



Downtown Retail Recruitment Check list

Community action items to recruit new businesses

Market Assessment & Data Collection

Gathering market data provides the foundation for targeting the right retailers for your downtown.

Downtown Environment Enhancement

Focus on improving your downtown's physical environment, activating public spaces and supporting businesses.

Recruitment Preparation

Building your recruitment toolkit. Create compelling marketing materials and develop clear incentive programs.

Active Recruitment

Focus on identifying and connecting with regional businesses, brokers, and property owners.

Implementation Support

Streamline the business startup process. Build a support network of contractors and resources.

Monitoring & Adjustment

Conduct quarterly reviews and annual assessments to track success and ensure your recruitment efforts stay on target.

Complete Timeline

18-24 months

Total Cost Range

\$8,000-65,000+



Market Assessment & Data Collection

Phase One

Essential Groundwork

- ☐ Complete demographic analysis of trade area
- ☐ Population trends
- ☐ Income levels
- ☐ Age distribution
- ☐ Daytime population
- ☐ Conduct retail gap analysis
- ☐ Identify leakage categories
- ☐ Map existing business mix
- ☐ Calculate capture rates
- ☐ Create property inventory
- ☐ Available spaces and sizes
- ☐ Rental rates
- ☐ Building conditions
- ☐ Ownership information

Estimated Timeline

3 to 4 months

Key Resource Needs

Staff time for data collection,
potential consultant for analysis

Cost Considerations

\$0 to \$5,000 Depending
on use of consultants



Downtown Environment Enhancement

2 Phase Two

Improving your downtown

- ☐ Assess current downtown conditions
- ☐ Building façades
- ☐ Sidewalks and streetscape
- ☐ Lighting and safety
- ☐ Parking availability
- ☐ Develop improvement programs
- ☐ Launch façade improvement program
- ☐ Create sign grant program
- ☐ Plan streetscape enhancements
- ☐ Activate public spaces
- ☐ Plan regular events calendar
- ☐ Implement pop-up retail program
- ☐ Create outdoor gathering spaces
- ☐ Support existing businesses
- ☐ Establish regular communication channel
- ☐ Create business retention program
- ☐ Develop cross-promotion opportunities

Tip: Start with low-cost, high-impact projects while seeking funding for larger improvements

Estimated Timeline

6 to 12 months

Key Resource Needs

Community volunteers, local contractors,
main street/downtown organization

Cost Considerations

\$5,000-50,000+ depending
on scope of improvements



Recruitment Preparation

3 Phase Three

Building your recruitment toolkit

- ☐ Create recruitment package
- ☐ Market data summary
- ☐ Available property list
- ☐ Success stories and testimonials
- ☐ Photos and maps
- ☐ Develop incentive programs
- ☐ Review existing incentives
- ☐ Create new programs if needed
- ☐ Document application process
- ☐ Build online presence
- ☐ Update website with retail recruitment info
- ☐ Create social media strategy
- ☐ Develop photo/video assets

Tip: Partner with local photographers, designers, and marketing students for cost-effective content creation

Estimated Timeline

2 to 3 months

Key Resource Needs

Marketing materials, photos,
website updates

Cost Considerations

\$1,000-3,000 for materials
and digital presence



Active Recruitment

4 Phase Four

Begin outreach efforts

- ☐ Identify target businesses
- ☐ Create prospect list
- ☐ Research expansion plans
- ☐ Identify decision makers
- ☐ Launch outreach campaign
- ☐ Develop email templates
- ☐ Create direct mail pieces
- ☐ Plan follow-up strategy
- ☐ Build partnerships
- ☐ Connect with commercial brokers
- ☐ Engage property owners
- ☐ Partner with regional economic development

Tip: Focus on regional businesses looking to expand rather than national chains initially

Estimated Timeline

Ongoing, plan for 6-12 months before first success

Key Resource Needs

Dedicated staff time (5-10 hours/week), travel budget

Cost Considerations

\$2,000-5,000 annually for outreach and travel



Implementation Support

5 Phase Five

Supporting your efforts

- ☐ Streamline processes
- ☐ Review permitting procedures
- ☐ Create business startup guide
- ☐ Designate point of contact
- ☐ Prepare support network
- ☐ List of local contractors
- ☐ Financial resources
- ☐ Technical assistance providers
- ☐ Plan for success
- ☐ Create opening celebration template
- ☐ Develop welcome package
- ☐ Plan marketing support

Tip: Create templates and processes upfront to minimize ongoing time investment

Estimated Timeline

1-2 months setup, then ongoing

Key Resource Needs

City staff cooperation, local business mentors

Cost Considerations

Minimal direct costs, mainly staff time



Monitoring & Adjustment



Phase Six

Tracking Success

- ☐ Track metrics
- ☐ Vacancy rates
- ☐ Business mix
- ☐ Property values
- ☐ Pedestrian counts
- ☐ Gather feedback
- ☐ Survey new businesses
- ☐ Monitor customer satisfaction
- ☐ Track program effectiveness
- ☐ Update strategies
- ☐ Review goals quarterly
- ☐ Adjust incentives as needed
- ☐ Refine target business list

Tip: Use free tools like Google Forms and Sheets for tracking

Estimated Timeline

Quarterly reviews, with annual comprehensive assessment

Key Resource Needs

Simple tracking system, regular check-ins with businesses

Cost Considerations

Minimal, mainly staff time



Downtown Retail Recruitment

Total Program Overview

The goal

- ☐ Budget allocation
- ☐ Marketing materials
- ☐ Incentive programs
- ☐ Professional services
- ☐ Staff responsibilities
- ☐ Project lead
- ☐ Support staff
- ☐ Partners and volunteers
- ☐ Timeline development

- ☐ Short-term goals (3-6 months)
- ☐ Medium-term projects (6-12 months)
- ☐ Long-term initiatives (1-3 years)

Key Success Factors: Community engagement, volunteer support, and local partnerships

Complete Timeline

18-24 months for full implementation

Total Cost Range

\$8,000-65,000+ depending on scope of physical improvements

Minimum Staff Requirements

One part-time coordinator (10-15 hours/week)