

SITE RELOCATION GUIDE FOR GEORGIA RETAIL BUSINESS

**By Robert E. Collier
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT DIVISION**

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**Engineering Experiment Station
GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
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Foreword

This is the second of a series of special reports prepared by the Industrial Services Branch of the Industrial Development Division to complement the Branch's program of direct personal assistance to Georgia business and industry. This series of reports is offered as a means of broadening the base of service and extending the benefits of the industrial services program beyond the somewhat limited bounds of those companies that can be served directly.

The economic growth of communities, the changing population patterns, and the upheaval created by urban renewal projects frequently affect the location of new and existing retail establishments. Over the past years, the Industrial Services Branch has received a number of requests for assistance from small businessmen faced with the critical decision of store location. This guide has been developed to assist the retailer in making this decision.

Comments concerning this report or other reports in this series are invited. Especially solicited are suggestions of subjects for future reports which will be of particular interest to those involved in the establishment and growth of business and industrial firms in the state.

Ross W. Hammond, Chief
Industrial Development Division
GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

There may be no perfect spot on which to relocate a business, but some are better than others. When relocating a retail store, there are certain very definite hazards which should be avoided and a number of factors which should be given serious consideration.

The purpose of this brief guide is to furnish the retail store operator a summary of the factors to be considered when relocating his store, and to suggest practical techniques and procedures that may be used in making a logical and rational site selection decision. Although this guide was developed to assist the retailer when a relocation is contemplated, the general considerations, techniques, and procedures suggested are also applicable to the establishment of a new store or the expansion of the number of outlets of an existing business.

During the preparation of this guide, it became apparent that if the retailer adopted a strategy of considering all facts before he made the site location decision, he probably would never make the decision. In most situations there are just too much data for him to adequately consider and comprehend. Thus the retailer must abstract from the total situation those facts and data which he considers to be most relevant to the decision he must make and focus his attention on those considerations. There are, however, a number of questions that the retailer should seek to answer prior to making a relocation decision, and the decision should be based on factual data relating to each question. Some of the questions to be answered are as follows:

1. Which location offers the greatest trade potential?
2. Which location offers the greatest growth potential?
3. Which location offers the highest degree of accessibility to present customers?
4. Which location offers the highest degree of accessibility to potential new customers?
5. Which location provides the highest degree of freedom from competitive hazards?
6. Which location will best fit management philosophy, capabilities, and current mode of operation?
7. Which location is most physically desirable?
8. Which location is most economically feasible?

In the following sections of this guide, means of determining answers to the foregoing questions are discussed in terms of the general considerations involved, site selection techniques and procedures, the evaluation of factors, and the final decision. A checklist for use in gathering, analyzing, and evaluating data is included as Appendix 1.

A list of publications relating to retail store location is contained in Appendix 2. A number of these publications describe rational and quantitative techniques which are more complex than those contained in this guide. These publications offer an individual the opportunity of expanding his study of retail location to include techniques which are of a more sophisticated nature than those described in the following sections of this publication.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Purpose

The purpose of this section of the guide is to provide an "overview" of the considerations involved in the relocation of a retail store. Factors which are discussed here in general terms are presented in greater depth in the sections which follow.

Types of Site Selection Procedures

A retailer faced with the necessity of selecting a new site for his business may use one of several procedures in determining which location is best for his business. He may make the site relocation study himself. Basically, this procedure involves a comparison of the estimates of potential business of a number of locations with occupancy costs. He may invite proposals from real estate companies and study the proposals made. He may retain the services of a management consultant who will furnish the data upon which a decision can be made. However, no matter which course of action is selected, it is the retailer who must make the final site relocation decision.

If the retailer is not fully acquainted with the techniques for developing and analyzing data required for this phase of management or does not have the time, the services of a consultant who specializes in retail store location should be employed if it is economically feasible. This course of action has two major advantages. First, the retailer obtains survey data that he would ordinarily be unable to develop himself, together with a scientific analysis and quantitative evaluation of the data by trained personnel. Second, since the retailer is not directly involved in the collection and analysis of data, with the possibility of reaching premature conclusions, he is better able to retain objectivity in making the final decision. However, in those cases where it is not economically feasible to retain the services of a consultant, the retailer can make his survey and analysis with reasonable assurance of success provided he uses logical techniques and procedures.

Basic Value of Locations

Retail stores can be usefully placed into several categories for purposes of location analysis. Stores to which a customer is drawn directly from his home to shop are placed in the first category. In this instance, the customer's

primary purpose of leaving his home is to shop at a particular store. In a sense, the business of such a store is "self-generated" as a result of advertising, goodwill, traditional customer habit, or other related factors.

A second category relates to "shared" business. In this instance such factors as cost, time, and energy may cause the shopper to visit an area within which several stores are located. These stores may offer similar, related, or unrelated kinds of goods, and "share" in the total business generated by the merchants of the area. In this connection, studies have shown that certain types of stores tend to appear most frequently in proximate areas. For example, furniture stores are frequently located near restaurants, men's furnishings, shoe, and women's clothing stores. Certain types of stores are afraid of losing business to near competitors, while others locate near stores selling similar goods because they are complementary. In the latter case, the stores may carry similar lines of merchandise but with different price lines as well as different standard brands of merchandise.

A third category relates to stores or merchandise lines to which the customer is impulsively attracted while away from his place of residence for purposes other than shopping. Such businesses receive business rather than generate it.

Although the basic value of retail store locations must be considered in terms of the foregoing business categories, the value of a particular location to the small, independent retailer usually becomes a trade-off between cost and site productivity. Occupancy cost exists whether the retailer rents or owns the location. As a related matter, the amount the retailer can pay for occupancy depends on the total amount he can pay to attract customers; advertising is a part of this cost. Consequently, the more the retailer spends for advertising the less he can usually afford or need to spend for rent. Thus, the rent-advertising ratio must be given serious consideration when determining the basic value of a particular retail store location.

Site Selection Criteria

While it is difficult to categorically state that there are basic, universal principles that apply to the selection of retail locations, there seems to be a consensus among authorities concerning factors that serve as criteria in

site selection. The following factors are considered to be basic to the selection of a site for a retail establishment:

1. Trade potential -- The prime factor to be considered in the selection of a specific site is the potential of the surrounding area to support sales at a desired level or volume. A fundamental question must be answered. Assuming that the business is able to compete effectively with other stores, is there enough effective demand (demand plus buying power) in the market area to provide for profitable operations? Not only is the trade potential of an area the most important aspect to be considered in site selection, it also is the most difficult and expensive to accurately measure.
2. Growth potential -- Growth potential is closely associated with trade potential and site accessibility since all are in some measure related to sales volume. Due to the narrowing of retail profit ratios in recent years, retail concerns have resorted to an increase in total business volume to maintain or increase dollar profits. Thus, it is essential that the growth factor be given due consideration in site location or relocation, so that a business may be placed in an area of growing population and income.
3. Site accessibility -- Accessibility is measured in terms of the type of business and the potential source of customers. If the store generates most of its own business through advertising, it generally wants the most accessible location possible, commensurate with cost. In those cases where a concern expects to receive "shared" business, the site should be such that other stores located in the immediate area are complementary rather than fully competitive. Since the sales volume is made up of both "self-generated" and "shared" business in most stores, the evaluation of a specific location must take both factors into consideration. In a narrow sense, accessibility may mean putting a store in the way of as many people as possible or finding a location to which people are forced to come as near as possible. In a broader sense, site accessibility includes the consideration of such factors as traffic flow, private and public transportation, street location, parking space, and geographical obstacles.

4. Shopping habits -- Shoppers tend to become habituated to a traditional source of goods and to a shopping routine that fits their daily and weekly employment patterns, their economic strata, the type or types of goods purchased, the geographic location, and to some extent the ethnic, racial, and social background of the group of which they are a part. These habits may change imperceptibly over a long period of time, or they may be changed in a relatively short period of time through shifts in population or a major change in the location of the marketplace. When relocating a retail store, special attention should be given to selecting a site in a location between the customer and his traditional marketplace. Although the customer may tend to follow his habit of visiting the traditional market, it is more likely that he will shop at an intercepting location, other considerations being equal. In the final analysis, site accessibility strongly influences the establishment and maintenance of shopper habits.
5. Competition -- When considering competition as a matter relating to site location or relocation, both present and future competitive hazards must be examined. Such examination involves the location, character, size, and type of business conducted by competitive enterprises. Other things being equal, a location should be selected where there are as few competitive sites as possible and where competitive sites are not in a position that will intercept business. Actually, the competitive aspect of site selection is somewhat more complex than it may appear. For example, it might seem unwise to establish a shoe store in the vicinity of one already in existence. However, the possibility exists that, due to the different merchandise lines handled by the two stores and the differences in price lines, the two stores would actually complement each other rather than be placed in a competitive position. Although the competitive factor cannot be eliminated, every effort should be made to minimize its effect, commensurate with other vital site considerations.
6. Economics -- The relationship of site cost to productivity is an important consideration in site selection. The physical character of the building and the surrounding environment affects site

location cost and desirability. Cost differential between purchase or rent of a site must be examined, since these factors bear directly on the final selection of the location of a business. In this connection, the history of a site should be examined in detail since occupancy history can give a clue as to whether the site will meet the economic need of the business in the new location.

Management Philosophy and Capability

A decision by the small, independent operator to relocate his business should involve a period of self-appraisal. Management philosophy and capability play an important role in the selection of a site when the relocation is forced on the small businessman through the loss of lease or an urban renewal project or when it is brought about as a result of changing population patterns.

One of the greatest advantages that the small business enjoys over a large business is the possibility of adapting more quickly to changing situations. Less rigidly bound by policy and structure, small businesses generally are capable of moving directly and swiftly in meeting problems and needs. This natural advantage is often lost, however, because a small business operator is either unwilling or unable to adapt or lacks or does not exercise the aggressiveness and ingenuity required to capitalize on the asset of flexibility.

Unless the small business owner grows into the small business manager, problems in all areas of the operation are likely to develop and multiply. Certainly at the time the small business operator is faced with the problem of relocation, he must exercise a high order of managerial capability and aggressiveness. It is a time of major decision, not only for the owner himself, but for the future of the business as well. The actions he takes and the decisions he makes will reflect his philosophy towards the future of his business as well as his capability as a manager.

Current Mode of Operation

A retail business that has been in operation for a period of time will inevitably develop a mode of operation which fits its management philosophy and capabilities and reflects the size and nature of business, the type or types of merchandise lines carried, the character of its customers and their shopping habits, and retail practices common to the area. When considering relocation of the business, management must give early and continuing attention to its

mode of operation. If, for example, sales volume was developed on the basis of evening shopping hours and it is desired that this practice continue after relocation, a new site should be selected that will be compatible with this mode of operation. Thus, the retailer must seek to avoid dark and isolated areas in which there is a low level of night activity, unless the advertising program is designed to overcome this hazard and the hazard is sufficiently offset by low occupancy cost.

Characteristics and Location of Present Customers

A business contemplating relocation is a "going concern"; that is, the owner did not establish the business for the express purpose of going out of business. As a going concern, the business has customers, both regular patrons and walk-in shoppers. A business foreseeing a relocation should have a clear picture of its clientele.

The extent to which management desires to continue to serve its present customers will bear directly on location sites considered and the final selection of the site. Unless management intends to change its present mode of operation and merchandise lines and to cater to a different type of customer, it is essential that the relocation site be so situated as to minimize changes in the shopping habits of its present customers.

The Downtown Location Versus an Outlying Location

In an historic sense, accessibility is the factor that made downtown the major retail center of a community. However, the growth of communities accompanying the population explosion, together with changes in modes of transportation, has lessened the central city's accessibility for shopping by the general public in major population centers.

The size, character, and complexity of the city in which a business is located will play a decisive role in the relocation decision-making process. If a city is of sufficient size and complexity to make accessibility of the downtown area to the general shopping public a problem, there are only two primary reasons for locating or relocating a retail establishment in the downtown area. First, a downtown location provides shoppers the advantage of a large selection of goods offered by the high density of retail stores already in operation. Secondly, a retail establishment located downtown can serve the downtown working, transient, and resident population. Conversely, if the city is

small and the downtown area is accessible to the general buying public, accessibility is, of course, still the dominant factor.

In the case of the larger population centers, occupancy costs, the type of business, the character and location of present customers, and changing population patterns may dictate the selection of an outlying or isolated location.

The Effect of Store Characteristics on Site Location

The type or types of merchandise carried by a retail store and the mode of operation will inevitably result in the store having certain inherent characteristics. Frequently, an analysis of these characteristics will indicate the type of relocation site that will be best for a particular store. For example, the main characteristics of a furniture store are as follows:

1. Low value of merchandise in proportion to bulk.
2. Large amount of floor space required for interior display.
3. Low rate of turnover.
4. An established clientele, usually based on economic strata.
5. Much advertising and promotion.
6. Shopping lines sold in addition to the main line (lamps and pictures in addition to furniture).

A comparison of the main characteristics of a retail furniture store with characteristics of other types of stores indicates that, generally speaking, the furniture store should occupy a low-cost site. However, furniture stores vary in character, size, and mode of operation. Some stores concentrate on services, such as interior decorating, with sales lines limited to prestige furniture; others concentrate on volume sales of low-priced furniture and offer little service. This wide variance in character of operation and merchandise lines is reflected in a similar variance in locations. Furniture stores operate successfully in downtown, outlying, and even isolated locations.

The inherent characteristics of the business, as well as the other general considerations set forth in this section of the guide, are involved in the site relocation decision-making process. These considerations are treated in greater depth in the sections that follow.

SITE SELECTION TECHNIQUES AND PROCEDURES

Basic Choice Limitation

Picking out the actual site for the relocation of a small, independent retail store is frequently largely "taking what is available." Chains and some large independents can, and frequently do, wait for months and even years for the site that is best for them. A small operator, however, cannot be so particular. This situation results in a much less scientific and careful selection of sites for the small, independent stores than for others. If the retailer has any choice, however, he should weigh the possibilities carefully and make as complete a study as time and money will permit. There are certain very definite hazards which should be avoided and certain factors which should be considered favorably. In any event, logical and rational procedures and techniques should be followed in selecting the site for the relocation of a business.

Types of Locations

All types of locations should be fully considered. Initially, management must be on guard lest it consciously or unconsciously prematurely select a site prior to evaluating all logical locations. Retailers seeking a new place of business may select a site in one of the following types of locations:

1. The downtown retail district.
2. A major outlying shopping district.
3. A large outlying shopping center.
4. A neighborhood shopping center.
5. An isolated area.

In discussing site selection procedures and techniques, the term "area" refers to one of the foregoing types of locations, while the term "site" refers to a specific, identifiable point or building within a particular area. In a substantial number of instances, both area and site have common characteristics in relation to criteria for selecting a location for a retail store. Thus, the information that follows has been so arranged that both area and site are covered in simultaneous presentation where possible.

Basic Procedure

Site selection basically involves a narrowing-down procedure. First, general areas are identified and all possible sites are catalogued. Second, a preliminary analysis is made of each proposed area and site location, using the general considerations discussed in this guide as a point of departure. Third, areas and sites that are clearly unfit for the intended purpose are eliminated from further consideration. Fourth, a detailed analysis is made of each site within selected general areas. Fifth, a decision is made, based on an evaluation of the several sites under consideration.

Analytical Aids

In selecting a relocation site, a great deal of data will be collected which must be analyzed and evaluated. The analysis of data can be simplified through the use of a checklist such as shown in Appendix 1. Also, maps should be prepared which show the following:

1. Population density and purchasing power potential.
2. Location of present customers.
3. Location of competitors.
4. Traffic flow and other accessibility factors.
5. Potential location sites.
6. New growth areas.

Cataloguing of Possible Areas and Sites

Although it may be a wise course of action to take a cursory look at all possible locations, it frequently is illogical to attempt to catalogue all possible areas and sites. This is especially true in metropolitan areas. Usually it is the better course of action to select several general areas, then catalogue "possible" sites within each area. The areas initially selected for possible relocation should be identified after briefly considering population density, trade potential, growth patterns, competitive factors, the location of present customers, and the accessibility of the areas to present customers. The areas selected for consideration should include as many of the types of locations set forth above as possible.

Elimination of Areas

As noted above, it is generally advisable to select a number of areas for preliminary analysis. However, once preliminary analysis has been completed,

it usually is desirable to eliminate some of the areas from further consideration for quantitative reasons. Although the retailer may be inclined to favor a downtown location over an outlying shopping center or an isolated area, these latter locations should not be completely eliminated at this time. Concurrent analysis of all types of locations may indicate a weakness in one that could not have been determined without this counter-analytical phase.

Once general areas have been selected for detailed consideration, "available" site locations within each should be obtained from real estate companies or through physical search. As site locations are identified, their characteristics should be listed, analyzed, and evaluated by techniques discussed in the following paragraphs.

Location of Present Customers

From a practical viewpoint, good management practice demands that the retail store operator periodically determine the location of his clientele, since urban growth patterns and population mobility will change relationships between the customer and the marketplace. Shifts in the location of a store's clientele may dictate the relocation of the store. When the decision is made to relocate a retail store, it is imperative that the retailer have a detailed knowledge of the approximate residential location of his customers. While a general knowledge of customer location by area is helpful, validity of data will depend on accurate and detailed records.

There are several practical methods a retail store operator may use to determine the approximate location of a substantial number of his customers. Actually, all methods may be used and the results plotted on a map. In turn, this map may be used in connection with a population density map, a map showing the plotted location of competitors, and a map showing plots of potential site relocations. The several methods are as follows: First, plot charge account addresses. Second, plot credit and time payment account addresses. Third, plot addresses where deliveries are made. Fourth, interview customers and plot approximate addresses given by the customers. When preparing the map, duplicate addresses should be eliminated where possible.

The interview technique used should be very simple. A couple of questions related to the availability or nonavailability of merchandise may be asked to warm up the customer, followed by a question such as, "What is the street

intersection nearest your home?" This question is not too personal nor too specific for the customer to answer, yet gives sufficient information concerning the individual's approximate residential location.

Location of Potential Customers and Their Purchasing Power

Population density and purchasing power relate directly to potential customers of a business, and must be considered on at least two occasions in the analytical process leading to a site selection decision. First, population density and purchasing power must be considered briefly at the time general areas are selected. Second, these factors must be analyzed in depth when each specific site is evaluated.

Population and purchasing power are integral aspects of the trade potential of an area. The economic analysis of such areas is a time-consuming and expensive process. The services of a market research specialist should be considered if a large investment is involved. However, the small, independent retailer usually cannot afford to retain the services of such a specialist, but must make his own analysis of potential trade areas.

Given a relatively uncomplicated situation, there is no reason why the retailer who studies the subject cannot make a reasonable estimate of the potential business at a specific site. However, he must be willing to spend the time and effort needed and should apply logical techniques in the process. In fact, there may be an advantage in this course of action since the retailer will know his business better than anyone else, and in the final analysis, it is he who must live with the decisions that are made.

The basic questions to be answered are as follows: Where is the population located? What is the purchasing power of the population? What part of the purchasing power can the retailer hope to attract? In this connection, it must be remembered that no population center remains stationary. Any area selected for relation is subject to either growth or decline. It is important that the trade area supporting the relocation site be one that is growing now and will continue to do so.

In determining the trade potential, the retailer should divide his effort into a logical sequence of actions. First, he should examine the total population picture of his community, including its growth potential, and locate population density centers. Second, he should relate purchasing power to these

centers. Third, he should evaluate proposed sites in relation to area population concentration and purchasing power.

Population must be considered in terms of location and density. Population figures for a general area may be obtained from the latest census reports and from studies and reports prepared by chambers of commerce and development agencies. Frequently, population density maps may be obtained from such sources. Where available, they should be used in site analysis. If such a map is not available, one can be developed by obtaining a map of the city showing the census districts and a list of the latest census figures by district. Using an appropriate scale of values, each district is colored or shaded to indicate its population value as contrasted with other districts. Vertical aerial photographs of the area or areas under consideration also may be used to determine population density. When the photograph is used, houses in specific areas are counted on the basis of blocks and the number transcribed to a street map. Then, using a reasonable average occupancy count per dwelling, an estimate of population density is made. This count may be verified to some extent by visiting the areas on foot or by vehicle.

Growth potential is an integral aspect of population. When considering growth potential of an area or group of areas, a map showing new-growth areas should be obtained. If such a map is not available, one may be developed by plotting building permits, new subdivisions, and areas of recent major population increases on a city map. This, plus the retailer's knowledge of the general area, frequently will indicate those areas in which growth may be expected. Growth factor items are listed in Appendix 1.

In reviewing the foregoing, it appears that the small retailer can identify population concentrations rather easily and compare these areas with the locations of alternative relocation sites, present and potential customers, and potential competitors. This analysis can be extended further to site accessibility studies, which are discussed later in this section.

The composition and occupations of the people in the several trade areas supporting the relocation sites being considered are important aspects of population study. For example, the buying habits and purchasing power of industrial workers may differ from those of office workers and professional groups. The economic strata of the people making up a particular center of population are important, since income is the chief determinant of sales for most retail

stores. In the final analysis, the success of a store, when relocated, will depend primarily on whether there is enough effective demand in the market area to support it.

Techniques used to accurately gauge the purchasing power of people located within definable areas are complex, often sophisticated, and usually expensive. The retailer must seek out all relevant published data, discuss the matter with financial advisers, real estate men, and others. From a practical viewpoint, it should be recognized that a retailer seeking a relocation site is currently in business and should have a fairly comprehensive knowledge of his community. Usually, the small, independent retailer must interpret published data or choose a trade area for relocation that has proven adequate purchasing power.

Purchasing power information is published by several commercial concerns. These publications usually contain data for particular areas relating to population, individual income, number of households and income per household, number and types of stores, and estimated sales by type of merchandise. The foregoing data are collected on city, county, and metropolitan area levels. Such information is useful in a general sense, but may not relate precisely to a particular area or site within the general area specified in the particular publication.

An additional reference source is the Census of Business issued periodically by the U. S. Department of Commerce. This publication provides information relating to kinds of businesses and merchandise lines, number of establishments, sales, and percentage of sales accounted for by specified merchandise lines.

Measuring Site Accessibility

Accessibility refers to the ease of reaching a location. Ordinarily it would appear that an analysis of traffic, public and private transportation, and parking would indicate whether a specific retail location has an acceptable degree of accessibility to the shopping public. However, the customer will weigh the advantages and disadvantages of retail locations in terms of what he or she has to pay in cost, time, and energy. Thus site accessibility has many facets which must be considered when seeking a retail relocation site.

An important reason for choosing a particular site for the relocation of a business is to make it easy for current and potential customers to reach the

business location. However, the retailer must do more than seek a place which is easily reached by customers. He must find means of putting his store in the way of as many people as possible, find a location to which people are forced to come as near as possible, and influence people to change their normal circulation patterns to visit his store as shoppers. Thus site accessibility cannot be measured in geographic terms alone; in the final analysis, it must be measured in terms of the type of business conducted and the potential source of customers. Accessibility is a matter of degree -- the accessibility of a particular site to the market as compared with another site is a relative matter.

The type of business conducted involves both the mode of operation and the merchandise lines carried. For example, a furniture store that attempts to generate a major part of its sales through advertising has an accessibility factor differing from a neighborhood grocery store that does little or no advertising. Both the self-generative aspect and the type of goods carried affect accessibility. The degree of inconvenience a potential customer will bear to visit a particular marketplace reflects both the frequency of purchase of a particular type of merchandise and the desire to shop at a particular place engendered by promotional efforts of the merchant. This aspect of site accessibility cannot be accurately and independently measured. Rather, the type of business and mode of operation are analyzed and a determination is made as to which type of location would most likely afford maximum accessibility, providing customer locations correlate with the site being considered.

The geographic relationships between the residential location of customers and retail store locations can be appraised in tangible terms such as traffic flow, public and private transportation, and parking facilities. Factors that should be considered are outlined in Appendix 1 and discussed briefly in the following paragraphs.

People moving about create traffic flow. This flow is measurable and related directly to retail store location. Traffic forms certain patterns which change with changes in the environment. It provides links between a particular store and its present and potential customers; but such links may be intercepted by a competitor.

The importance of traffic varies with the type of store and merchandise policies. Stores that must rely on the passers-by who can be converted into

buyers find it profitable to pay higher rentals usually demanded for sites of maximum traffic. Business which usually seeks dense traffic for this and other reasons are drugstores, shoe stores, hat shops, men's furnishings shops, and gasoline and oil stations.

The quality or composition of the traffic is by far the most single important factor determining the value of a retail site for certain types of businesses. When analyzing traffic, public transportation, private transportation, and parking must be considered along with the pedestrian. The nature of the traffic, where it comes from, and where it is going are key considerations. There is a vital difference, for example, between a traffic stream made up largely of office workers on their way to and from work and a stream made up of women on their way to shop. Also, the availability of adequate parking facilities at or near the retail location will vitally affect the accessibility of a store catering to customers who normally use private transportation while shopping.

Although volume of traffic is important, there is no dependable relationship, for example, between volume of pedestrian traffic and the value of a retail site as measured in sales volume. However, when the volume of traffic is broken down into its component parts and applied to certain types of stores, particular benefits may be identified. This procedure is a complicated and complex one and the process usually too expensive to be used by the smaller retailers. Although some of the large companies work up their own traffic flow records, more and more of them use traffic counts prepared by research agencies, local real estate companies, transit companies, local chambers of commerce, and others. As a matter of fact, there appears to be a tendency to use such counts only for pioneer locations or to validate previous counts when large investments are contemplated.

The retailer has the basic choice of locating near or within a place of proven accessibility or of making his own accessibility analysis. However, even in an area of proven accessibility, the retailer should make a brief analysis of accessibility factors relating to his business and the site under consideration to insure that no important considerations have been overlooked.

Analysis of Competitive Hazards

A retailer contemplating the relocation of his business must analyze the competitive forces he will face in each proposed location, together with his

ability to compete successfully with existing and potential stores. This analysis should be made in a logical manner.

The actual locations of existing competitors may be determined from the Yellow Pages of the telephone book and plotted on a street map on which potential relocation sites have also been plotted. A checklist of items to look for in evaluating each competitive store is then developed. (See Appendix 1.) Most of the data required by the checklist may be obtained through comparative shopping, personal visits to the competitive stores to observe operations, and analysis of advertising carried in local news media.

After each competitor has been analyzed, a master location pattern for each site may be developed showing the competitive businesses. This pattern is based on geographic locations to emphasize the relationships between the trade area or areas, the potential relocation site, and the competitive stores.

Estimating Business Volume for the Relocation Site

There is no set method for estimating the amount of business a new store or relocated store may expect to get. The small, independent retailer must make his own judgment based on his knowledge of his present customers, the accessibility of the new site to present and potential customers, the competitive hazards in the new location, and the total purchasing power in the trade area. In this connection, the sales of a relocated store usually must come from one or more of the following sources:

1. Present customers -- A store's success in taking its present customers with it when it is relocated will depend primarily on the accessibility of the new site.
2. Customers of other stores in the new area -- A store's success in taking away a competitor's customers will depend primarily on the relative accessibility of the store to customers and on the extent to which it can provide the price lines, quality, variety, and service which are wanted.
3. New residents in the relocation trading area -- New residents in an area are the result of either area growth or new residents replacing those who have moved from the area. In any event, success in attracting their business will depend essentially on the same

factors that related to obtaining the trade of customers of other stores.

4. Shoppers residing in remote areas -- Success in this case depends on providing what is wanted. However, the factors of cost, time, and energy become more critical as distance increases.

Occupancy Cost Versus Site Productivity

As previously noted, the value of a particular location to the retailer usually becomes a trade-off between cost and site productivity. At some point in the site relocation analysis, the retailer will be faced with the hard, cold fact of occupancy cost. At this point he must compare site cost (rent, lease, or purchase) with his estimate of business volume for the particular site being considered. In this connection, it must be remembered that advertising will continue to play an important role in the total cost of occupancy.

EVALUATION AND DECISION

Objective

There may be no perfect spot on which to relocate a business, but some are better than others. The basic objective of evaluation is to identify the locations that are clearly superior.

Data Characteristics

Since there is a great deal of data upon which a relocation decision can be based, the retailer must abstract from the total situation that which he considers to be most relevant to the decision he must make. The material presented in previous sections of this guide provides a basis upon which the retailer may identify and collect relevant data. Additionally, the checklist shown as Appendix 1 furnishes an outline for data collection, analysis, and evaluation.

Ideally, the decision should be a "quantitative" one; that is, one in which the facts add up in a mathematical way to indicate a superior site without the need of a verbal, reasoned process. However, the facts and data collected may either be "quantitative" or "qualitative" in nature or have both characteristics.

Quantitative data are those facts that may be expressed in terms of quantity or amount. For example, the number of competitive stores, traffic flow, and time and space factors may be expressed in quantitative terms with mathematical precision. Qualitative data are facts that describe the character or distinguishing attributes inherent in the object being considered. Thus, the kinds of stores in a neighborhood and their appearance are distinguished in qualitative terms.

While every reasonable effort should be made to "quantify" all possible data for comparison purposes, extreme caution should be used to prevent assigning unrealistic values to data that would cause inaccurate measurement. When evaluating an area or site, both quantitative and qualitative data must be considered. In the first instance, an answer expressed in mathematical terms is possible. In the second instance, the value of a particular item or factor is expressed in verbal terms. Usually, a decision must be derived from considering both verbal and mathematical answers; thus, the decision must be a reasoned

judgment in which all factors, both quantitative and qualitative, are given due weight. It follows, therefore, that evaluation is the weighing of the total "evidence" that has been obtained for each area and site.

Evaluation Technique

The person evaluating areas and sites for possible relocation of a retail store should employ methods and techniques which best suit his capabilities and the time available. There is no single "best" method; however, it is essential that the entire analysis and evaluation process be put in written form since such a procedure will encourage the person making the evaluation to consider all relevant matter. Additionally, the written record will provide a basis for later review and reevaluation, if required. The following is a simple, straightforward method that may be used when more sophisticated methods are not required or desired.

The first step in the evaluation process is area analysis. In this connection, it has been previously shown that, where possible, all types of locations (areas) should be considered prior to analyzing particular relocation sites. Using applicable parts of the checklist shown in Appendix 1, or a similar one, and pertinent analytical aids, each area is first analyzed and evaluated without reference to other areas. The advantages and disadvantages of the area, derived from consideration of each checklist factor, are listed in a simple, understandable form. Using this list as a base of consideration, a reasoned judgment is made relative to the degree of acceptability, or value, of the area for the proposed relocation.

In the second step, the several areas under consideration are compared. Here the evaluation may be made by seeking answers to the following questions:

1. Which location offers the greatest trade potential?
2. Which location offers the greatest growth potential?
3. Which location offers the highest degree of accessibility to present customers?
4. Which location offers the highest degree of accessibility to potential new customers?
5. Which location provides the highest degree of freedom from competitive hazards?
6. Which location will best fit management philosophy, capabilities, and current mode of operation?

7. Which location is most physically desirable?
8. Which location is most economically feasible?

Obviously, there is a difference in the inherent values of the factors in the several questions. For example, purchasing power and accessibility are usually considered to be very important factors in retail location since they relate directly to site productivity; yet, occupancy cost is a fundamental consideration. The retailer making the evaluation must assign values or weights to the several factors as he thinks best.

In seeking answers to the foregoing questions (and others, if desired), each question is initially treated independently. The several areas are compared with one another in light of each stated question. Based on an analysis of the factors involved in the question, the relative values of the several relocation areas are determined. After all questions have been considered, the areas as entities are compared, and the overall comparative advantages and disadvantages of each are listed. As a result of comparative evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of the several areas, one or possibly two areas should be identified as clearly superior for relocation purposes.

At this point, particular sites within the superior area or areas are evaluated in a manner similar to that used in evaluating the type locations. Again using applicable parts of the checklist, a narrowing-down process is followed. For example, in site evaluation particular buildings or sites are considered; occupancy cost, appearance, sales area, and location within the general area are some of the specific factors analyzed.

The Decision

The retailer's choice of a particular site for the relocation of his store will settle the pattern of his future business for some time to come. The decision reached at this point becomes his general plan for relocation, or provides the basis therefor. Thus, a rationale or basis for the decision should be developed in brief summarizing remarks which can be referred to during the location process.

The decision reached as a result of the site evaluation phase should be considered a tentative one and the documented decision-making process laid aside for a few weeks. Then the retailer should validate his decision by

reevaluating all factors previously considered and any new ones that may have arisen during the development of the detailed relocation plan.

Post-Decision Actions

Although this guide is concerned primarily with matters relating to the selection of a relocation site for a retail store, the person making the analysis and decision will inevitably look beyond the basic decision during the decision-making process. As a matter of fact, it is the wise course of action to develop a detailed relocation plan before negotiations for the site are completed.

The overall plan should include the following considerations:

1. Financial arrangements.
2. Site acquisition.
3. Site improvements, including required construction.
4. Changes in mode of operation, if contemplated.
5. Changes in merchandise lines, if contemplated.
6. Internal physical arrangement of the new store, including new equipment.
7. Movement to the new location.
8. Relocation advertising campaign directed to both present customers and potential customers in the new trade area.
9. Long-range advertising policy.
10. Time schedule.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1
RELOCATION CHECKLIST

These guidelines are suggested as a basic checklist for use in evaluating the feasibility of each area and site considered for the relocation of a retail store.

1. Trade potential

- a. What is the total population within the trade area?
- b. Where are the centers of heavy population density located?
- c. Where are present and potential customers located?
- d. What is the character of the population? (Ethnic, social and economic strata, type of work.)
- e. What is the individual income level in the community?
- f. How many households are there in the community and what is the income per household? (Show by area if possible.)
- g. What are the estimated total annual sales for the area by type of merchandise?
- h. What is the estimated degree of success the store will achieve in retaining its present customers on relocation?
- i. What is the estimated degree of success the store will achieve in taking away a competitor's customers on relocation?
- j. What success will the store have in attracting customers from other areas when relocated?

2. Growth potential

- a. Where are the areas of recent population growth located?
- b. What has been the magnitude of growth during the last five years in the area under consideration?
- c. To what degree will the following affect the future growth of the area being considered?
 - Residential zoning changes.
 - Other than residential zoning changes.
 - New sanitary and water systems built or planned.
 - Other utilities trends.
 - Vacant land market.
 - Land-use patterns set forth in area development plans.
 - Retail building and improvement trends.
 - Income trends for average family units in the area.

- Plant and equipment expenditure trends.
- Payroll trends.

3. Accessibility

- a. Present customers -- Based on the factors listed in paragraph 3 c, what is the estimate of the accessibility of present customers to the area or site under consideration?
- b. Potential customers -- Based on the factors listed in paragraph 3 c, what is the estimate of the accessibility of potential customers to the area or site under consideration?

c. Accessibility factors

(1) General considerations

- What is the type of business conducted?
- What is the mode of operation?
- What merchandise lines are carried?

(2) Pedestrian traffic

- Is the site on a logical and well-traveled route between major office buildings and the retail district?
- Is the location adjacent to any non-mercantile institutions?
- Is the site on the shady or sunny side of the street?
- Are the street crossings difficult to negotiate?
- What is the pedestrian traffic flow and what is it composed of?
- What kinds of people work nearby?
- What are the working hours of people who work in the neighborhood?
- What types of people reside in or near the site?

(3) Public transportation

- What type of public transportation serves the site?
- How many trips are made per hour?
- What is the cost of transportation?
- What area or areas are served?
- What interchange or connecting service is offered?
- Is the discharge point or points convenient to the site?
- What plans have been made for improving and extending public transportation facilities?

(4) Private transportation

- What vehicular traffic arteries service the site?
- What are the width of roadways and direction of traffic?
- Where are the traffic artery intersections?
- What is the traffic flow and congestion factor?
- What are the speed limits and road conditions?
- Where are traffic signal devices located?
- What mobility factors are involved, such as grade curves and detours?
- Are throughways and expressways accessible?

(5) Parking facilities

- What parking facilities are available and where are they located?
- Is there sufficient parking for the stores in the area?
- What is the cost of parking?
- If parking is on the street, what does it cost and what is the turnover period?
- What potential is there for increasing parking facilities?

4. Competitive hazards

- a. How many fully competitive stores are located in the same block, on the same side of street, across the street, and within one mile of the site being considered?
- b. How many partially competing stores are located in the same block, on the same side of street, across the street, and within one mile of the site being considered?
- c. What kinds of stores are located next door to the site being considered?
- d. Are there other potentially competitive sites that might intercept trade if competitive stores were located on these sites?
- e. For each potential competitor, determine the following:
 - Name of business and location.
 - Variety and selection of merchandise.
 - Gross sales area (square feet of store sales area).
 - Parking facilities.
 - Appearance and customer appeal of the store.
 - Displays, advertising, and other promotional aspects.

- Credit policy.
- Customer relations policy.
- Store identification in public's mind.
- Degree of possible customer interchange within the potential location.

5. Management capability and mode of operation

- a. Does present management have the capabilities required to operate the business successfully in the area or site being considered?
- b. Will any changes be required in management's philosophy if the store is relocated in the area or site under consideration?
- c. Will a relocation to the area or site being considered require any major change in the present mode of operation? If so, what changes will be required?

6. Area and site physical characteristics

a. General characteristics

- (1) Is the area physically desirable?
- (2) Do any of the following unfavorable characteristics exist?
 - Fire hazards.
 - Cemetery.
 - Hospital.
 - Industry.
 - Relief office.
 - Undertaking establishments.
 - Smoke, dust, disagreeable odors.
 - Old or worn-out neighboring structure.
 - Poor sidewalks and pavement.
- (3) Is any major construction under way or planned for the area?

b. Building characteristics

- What is the frontage (in feet)?
- What is the depth (in feet)?
- How much total sales space is available?
- Will the shape of the building permit efficient operations?
- What is the condition of the building?
- Are light and heat facilities adequate?
- Are the entrances adequate?

- Are display windows adequate?
- What is the history of the building?

7. Site economics

- a. What are the rent-lease-purchase costs?
- b. What are the leasing terms?
- c. What will total occupancy cost amount to?
- d. What will the rent-advertising ratio be?
- e. What other costs will occur if the store is moved to the location being considered?

Appendix 2
SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

The following list of publications is a partial listing of those contained in the Small Business Bibliography No. 16 published by the Small Business Administration in January 1964. This publication may be obtained free from the Small Business Administration, Washington, D. C. 20416, or any of its field offices. Additionally, several other publications of recent date are listed.

Public Documents

U. S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, Washington, D. C. 20416.

Management Research Summaries

How Urban Renewal Projects Affect Small Business, November 1960, No. 1.
Small Store Opportunities in Planned Shopping Centers, March 1961, No. 17.
Problems of Small Business, August 1961, No. 42.
Case Studies of Small Retail Stores, September 1961, No. 45.
Small Business Success and Failure Cases, March 1962, No. 58.
Small Business Problem Studies, April 1962, No. 63.
Site Evaluation for Small Retailers, September 1962, No. 78.
Assessing the Prospects for New Retail Businesses, November 1962, No. 89.
Buying and Selling a Small Business, 1963, No. 120.
Ten Small Retailers and Their Problems, 1963, No. 109.

The foregoing studies, prepared in full report form, were sponsored under SBA's Small Business Management Research Grant Program. They may be reviewed at any SBA field office or at certain depository libraries whose addresses may be obtained from the SBA field offices or from the Small Business Administration. The two directly applicable are:

John E. Mertes, Creative Site Evaluation for the Small Retailer. 1962. 236 pp. The study is an extensive discussion of the factors to consider for drive-in, shopping center, and downtown retail store sites.

Thomas Lea Davidson, Some Effects of the Growth of Planned Shopping Centers on Small Retailers. 1960. 178 pp. The report covers the many aspects of locating in a planned shopping center, including the problem of obtaining space in such centers.

Books and Pamphlets

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF LAUNDERING, Joliet, Ill. 60434.

Store Location Survey. Special Report No. 229. A statistical study of location.

ARCHITECTURAL RECORD, 119 West 40th Street, New York, N. Y. 10018.

Shops and the Market Place. Building Types Study 263. October 1958. 193 pp. A study of stores in relation to types of districts and attraction to shoppers.

BAYLOR UNIVERSITY, SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, Waco, Tex. 76703.

Tomorrow's City. Baylor Bulletin. March 1958. 17 pp. Considers declines in downtown shopping districts of selected cities. Corrective measures are suggested. Also looks at suburban center planning.

BUREAU OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH, GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY, East Lansing, Mich. 48824.

Bernard J. La Londe, Differentials in Supermarket Drawing Power. 1962. 72 pp. This study directs most of its attention to developing a conceptual framework that recognizes the dynamic nature of current and possible movements of people in urban areas and is illustrated as a technique for the location of retail food outlets.

BUREAU OF BUSINESS RESEARCH, THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY, Columbus, O. 43210.

C. T. Jonassen, Downtown Versus Suburban Shopping. 1953. 99 pp. A significant study of the downtown location in competition with outlying centers for customers.

BUREAU OF HIGHWAY TRAFFIC, YALE UNIVERSITY, Strathcona Hall, New Haven, Conn. 06520.

Donald E. Cleveland and Edward A. Mueller, Traffic Characteristics at Regional Shopping Centers. 1961. 49 pp. This information is useful for the merchant planning to locate in an existing shopping center.

CENTER FOR REGIONAL STUDIES, THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS, Lawrence, Kan.

A Programmed Solution for Estimating Retail Sales Potential. 1966. 64 pp. Presents a computer programmed solution for estimating sales of a proposed retail development.

F. W. DODGE CORPORATION, 119 West 40th Street, New York, N. Y. 10018.

Richard L. Nelson, Selection of Retail Location. 1958. 422 pp. An excellent book on location covering five categories: (1) Influence of Location on Retailing, (2) Selection of Location, (3) Technique of Estimating Business Volume, (4) Shopping Centers, and (5) New Trends in Location Economics.

DOYLE, DANE, BERNBACH, INC., 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N. Y. 10036.

E. B. Weiss, Highway Retailing: The Next Great Retail Revolution. 1958. 56 pp. This brochure is the first marketing analysis of highway retailing now known as drive-in retailing.

ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY, CLARK UNIVERSITY, Worcester, Mass. 01610.

William Applebaum, et al, Store Location and Development Studies. 1961. A collection of articles that have appeared in Economic Geography on retail store location and kindred problems.

THE ENO FOUNDATION FOR TRAFFIC CONTROL, Saugatuck, Conn. 06882.

Eugene J. Kelly, Shopping Centers. 1956. 192 pp. Part 1 of this study is an excellent summation of various site location theories and is noteworthy for its conceptualization of the retail structure of the metropolitan economy.

Robert E. Schmidt and Earl Campbell, Highway Traffic Estimation. 1956. 247 pp. This study is the best treatise on traffic estimation, especially for urban traffic patterns.

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, Los Angeles, Calif. 90024.

David L. Huff, Determination of Intra-Urban Trade Area. 1962. 47 pp. This study develops an approach for circumscribing trade areas for tentatively planned shopping centers.

HIGHWAY RESEARCH BOARD, 2101 Constitution Avenue, Washington, D. C. 20037.

J. T. Stegmaier, Parking and Its Relationship to Business. Special Report 11-D. 1956. 16 pp. A definitive study of the relationship of parking to business growth.

INSTITUTE OF TRAFFIC ENGINEERS, YALE UNIVERSITY, Strathcona Hall, New Haven, Conn. 06520.

Alan M. Voorhees, A General Theory of Traffic Movement. 1955. 16 pp. A very useful paper for those interested in traffic movement and character.

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY, Publishers, 60 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10011.

Rayburn D. Tousley, Eugene Clark, and Fred E. Clark, Principles of Marketing. Chapter 9, "The Location and Size of Retail Stores," pp. 168-194. 1962. The chapter presents the distribution of retail trade by city size and changes in its retail locational structure.

McGRAW-HILL BOOK COMPANY, INC., 330 West 42nd Street, New York, N. Y. 10036.

Ferdinand F. Mauser, Modern Marketing Management: An Integrated Approach. Chapter 14, "Location Selection and Development," pp. 357-384. 1961. An excellent consideration of the total site selection problem. The chapter discusses (1) The Nature of and Approaches to Space Logistics, (2) Regional and Community Developments, (3) Retail Site Location, and (4) Some Implications of Location Decisions.

Population and Its Distribution: The United States Market. Eighth Edition. Compiled by J. Walter Thompson. 1961. 471 pp. An excellent source for population statistics used in trading analysis.

THE NATIONAL RETAIL MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION, 100 West 31st Street, New York, N. Y. 10001.

Paul E. Smith, Shopping Centers: Planning and Management. Chapter 2, "The Analysis of the Site for the Shopping Center," pp. 39-59. 1956. 200 pp. This chapter is a careful delineation of the procedures to use in the selection of a shopping center site.

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, 112 State Street, Albany, N. Y. 12207.

Market Measures for Cities and Villages. March 1958. 12 pp. Describes various community types and their population, employment, purchasing power, housing characteristics.

PITMAN PUBLISHING CORPORATION, 20 East 46th Street, New York, N. Y. 10017.

Committee on Retailing, Principles of Retailing. Chapter 9, "The Site on Which to Locate," pp. 174-192. 1955. Discusses problems of downtown site selection.

PRENTICE-HALL, INC., Englewood Cliffs, N. J. 07632.

Charles M. Edwards, Jr. and Russell A. Brown, Retail Advertising and Sales Promotion. Third Edition. Chapter 22, "Advertising Research: Measuring the Retail Market," pp. 572-598. 1959. This commentary is the best source for methods to be used in measuring the trade territory for a store.

REAL ESTATE RESEARCH PROGRAM, BUREAU OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, Los Angeles, Calif. 90024.

Gerald J. Foster and Howard J. Nelson, Ventura Boulevard: A String-Type Shopping Street. 1958. 63 pp. This publication is of interest because of the techniques used for the analysis.

REINHOLD PUBLISHING CORPORATION, 430 Park Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10022.

Geoffrey Baker and Brune Funaro, Parking. 1958. Photos and plans of parking lots, ramp garages, parking decks, and so forth. Layout of parking space and zoning requirements are included.

RICHARD D. IRWIN, INC., 1818 Ridge Road, Homewood, Ill. 60430.

D. J. Duncan and C. F. Phillips, Retailing: Principles and Methods. Sixth Edition. Chapter IV, "Store Location," pp. 93-119. 1963. The authors discuss the basic factors regarding location.

RONALD PRESS COMPANY, 15 East 26th Street, New York, N. Y. 10010.

W. R. Davidson and Paul R. Brown, Retailing Management. Second Edition. Chapter 3, "Store Location: Community and Area Problems," pp. 49-74. Chapter 4, "Store Location: Selection of a Specific Site," pp. 75-94. 1960. An excellent analysis of the total site selection problem.

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON PRESS, THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON, Seattle, Wash. 98105.

Edgar M. Horwood and Ronald R. Royce, Studies of the Central Business District and Urban Freeway Development. 1959. 184 pp. The authors have examined the changing business structure in relation to the highway network. Of interest to those seeking new potential locations.

URBAN LAND INSTITUTE, Ring Building, 1200 18th Street, N. W., Washington, D. C. 20036.

D. L. Curtiss, Operation Shopping Centers. 1961. 189 pp. A complete survey of the operation of shopping centers.

The New Highways: Challenge to the Metropolitan Region. Technical Bulletin 31. 1957. 92 pp. A symposium on the impact of the new Interstate Highway system.

Store Location and Customer Behavior. Technical Bulletin 56. 1966. 18 pp. Describes a method designed to provide specific quantitative information each retailer needs when he makes a locational decision.