

Conclusions – Retail Mix Analysis

When evaluating the Sauk Prairie area relative to the comparable communities, a number of strengths and opportunities become apparent:

- The business mix suggests that Sauk Prairie (the sum of both zip codes) is above average in terms of the overall number of businesses (60 retailers in the Sauk Prairie zip codes compared to 47 in the comparable communities). However, these figures partially reflect the use of two zip codes for the Sauk Prairie analysis, compared with one zip code for other communities. *Despite this difference, there appears to be categories where Sauk Prairie may have gaps in the retail mix.*
- Potential trade area gaps for Sauk Prairie include: computer and software stores, jewelry stores, clothing stores (especially for women), water recreation stores, specialty food, musical instruments, art dealers, and gift/souvenir stores. *The gap in gift/souvenir stores appears to be significant given Sauk Prairie's relative position as a tourism destination.* These gaps may provide opportunities for exploring business expansion and recruitment opportunities in Section 7.
- Retail strengths, or those categories with higher than average establishment counts, include: grocery stores, motorcycle/boat/other motor vehicle dealers, pharmacies, home furnishing stores, appliance/TV/electronic stores, and other general merchandise stores. These strengths are found in both convenience-based and destination-oriented retail categories. One category in particular, motorcycle/boat/other motor vehicle dealers, captures Sauk Prairie Harley Davidson. *This category provides an example of how a unique retailer focusing on the broader market can find success in Sauk Prairie.*
- With a few exceptions, apparel and specialty retail stores (books, music, toys, etc.) are rare in the comparable communities. The absence of these retail types is likely due to limited demand in communities of this size, changing consumer habits, and the presence of large national discount stores.
- Retail categories where Sauk Prairie's downtowns have fewer than average businesses may reflect potential business opportunities. Specific categories showing possible gaps include furniture stores, floor covering stores, jewelry stores, gift novelty stores, and art dealers. *Again, the gap in the gift/novelty store category is somewhat surprising given Sauk Prairie's desired position among tourists.*
- While Sauk Prairie's downtown business districts include one art dealer, both Stoughton and Fort Atkinson have multiple establishments. *The presence of several art dealers in these downtowns represents the importance of establishing a critical mass for certain destination-retail categories.* With a few exceptions, Sauk Prairie's downtown business districts lack a critical mass in destination-oriented business categories.
- Niche-based development strategies will be vital for differentiating Sauk Prairie's downtown business districts from other regional shopping opportunities. With the exception of retailers serving the local resident population, the downtown business mix does not suggest any existing niche with an overwhelming market presence. The remaining analyses in this report will seek to find potential niches that are suggested by local market conditions.