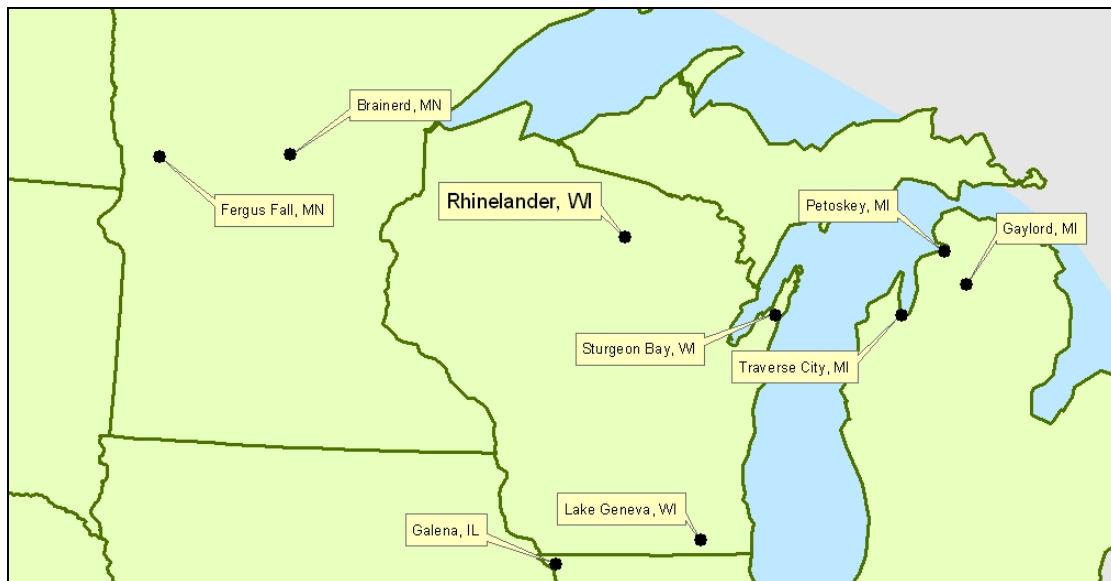


# Business Mix Analysis of Comparison Communities

*This section analyzes vibrant downtowns of communities with similar market orientations as Rhinelander. Study of these communities reveals common characteristics as well as examples of businesses that are important to their economic success. This information is provided as a resource for business expansion and recruitment efforts.*

In order to study characteristics of successful downtowns in comparable cities in the Upper Midwest, Downtown Rhinelander, Inc. and the University of Wisconsin Extension conducted a phone survey of the directors of local Chambers of Commerce and Main Street programs.<sup>1</sup> Downtowns were identified after analyzing local characteristics including population, seasonal housing units, lodging establishments, eating and drinking establishments, and rural/urban character. Data supporting this analysis is provided in Appendix A of this section.

Eight comparison communities selected for the interviews are illustrated on the following map. Each has less than 15,000 residents, but significant tourist and second homeowner populations.



The phone survey focused on two types of questions: what are the distinguishing characteristics that these communities have in common; and what types of businesses and operating practices draw people downtown.

<sup>1</sup> This section was written by Joshua Clements, a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Department of Urban and Regional Planning. The section incorporates telephone interviews with representatives of comparison communities as coordinated by Sue Bessert of Downtown Rhinelander, Inc.

## Distinguishing Characteristics of the Comparison Communities

Each of the communities interviewed compete with larger and smaller cities in their respective regions for customers and commercial development. However, respondents indicated that their downtowns differ from the downtowns of other communities in the following ways:

- Locally owned/focused businesses – local retail mix is predominately locally owned establishments, with few franchise or national retailers in or near the downtown. Locally owned businesses give each community a unique, local feel, while providing a distinct alternative to national retailers. However, in small numbers, franchise and national retailers can be important in providing a known, visible presence that supplements strong local business economies.
- History – each of the comparison cities have done well in preserving historic buildings and streetscapes. Municipal and private sector leaders have made efforts to save, maintain, and restore their character. This has been realized by adopting strict zoning, design standards, and historic districts that prohibit demolition or significant alteration to historic structures and/or place strong emphasis on maintaining and restoring them to their original character while allowing for modern uses. When infrastructure must be rebuilt – such as roads, sidewalks, and pedestrian lighting – it is done in a style consistent with local historic architecture.
- Pedestrian Orientation - The history of the streetscape in each city is unique, built and rebuilt on separate timelines. However, a commonality is that they are built to accommodate pedestrians and create an inviting streetscape. Elements include wide sidewalks, decorative pavers, street trees, decorative lighting, and quality signage. Business owners highlighted that parking is important, but that pedestrians will walk between businesses if there are continuous sidewalks with few obstructions (especially traffic obstructions), easy navigation, and interesting streetscapes. Owners report that patrons will park their vehicle and visit a number of nearby businesses if pedestrian facilities are provided.
- Uniqueness – respondents described their downtowns as unique, drawing from the predominance of locally owned businesses and preserved historic structures. These elements combine to create a visual aesthetic, business mix, and feel about each downtown community that cannot be replicated.
- Geography – most of the respondents emphasized that their local geography plays a very important role in attracting visitors and providing outdoor activities for residents. These features draw visitors which provide additional traffic for downtown businesses as well as provide high quality-of-life activities for residents.

The location of the city and its downtown near local geographic and natural assets provides significant boosts to business and community vibrancy.

- Downtown Park – public space in or adjacent to the downtown provides a place for recreational activities, but also public events such as festivals, music, and outdoor sales.

Downtown parks may also host private events such as weddings, conventions, and other social gatherings. Parks also provide open space for local residents.

- Lakes (local) – Downtowns that are located adjacent to bodies of water provide recreational opportunities, drawing people into the area. Businesses may take advantage of the lakefront scenery, capturing business from swimming, fishing and boating users.
- Lakes (regional) – Downtowns may still take advantage of lakes that are not directly adjacent to the downtown or to the city if the downtown provides a magnet of activities for recreational users of lakes. These uses may be: outdoor themed retail, recreational equipment sales, food (restaurant & grocery), and entertainment (pubs, music venues).
- Skiing – the presence of nearby ski venues (Nordic or alpine) can provide a draw for downtown businesses in the winter. Marketing the downtown and orienting it as a local gathering place for visitors of one or more ski venues can capture additional retail, restaurant, and hospitality business.
- Golf courses – Golf draws visitors to a community, and allow for the capture of various market segments including business and meeting attendees.

Geography and natural features can also be a challenge to businesses and downtown communities. Recreational activities accessible primarily during the summer can create significant business depressions in the winter; adverse seasonal weather can keep away visitors (too much or too little snow, rain, heat, etc.); and splendid natural features can double as recreational assets and barriers to accessibility. Many of the downtowns studies cope with these challenges as follows:

- Accessibility – provide simple, strategically placed signage that direct recreational users to and from the downtown and their recreational destination.
- Day-trippers – address the difficulty of capturing business from day-trippers traveling near or into the city to use natural recreational uses such as boating or skiing.
- Winter slowdown – understanding that in cities where seasonality is most pronounced, some businesses must close during the winter season to minimize losses.

Respondents have found that the business mix of their downtowns evolve over time, reacting to customer demand, changes in regional competition, and national trends. Each community faces unique competitive environments and differing levels demand. Accordingly, there is not a “magic” business mix to achieve. Each downtown must assess their own local and regional situation independently.

Nevertheless, there are some similarities in business mix among the comparison communities. The average business mix is approximately:

- Retail            40 – 60%
- Entertainment 10 – 25%
- Service           20 – 40%

The primary consumer market segments of businesses in each community are quite consistent. The strongest responses are day-trippers and second home owners residing in the largest regional cities (Chicago, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, Grand Rapids, etc).

### **Common Threats Facing Comparison Communities**

Respondents listed many common issues as threats to downtown vitality – issues which have hobbled cities of all sizes throughout the county. The first threat is sprawl – development at the periphery of urban areas that are characterized by low rents, large warehouse-like retail buildings, and vast parking lots connected to regional highways. The second threat might be called a “new” variety of sprawl – the “lifestyle center”, an entirely new retail development built to mimic a traditional downtown. Respondents address these two issues through marketing of buying locally, experience shopping (historic buildings, pedestrian feel, small stores, social experience), and organizing downtown events. Additional threats identified by respondents are: upward pressure on downtown rents, local opposition to new downtown development, and availability of parking.

## Businesses Types that Contribute to Vibrant Downtowns in the Comparison Communities

Interviews with innovative downtown businesses in the comparison communities were conducted to provide insight into specific businesses and business types that are adding to downtown economic vitality.

Downtown representatives from each community were asked to nominate businesses that they have identified as making significant contributions to downtown vibrancy. Interviews were conducted with owners and/or managers from each business nominated, and short case studies were prepared for discussion in this report and inclusion in the UW-Extension Innovative Downtown Business clearinghouse. A brief description of these businesses is presented in Appendix B.

### **Innovative Downtown Business Clearinghouse**

To generate ideas for successful downtown business expansion and recruitment, the University of Wisconsin-Extension has created a web-based clearinghouse of innovative businesses that are bringing people back downtown. The Innovative Downtown Business Database offers brief case studies that include products sold, niche developed, market segments served, and synergy created downtown. The businesses are searchable by category (such as home furnishings, clothing, sporting goods, hobby, books, and restaurants) and size of community.

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cced/downtowns/innovative/>

Five general types of businesses were identified as important generators of activity for downtown. These are listed below.

#### Destination Restaurants

Destination restaurants typically have large seating areas split into different rooms with a more intimate feel. Most have live music one or more times per week. Most are in the middle (\$12 - \$25) price range for dinner entrées.

Popeye's Restaurant is an ethnic Greek restaurant on the shores of Lake Geneva with seating up to 600. Popeye's has generous outdoor seating on their deck, featuring a rotisserie serving slow roasted chicken every day. Popeye's is known for their popular German-Wisconsin fare, such as bratwurst, burgers, and fish fries. Popeye's hosts parties of all sizes, and is packed with patrons all year-round. Popeye's innovative technique is hosting charity events and fundraisers for local organizations during the slow seasons, drawing people into the downtown throughout the year.

Another example of a destination restaurant of a much different style than Popeye's is Red Ginger in Traverse City, Michigan. Red Ginger is an Asian fusion restaurant serving specialty dishes from all across Asia, including fresh Pacific and Atlantic fish. Red Ginger opened in 2007, renovating a 100 year-old historic building located between Horizon Books and the State Theatre. Despite only being open for one year, the 130 seat restaurant is at full capacity nearly

every night. Red Ginger complements neighboring business by combining to create a vibrant node of activity.

### Unique/Regional Gift Stores

Some gift and clothing stores offer unique, quality product offerings that are not found in franchise, corporate, or big-box environments. These product offerings are highlighted by items that reflect local/regional culture, such as cherries and wine in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, and Swiss-themed products in Gaylord, Michigan. Predominate retail themes are attention to detail, quality products, and superior customer service. Many of the retailers interviewed stressed the need to differentiate themselves from both discount retailers, and also from one another.

Cornerstone Shoppe in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, combines elegant and traditional home appointments with unique and artistic creations not found in chain retailers, such as hand made jewelry and ceramics, hand-blown glass and stained glass, original art work, candles, custom furniture, and books.

“If shopping is not fun – people are not going to return” – Candi Edwards, Old Spud Warehouse

Despite being located two blocks from Main Street in Gaylord, Michigan, Old Spud Warehouse’s unique products create a huge draw. Old Spud Warehouse carries furniture, lighting, and home accents, including couches, chairs, end tables, lamps, rugs, artwork, clocks, frames, and other oddities. The product mix at the Old Spud Warehouse is always changing and evolving depending

upon sales, and the Old Spud tries to stay away from popular name brands and brands offered at other establishments in Gaylord. Old Spud prides itself at being unique and reacting to customer feedback.

### Downtown “Hangouts”

Downtown hangouts are businesses that provide a niche as a place where downtown residents hang out and socialize, the “public living room”. Many of these establishments are coffee shops, sometimes integrated with local book stores; most offering baking goods produced locally, many with outdoor sidewalk or courtyard seating during appropriate weather. These businesses facilitate downtown vibrancy by providing a place where people gather, and increase foot traffic on the street and in nearby establishments.

An example of a downtown hangout is Horizon Books in Traverse City, Michigan. Horizon Books is a large, independent book store occupying three stories. What sets Horizon Books apart is that they have contracted with Cuppa Joe, a local coffee house chain, to have a full-service location integrated with their book store and retail front. Cuppa Joe creates constant traffic from 7am to 11pm, features outdoor seating, and is an immensely popular hangout for downtown residents, shoppers, tourists, and social organizations.

### Entertainment

A pair of theatres are among those profiled. Neither competes directly with large movie theatres that show large budget Hollywood films, but rather they feature independent and foreign films, live music and theatre productions, and special events (high school film, art exhibitions, film series). These uses complement other downtown businesses by drawing crowds of people who then visit nearby businesses. Further, entertainment uses can promote downtown living by providing residents with easily accessible entertainment options.

## Lodging

Two hotels are featured, Store Harbor Resort and Stafford's Perry Hotel, each locally owned and operated. Both are located downtown, providing a steady stream of visitors to patron other businesses; and host meetings, conferences, weddings, and other events that regularly draw additional traffic. Each also has restaurant/bar/grill elements, which serves as an additional draw. It is important to note that both facilities occupy lakefront property, creating an additional draw for each.

### **Additional Business Ideas for Downtowns**

Based on market analysis findings from other communities coupled with business examples being submitted to the University of Wisconsin-Extension's Innovative Downtown Business online clearinghouse, some broad categories of retail serve as "good fits" for many downtowns:

- Lifestyle and wellness retail and services;
- Stores that celebrate local arts and heritage;
- Stores that entertain or educate;
- Gift and indulgences stores;
- Unique destination retailers; and
- Neighborhood-serving retailers.

See the innovative Downtown Business clearinghouse for examples and case studies of these businesses operating throughout the Midwest and Northeastern United States.

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cced/downtowns/innovative/>

In addition, Appendix C offers suggestions specific to retailing in resort communities.

## Operating Characteristics of the Selected Businesses

The businesses included in this analysis share certain characteristics that differentiate themselves from others. These characteristics include:

- Locally owned and operated - All of the businesses surveyed are locally owned and operated. Five of the twenty-five businesses have more than one location, either within the same city or region.
- Located in historic buildings - *Sixty percent* of the businesses surveyed are located in buildings listed on national or local historic registries. A number of businesses which recently renovated their buildings, including Galena Canning Company and Grandpa Shorter's, shared that after historical restorations were complete, business significantly improved. In the case of the Galena Canning Company, business increased 400% following building restoration.

"Our number one priority is quality products, number two is customer service – that's key. If it's not the absolute best product we can make – we don't make it." – Chef Ivo, Galena Canning Company
- Place-based - Building off of businesses located in and preserving historic structures, successful downtown businesses – from retail to restaurant – feature, complement, and build local or regional culture.
- Active in the downtown business community - Owners/managers organize and/or participate in community events, charities, and work directly with other businesses in their community. It was repeatedly emphasized that participation in downtown community activities is critical to not only success of the individual businesses, but to the downtown community as a whole. The Alpine Chocolat Haus hosts fund raising events throughout the year, providing thousands of dollars for local organizations. Alpine Chocolat Haus posts no direct financial gain by hosting these events, but the excellent press coverage and word of mouth creates invaluable community goodwill and trickle-down increase in business.

"We're in business to support the downtown community. We're a place for friends." – Gary Wolfe, Horizon Books

In order to co-exist successfully with big-box stores and other large businesses, these innovative businesses have developed techniques to distinguish themselves from competition.

- Customer Service – By focusing on customer service, local establishments build a positive reputation leading to repeat customers.
- Quality Products and Services – Rather than focusing on low price points, these selected businesses instead focus on offering quality products at reasonable prices. Small businesses cannot compete directly with large retailers on price, but by offering superior quality products, retailers can create their own niche.
- Unique Product Offerings – In addition to providing superior customer service and quality products, businesses in this study offer unique products to distinguish themselves from discount retailers – as well as from one another.

## Appendix A - Potential Comparable Communities for Rhinelander – Selected Statistics

City Name (County)	City Population (2006)	Population in a 20-mile radius (2000)	County Population (2005)	Seasonal Housing in County (% of all housing units in 2000)*	County Lodging Establishments per 1,000 residents (2005)	Eating and Drinking Establishments in County per 1,000 residents (2005)	Rural/Urban Character of County**
Brainerd, MN (Crow Wing)	13,722	58,497	60,018	30.9%	0.8 (48 total)	2.4 (147 total)	Micropolitan area not adjacent to a metro area
Fergus Falls, MN (Otter Tail)	13,839	31,672	57,582	29.2%	0.6 (36 total)	1.9 (112 total)	Micropolitan area adjacent to small metro area
Park Rapids, MN (Hubbard)	3,557	20,362	18,845	32.6%	1.5 (28 total)	2.3 (43 total)	Adjacent to a micropolitan area and contains a town of at least 2,500 residents
Gaylord, MI (Otsego)	3,744	37,590	24,608	28.6%	0.7 (16 total)	2.2 (55 total)	Not adjacent to metro or micro area and contains a town of at least 2,500 residents
Petoskey, MI (Emmet)	6,112	60,303	33,461	27.6%	1.5 (49 total)	3.4 (113 total)	Not adjacent to metro or micro area and contains a town of at least 2,500 residents
Saugatuck/Douglas, MI (Allegan)	1,031/1,185	161,036	113,052	7.8%	0.3 (30 total)	1.5 (171 total)	Micropolitan area adjacent to small metro area
Traverse City, MI (Grand Traverse)	14,407	114,735	83,954	8.6%	0.5 (42 total)	2.2 (187 total)	Micropolitan area not adjacent to a metro area
Galena, IL (Jo Daviess)	3,396	102,659	22,508	17.1%	1.1 (24 total)	3.6 (80 total)	Adjacent to small metro area and contains a town of at least 2,500 residents
Lake Geneva, WI (Walworth)	8,155	279,586	99,755	17.5%	0.3 (34 total)	2.5 (247 total)	Micropolitan area adjacent to large metro area
Sturgeon Bay, WI (Door)	9,171	28,895	28,222	36.2%	3.4 (97 total)	5.5 (154 total)	Adjacent to small metro area and contains a town of at least 2,500 residents
Rhinelander, WI (Oneida)	7,821	37,946	36,892	39.1%	0.9 (33 total)	4.1 (152 total)	Adjacent to a micropolitan area and contains a town of at least 2,500 residents

## **Appendix B - Nominated “Innovative Downtown Businesses”**

### **Brainard, MN:**

- Coco Moon - Popular yet quiet coffee house with a friendly atmosphere, Coco Moon is a hangout hotspot for downtown residents. Coco Moon is a full-service coffee shop, including specialty coffees, lattes, mocha, teas, gourmet smoothies, and iced drinks. Coco Moon has partnered with a local bakery to provide a variety of pastries and baked goods fresh daily.
- E.L. Menk - This is a locally-owned, full-service jeweler that has become a cornerstone business in downtown Brainerd, specializing in custom-made jewelry. E.L. Menk completes 100% repairs in-house, including laser welding and computerized engraving. Product lines include diamonds, colored stones, watches, and necklaces. Mr. Menk is a graduate gemologist with experience in the total picture of jewelry.
- Others nominated businesses: Sawmill Inn and Bob & Fran's

### **Fergus Falls, MN**

- City Bakery, Café and Coffee Shop
- Fergus Theatre - A Center for the Arts sponsors a wide range of programming, including live theatre; independent, foreign, and documentary films; a variety of music; professional and local dance; visual arts exhibitions and festivals; numerous workshops and literary events; and music and arts classes. Events are programmed nearly every day.
- Others nominated businesses: Victor Lundeen, Co.

### **Gaylord, MI**

- Alpine Chocolat Haus - Alpine Chocolat Haus produces locally famous handmade chocolates, unique novelty candies and treats, and Carmel corn. This includes their #1 seller, chocolate covered potato chips. Additional products include gift baskets of assorted goodies, and gift boxes of chocolates. Alpine Chocolate Haus also has a full service ice cream counter serving shakes, banana splits, and 40 varieties of Ashby's Sterling Ice Cream. Treats also include chocolate covered frozen grapes and other fruit – chocolate covered everything!
- Others nominated businesses: Diana's Delights Restaurant, Sugar Bowl Restaurant, and The Old Spud Warehouse

### **Galena, IL**

- Galena Canning Company - Galena Canning Company produces diverse lines of over 350 old fashioned canned and sauce items, including: Salsas, Pasta Sauces, BBQ Sauces, Chili, Relishes, Pickles, Hot Sauces, Mustards, Jams & Jellies, Fruit Butters, Syrups, Toppings, Flavored Oils and Vinegars. Among the sauces Chef Ivo produces is 100% natural hot “Blasting Sauce” which was won a number of national and international awards. All of the sauces are produced in the store's kitchen, and features daily sampling of a wide variety of Chef Ivo's famous products.
- Fried Green Tomatoes - Fried Green Tomatoes serves upscale Italian cuisine, including a wide assortment of pastas, steaks, seafood, veal, chicken, soups, sandwiches, pizza, and wine. Fried Green Tomatoes won the Wine Spectator Award of Excellence in 2007, which is awarded to restaurants who have the most outstanding wine lists in the World.
- Poopsies - Poopsies carries an eclectic variety of over 6000 “wacky and wonderful things” collected from around North America. This includes home decoration, kitchen and dining, unique artwork and glassware, books, games, and children's toys. The Landons travel to over ten exhibitions each year to collect products to feature at Poopsies
- Simply Elegant - Simply Elegant Boutique is upscale cosmopolitan women's apparel and accessory store. Simply Elegant caters to women seeking sophisticated and personalized service, offering customized wardrobe fitting, closet cleanout (organizing), and personal shopping sessions. Product lines include tops, jackets, jeans, outerwear, dresses, footwear, skin care, and accessories. Simply Elegant features a proprietary line of high quality skin care products.

### **Lake Geneva**

- Popeye's Restaurant - Popeye's is a Greek ethnic restaurant, serving some traditional Greek dishes in addition to class American fare and seasonal offerings from a wide selection of ethnicities. American fare includes bratwurst, burgers, fish, steak, seafood, and BBQ ribs. The most popular draw is the

- Flemings - Flemings Limited, an Irish Specialty Shop, carries men's and women's clothing, gifts, and accessories. One-of-a-kind, imported, and hand-made quality goods include Galway Crystal, Ballcreek China, Licensed Guinness merchandise, Irish books, authentic foods, pottery. Clothing line includes not only traditional Irish clothing but also specialty fashion. Flemings also provides tuxedo and formal wear rental and sales services
- Cornerstone Shop - The Cornerstone Shoppe combines elegant and traditional home appointments with unique and artistic creations including hand made jewelry and ceramics, hand-blown glass and stained glass, and exotic wood pieces. Other products include original art work, candles, custom furniture, and books. Cornerstone Shoppe offers a wide variety of unique and specialty items typically not found in franchise or big-box establishments. Cornerstone Shoppe takes care in creating beautiful product displays which rotate throughout the year and include seasonal items.

#### **Petoskey, MI**

- Staford's Perry Hotel - The Perry Hotel is a 79-room luxury historic Victorian building featuring elegant dining in their period H.O. Rose Dining Room. Perry Hotel is a modern full-service lodging facility located in downtown Petoskey, with a business center, library, and exercise room.
- Grandpa Shorter's - Grandpa Shorter's carries a wide variety of gifts and artwork, specializing in handcrafted Native American pieces. Products include the largest in-store selection of Minnetonka Moccasins, Lynn Haney Santas, Porcupine Quill Boxes, Petoskey Stones, Deerskin leather gloves, and other gifts. Grandpa Shorter's strives to have "something for everyone." Grandpa Shorter's has three retail locations between three buildings, each with its own unique product mix.
- City Park Grill - The City Park Grill serves a variety of savory appetizers, grilled dishes, pasta entrees, seafood, and sandwiches. The City Park Grill serves fine food and wine from around the World. The City Park Grill hosts frequent live music and dancing in a variety of genres, including jazz and rock; weekly salsa dancing, and the occasional theme party. The City Park Grill is best known for their diverse menu, grilled fish and chicken entrees, wine selection, and live music.

#### **Sturgeon Bay, WI**

- Nominated business: Stone Harbor Resort

#### **Traverse City, MI**

- Horizon Books - Horizon Books has a huge selection of books of all types, filling their three-floor location. Horizon Books includes the Cuppa Joe full service coffee café which creates a cozy ambience that encourages patrons to linger, drawing both crowds of residents and tourists. Horizon Books has an outdoor patio that is popular throughout the spring, summer and fall with patrons hanging out with a cup of coffee.
- State Theatre - The Traverse City State Theatre is a run by the non-profit Traverse City Film Festival, showing primarily independent films. Film genres include American independents, foreign films, documentaries, and other limited-release works. The Theatre also has limited showings of previously released Hollywood films. The main theatre seats 540 and features a restored interior, including Romanesque columns, acoustical improvements, and modern digital projection equipment.
- Others nominated businesses: Red Ginger

## Appendix C - Retailing in Resort Communities: Designing Shopping for Today's Visitors<sup>2</sup>

For a community to effectively capture its share of visitor spending, it must balance natural, historic and cultural resources with the right mix of manufactured attractions including retail. An article in Urban Land provides ideas from successful retail centers located in major North American resort communities. Successful tourist-based retail centers have some similar characteristics. They typically:

- provide an intimate, distinct atmosphere and a strong pedestrian character;
- offer an experience and increase the lifestyle appeal of the community;
- have distinctive and consistent architectural design, (perhaps based on a historic theme);
- offer a variety of eating and drinking places that create a social ambiance;
- lack traditional anchor tenants;
- include logo or merchandise shops with memorative or iconic appeal; and
- offer ongoing special events and activities.

Finding the right mix of businesses to compliment these retail centers is difficult as tourism and retail are both sensitive to changing consumer, economic and social trends. Six principles can help identify the right mix of services, facilities and tenants in a tourist-based retail center:

1. **The Retail Center Should Build on the Attributes of the Surrounding Area:** Tourism destinations depend on the special attributes of their locations. These attributes might include unique natural attractions such as a spectacular river or lake front setting. They can also include unique historic and cultural characteristics of the community. The retail center should build on these special attributes to achieve a unified and authentic theme that complements the surrounding area.
2. **Have a Year-Round and Diverse Appeal:** Successful tourism related retailers appeal to more than one market segment. They look at the various types of visitors by season to identify opportunities to increase year-round sales. For example, a shop that sells and services bicycles in the summer may be able to sell ski equipment in the winter. Successful retailers also try to appeal to a diverse mix of customers including overnight visitors, day trippers, conference attendees, local residents and employees.
3. **Cluster Retail Near Town Center:** The appeal of tourism-based retail is increased when a wide variety of shops are clustered around each other and near local services. Local services can include visitor information, post office, library, medical center, banks, realtors, conference and lodging facilities. These services provide spin-off for local retailers and build a sense of community.
4. **Retail Mix:** The mix of retail, restaurants and entertainment should reflect the needs and interests of the primary market segments. Today's tourist destinations provide a variety of retail and services beyond souvenirs and fast food. Examples of Tourism-Based Specialty Retail: cheese, liquor and wines, skin and health care, perfumes/soaps, jewelry, lifestyle apparel, golf/sports/outdoor Equip., novelty gifts, antiques, home accessories, theme/historic restaurant, coffee shop, high-tech entertainment, bakery products/cookies, chocolates/candy, heritage/ethnic gifts, art gallery, crafts, T-shirts and clothing, gourmet foods, books, photography, factory outlet products, Christmas items, flowers, toys, wildlife art, cards. In addition, general merchandise stores that sell drugs, groceries, hardware and convenience items are also important in servicing visitors.
5. **The Right Products:** Many resort retailers sell products related to health, wellness and feeling good. Such products include small indulgences such as specialty coffees, ice cream, cookies and chocolate, toys as well as outdoor accessories such as sunglasses, sweaters and footwear. Locally produced products are also appealing to tourists. Retailers should adjust their merchandise seasonally and carry products that also appeal to the local resident market.
6. **Appearance of the Retail District:** Appearance of the retail district can strengthen the area's identity and sales. Consistency in signage, shopfronts and merchandising can be achieved through the following:
  - landscaping (and street-scaping) to clearly define the retail area;
  - building size;
  - pedestrian orientation;
  - signs and icons reflecting local cultural, natural, recreational or historical features;
  - mobile kiosks;
  - colorful storefronts/facades with inviting window displays, entrances, awnings, umbrellas, banners and signage; and outdoor entertainment.

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<sup>2</sup> Drawn from the University of Wisconsin publication *Let's Talk Business*, February 1997 No. 6