the City of San Jose, as well as its role promoting economic justice in the region. These economic benefits can be characterized in some numeric or quantitative form based on data gathered either through original sources, such as the vendor questionnaire, or through secondary sources including the U.S. census.

##### ECONOMIC IMPACTS TIED TO THE MARKET’S PHYSICAL AND LOCATIONAL ATTRIBUTES

**The high business density and sheer size of the Flea Market creates a critical mass that benefits small retail businesses from the positive effects of retail agglomeration.** The Berryessa Flea Market is a significant retail destination in the region and includes more businesses within a much smaller area than any of the region’s malls. The number of businesses at the Berryessa Flea Market is more than twice the number of businesses at the Westfield Valley Fair, the largest mall in Northern California. Generally speaking, the Berryessa Flea Market has the same number of businesses as seven to eight retail shopping malls and rivals the Markets of Paris and Mexico City in scale and impact<sup>25</sup>. The high concentration of small retail businesses at the Flea Market, generates a critical mass in which competitors have an incentive to locate close to one another to attract more consumers<sup>26</sup>. Shopping at the Flea Market enables customers to find all kinds of different goods, including new and uses, at the same location, compare prices for similar goods, and hunt for discounts unavailable in large retail locations. This synergy which attracts a large customer base creates many positive economic impacts

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<sup>25</sup> Ortiz, P. and Rojas, J. (2021) “Opinion: Don’t Gamble with Vendors’ Futures at the San Jose Berryessa Flea Market”. *San Jose Inside*.

<sup>26</sup> Pasidis, I. (2013) “Why do shops cluster? Spatial competition and agglomeration in the Netherlands”. *UrbanEconomics.nl*

including sales volumes for the vendors who can then afford to pay the Market operator higher rents as compared to other flea markets.<sup>27</sup>

**The low-cost permanent, open-air format of the Berryessa Flea Market encourages higher profitability for vendors and the Market operator by keeping costs and stall vacancies low.** The permanent Market site approach allows vendors to rent spaces by the month and keep their inventory on site during days when the Market is not open, drastically reducing transportation costs for the small businesses. The presence of permanent structures and facilities on site has also allowed the La Pulga to grow larger than temporary market sites in the area<sup>28</sup>. Post-pandemic, open-air markets in the US have lower vacancy rates compared with traditional indoor malls as they provide more wide-ranging options for shopping, dining, and entertainment that cater to a variety of demographic and cultural preferences. They also consume less power and are more environmentally sustainable than traditional brick-and-mortar stores, have greater visibility, and provide inclusive opportunities to shop in community settings.

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<sup>27</sup> WestWind Public Market. *Seller Information*. <https://www.westwindpm.com/Locations/Capitol?ifold=seller>.

The stall prices at the Flea Market are at least double, if not higher than that of the nearby Capitol Flea Market.

<sup>28</sup> Archives and Architecture (2006) "Historical Resources Assessment: San Jose Flea Market". *Appendix D: Historical resources Assessment*.

## VENDOR BENEFITS

The Berryessa Flea Market provides more than 1,000 local jobs and, in aggregate, could be considered one of the top 50 employers in the city of San José. Each business at the Market employs an average of 2.7 employees. Employees are either local residents, or family members of vendors, creating opportunities for local communities, building economic stability and community cohesion.

**The majority of jobs at the Berryessa Flea Market are stable and many offer opportunities for full-time employment.** About half the vendors surveyed work at the Market as their full-time job, and three-quarters rely on the Market as their primary source of income as shown in Figure 13. Vendors at the Berryessa Flea Market have regarded their businesses as stable and a steady long-term business opportunity.

### THE IMPACT OF THE BERRYESSA FLEA MARKET ON VENDORS LIVES: 3 ANECDOTES

Three anecdotes from Jennifer Wadsworth of San Jose Inside (2021) present the multifaceted impact of vending at the Berryessa Flea Market in terms of livelihood generation, building intergenerational wealth and creating lasting community impacts.

#### Story 1:

Donelia Duarte fled Guatemala to escape poverty and violence and came to the Market with no possessions. She built enough to scrape by from nothing, and eventually became her own boss as a jewelry vendor at La Pulga. Through that business she supported her own family and her husband's family back in El Salvador. The business enabled her to buy a house, and a car, and provided enough income to cover her medical bills when she had cancer. She will be passing down the legacy of her business two generations later once her daughter has children.

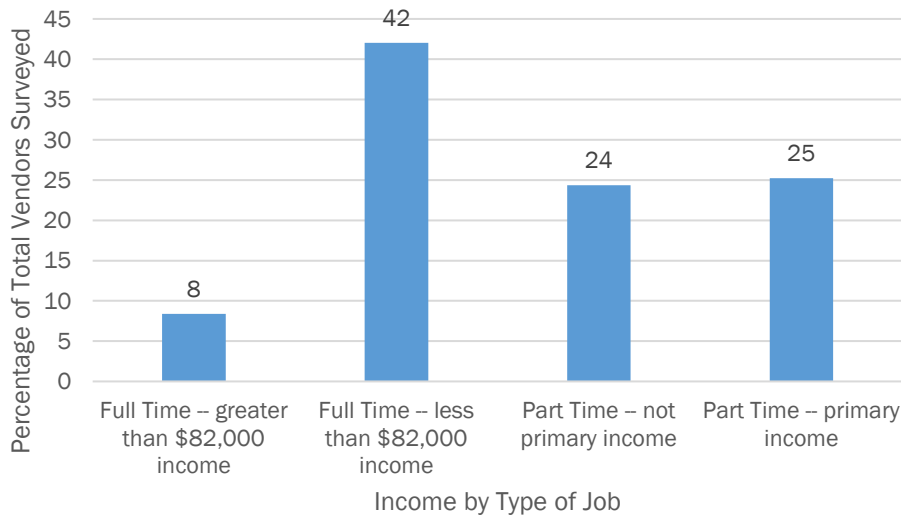
#### Story 2:

A vendor of brightly embroidered tunics and purses, Maria Lourdes, employs six people who each have their individual families to support. Her business is her only means to pay down the \$50,000 she owes in medical bills for five days at the hospital for contracting the coronavirus.

#### Story 3:

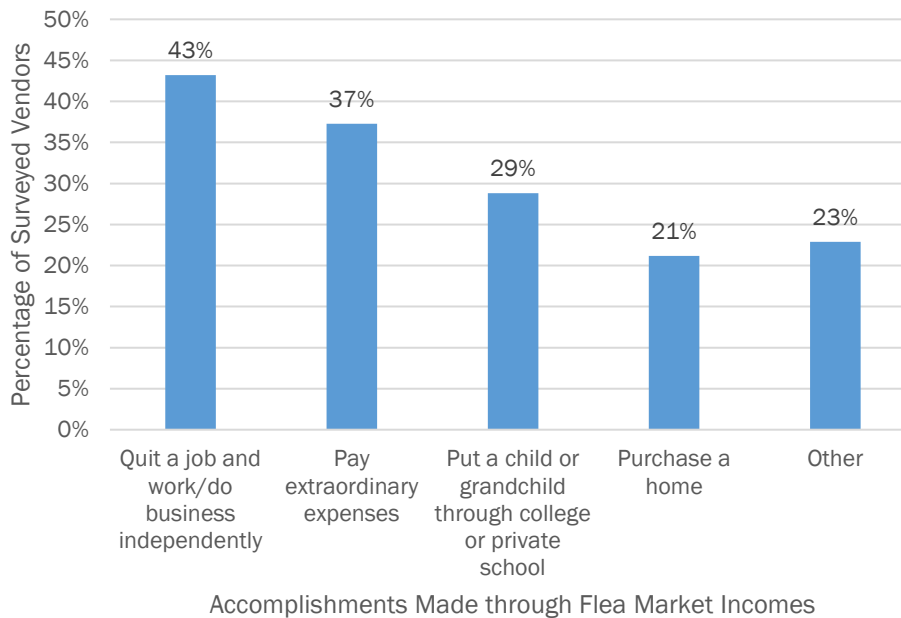
After losing their jobs in the Covid-19 pandemic, a vendor and his wife, Daniel Ramirez, and his wife Maria, are able to put food on the table for their four children and the artisans who make woven-leather chanclas, belts and cotton dresses sourced from rural villages in Mexico.

**FIGURE 13: PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL VENDORS SURVEYED BY INCOME AND TYPE OF JOB, 2023**



Note: Number of vendor responses depicted in the figure (n) = 119.  
Sources: Strategic Economics, 2023.

**FIGURE 14: PERCENTAGE OF SURVEYED VENDORS BY ACCOMPLISHMENTS MADE THROUGH FLEA MARKET INCOME, 2023**



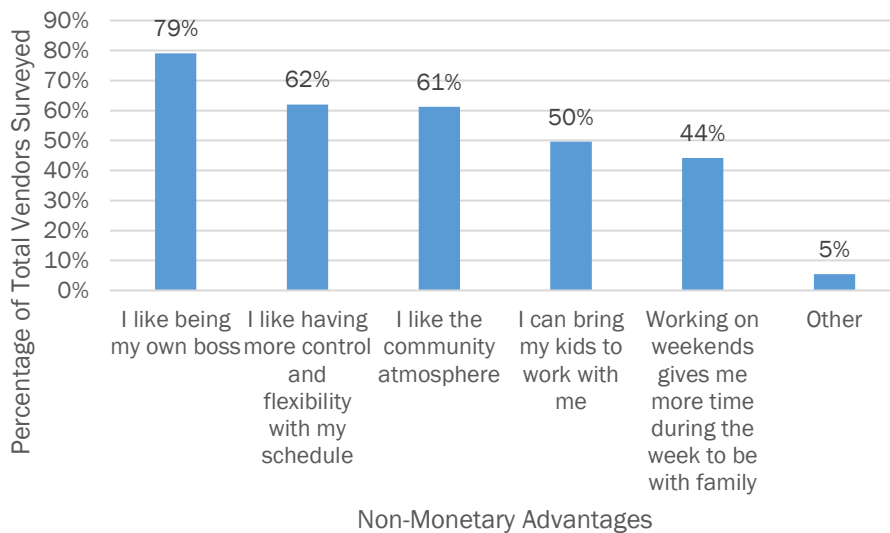
Note: Number of vendor responses depicted in the figure (n) = 118.  
Sources: Strategic Economics, 2023.

**The Berryessa Flea Market has the potential to lift households out of poverty and generate upward social mobility for microbusiness owners.** Nearly 40 percent survey respondents who are also full-time business owners at the Flea Market earn less than \$80,000, which is 60 percent of the area

median income for San José. Despite being lower than San José’s area median income, these incomes generated through the Flea Market were enough to lift households out of poverty. Vendors have reported using their business incomes for a variety of purposes including being able to quit a full-time job, pay off extraordinary expenses, put a child through school or purchase a home as shown in Figure 14.

**Vending at the Berryessa Flea Market offers a lot more than just monetary advantages.** According to the vendor survey, 79 percent of vendors reported enjoying being their own boss. Similarly, 62 percent vendors reported having more control over their schedules, 61 percent reported enjoying their community atmosphere, 49 percent reported being able to bring their kids to work and 44 percent reported having greater time to spend with their families during the week as shown in Figure 15. The Market provides economic security while allowing vendors to craft their schedules and cater to their individual and family needs.

**FIGURE 15: PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL VENDORS SURVEYED BY NON-MONETARY ADVANTAGES OF VENDING AT THE BERRYESSA FLEA MARKET REPORTED, 2023**



Note: Number of vendor responses depicted in the figure (n) = 129.  
Sources: Strategic Economics, 2023.

## CUSTOMER BENEFITS

Post-pandemic, the Flea Market drew as few as 800,000 and as many as 1.7 million customers annually making La Pulga a major draw for the City of San José. A 2006 report on the history of the Berryessa Flea Market called it a “premier open market” that was “one of the largest and most successful of the 5,000 other flea markets scattered throughout the US... rivalled only by Disney and Universal Studios which drew more visitors annually<sup>29</sup>”. However, since then, customer visitations at popular theme parks have skyrocketed, while market forces have decreased the Market’s size and customer base. In 2022, Disney theme parks across the US hosted between 19 million to 100,000

<sup>29</sup> Archives and Architecture (2006) “Historical Resources Assessment: San Jose Flea Market”. *Appendix D: Historical resources Assessment*.

visitors, with the median being around 4 million visitors at each location<sup>30</sup>, or nearly double the number of visitations at the Berryessa Flea Market. Yet, customer draws for the Market are greater than the average American shopping mall in 2022<sup>31</sup>

**The Berryessa Flea Market provides lower-income households with access to healthy food.** The famous Produce Row provides access to fresh, healthy produce options including fruits and vegetables that are important to people from Asia and Latin America. The Berryessa Flea Market's role in providing access to healthy food is a key economic benefit to its customers who primarily hail from lower income communities of color.

## BENEFITS TO SAN JOSÉ AND THE REGION

**The Flea Market has enriched the local and regional economy by launching thousands of small businesses, creating local jobs, and drawing a significant number of customers to San José over the years.** An untold number of businesses have been launched through the Berryessa Flea Market. Not all of these businesses still exist. But the opportunity to start a business has given many people an economic opportunity for self-sufficiency in meeting either a short-term economic need, like earning additional income to tide over household finances after a job layoff or creating a business that can sustain multiple generations of family members. Berryessa Flea Market vendor incomes have created pathways for integration into the middle class, including buying homes and educating children from low-income communities of color.

**The Berryessa Flea Market has spun off several retail powerhouses including Shoe Palace, Ramos Furniture and Calderon's Tires<sup>32</sup>.** The most successful of these, Shoe Palace, was sold to JD Sports, a global sports fashion retailer with stores around the world. The sale took place in 2020 and was valued at \$325 million. Today, Shoe Palace employs over 2,000 people. Calderon's Tires is a regional chain and has locations throughout the Bay Area.

**Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the San José Flea Market contributed \$16 million in annual taxable sales.** Post pandemic and owing to the Market's reduced size in the last decade, taxable sales have been declining and came to nearly \$13 million in 2022, adding \$150,000 in sales tax to the city<sup>33</sup>. However, these sales values understate the Market's true total sales volume since large categories like produce and services are not taxable, and vendors may report taxes at their home addresses. Despite the decline in sales, Berryessa Flea Market still produces approximately six times the amount of taxable revenue as Capitol Flea Market, the city's second largest open-air market.

**The Berryessa Flea Market reflects an investment in building local human capital.** The Market has brought households out of poverty and enabled families to bring their children to work and offset

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<sup>30</sup> Statista. Attendance at Disney theme parks in the United States from 2019 to 2022, by park.

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/227490/disney-world-visitors-orlando-usa/>

<sup>31</sup> Vantine, Scott (2023) "U.S> Retail Foot Traffic Study Q2 2023: Shopping Mall Visitation". Unacast.

<https://www.unacast.com/post/retail-foot-traffic-q2-2023> . This data shows that department stores, sports retailers and children's apparel were attracting between 1.7 to 560 customer visitations a day, which comes to between 620,500 to 204,400 customers. Other sources indicate that an average shopping mall can attract a few thousand customers a day, coming to just over a million customers a year with 3,000 customers daily.

<sup>32</sup> Wadsworth, J. (2021) "New Urban Village Development Threatens to Displace San Jose's 60-Year-Old Berryessa Flea Market". *San Jose Inside*.

<sup>33</sup> While still currently significant, the taxable sales at the Market has declined by approximately 50% since 2012. This can be attributed to the smaller size of the Market, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and a shift in the types of goods being sold. For the latter, a big component of taxable sales in the early 2000s was on vehicles, as several car sales businesses were run out of the Market. Thus, taxable sales were much higher given the higher purchase price of vehicles. Since the closure of these businesses, general retail sales have increased from 30% to 53% of total taxable sales.

childcare costs and ultimately send them to schools and colleges. Over a lifetime, government expenditures are \$82,000 lower for college graduates than for those with only high school degrees<sup>34</sup>.

**Small and microbusinesses at La Pulga diversify San José's local and the Bay Area's regional economy, making it more resilient.** The Berryessa Flea Market creates entrepreneurs outside high-tech or advanced manufacturing sectors, which have high barriers to entry. Microbusinesses at the Market have also been very agile, responding quickly to customer's changing demands, allowing for experimentation and innovation. The Market's concentration of small retail businesses and its agility and non-dependence on dominant economic sectors enhances regional economic resilience.

## ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND EQUITY IMPACTS

**The Berryessa Flea Market likely represents the largest concentration of small businesses owned by communities of color in Northern California.** La Pulga represents a rare opportunity, since other economic pathways to own a business for low-income communities of color do not match the opportunity offered by vending at the Berryessa Flea Market in terms of economic security or non-economic advantages. While exact numbers are uncertain, the approximate revenue range for vendors could range from just under \$75,000 a year at the low end, to about \$200,000 at the high end t<sup>35</sup>. Although these revenue ranges are estimated, they are intended to demonstrate that vendors have the potential to earn an income that is slightly above San Jose's median household income.

**Microbusinesses at the Berryessa Flea Market create opportunities with low entry-level barriers.** Microbusinesses at the Berryessa Flea Market typically employ people with high school degrees or lower, creating an important strategy for economic justice. At the Berryessa Flea Market, this type of accessibility is particularly important, as only 26% of vendors noted having a bachelor's degree or higher (see Figure 5). This is particularly relevant in the context of the Bay Area, where educational attainment is higher than the rest of the country and split along racial lines<sup>36</sup>. While 46% of White residents over 25 years old hold a bachelor's degree, the same is true for only 18% of Hispanic or Latinx residents.<sup>37</sup> Therefore local employment opportunities that do not require a bachelor's degree represent a significant pathway not just for economic justice, but for racial justice as well.

**Berryessa Flea Market microbusinesses create intergenerational wealth.** Most often the structure of microbusinesses is employee-owner, in which the business owner is the sole employee, and several other unpaid members of the owner's family help support the business. This reflects the situation at the Berryessa Flea Market, where businesses typically have fewer than three employees on average, and most employ family members, often on a paid, but sometimes voluntary basis. This enables intergenerational wealth building for vendor families. Almost half of vendor respondents mentioned that income from vending has helped them quit other jobs and work independently. Other activities that this supplemental income has helped support include paying extraordinary expenses, putting a child or grandchild through college or private school, and purchasing a home (see Figure 14). When managed financially, the profits from the business as well as the business itself can benefit the next

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<sup>34</sup> Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities. *How do college graduates benefit society at large?*.

<https://www.aplu.org/our-work/4-policy-and-advocacy/publicvalues/societal-benefits/#:~:text=By%20nearly%20any%20measure%2C%20college,million%20higher%20over%20a%20lifetime>

<sup>35</sup> This is based on an assumption that rents for small businesses are typically about of to 6% of revenue, thus the lowest and highest annual rents were used to calculate revenue ranges. While this does not account for vendor expenses, it does indicate that it is possible to have a profitable business and earn enough to be at or slightly above the \$125,075 median annual household salary for San Jose.

<sup>36</sup> Bay Area Council Economic Institute. *Economic Profile 2020: The Evolution of the Bay Area Higher Education System in the Wake of Covid-19*. <http://www.bayareaeconomy.org/report/economic-profile-2020-the-evolution-of-the-bay-area-higher-education-system-in-the-wake-of-covid-19/> .

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

generation of the vendor's family. Many businesses at the Flea Market are currently run by second or third generation family members of the original vendor. Thus, the market provides opportunities for personal, household economic development and social cohesion across generations.

**Berryessa Flea Market is an incubator of small businesses.** The Berryessa Flea Market is a key driver of immigrant entrepreneurship in the Silicon Valley<sup>38</sup>. The Berryessa Flea Market acts as an entry point for new entrepreneurs owing to their low start-up and operational costs. The Berryessa Flea Market has significantly low start-up and expansion costs and very low risk owing to low rents and reservation types to accommodate different levels of commitment to a business (daily, monthly, yearly). This also decreases barriers to entry into the Berryessa Flea Market. Stalls at the Flea Market are designed to incubate small businesses with little to no external capital. Each vendor stall is less than 30 percent the size of a typical brick-and mortar retail space in the city and costs even less on a monthly basis. The small size of vendor stalls and flexibility to occupy multiple stalls coupled with on-site storage is uniquely suited to the needs of new entrepreneurs who are just starting out, or those experimenting with expansion. Since its inception it has created thousands of vendors and local jobs. An appreciable number of Berryessa Flea Market businesses which began at the market site have transitioned to marquee brick-and-mortar businesses including Shoe Palace, Ramos Furniture and Calderon's Tires.

## The Cultural Impact of the Berryessa Flea Market

This section examines the cultural impact of the Flea Market on its customers, the city, and the region. There are three primary cultural benefits to the Market that have been considered in this report. First is social cohesion. In a racially and culturally diverse place like the Bay Area, having places like La Pulga that support a deeply rooted sense of community can also help bring together people from many cultures and backgrounds so that they feel like they have a shared context and sense of belonging. Second is the benefit that Market vendors provide to the neighborhoods and communities where they live. The economic benefits that these vendors capture for their individual households are further amplified in the support these households offer to their local schools, places of worship, recreational activities, etc. And finally, the Market benefits the City of San Jose's image as an inclusive place that is benefiting from and offers benefits to businesses of all types to create a just and resilient economy.

### THE BERRYESSA FLEA MARKET BUILDS SOCIAL COHESION

Outdoor markets selling food, clothing, and a myriad of other goods are as old as cities. European travelers and explorers starting as early as the 13<sup>th</sup> century have left written accounts of marveling at the markets they saw in places as distant from each other as what is modern day Hangzhou in China to Tenochtitlan, or Mexico City<sup>39</sup>. But what these first-person accounts signify today is that while the "modern" flea market or swap meet may seem like a relatively new phenomenon only dating back to the mid-twentieth century, in fact, these markets are linked to much older traditions that resonate with people from across many cultures, countries, and continents. That this fundamental market format is familiar to vendors from places as different as Mexico, Vietnam, Afghanistan, or Portugal suggests that markets play an essential role for community health and resilience as what the sociologist Eric Klineberg calls a piece of "social infrastructure." Social infrastructure can be defined as places, like a

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<sup>38</sup> Wadsworth, J. (2021) "New Urban Village Development Threatens to Displace San Jose's 60-Year-Old Berryessa Flea Market". *San Jose Inside*.

<sup>39</sup> Le Gates, Richard T and Stout, Fredric editors, *The City Reader Third Edition. First Person Accounts of Great Cities of the Medieval and Early Modern World*. Routledge Press, 2003.



market, where people from diverse backgrounds can come together on a regular basis to have informal social interactions and to build a sense of belonging to a larger community. Klineberg argues that social fragmentation is one of the greatest challenges the world faces today, and that to solve major societal problems, like income inequality and climate change, people need social infrastructure. And although Klineberg does not monetize the value of social infrastructure for a city, a region, or a county, he does assert that investing in places that serve as social infrastructure will provide social returns that are much greater than the value of the initial investment.<sup>40</sup> These results suggest that the cultural benefits of investing in the Berryessa Flea Market can be considered a significant public good that will have can have benefits well beyond the standard financial return expected for a private real estate or business investment.

**Berryessa Flea Market Vendors are a cohesive community.** Over 91 percent of vendors surveyed at the Market said that they feel like they have community with vendors at the Market, about 80 percent said they feel that vendors look out for each other, and 60 percent said that they feel like they have community away from the Market as well. Vendors are well-connected within their communities, hire locally and support their communities creating social safety nets for lower-income communities.

**Operating a business at the Berryessa Flea Market fosters a culture of gender and racial equity, social cohesion and work/life balance that is often missing in traditional economic opportunities.** Nontraditional benefits of working at the Market, including control over one's schedule, the ability to bring children to work and having more time for families outweigh benefits from traditional business incomes. Non-traditional benefits of working in a communal atmosphere are associated with greater inclusion and belonging, good quality of life, high talent retention rates, neighborhood stability and reduced youth violence<sup>41</sup>.

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<sup>40</sup> Klineberg, Eric. Palaces for the People Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civic Life. 2018

[https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0001699319878098#:~:text=Eric%20Klineberg's%20Palaces%20for%20the,%2C%20and%20climate%20change%20\(p.](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0001699319878098#:~:text=Eric%20Klineberg's%20Palaces%20for%20the,%2C%20and%20climate%20change%20(p.)

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

**The Berryessa Flea Market has created social and political capital for vendors and their supporters.** Vendors have been organizing politically to counter the threat of relocation for a few decades, with community-based organizations educating and organizing La Pulga vendors. In more recent years, a vendor-led organization, the Berryessa Flea Market Vendors Association, emerged to advocate for vendor interests. During the most recent rezoning, an agreement that included certain protections and resources for vendors, including a 5-acre space within the present location for a smaller, new market, was achieved. The city has formed the Berryessa Flea Market Advisory Group to smooth vendor transition. Over the years, the social and political capital created by vendors at La Pulga has enabled them to garner support from the community and local government in protecting their economic interests.

## **LOCALLY OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES SUPPORT MULTIPLE COMMUNITY ASSETS**

Research shows that locally owned small businesses have deeper social, cultural and emotional connections to the community in which they are located. These connections often result in a wide range of benefits beyond the direct economic benefits discussed in the previous section.<sup>42</sup>

**Locally owned Berryessa Flea Market vendor businesses have a higher multiplier effect on the local economy as compared with non-locally owned business.** Independent and locally owned businesses circulate their dollars within the community 2 to 4 times more than non-locally owned businesses<sup>43</sup>. Moreover, Berryessa Flea Market businesses typically hire local staff including family members, further indicating that local communities benefit from their residence and local spending.

**Berryessa Flea Market vendors who also live in San Jose contribute to the City's tax base.** Local vendors pay sales taxes for purchases they make either from local suppliers, or to support their household needs. In addition, any vendors who own houses in San Jose also pay property taxes. These tax revenues help support basic city services including police and fire.

**Small businesses play an important philanthropic role in their communities.** Research shows that local small businesses contribute 250 percent more than large corporations to community and civic organizations such as sports clubs, local service groups, and youth activities.<sup>44</sup> Approximately two-thirds of La Pulga vendors surveyed live in San Jose indicating their impact extends well beyond what they directly contribute through taxes, job creation, etc.

**Locally owned small business owners support others to also start new businesses.** A recent study prepared for the California Office of the Small Business Advocate<sup>45</sup> suggests that small business owners who themselves may be living in low or moderate income neighborhoods can inspire others around them to consider becoming an entrepreneur. These businesses owners provide social support and a positive attitude towards running a business that are proven factors which help individuals decide to start their own small business. Having this direct personal support is especially important

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<sup>42</sup> <https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/mje/2023/12/04/op-edwhy-are-local-businesses-more-vital-to-the-local-economy-than-large-corporations/>

<sup>43</sup> American Independent Business Alliance. The Local Multiplier Effect: How Independent Locally Owned Businesses Help Your Community Thrive. <https://amiba.net/localmultiplier/#:~:text=The%20Local%20Multiplier%20occurs%20when,at%20a%20non%2Dlocal%20company.>

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.score.org/resource/infographic/infographic-small-business-charitable-giving-big-impact-local-communities>

<sup>45</sup> [https://calosba.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/The-State-of-Diverse-Small-Businesses-in-California\\_Executive-Summary.pdf](https://calosba.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/The-State-of-Diverse-Small-Businesses-in-California_Executive-Summary.pdf)

where other traditional factors contributing to entrepreneurship, such as high levels of educational attainment and access to capital may be absent.<sup>46</sup>

## **THE BERRYESSA FLEA MARKET CONTRIBUTES TO SAN JOSE'S RICH AND DIVERSE CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT**

**San Jose's General Plan, its Cultural Plan, and many other policy documents recognize the value that cultural resources, like La Pulga, contribute to maintaining the City's vibrancy and its quality of life.** According to a historical analysis completed in 2006, the Market's physical setting and business characteristics create a place that is unique within Silicon Valley. This includes the open air, densely packed, single story shopping aisles, multiple stages for performances and live music, picnic tables, play spaces, and more, enabling the Market to function both as a place of business and a leisure space, where people can gather and spend time together without having to shop if they don't want. The Market also has proven itself to be flexible and resilient in the face of changing market conditions, while continuing to reflect the region's growing and changing demographic mix.

**Over the Past 60 years, the Flea Market has emerged as a center of Latino public life in San José.** The Flea Market is in contrast with other central plazas in San José which are often relegated to urbane interpretations of public plazas. The open-air format of the Flea Market, or La Pulga, still conforms to the Latin American *mercado* and encourages the essential concept of *tianguis* or street vending, which is of significance for much of the region's communities of color<sup>47</sup>. The Flea Market's replication of cultural scenes from a large number of communities makes it a nostalgic, memorable location.

**In addition to the Latino businesses, the melting pot of businesses representing many other cultures enables the Berryessa Flea Market to offer products associated with the traditions and practices of many different communities.** The culturally specific offerings at the Market span food and groceries, jewelry, and clothes, along with spaces for celebrating arts, music, and performances. For immigrants, the ability to speak in a native language and form relationships in a familiar and welcoming setting represents key aspects of the Market. The large variety of culturally specific goods offered at the Market counters simplistic or stereotypical depictions of such cultures by demonstrating diversity within cultural niches<sup>48</sup> while also reinforcing a sense of authenticity.

**The Berryessa Flea Market is an important tourist destination in San Jose.** The Market is often highlighted in many top lists of "things to do in San Jose" lists, and Visit San Jose lists Garden at the Flea as a tourist attraction in the City, along with other popular destinations including Santana Row, San Jose Museum of Art, Happy Hollow Park and Zoo and Mission San Jose<sup>49</sup>. The Garden at the Flea offers a variety of community and cultural experiences including a beer cantina, a live entertainment stage, food trucks and eateries, a games area and garden space. Garden at the Flea is a relatively new part of La Pulga building on the Berryessa Flea Market's 60 years of experience as the largest open air market in the state<sup>50</sup>,

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<sup>46</sup> <https://typeset.io/questions/what-are-some-of-the-factors-that-influence-people-to-start-1fktiq3c4o>

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> National Community Reinvestment Coalition (2021) *The Covid-19 Pandemic and its Impacts on Culturally Significant Businesses*. <https://ncrc.org/the-covid-pandemic-and-its-impacts-on-culturally-significant-businesses/>

<sup>49</sup> Visit San Jose California. <https://www.sanjose.org/things-to-do/attractions-and-amusement>

<sup>50</sup> Visit San Jose California. Garden at the Flea. Retrieved from <https://www.sanjose.org/attraction/garden-flea> on 07.09.2024



## **APPENDIX A: VENDOR SURVEY FORMS**



### Berryessa Flea Market Vendor Survey Questions

As you may know, the future of the Flea Market is uncertain. Right now, the City of San Jose is working to identify future options for vendors so that they can continue to operate when the Market does close. To help with this process, we need your input about how the market is currently working for you, its vendors. To get the information, we are asking vendors to fill out this survey. This should take about 10-15 minutes. Your answers will be confidential and not shared with the Flea Market owner. Also, even if your business is not registered in your name, it is fine to answer the questions.

1. How long have you been selling at the market? [number + any other details]

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2. How many separate businesses do you operate at the market? [number + any other details]

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3. How many employees (family/non-family) do you have per business? [number + any other details]

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- a. How many of them are family members? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Why did you start selling at this particular market?

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5. What do you sell? If you have more than one business, please report what you sell at each business.

---

6. How many days a week do you sell, and on which days?

---

7. Would you like to sell on more days if the market were open more days of the week?

Circle: Yes / No

8. On what basis do you rent space? Check all that apply.

- Daily Spaces
  - Wednesday
  - Friday
  - Saturday
  - Sunday
- Daily Reservation
- Monthly Reservations
  - Month-to-Month
  - 6-Month Agreement

9. What kind of space do you rent? Check all that apply.

(If you have more than one business, please let us know the kind of space you rent for each business, while indicating what that business sells.)

● Pavilion/Open Space



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● Metal Building



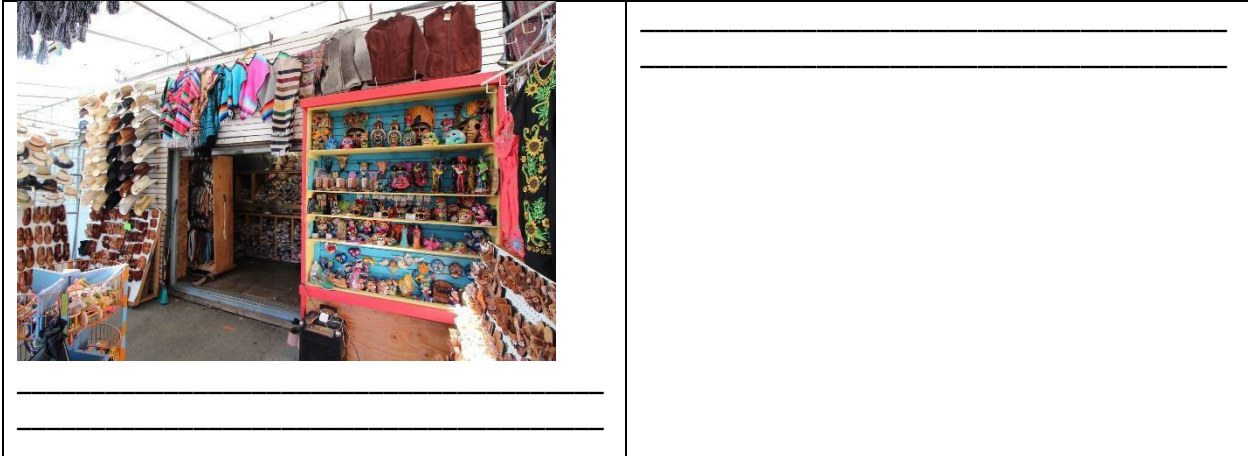
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● Container

● Produce Row





10. Do you pay a storage fee at your space(s)? If so, check all that apply.

- Storage fee is included in rent for Container/space in the Metal Building
- Extra storage fees for a tarp over goods (Cost: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Extra fees for keeping the stand (with tarp) (Cost: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Storage fee for inventory off-site? (Cost: \_\_\_\_\_)

11. Do you pay for any of the following, and how much per month? Check all that apply and include monthly cost.

- Electricity (Cost: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Parking (Cost: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Walk-in entrance fee (Cost: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Trash (Cost: \_\_\_\_\_)

12. Approximately, what percent of your customers are regular or repeat business?

\_\_\_\_\_

13. For each of the following, please say how much you believe each of these market characteristics contribute to making the market successful overall:

	Very Important	Important	Doesn't Help	Detracts from Business
a. Large number of Vendors				
b. Cultural diversity				
c. Diverse Merchandise being offered				
d. Quality of Environment (Amenities)				
e. Produce row				
f. Live Music				
g. Fun zone arcade				
h. Fun zone playground				
i. Fun zone rides				



j. Food stands				
k. Little Park or Green Spaces				
l. Health or Craft fairs				
m. Proximity to Transit				
n. Proximity to Freeways				

14. Do you have a sense of community with other vendors?

	Yes	Somewhat	No
a. Are you friendly with other vendors when you're at the market?			
b. Are you in touch with vendors away from the Flea Market, or in different markets?			
c. Do vendors look out for one another?			
d. Do you shop at other vendors' booths?			

15. Do you also sell at other markets, stores, etc.? [Check all that apply]

- Capitol Market
- Other markets (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)
- Storefront (Location \_\_\_\_\_)
- Internet Sales
- Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)

16. Do other members of your family also sell at the market through their own businesses?

Circle: Yes / No

- If so, how many? \_\_\_\_\_ [Number of family members]

17. Which of the following categories describe whether flea market vending is your only job and what approximate income do you fall in?

- Full Time vendor – less than \$82,000 income
- Full Time vendor – greater than \$82,000 income
- Part Time vendor – not primary income
- Part Time vendor – primary income

18. What are your biggest business expenses?

- Rent
- Products to sell
- Employees
- Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)

19. Has your vendor income enabled you/your family to do any of the following? [Mark all that apply]

- Purchase a home
- Quit a job and work/do business independently
- Put a child or grandchild through college or private school (how many \_\_\_\_\_)
- Pay extraordinary expenses, such as medical expenses, or high credit card costs
- Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_)

20. In addition to the money you earn, what are the other advantages to you/your family from being a flea market vendor? [Mark all that apply]

- Working on weekends gives me more time during the week to be with family
- I like being my own boss
- I like the community atmosphere
- I can bring my kids to work with me
- I like having more control and flexibility with my schedule
- Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_)

21. Please answer a few short questions about yourself.

- a. What city do you live in?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. How many people live in your household? \_\_\_\_\_
- c. How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_
- d. What level of education do you have?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- e. What's your country of origin?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- f. What language(s) do you speak? \_\_\_\_\_

22. Would you be willing to talk to us further about the Flea Market? Circle: Yes / No  
If yes, can you please give us your name and the best way to reach you.

\_\_\_\_\_



### Preguntas de la encuesta para vendedores del Mercado de La Pulga de Berryessa

Como sabrá, el futuro del Mercado de La Pulga es incierto. En este momento, la Ciudad de San José está trabajando para identificar opciones futuras para los vendedores para que puedan continuar operando cuando el Mercado cierre. Para ayudar con este proceso, necesitamos su opinión sobre cómo está funcionando el Mercado actualmente para ustedes, sus vendedores. Para obtener la información, les pedimos a los vendedores que completen esta encuesta. Esto tomará alrededor de 10-15 minutos. Sus respuestas serán confidenciales y no se compartirán con el propietario del Mercado de La Pulga. Incluso si su negocio no está registrado a su nombre, puede responder las preguntas.

1. ¿Cuánto tiempo lleva vendiendo en el mercado? [número y cualquier otro detalle]

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2. ¿Cuántos negocios separados opera en el mercado? [número y cualquier otro detalle]

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3. ¿Cuántos empleados (familiares/no familiares) tiene por negocio? [número y cualquier otro detalle]

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- ¿Cuántos de ellos son miembros de la familia?

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4. ¿Por qué comenzó a vender en este mercado en particular?

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5. ¿Qué vende? Si tiene más de un negocio, informe lo que vende en cada negocio.

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6. ¿Cuántos días a la semana vende, y en qué días?

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7. ¿Le gustaría vender más días si el mercado estuviera abierto más días de la semana?

Elige: Sí / No

8. ¿Alquilas espacio? Marca de verificación todo lo que se aplica.

- Espacios Diarios
  - Miércoles
  - Viernes
  - Sábado
  - Domingo
- Reservación diaria
- Reservaciones mensuales
  - Mes a mes
  - Acuerdo de 6 meses

9. ¿Qué tipo de espacio alquila? Ponga una marca de verificación al lado del nombre.  
(Si tiene más de un negocio, háganos saber el tipo de espacio que alquila para cada negocio, indicando lo que vende ese negocio.)

- Pabellón/espacio abierto



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- Edificio metálico



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- Contenedor



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- Fila de productos frescos



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10. ¿Paga una tarifa de almacenamiento en su(s) espacio(s)? [Marque todas las opciones que apliquen]

- La tarifa de almacenamiento está incluida en el alquiler del contenedor/espacio en el edificio de metal
- Tarifas de almacenamiento adicionales para lonas sobre mercancías (Cantidad: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Tarifas extra por mantenimiento del puesto (con lona) (Cantidad: \_\_\_\_\_)
- ¿Tarifa de almacenamiento para el inventario fuera del sitio? (Cantidad: \_\_\_\_\_)

11. ¿Paga por lo siguiente y cuánto al mes? Formato: (Marcar todo lo que aplique y incluya la cantidad)

- Electricidad (Cantidad: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Estacionamiento (Cantidad: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Tarifa de entrada (Cantidad: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Basura (Cantidad: \_\_\_\_\_)

12. ¿Aproximadamente, qué porcentaje de sus clientes son habituales o recurrentes?

13. Para cada uno de los siguientes, ¿puede decir cuánto contribuye cada una de estas características del mercado a hacer que el mercado sea exitoso en general?

	Muy importante	Importante	No ayuda	Detrae del negocio
a. Gran cantidad de vendedores				
b. Diversidad cultural				
c. Diversa mercancía que se ofrece				
d. Calidad del ambiente (Amenidades)				
e. Fila de productos frescos				
f. Música en vivo				
g. Sala de juegos de la zona de diversión				
h. Parque de juegos de la zona de diversión				
i. Atracciones en la zona de diversión				
j. Puestos de comida				
k. Parque pequeño o espacios verdes				
l. Ferias de salud o artesanía				
m. Proximidad al tránsito				

	Muy importante	Importante	No ayuda	Detrae del negocio
n. Proximidad a autopistas				

14. ¿Tiene un sentido de comunidad con otros vendedores?

	Sí	Un poco	No
a. ¿Es amigo de otros vendedores cuando está en el mercado?			
b. ¿Está en contacto con proveedores fuera del Mercado de La Pulga o en diferentes mercados?			
c. ¿Los vendedores se cuidan unos a otros?			
d. ¿Compra en los puestos de otros proveedores?			

15. ¿Venden también en otros mercados, tiendas, etc.? [Marca de verificación todo lo que se aplica]

- Mercado Capitol
- Otros mercados (Especifique \_\_\_\_\_)
- Escaparate (Ubicación \_\_\_\_\_)
- Ventas por Internet
- Otra (Especificar \_\_\_\_\_)

16. ¿Otros miembros de su familia también venden en el mercado con sus propios negocios?

Elige: Sí / No

- Si es así, ¿cuántos? \_\_\_\_\_

17. ¿En cuál de las siguientes categorías se encuentra?

- Tiempo completo – ingresos de menos de \$ 82,000
- Tiempo completo – ingresos superiores a \$ 82,000
- Medio tiempo – no ingreso primario
- Medio tiempo – ingreso primario

18. ¿Cuáles son los mayores gastos de su negocio?

- Renta
- Productos para vender
- Empleados
- Otro (Especificar \_\_\_\_\_)

19. ¿Su ingreso como proveedor le ha permitido a usted o a su familia hacer algo de lo siguiente? [Marcar todo lo que aplica]

- Comprar una casa
- Renunciar a un trabajo y trabajar/hacer negocios de forma independiente
- Enviar a un hijo o nieto a la universidad o escuela privada (cuántos \_\_\_\_\_)
- Pagar gastos extraordinarios, como gastos médicos o costos elevados de tarjetas de crédito
- Otro (Especificar \_\_\_\_\_)

20. Además del dinero que gana, ¿cuáles son las otras ventajas para usted o su familia de ser vendedor en un mercado de La Pulga? [Marca de verificación todo lo que se aplica]

- Trabajar los fines de semana me da más tiempo durante la semana para estar con la familia.
- Me gusta ser mi propio jefe
- Me gusta el ambiente de comunidad
- Puedo llevar a mis hijos a trabajar conmigo
- Me gusta tener más control y flexibilidad con mi horario
- Otro (Especificar

\_\_\_\_\_ )  
\_\_\_\_\_ )

21. Por favor, responda algunas preguntas sobre usted.

- ¿En qué ciudad vive? \_\_\_\_\_
- ¿Cuántas personas viven en su hogar?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- ¿Cuántos años tiene? \_\_\_\_\_
- ¿Qué nivel de educación tiene? \_\_\_\_\_
- ¿Cuál es su país de origen?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- ¿Qué idiomas habla?  
\_\_\_\_\_

22. ¿Estaría dispuesto a hablarnos más sobre el Mercado de La Pulga? Elige: Sí / No  
En caso que sí, ¿podría darnos su nombre y la mejor manera de contactarlo?

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## Những Câu Hỏi Thăm Dò Ý Kiến Dành Cho Thương Nhân Chợ Trời San Jose

Như quý vị đã biết, tương lai của Chợ Trời đang trong tình trạng bấp bênh. Hiện giờ Thành Phố San Jose đang cố gắng tìm ra những giải pháp giúp đỡ các thương nhân tiếp tục hoạt động một khi Chợ Trời đóng cửa. Để thực hiện tiến trình này, chúng tôi cần ý kiến của quý vị về cách Chợ Trời tạo điều kiện làm ăn cho những thương nhân của chợ. Để có được thông tin, chúng tôi yêu cầu các thương nhân điền vào mẫu khảo sát này. Quý vị sẽ chỉ mất khoảng 10 đến 15 phút. Các câu trả lời của quý vị sẽ được giữ kín và không bị tiết lộ cho chủ nhân của Chợ Trời biết. Trong trường hợp công việc kinh doanh của quý vị được người khác đứng tên, quý vị cũng vẫn có quyền trả lời các câu hỏi.

1. Quý vị buôn bán ở chợ đã được bao lâu? [số và bất kỳ chi tiết nào khác]

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2. Quý vị quản lý bao nhiêu dịch vụ kinh doanh riêng biệt ở chợ? [số và bất kỳ chi tiết nào khác]

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3. Quý vị có bao nhiêu nhân viên (người trong gia đình/người ngoài gia đình) cho mỗi công việc kinh doanh? [số và bất kỳ chi tiết nào khác]

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- Bao nhiêu nhân viên là người trong gia đình? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Tại sao quý vị bắt đầu buôn bán tại chợ này?

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5. Quý vị bán những mặt hàng gì? Nếu quý vị có hơn một công việc buôn bán, xin vui lòng cho biết quý vị bán những mặt hàng gì tại mỗi gian hàng?

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6. Quý vị buôn bán mấy ngày một tuần? [số nào và ngày nào]

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7. Quý vị có muốn buôn bán thêm ngày trong trường hợp chợ mở thêm ngày hàng tuần?

Có / Không

8. Quý vị có muốn chỗ (Xin đánh dấu)? [Đánh dấu tất cả những gì phù hợp]

- Chỗ tùy theo ngày
  - Thứ tư
  - Thứ sáu
  - Thứ bảy
  - Chủ nhật
- Giữ chỗ cho mỗi ngày
- Giữ chỗ cho nguyên tháng
  - Từng tháng một
  - Hợp đồng mỗi 6 tháng

9. Quý vị muốn chỗ thuộc loại nào? Xin đánh dấu bên cạnh tên của loại chỗ.

(Nếu quý vị có hơn một gian hàng, xin vui lòng cho chúng tôi biết loại chỗ mà quý vị muốn cho mỗi gian hàng, và đồng thời cho biết gian hàng đó bán gì.)

- Trong Lều/Ngoài Trời



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- Nhà Mái Tôn



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- Nhà Kho



- Dãy Hàng Rau Quả



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10. Quý vị có phải trả khoản lệ phí kho tại chỗ bán hay không? [Đánh dấu tất cả những gì phù hợp]

- Lệ phí kho bao gồm trong tiền mướn Nhà Kho/chỗ trong Nhà Mái Tôn
- Trả thêm lệ phí cho tấm che phủ hàng hóa (Xin cho biết số tiền \_\_\_\_\_)
- Trả thêm lệ phí để được giữ quày hàng (với tấm phủ) (Xin cho biết số tiền \_\_\_\_\_)
- Trả lệ phí kho để chứa hàng bên ngoài chợ (Xin cho biết số tiền \_\_\_\_\_)

11. Quý vị có phải trả cho những khoản tiền dưới đây, và bao nhiêu hàng tháng? (Xin đánh dấu)

Số tiền phải trả

- Tiền điện ( ) \_\_\_\_\_
- Tiền chỗ đậu xe ( ) \_\_\_\_\_
- Tiền cổng vào ( ) \_\_\_\_\_
- Tiền đổ rác ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

12. Bao nhiêu phần trăm khách hàng của quý vị là khách hàng thường xuyên hoặc chỉ một vài lần? [số]

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13. Xin quý vị cho biết mức độ mà mỗi đặc điểm nêu lên dưới đây đóng góp cho sự thành công của chợ nói chung:

	Rất quan trọng	Quan trọng	Không hiệu quả	Không tốt cho việc buôn bán
a. Đông thương nhân				
b. Đa văn hóa				
c. Hàng hóa đa dạng được bày bán				
d. Chất lượng môi trường (Tiện nghi vật chất)				

e. Dãy hàng rau quả				
f. Nhạc sống				
g. Khu vui chơi giải trí				
h. Sân chơi				
i. Đi bánh xe đu quay				
j. Quầy thực phẩm				
k. Công Viên Nhỏ hoặc Không Gian Xanh				
l. Hội Chợ Y Tế hoặc Thủ Công				
m. Gần các phương tiện giao thông				
n. Gần xa lộ				

14. Quý vị có cảm thấy gần gũi với những thương nhân khác hay không?

	Có	Đôi chút	Không
a. Quý vị có thân thiện với những thương nhân khác khi đang ở chợ hay không?			
b. Quý vị có giữ liên lạc với những thương nhân khác cho dù ở bên ngoài chợ hoặc ở những chợ khác hay không?			
c. Các thương nhân có quan tâm cho nhau hay không?			
d. Quý vị có đi mua đồ ở các gian hàng của những thương nhân khác hay không?			

15. Quý vị có buôn bán ở những chợ khác, tiệm khác, v.v. hay không? [Đánh dấu tất cả những gì phù hợp]

- Capitol Market
- Những chợ khác (Xin nói rõ \_\_\_\_\_)
- Tiệm mặt tiền (Địa điểm \_\_\_\_\_)
- Buôn bán trên mạng
- Những nơi khác (Xin nói rõ \_\_\_\_\_)

16. Có thành viên nào khác trong gia đình của quý vị cũng buôn bán ở chợ với gian hàng riêng không? Có / Không

- Nếu có, bao nhiêu người? \_\_\_\_\_

17. Quý vị thuộc diện nào dưới đây?

- Toàn thời gian – lợi tức dưới 82.000 Mỹ kim

- Toàn thời gian -- lợi tức trên 82.000 Mỹ kim
- Bán thời gian -- không phải lợi tức chính
- Bán thời gian -- lợi tức chính

18. Những chi phí nào lớn nhất trong công việc kinh doanh của quý vị:

- Tiền thuê mướn
- Sản phẩm để bán
- Khoản chi trả cho nhân viên
- Những chi phí khác \_\_\_\_\_

19. Lợi tức kinh doanh có giúp cho quý vị hoặc gia đình thực hiện được bất cứ những việc gì dưới đây hay không? [Đánh dấu tất cả những gì phù hợp]

- Mua một căn nhà
- Nghỉ việc và tự sinh sống/kinh doanh
- Giúp một đứa con hoặc cháu học xong đại học hoặc học trường tư (khoảng bao nhiêu \_\_\_\_\_)
- Thanh toán những khoản chi phí lớn, chẳng hạn như chi phí y tế hoặc chi trả tín dụng cao
- Những việc khác: \_\_\_\_\_

20. Ngoài số tiền kiếm được, với tư cách là thương nhân Chợ Trời, quý vị hoặc gia đình được hưởng những điểm thuận lợi nào? [Đánh dấu tất cả những gì phù hợp]

- Làm việc vào những ngày cuối tuần giúp tôi có thêm thời gian gần gia đình trong tuần
- Thích được làm chủ
- Tôi thích không khí cộng đồng
- Tôi có thể cho con đi làm cùng với mình
- Thích dễ dàng kiểm soát thời khóa biểu của mình
- Những điểm thuận lợi khác: \_\_\_\_\_

21. Việc thăm dò ý kiến đã gần xong, và tôi chỉ xin hỏi thêm vài câu về bản thân của quý vị

- Quý vị sống ở thành phố nào?  
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- Gia đình của quý vị có bao nhiêu người?  
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- Quý vị được bao nhiêu tuổi?  
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- Trình độ học vấn của quý vị?  
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e. Quý vị là gốc người nước nào?

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f. Quý vị biết nói những thứ tiếng nào? \_\_\_\_\_

22. Quý vị có sẵn sàng nói chuyện thêm với chúng tôi về Chợ Trời không? Có/Không  
Nếu có, xin vui lòng cho chúng tôi biết tên và cách tốt nhất để liên lạc với quý vị.

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