

Town of Poultney: Retail Market Analysis

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Prepared for:



RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Rutland Regional Planning Commission
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About Camoin 310

Camoin 310 (formerly Camoin Associates) has provided economic development consulting services to municipalities, economic development agencies, and private enterprises since 1999. Through the services offered, Camoin 310 has had the opportunity to serve EDOs and local and state governments from Maine to California; corporations and organizations that include Lowes Home Improvement, FedEx, Amazon, Volvo (Nova Bus) and the New York Islanders; as well as private developers proposing projects in excess of \$6 billion. Our reputation for detailed, place-specific, and accurate analysis has led to projects in 40 states and garnered attention from national media outlets including *Marketplace* (NPR), *Forbes* magazine, *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*. Additionally, our marketing strategies have helped our clients gain both national and local media coverage for their projects in order to build public support and leverage additional funding. We are based in Saratoga Springs, NY, with regional offices in Portland, ME; Boston, MA; Richmond, VA and Brattleboro, VT. To learn more about our experience and projects in all of our service lines, please visit our website at www.camoinassociates.com. You can also find us on Twitter [@camoinassociate](https://twitter.com/camoinassociate) and on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/camoinassociate).

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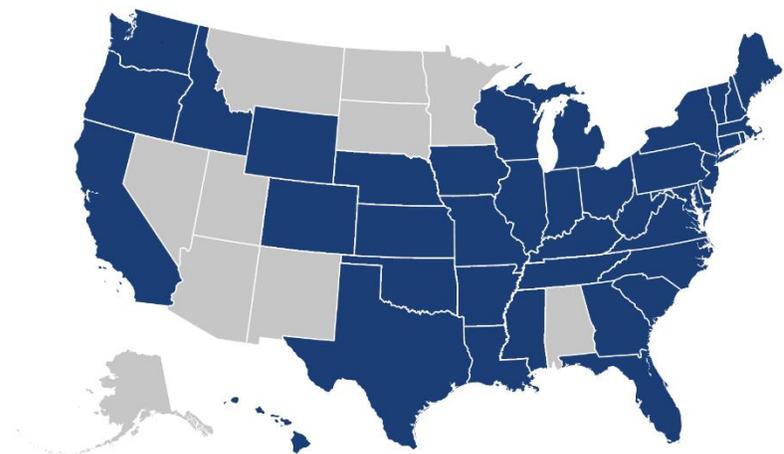


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Executive Summary and Recommendations

Camoin 310 (formerly Camoin Associates) was commissioned by Rutland Regional Planning Commission to contribute research and data analysis towards the development of a downtown economic assessment plan for the Town of Poultney, VT. Namely this work focuses on a retail leakage study to assess the retail market needs in downtown Poultney. The following report consists of:

- Demographic and Socioeconomic Trends
- Business Summary
- Retail Market Analysis detailing surplus and business potential
- Recommendations centered around downtown Poultney's retail market

Our recommendations are based on a comprehensive analysis of existing conditions the Town of Poultney and Rutland County, with comparisons to trends at the state and national level as necessary. Data were gathered for demographic, economic, and retail market trends, and informed by insight gained through discussions with stakeholders from the community.

Findings from this analysis were used to develop recommendations for this project, revealing existing strengths, identifying opportunities, and highlighting areas where the community's goals and vision are well-supported by existing trends and resources. Key findings of the report are found below by category.

Key Findings

- The Town of Poultney and Rutland County have slightly declined in population from 2010 to 2018 by 0.3% and 1.2% respectively. Population decline is projected to continue into 2023 where the town is projected to decline by 1.5% and the county by 2.1%.
- As of 2018, the age distribution in the Town of Poultney is heavily skewed towards 15 to 24-year olds which make up nearly a quarter of the total population. This is due in part to Green Mountain College which is anticipated to close after the Spring 2019 semester and thus will change the demographic composition of the area.
- Median household income was approximately \$50,000 for the Town of Poultney in 2018, falling below county, state, and national levels. These lower household incomes impede the ability to support new businesses downtown. Looking forward into 2023, median household incomes are projected to grow 9.5%, showing promising uptick for future retail. Drawing on regional residents and visitors will be crucial to supporting Poultney businesses.
- The business community in Rutland County is rich in entrepreneurs and small businesses. The majority of businesses in Rutland County are small businesses with 2 to 9 employees at 64% of all businesses and 18% of all businesses are self-employed.
- Twenty-four of the 134 business establishments in the Town of Poultney are within the Retail Trade industry. A retail leakage analysis of both the downtown trade area (15-minute drive time from downtown Poultney) and regional trade area (30-minute drive time from downtown Poultney) demonstrates that spending dollars are leaving the area in the following categories: Automobile Dealers; Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instrument Stores; and Clothing Stores.
- Conversely, Furniture Stores; Building Materials & Supply Stores; and Grocery Stores indicated sales surplus in both geographies. This means non-residents are coming into Poultney to spend money on these items/services.

- A retail potential analysis indicated that there is enough demand in the downtown trade area to support one or more businesses within the Clothing Stores; Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instrument Stores; and Electronics & Appliances industries. The regional trade area shows a greater variety of retail categories signifying the greatest potential for Clothing Stores; Sporting Goods & Hobby Stores; Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores; and Restaurants/Other Eating Places.

Recommendations

Using the information collected from the review of previous reports, data collection and analysis, and interviews with key stakeholders, the following is a list of recommendations that aim to support economic activity throughout the town but specifically in downtown Poultney during this time of transition. The following recommendations are grouped into overarching themes and provide suggestions for specific retail offerings that would be a good fit for downtown, as well as suggestions on economic development policy and practices that will support the desired economic activity.

Initiate Main Street Revitalization

The downtown district of Poultney has great infrastructure, scale, and accessibility that is known of classic Vermont communities but there are investments and improvements that can be implemented to help existing business remain viable, attract new businesses, and improve quality of life for all.

Enhance the business mix

The following are a series of businesses/services that could be a good fit for downtown Poultney and should be identified as community priorities when considering investments, grant/loan programs, and/or zoning or land use decisions.



Figure 1: Stores on Main Street Source: Camoin 310

- **Small café/restaurant** – Small cafes often serve as both places to buy food and as community gathering places. A café would benefit local residents as well as provide grab and go options for visitors who may be passing through on the way to recreation assets in the region and the rail trail. With healthy and quick offerings of prepared foods, single serve drinks, and salads/sandwiches the café would meet the needs of a wide variety of consumers.

A family friendly, mid-level priced restaurant could also be a good draw to serve local residents, second homeowners, vacationers, and regional customers. Expanding the restaurant offerings will create more of a draw for people to chose Poultney over other potential locations and generate additional economic activity for all. Restaurants ranked high in importance in the 2015 Poultney Downtown Revitalization Public Opinion survey.
- **Brewery/Tasting Room** – Building off the recent trend of breweries and the Vermont craft beer reputation, a brewery in Poultney would be a good fit downtown when considering close proximity of the rail trail, second-home owners and tourists.. It is important to recognize that breweries do have specific infrastructure and zoning needs including access to water and allowance of light-industrial. If the infrastructure or zoning will not allow for a brewery in downtown there are other ways to capitalize on this market– including approaching other breweries for a second location and/or the establishment of a restaurant that serves Vermont-centric food and drink.

Beverage Producer Tasting Room Destination

Beverage tourism has seen a significant amount of growth in Vermont and throughout the United States in recent years, with people traveling to taste craft beverages, craft food, and have authentic experiences. Proximity to Manchester, VT and tourist destinations in New York could make Poultney a location destination for a unique tasting room and restaurant to complement and build off the success of the industry. Ways to capitalize on this opportunity include:

- Reach out to existing producers and discuss whether they are interested in this type of venture to increase their brand awareness and retail locations. This could either be a single producer or more of a cooperative approach with multiple producers.
- Identify incentives that would make this type of project feasible. New business startup funds, infrastructure improvements, guidance on business strategies, and/or other assistance.
- Establish partnerships, like food trucks, craft producers, or other amenities that would make it a destination for people in the region.
- Coordinate with bike tours and other tourist groups to go through Poultney and stop at existing producers and the tasting room. This type of exposure may be more attractive to a producer that doesn't currently have access to trail tour opportunity.

- **Outdoor recreation outfitters** - Continued investment and interest in outdoor recreation will create demand for outdoor recreation goods and services providers. There are existing bike shops in Poultney that may benefit from a second location in downtown and may be interested in establishing a second location with rental offerings to serve the many people who will be coming through town as investment in the trail infrastructure continues to be made. Connect with trail users to identify their needs, conduct a survey during the heavily used times, and begin to build out the reputation as a starting point for the trail systems. Heavily promote access points and systems on websites, promotional material, and through social media to encourage increased use and overall demand for the system and create additional economic activity in the town.



Figure 2: Entrance to Rail Trail on Church Street
Source: Camoin 310

Community Supported Enterprises

As rural communities struggle to retain and sustain their local enterprises they have looked to new options to keep their downtown vibrant. One approach is the creation of a community-owned store that is financed and owned by members of the community. Similar to the co-op, a community owned store is a corporation, capitalized through the sale of stock to local residents and run by an elected board of directors.

There are other models that have a similar impact, with the community investing in a store for the sake of finding a way to keep it open for the benefit of the residents. Vermont communities have been leaders in this approach, including the following examples:

- Shrewsbury Coop at Pierce's store, North Shrewsbury, VT
- Putney General Store, Putney, VT
- Hinesburgh Public House, Hinesburg, VT
- The Bobcat Café, Bristol, VT
- The Basin Block, Vergennes, VT
- The Adament Coop, Adamant, VT

Support reuse of vacant buildings

There are a substantial number of vacant buildings, commercial and residential, in and around downtown. The closure of GMC will likely result in additional vacant residential units, however continued economic development initiatives could help turn that around.

- Communication with property owners and potential/past tenants could help identify why the vacancy exists and better understand how to mitigate any challenges. Work to identify critical issues like whether the zoning is unclear, development process is unpredictable, if there is low expectation that the town is easy to work with, and/or if cost is the greatest constraint to investment. All of these issues can be addressed but it's important to first identify what they are and pursue improvement.
- During interviews it was identified that the Poultney Downtown Revitalization Committee is interested in hosting an open house in the downtown to help fill some of the vacant commercial space in downtown. This could be a very successful event that could attract brokers, potential buyers, and tenants to downtown while at the same time providing a community activity and event for residents to showcase their community. Ensure community advocates and boosters are present to talk about all the positive aspects of Poultney are present and that the town puts its "best foot forward" for that evening.
- Look to other communities for ideas on how to address vacant store fronts. For example, Woodstock, Vermont recently created an incentive for a business to open in a storefront that had been vacant for 6 months. They are offering a grant for \$2.50 per square foot of retail space that will be offered for a one-year lease as a way to make it more affordable for a new retail business to come in.



Figure 3: Vacant Store on Main Street Source: Camoin 310

Invest in recreation infrastructure

Recent investment in recreation infrastructure in and around Poultney is a very positive step and one that must continue to build out the amenities, assets, and reputation of the community as a recreation destination. The tourism demand for recreation is growing and communities that are able to position themselves as close to multiple assets will benefit, and Poultney has the potential to do that.

- Continue to expand marketing and encourage businesses to be bike friendly. Work to make sure there are adequate bike racks, signs, maps, and other bike friendly amenities.
- Conduct a financial feasibility analysis on whether the old train depot can be repurposed to meet the needs of trail users. The top things that trail users look for when planning their trip is access to bathrooms and water. Consider the feasibility of the train depot being used as a mixed use space to accommodate public bathrooms, bike rentals, and cafe space to create a real destination for those using the bike trail. The building is currently privately owned but a project of this sort could be done with building owners' cooperation through a developer RFP process.
- Invest in more trail networks and land conservation. Furthermore, make it a priority for the community. Facilitate a conversation with Slate Valley Trails and other organizations about continuing to expand this



network and transition into a destination system for the eastern side of the state. With proximity to New York there is real potential to capture some of the activity that may be looking for an alternative to the increasingly popular Kingdom Trails.

Streetscape improvements

Downtown Poultney has the buildings and infrastructure to be a quintessential Vermont town and there has been recent investment to maintain the feeling and beautify of the district. The view coming down the main street and seeing the college campus (or whatever it will become) is truly striking and deserving of preservation and reinvestment. Continuing to invest in these types of streetscape improvements will be critical to supporting the other strategies and making it a place that people want to spend time, live, and open their business. Specific recommendations include:

- Analyze the feasibility of making the street narrower. Traffic calming techniques like lane narrowing have positive impacts on pedestrians in downtown areas and can create opportunities for other assets and amenities for users like bike lanes, more greenery along the sidewalks, and additional street furniture.
- Review zoning to allow for pop-up shops and food trucks to create more activity and vibrancy on the street and allow newer business owners to test out the market in a more temporary way.
- Find ways to incorporate art into public spaces through sculptures, murals, gallery windows in vacant store fronts, specially painted crosswalks, and other techniques that will create the sense that the space is alive and vibrant. Use the history of slate in the area to create related art and interpretive pieces.
- Continue to build and create programming for the Slate Quarry Park. Weekly events in the warmer weather, promotion regionally, coordinate with bike races or running races. Activate the space in a way to be attractive to a wide range of users from young kids to older adults. Review town owned property regularly to see if there are other options for pocket parks, recreation spaces, or ways to connect existing assets.



Figure 4: View of Green Mountain College Campus from Main Street
Source: Camoin 310



Figure 5: Colorful crosswalk. Source: <https://sdotblog.seattle.gov>

Increase town's reputation as a regional hub

Proximity to Lake St. Catherine and other vacation destinations is a real opportunity for Poultney to be the primary retail hub for these visitors. Establishing Poultney as the "go to" place for food, entertainment, recreation, and other needs will create positive economic activity for businesses and generate increase demand for services.

- Encourage local residents to be open and welcoming to second home owners who may be looking to get involved or feel a part of a community.
- Encourage visitor related establishments and events (restaurants, retail, concerts, festivals, etc.), to locate and occur downtown. An entertainment/concert venue was listed as very important to residents during the Downtown Revitalizations Public Opinion Survey of 2015. Establishing something like that would cement Poultney's distinction as the primary visitor hub. Build up the musical offerings at Slate Quarry Park and other areas and consider attracting a performance space.
- Offer customer service training to local service staff to improve the overall experience of being in Poultney. Offer regular updates on events, attractions, and amenities that can be shared with customers. Make sure all are well versed in the community history, local landmarks, and directions to major destinations.

Unique Restaurant Destination

Samurai Soul Food in Fairlee, VT is a good example of a unique and unexpected restaurant that has created a real destination for people throughout the region. A fusion restaurant serving affordable Chinese food, tex-mex, and fried chicken in a fast-casual setting has been a great success since it opened in 2018. It has been popular with locals in Fairlee, but also an attraction for people throughout the region who have heard about it through word of mouth and social media and are willing to make the drive to eat there.

Align Community Resources with Economic Development Goals

All communities are being forced to do more with less. However, as Poultney goes through this major transition period it is even more important that the community resources be invested in initiatives that align with the community's goals of remaining economically viable, vibrant, and sustainable. This will require additional funding for economic development efforts, supporting programs for businesses, and pushing initiatives that will engage the regional community for the long run.

Hire a community development professional

Having a dedicated professional who can focus on issues related to economic development, implementing this strategy, and working with businesses will have an enormous impact on the ability to cope with this period of transition.

- Hire a community development professional with experience dealing with rural communities who have experienced economic trauma and who will be able to keep the community engaged and positive. A holistic approach to economic development will be critical as there will be issues related to housing, workforce development, transportation, and others that may not be in the typical wheelhouse of an economic development professional but will play a role in this community.

Conduct a full economic development strategic planning process

Use this transitional time in the community to pursue funding and community/business engagement in a full economic development strategic planning process.

The closure of Green Mountain College will have significant ripple effects on the Town of Poultney and the larger region that will require transition and flexibility on the part of many who have long relied on the students and faculty of the college. The future of GMC is unknown at this time and while there is likely to be another user who will generate economic activity, the time is now to build on the public engagement that has been generated and build off of the momentum. Use statewide attention on the issue as a way to get seed money for programs that will have a long-term impact.

- Establish a diverse steering committee to pursue a process that will use a holistic approach to address many issues related to the town’s economic health, including workforce development, development processes, transportation, infrastructure, housing, and other issues facing rural communities.
- Focus on community branding and marketing initiatives as well, including highlighting the strong Poultney themes of *community strength* and *resiliency*. Work to attract residents, businesses, and visitors that are interested in those themes and continue to present that brand through marketing, signage, investments, and community goals.

Support small business development

Data shows that the Poultney area is rich in small businesses and entrepreneurs (747, or 18% of businesses in Rutland County are self-employed entrepreneurs) and many small businesses have very specific needs to help them achieve their goals, whether that is to remain viable or expand.

- Work with regional economic development entities, such as the Rutland Regional Workforce Investment Board, to increase awareness/availability of training programs for businesses who may be looking for guidance on various business development issues like online marketing/social media uses, business plan writing, issues related to human resources, social media use, and other training that can help businesses remain viable. Specifically, consider the establishment of a program for businesses looking to adjust their business model to remain stable during the transitional time of the college closure. Make sure local officials and economic development professionals are aware of these programs and know how to direct interested businesses to the right partners.
- Work with partner organizations like the Chamber of Commerce and Poultney Downtown Revitalization Committee to establish a business welcome wagon that is available to meet with new businesses that are locating or considering locating in Poultney and make sure they are aware of all available funding, training, and other programs that are available to support their efforts.
- Showcase new businesses, community successes, and local entrepreneurs through media and newsletters to promote and encourage others highlight Poultney’s support for business.

Establish funding programs for microenterprises and property improvements

Funding can often be one of the biggest constraint to a project, whether it be starting a new business or making property improvements. There are different tools and techniques that are available for communities to use to support investors’ in these endeavors.

- **Microenterprises** - Create a revolving loan fund that can provide funding to new or existing businesses within targeted service areas and locations that align with the goals of the community. Establish certain guidelines, repayment requirements, and use guidance to ensure that the funds are being used in ways that are economically beneficial to the vibrancy of downtown. Utilize existing economic development organizations to administer, like the Poultney Downtown Revitalization Committee, or others that are familiar with the business community and the town’s goals.
- **Property Improvements** - Façade improvement programs support property owners in their efforts to improve the front of their building and signs through alleviating some upfront investment. This could be a revolving loan fund or grant program that requires a match from the property owner and the funder can provide additional requirements like location, type of business, and length of ownership to meet the community’s goals.
- **Property Tax Abatement** - Many property owners are reluctant to make improvements to their building due to the resulting increase in assessment and thus property tax payment. Working with local jurisdictions to create a phased in approach or tax credit that would limit that impact the immediate “negative” impact of making investments. Consider the feasibility of establishing a property tax abatement that would allow property owners (residential and commercial) to phase in the increased assessed value of

their property that occurs because of investment. Research what other communities are doing in this regard such as the 485-b tax program in New York State that phases in the change in assessed value over a period of ten years to reduce the disincentive of property investments. Conduct necessary fiscal analysis and public education before implementing a program of this kind.

- **Designated Downtown Development District** - With this designation awarded to downtown Poultney in 2002, there are tax credit benefits available to property owners to make improvements to their buildings. With a wide range of benefits, this program can positively impact the revitalization efforts. Connect property owners and downtown organizations with state representatives to ensure clear and accurate information is being shared and property owners are being supported in their work.

Review zoning, land use regulations, and business development experience

Perception of zoning and land use regulations are often a deterrent for businesses making location decisions. Developers and investors recognize the importance of having process and expectations, but also require predictability and clarity on what those expectations are. Reviewing the overall experience of establishing a business is critical to any community that would like to attract investment that is in line with the community's goals.

- Conduct a review of the zoning and land use regulations to ensure they align with the community goals. Density within the downtown core, a mix of business offerings, and maintenance of the community's feel should be incorporated into the planning documents to protect the future of Poultney.
- Ensure the processes and timeline is predictable for developers and businesses owners who are looking to make investments in Poultney. Create clarity for developers around what the community is looking for and will support in terms of business development, site plan review, and vision for the future.
- Establish clear guidelines on process, how to open a business, and who the major partners in development will be. Make this easily accessible on the website and provided (through the business welcome wagon) to local businesses and investors.

Demographic and Socioeconomic Trends

A review of past and projected economic and socioeconomic trends is an important way to start a project, to set the stage, understand what has been going on, and where opportunities exist. For Poultney, however, it is a unique time in their history in that Green Mountain College is projected to close after having been in the community for decades. The data presented below for projections does not include this shift and so must be reviewed in that light.

Population

The table below shows the historic and future population trends within the Town of Poultney, Rutland County, Vermont, and United States. From 2010 to 2018, both the Town of Poultney and Rutland County experienced slight declines in population of 0.3% and 1.2% respectively. Conversely, during this same time period the state and nation experience population growth. These trends are projected to continue into 2023, with the Town of Poultney declining by 1.5% and Rutland County declining by 2.1%.

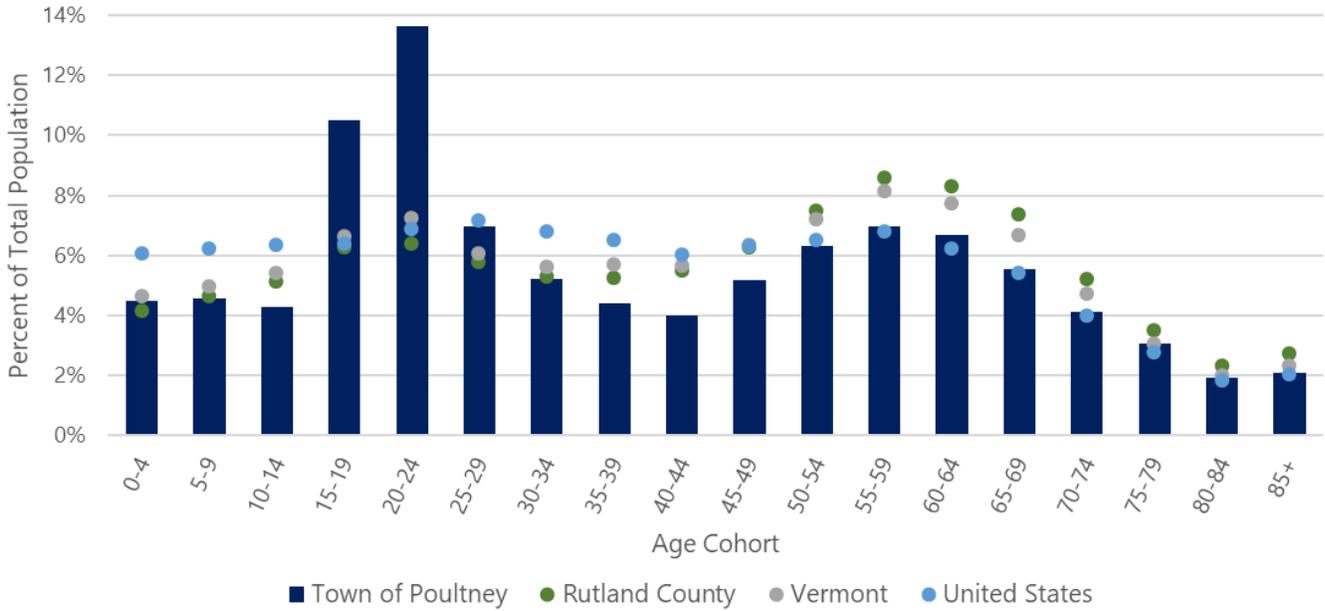
Population Trends by Study Area							
	Population 2010	Population 2018	Population 2023	# Change 2010 - 2018	% Change 2010 - 2018	# Change 2018 - 2023	% Change 2018 - 2023
Town of Poultney	3,432	3,421	3,371	(11)	(0.3%)	(50)	(1.5%)
Rutland County	61,642	60,886	59,626	(756)	(1.2%)	(1,260)	(2.1%)
Vermont	625,741	643,518	651,536	17,777	2.8%	8,018	1.2%
United States	308,745,538	330,088,686	343,954,683	21,343,148	6.9%	13,865,997	4.2%

Source: Esri

Age Distribution

The chart below demonstrates the age distribution of the Town of Poultney in comparison to the county, state, and nation for 2018. In general, the Town of Poultney has a significant proportion of 15 to 24-year olds compared to the other geographies with nearly a quarter (24%) of its population falling within those age limits. This is due to the presence of Green Mountain College. However, the college plans to close after the Spring 2019 semester and therefore will have a significant impact on the demographics of the area by (a) reducing the total number of residents in Poultney and (b) reducing the presence of college-aged cohorts in favor of another age cohort.

Age Distribution by Study Area, 2018



Source: Esri

Income

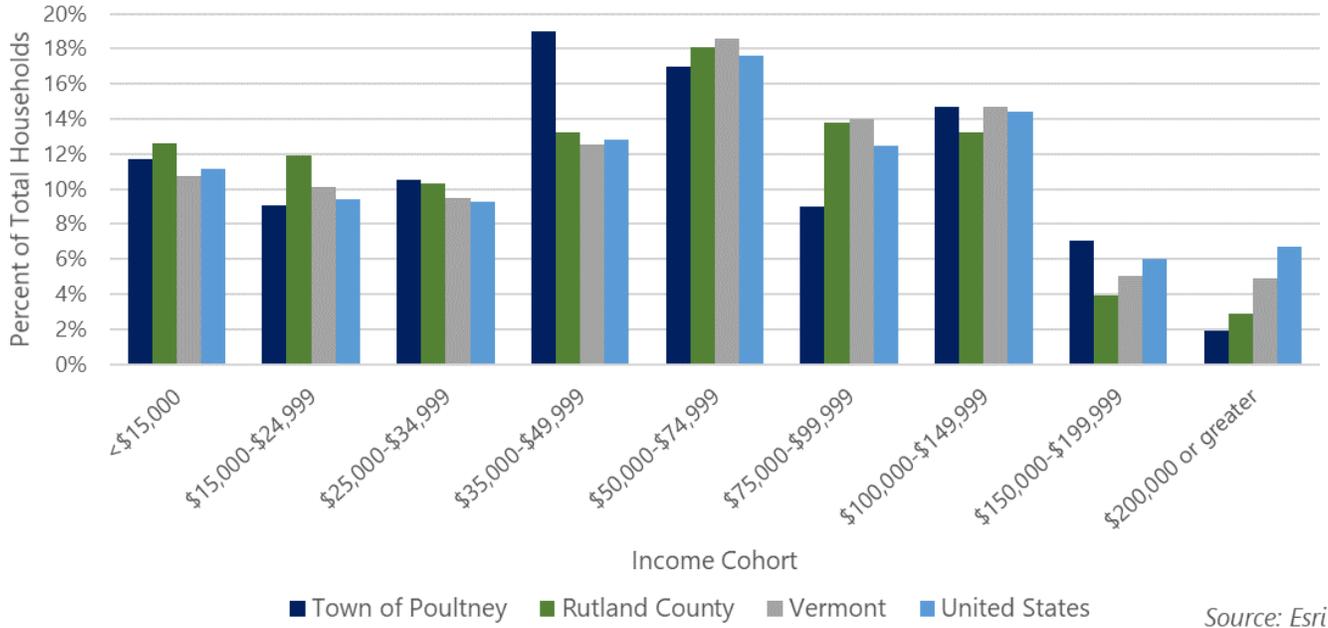
The Town of Poultney ranks the lowest of the study areas in terms of median household income at \$49,647 in 2018. Looking forward to 2023, the town is projected to increase its median household income by 9.5% to \$54,348. This growth surpasses the growth at the county and state level. Income growth is the highest at the national level, which is projected to increase its median household income 13.1% from 2018 to 2023.

Median Household Income				
	2018	2023	# Change 2018 - 2023	% Change 2018 - 2023
Town of Poultney	\$ 49,647	\$ 54,348	\$ 4,701	9.5%
Rutland County	\$ 51,832	\$ 55,521	\$ 3,689	7.1%
Vermont	\$ 57,396	\$ 62,280	\$ 4,884	8.5%
United States	\$ 58,100	\$ 65,727	\$ 7,627	13.1%

Source: Esri

The following figure displays the household income distribution for the town, county, state, and nation. The Town of Poultney has a far larger percentage of households within the \$35,000 to \$49,999 at 19% compared to 13% in the other geographies. Additionally, the town has the smallest proportion of households earning \$200,000 or greater

Household Income Distribution by Study Area, 2018



Business Summary

The business summary examines the business composition of the Town of Poultney and Rutland County.

From 2010 to 2017, the number of businesses in Rutland County increased while the composition of business size remained relatively the same. Small businesses with 2 to 9 employees are most prominent business size in Rutland County. As of 2017, there were nearly 2,700 businesses with 2 to 9 employees, constituting 64% of all businesses in the area. Additionally, there is a significant presence of self employed businesses in Rutland County with 18% of all businesses having self employed workers.

Businesses by Employment Stages, Rutland County				
	2010		2017	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Self Employed	741	18%	747	18%
2-9 Employees	2,638	65%	2,682	64%
10-99 Employees	650	16%	707	17%
100-499 Employees	28	1%	31	1%
500+ Employees	5	0%	7	0%
Total	4,062	100%	4,174	100%

Source: YourEconomy

The majority of Rutland County businesses are owned by residents (81%). As of 2017, 11% of the businesses in Rutland County were non-commercial, meaning they are not working to earn a profit.

Businesses by Type, Rutland County				
	2010		2017	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Resident	3,320	82%	3,363	81%
Non-resident	325	8%	363	9%
Non-commercial	417	10%	448	11%
Total	4,062	100%	4,174	100%

Source: YourEconomy

The business summary below displays the breakdown of industries within the Town of Poultney by number of businesses and employees. As of 2019, the Town of Poultney has 1,189 employees across 134 business establishments. Retail Trade has the greatest number of business establishments within the Town of Poultney with 24 businesses or 18% of all businesses within the town. Within the retail industry, Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers; Building Material & Garden Equipment & Supplies Dealers; and Food & Beverage Stores each have four business establishments.

Business Summary, Town of Poultney

NAICS	Description	Businesses		Employees	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	-	0%	-	0%
21	Mining	1	1%	42	4%
22	Utilities	-	0%	-	0%
23	Construction	10	7%	34	3%
31	Manufacturing	4	3%	14	1%
42	Wholesale Trade	13	10%	131	11%
44	Retail Trade	24	18%	165	14%
441	Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	4	3%	17	1%
442	Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	-	0%	-	0%
443	Electronics & Appliance Stores	-	0%	-	0%
444	Bldg Material & Garden Equipment & Supplies Dealers	4	3%	23	2%
445	Food & Beverage Stores	4	3%	46	4%
446	Health & Personal Care Stores	-	0%	-	0%
447	Gasoline Stations	3	2%	22	2%
448	Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	1	1%	2	0%
451	Sport Goods, Hobby, Book, & Music Stores	2	1%	7	1%
452	General Merchandise Stores	1	1%	2	0%
453	Miscellaneous Store Retailers	3	2%	5	0%
454	Nonstore Retailers	2	1%	41	3%
48	Transportation & Warehousing	7	5%	62	5%
51	Information	5	4%	135	11%
52	Finance & Insurance	2	1%	6	1%
52	Central Bank/Credit Intermediation & Related Activities	-	0%	-	0%
523	Securities, Commodity Contracts & Other Financial Investments & Other Related Activities	-	0%	-	0%
524	Insurance Carriers & Related Activities; Funds, Trusts & Other Financial Vehicles	2	1%	6	1%
53	Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	5	4%	12	1%
55	Professional, Scientific & Tech Services	8	6%	24	2%
541	Legal Services	2	1%	9	1%
551	Management of Companies & Enterprises	-	0%	-	0%
56	Administrative & Support & Waste Management & Remediation Services	3	2%	8	1%
61	Educational Services	7	5%	276	23%
62	Health Care & Social Assistance	7	5%	50	4%
71	Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	5	4%	26	2%
72	Accommodation & Food Services	7	5%	41	3%
721	Accommodation	2	1%	4	0%
48	Food Services & Drinking Places	5	4%	37	3%
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	19	14%	114	10%
811	Automotive Repair & Maintenance	4	3%	12	1%
90	Public Administration	5	4%	44	4%
99	Unclassified Industry	2	1%	5	0%
Total		134	100%	1,189	100%

Source: Esri

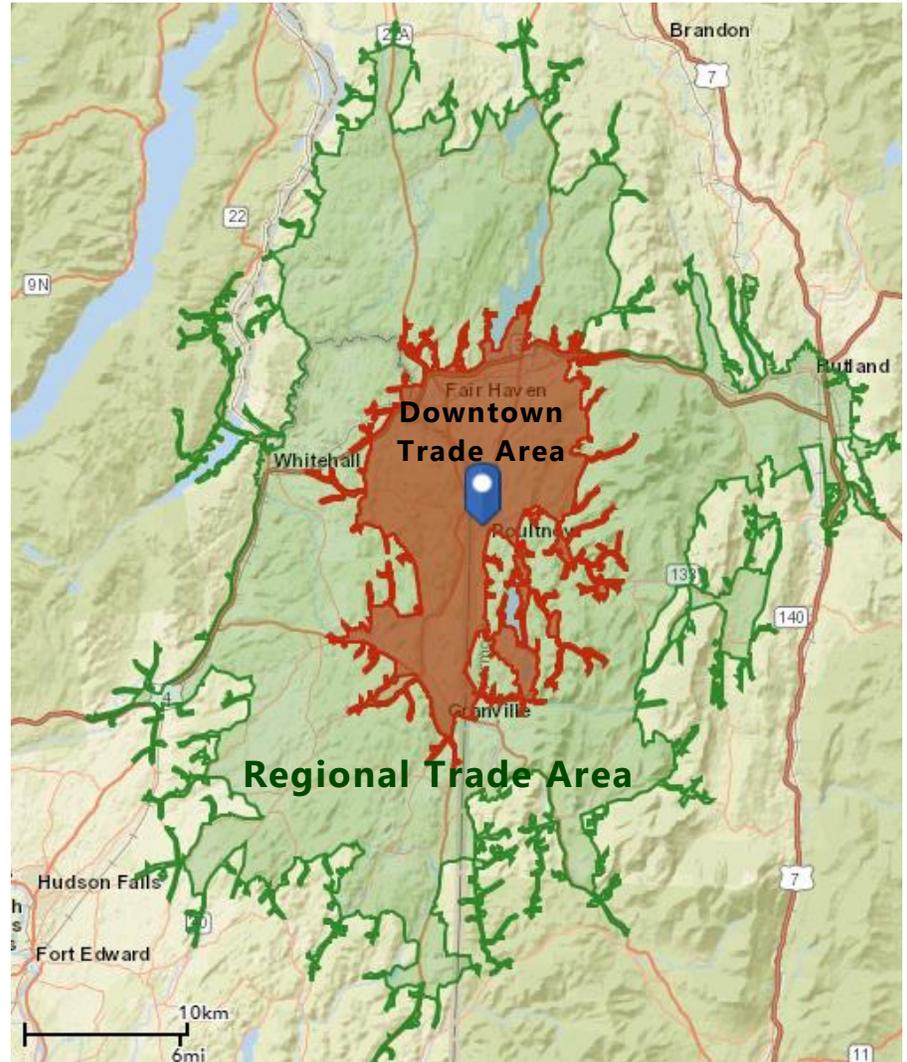
Retail Market Analysis

A retail market analysis examines the supply and demand for goods and services within a particular region to help identify opportunities, characteristics, and amenities that can be expanded upon to grow the retail market. For this retail market analysis, we analyzed the buying patterns of local and regional residents by analyzing two trade areas.

(1) **Downtown Trade Area** – For local residents, we created a downtown trade area represented by a 15-minute drive from center of downtown Poultney. This study area captures northeast Poultney and extends into the towns of Fair Haven, North Granville, Wells, Granville, and Whitehall. This is the geographic area from which downtown Poultney generates the majority of their customers. Businesses such as supermarkets, gas stations, and food establishments are located within this geography.

(2) **Regional Trade Area** – To display regional demand, we examine a 30-minute drive time radius. This larger region captures western

Rutland County, Vt and the northeastern section of Washington County, NY. This larger geography covers businesses that consumers are willing to travel farther to frequent and include a greater variety of car dealerships, clothing shops, department stores, specialty shops and restaurants.



Downtown Trade Area Retail Gap

The table below displays industry groups sorted by 3 and 4-digit NAICS codes and figures for sales demand (estimated spending by local trade area residents), sales supply (existing retail sales within the trade area), and retail gap (difference of the supply and demand). Retail categories with sales leakage are in green, and those with sales surplus are in red. There is a mix of retail categories experiencing leakage and surplus in the downtown trade area.

Retail sectors that show leakage represent opportunities for new or expanding businesses. However, not all retail categories that exhibit sales leakage within a particular trade area are a good fit for the region. Also note that any new retail in these categories would have to be unique enough to draw customers from not only the downtown trade area, but also from farther distances. Nationally, changes in consumer expectations and shopping habits have upended the retail market, rendering the retail sector a challenging bid for any business. Finding the right retail mix

and density is essential for a community that seeks to create a sense of place that can provide services to residents and attract visitors. Industries with the greatest sales leakage in the downtown trade area include Automobile Dealers; Department Stores Excluding Leased Departments; Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instrument Stores; and Clothing Stores.

A sales surplus might exist for several reasons. The geography might be a popular shopping destination for tourists and other out-of-town visitors, or a cluster of competing businesses offering a similar product/service may be located within the trade area. Alternatively, a sales surplus could be an indication of market saturation. The following industry groups have the highest levels of surplus in downtown trade area: Furniture Stores; Building Materials & Supply Stores; Grocery Stores; and Gasoline Stations.

Retail Gap, Downtown Trade Area

NAICS	Description	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Number of Businesses
441	Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	\$31,738,643	\$20,928,101	\$10,760,635	17
4411	Automobile Dealers	\$26,777,155	\$11,956,095	\$14,776,835	7
4412	Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	\$2,525,225	\$2,108,947	\$413,347	2
4413	Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	\$2,436,263	\$6,863,059	(\$4,429,546)	8
442	Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	\$4,983,757	\$36,277,211	(\$31,298,887)	3
4421	Furniture Stores	\$2,841,876	\$35,697,837	(\$32,859,158)	2
4422	Home Furnishings Stores	\$2,141,880	\$579,374	\$1,560,270	2
443	Electronics & Appliance Stores	\$5,164,328	\$588,016	\$4,570,508	1
444	Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	\$9,075,327	\$40,353,759	(\$31,289,017)	13
4441	Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	\$8,220,289	\$39,735,208	(\$31,524,495)	12
4442	Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	\$855,039	\$618,551	\$235,478	1
445	Food & Beverage Stores	\$25,309,908	\$59,587,092	(\$34,326,984)	17
4451	Grocery Stores	\$22,036,043	\$52,909,336	(\$30,919,742)	11
4452	Specialty Food Stores	\$1,606,668	\$353,731	\$1,251,288	2
4453	Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	\$1,667,197	\$6,324,025	(\$4,658,530)	3
446, 4461	Health & Personal Care Stores	\$11,288,100	\$9,225,055	\$2,051,544	3
447, 4471	Gasoline Stations	\$18,144,819	\$31,140,366	(\$13,086,594)	7
448	Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	\$10,112,376	\$2,258,284	\$7,834,042	3
4481	Clothing Stores	\$7,442,817	\$2,125,842	\$5,309,147	3
4482	Shoe Stores	\$1,104,158	\$0	\$1,103,081	0
4483	Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	\$1,565,401	\$132,442	\$1,421,814	1
451	Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	\$8,323,649	\$1,577,958	\$6,734,358	7
4511	Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	\$7,654,502	\$1,404,230	\$6,239,648	6
4512	Book, Periodical & Music Stores	\$669,147	\$173,728	\$494,710	1
452	General Merchandise Stores	\$15,164,840	\$4,956,076	\$10,193,489	6
4521	Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	\$9,541,927	\$0	\$9,532,039	0
4529	Other General Merchandise Stores	\$5,622,913	\$4,956,076	\$661,450	6
453	Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$5,459,956	\$2,387,295	\$3,066,706	10
4531	Florists	\$308,123	\$1,166,049	(\$858,160)	2
4532	Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	\$1,540,897	\$166,557	\$1,372,705	2
4533	Used Merchandise Stores	\$618,807	\$218,310	\$399,824	3
4539	Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$2,992,130	\$836,379	\$2,152,337	3
454	Nonstore Retailers	\$6,134,976	\$1,468,352	\$4,658,674	2
4541	Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	\$5,250,317	\$484,052	\$4,759,440	1
4542	Vending Machine Operators	\$104,589	\$0	\$104,462	0
4543	Direct Selling Establishments	\$780,070	\$984,300	(\$205,227)	1
722	Food Services & Drinking Places	\$14,489,080	\$11,793,533	\$2,671,204	35
7223	Special Food Services	\$552,593	\$27,486	\$524,599	1
7224	Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	\$582,883	\$60,769	\$521,625	1
7225	Restaurants/Other Eating Places	\$13,353,604	\$11,705,277	\$1,624,980	34

Data Note: Supply (retail sales) estimates sales to consumers by establishments. Sales to businesses are excluded. Demand (retail potential) estimates the expected amount spent by consumers at retail establishments. Supply and demand estimates are in current dollars. The Leakage/Surplus Factor presents a snapshot of retail opportunity. This is a measure of the relationship between supply and demand that ranges from +100 (total leakage) to -100 (total surplus). A positive value represents 'leakage' of retail opportunity outside the trade area. A negative value represents a surplus of retail sales, a market where customers are drawn in from outside the trade area. The Retail Gap represents the difference between Retail Potential and Retail Sales. Esri uses the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) to classify businesses by their primary type of economic activity. Retail establishments are classified into 27 industry groups in the Retail Trade sector, as well as four industry groups within the Food Services & Drinking Establishments subsector.

Source: Esri

Regional Trade Area Gap Analysis

The table on the following page shows the retail supply and demand by residents within a 30-minute drive time of downtown Poultney. The regional trade area has fewer retail categories with sales leakage compared to the downtown trade area. The demand for goods and services that is not being met regional is largest for Automobile Dealers; Clothing Stores; Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instrument Stores; and Other General Merchandise Stores. These results align with results of the downtown trade area retail gap analysis which also showed Automobile Dealers; Clothing Stores; and Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instrument Stores as the categories with the greatest leakage. This means, the Town of Poultney residents are leaving not only the downtown area to make purchases within these retail categories, residents are traveling a distance greater than 30-minutes away from the downtown area.

Conversely, if the supply of goods sold exceeds trade area demand, it is assumed that non-residents are coming into the trade area to spend money, creating a sales surplus. As previous mentioned, a sales surplus is indicated in red and shows a negative retail gap between sales and demand. Industries in the regional trade area that have a large sales surplus compared to their total sales include: Electronic Shopping & Mail Order Houses; Grocery Stores; Building Material & Supply Dealers; and Furniture Stores. These are similar to the results of the local trade area which also displayed a significant amount of sales surplus in Furniture Stores; Building Materials & Supply Stores; and Grocery Stores.

Retail Gap, Regional Trade Area

NAICS	Description	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Number of Businesses
441	Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	\$109,171,291	\$100,858,243	\$8,313,048	62
4411	Automobile Dealers	\$92,040,139	\$71,656,766	\$20,383,373	29
4412	Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	\$8,720,579	\$9,858,831	(\$1,138,252)	8
4413	Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	\$8,410,573	\$19,342,646	(\$10,932,073)	25
442	Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	\$17,197,831	\$54,916,361	(\$37,718,530)	19
4421	Furniture Stores	\$9,824,572	\$49,677,749	(\$39,853,177)	7
4422	Home Furnishings Stores	\$7,373,259	\$5,238,611	\$2,134,648	12
443	Electronics & Appliance Stores	\$17,823,437	\$13,369,801	\$4,453,636	15
444	Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	\$31,476,563	\$71,287,777	(\$39,811,214)	30
4441	Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	\$28,500,935	\$69,460,863	(\$40,959,928)	26
4442	Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	\$2,975,628	\$1,826,914	\$1,148,714	4
445	Food & Beverage Stores	\$87,014,031	\$150,530,349	(\$63,516,318)	58
4451	Grocery Stores	\$75,787,681	\$134,598,140	(\$58,810,459)	41
4452	Specialty Food Stores	\$5,505,792	\$3,675,189	\$1,830,603	10
4453	Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	\$5,720,558	\$12,257,019	(\$6,536,461)	7
446, 4461	Health & Personal Care Stores	\$38,661,999	\$60,436,272	(\$21,774,273)	25
447, 4471	Gasoline Stations	\$62,707,031	\$85,547,817	(\$22,840,786)	24
448	Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	\$34,785,030	\$16,939,158	\$17,845,872	24
4481	Clothing Stores	\$25,607,232	\$11,023,847	\$14,583,385	12
4482	Shoe Stores	\$3,769,799	\$3,303,984	\$465,815	5
4483	Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	\$5,407,999	\$2,611,327	\$2,796,672	7
451	Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	\$29,362,921	\$16,188,400	\$13,174,521	28
4511	Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	\$27,061,610	\$15,531,930	\$11,529,680	26
4512	Book, Periodical & Music Stores	\$2,301,311	\$656,471	\$1,644,840	2
452	General Merchandise Stores	\$51,906,207	\$52,744,889	(\$838,682)	20
4521	Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	\$32,750,634	\$40,076,200	(\$7,325,566)	4
4529	Other General Merchandise Stores	\$19,155,573	\$12,668,689	\$6,486,884	16
453	Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$18,794,499	\$15,618,892	\$3,175,607	52
4531	Florists	\$1,039,315	\$2,175,896	(\$1,136,581)	5
4532	Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	\$5,307,343	\$2,976,746	\$2,330,597	13
4533	Used Merchandise Stores	\$2,133,998	\$1,887,362	\$246,636	17
4539	Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$10,313,843	\$8,578,889	\$1,734,954	18
454	Nonstore Retailers	\$21,553,631	\$134,460,382	(\$112,906,751)	7
4541	Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	\$18,454,545	\$129,302,532	(\$110,847,987)	2
4542	Vending Machine Operators	\$364,692	\$0	\$364,692	0
4543	Direct Selling Establishments	\$2,734,394	\$5,157,850	(\$2,423,456)	5
722	Food Services & Drinking Places	\$49,889,676	\$45,107,489	\$4,782,187	125
7223	Special Food Services	\$1,887,639	\$85,732	\$1,801,907	2
7224	Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	\$1,978,717	\$2,332,458	(\$353,741)	15
7225	Restaurants/Other Eating Places	\$46,023,320	\$42,689,298	\$3,334,022	108

Data Note: Supply (retail sales) estimates sales to consumers by establishments. Sales to businesses are excluded. Demand (retail potential) estimates the expected amount spent by consumers at retail establishments. Supply and demand estimates are in current dollars. The Leakage/Surplus Factor presents a snapshot of retail opportunity. This is a measure of the relationship between supply and demand that ranges from +100 (total leakage) to -100 (total surplus). A positive value represents 'leakage' of retail opportunity outside the trade area. A negative value represents a surplus of retail sales, a market where customers are drawn in from outside the trade area. The Retail Gap represents the difference between Retail Potential and Retail Sales. Esri uses the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) to classify businesses by their primary type of economic activity. Retail establishments are classified into 27 industry groups in the Retail Trade sector, as well as four industry groups within the Food Services & Drinking Establishments subsector.

Source: Esri

Retail Potential Analysis

As mentioned above, the presence of sales leakage does not necessarily indicate that a new business or expansion of an existing business will be successful within a region. In the following tables, we compare the retail spending gaps in the downtown trade area and regional trade area within the retail categories that have sales leakage to the average sales of similar businesses in Vermont. This allows us to identify which of the industries with sales leakage in each of the trade areas may have enough unmet demand to support opening a new store or expanding existing stores. The tables below identify the number of new businesses that, theoretically, could be supported in each respective trade area assuming:

1. 25% of the sales leakage is recaptured (this is typical among various retail categories), and
2. New businesses have sales comparable to the average sales of all Vermont businesses in the same retail category.

The table below displays the retail categories that could support one or more businesses within the downtown trade area centered around downtown Poultney. Of the three retail categories, Clothing Stores demonstrates the strongest potential of 1.8 supportable businesses followed by Sporting Goods & Hobby Stores (1.5) and Electronics & Appliance Stores (1.0). Although many industries within the downtown trade area showed leakage, they do not demonstrate the capability to support a successful establishment based on average sales in the state. This does not mean that businesses within other industries should or could not open within downtown Poultney but rather the demand within the 15-minute drive time could not support the sales of a new business independently. It is likely that there will be some incoming demand from outside that trade area to support said new business based on travelling trends of Vermont and Eastern New York residents. Businesses outside of these retail categories would need to draw visitors in through unique offerings and/or creative use of space.

Supportable Retail, Downtown Trade Area							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
NAICS	Retail Category	Retail Gap	25% Leakage Recapture	Average Sales per Business	Supportable Businesses (D / E)	Average Sales per SF	Supportable SF (D / G)
4481	Clothing Stores	\$ 5,309,147	\$ 1,327,287	\$ 753,628	1.8	\$ 300	4,424
4511	Sporting Goods & Hobby Stores	\$ 6,239,648	\$ 1,559,912	\$ 1,051,272	1.5	\$ 250	6,240
4431	Electronics & Appliance Stores	\$ 4,570,508	\$ 1,142,627	\$ 1,098,222	1.0	\$ 500	2,285

Source: Esri, Camoin Associates

The retail potential analysis for the regional trade area shows a greater variety of retail categories. The following industries present the greatest opportunity for new business: Clothing Stores; Sporting Goods & Hobby Stores; Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores; and Restaurants/Other Eating Places.

Supportable Retail, Regional Trade Area							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
NAICS	Retail Category	Retail Gap	25% Leakage Recapture	Average Sales per Business	Supportable Businesses (D / E)	Average Sales per SF	Supportable SF (D / G)
4481	Clothing Stores	\$ 14,583,385	\$ 3,645,846	\$ 753,628	4.8	\$ 300	12,153
4511	Sporting Goods & Hobby Stores	\$ 11,529,680	\$ 2,882,420	\$ 1,051,272	2.7	\$ 250	11,530
4483	Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	\$ 2,796,672	\$ 699,168	\$ 423,068	1.7	\$ 500	1,398
7225	Restaurants/Other Eating Places	\$ 3,334,022	\$ 833,506	\$ 536,700	1.6	\$ 350	2,381
4532	Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	\$ 2,330,597	\$ 582,649	\$ 487,257	1.2	\$ 300	1,942
4431	Electronics & Appliance Stores	\$ 4,453,636	\$ 1,113,409	\$ 1,098,222	1.0	\$ 500	2,227

Source: Esri, Camoin Associates

Conclusions

The following are the critical data findings that came out of the analysis that informed strategy development.

Data Findings

- The Town of Poultney and Rutland County have slightly declined in population from 2010 to 2018 by 0.3% and 1.2% respectively. Population decline is projected to continue into 2023 where the town is projected to decline by 1.5% and the county by 2.1%.
- As of 2018, the age distribution in the Town of Poultney is heavily skewed towards 15 to 24-year olds which make up nearly a quarter of the total population. This is due in part to Green Mountain College which is anticipated to close after the Spring 2019 semester and thus will change the demographic composition of the area.
- Median household income was approximately \$50,000 for the Town of Poultney in 2018, falling below county, state, and national levels. These lower household incomes impede the ability to support new businesses downtown. Looking forward into 2023, median household incomes are projected to grow 9.5%, showing promising uptick for future retail. Drawing on regional residents and visitors will be crucial to supporting Poultney businesses.
- The business community in Rutland County is rich in entrepreneurs and small businesses. The majority of businesses in Rutland County are small businesses with 2 to 9 employees at 64% of all businesses and 18% of all businesses are self-employed.
- Twenty-four of the 134 business establishments in the Town of Poultney are within the Retail Trade industry. A retail leakage analysis of both the downtown trade area (15-minute drive time from downtown Poultney) and regional trade area (30-minute drive time from downtown Poultney) demonstrates that spending dollars are leaving the area in the following categories: Automobile Dealers; Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instrument Stores; and Clothing Stores.
- Conversely, Furniture Stores; Building Materials & Supply Stores; and Grocery Stores indicated sales surplus in both geographies. This means non-residents are coming into Poultney to spend money on these items/services.
- A retail potential analysis indicated that there is enough demand in the downtown trade area to support one or more businesses within the Clothing Stores; Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instrument Stores; and Electronics & Appliances industries. The regional trade area shows a greater variety of retail categories signifying the greatest potential for Clothing Stores; Sporting Goods & Hobby Stores; Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores; and Restaurants/Other Eating Places.

Recommendations

The following are the key recommendations for Poultney as it moves forward during this period of transition.

- **Initiate Main Street Revitalization**
 - Enhance the business mix
 - Support reuse of vacant buildings
 - Invest in recreation infrastructure
 - Streetscape improvements
 - Increase town's reputation as a regional hub

- **Align Community Resources with Economic Development Goals**

- Hire a community development professional
- Conduct a full economic development strategic planning process
- Support small business development
- Establish funding programs for microenterprises and property improvements
- Review zoning, land use regulations, and business development experience

Attachment A: Data Sources

Proprietary Data Sources

Esri Business Analyst Online (BAO)

ESRI is the leading provider of location-driven market insights. It combines demographic, lifestyle, and spending data with map-based analytics to provide market intelligence for strategic decision-making. ESRI uses proprietary statistical models and data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the U.S. Postal Service, and various other sources to present current conditions and project future trends. Esri data are used by developers to maximize their portfolio, retailers to understand growth opportunities, and by economic developers to attract business that fit their community. For more information, visit www.esri.com.

Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI)

To analyze the industrial makeup of a study area, industry data organized by the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) is assessed. Camoin 310 subscribes to Economic Modeling Specialists Intl. (EMSI), a proprietary data provider that aggregates economic data from approximately 90 sources. EMSI industry data, in our experience, is more complete than most or perhaps all local data sources (for more information on EMSI, please see www.economicmodeling.com). This is because local data sources typically miss significant employment counts by industry because data on sole proprietorships and contractual employment (i.e. 1099 contractor positions) is not included and because certain employment counts are suppressed from BLS/BEA figures for confidentiality reasons when too few establishments exist within a single NAICS code.

Attachment B: Community Assets

The following list of community assets was gathered from the Public Meeting on March 7th, 2019 surrounding the closing of Green Mountain College. Meeting participants were asked to identify assets of Poultney, VT.

- Trail network that spans 30 miles, with a vision to extend that to 50 to 60 miles
- Numerous organizations within the Town
- Community passion
- Lake Saint Catherine and State Park
- Community rich in volunteers
- Ability to build capacity within Town through hiring an Economic Development director

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