



Downtown Valdese Retail Marketplace Snapshot-May 2025

The purpose of this report is to give Downtown Valdese the baseline information for a better understanding of its current market. The NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center Staff studied the retail marketplace data within a 5-mile radius of and 15-minute drive time to the downtown area. The retail leakage analysis examines the quantitative aspects of the retail opportunities.

By reviewing the retail gap, we can:

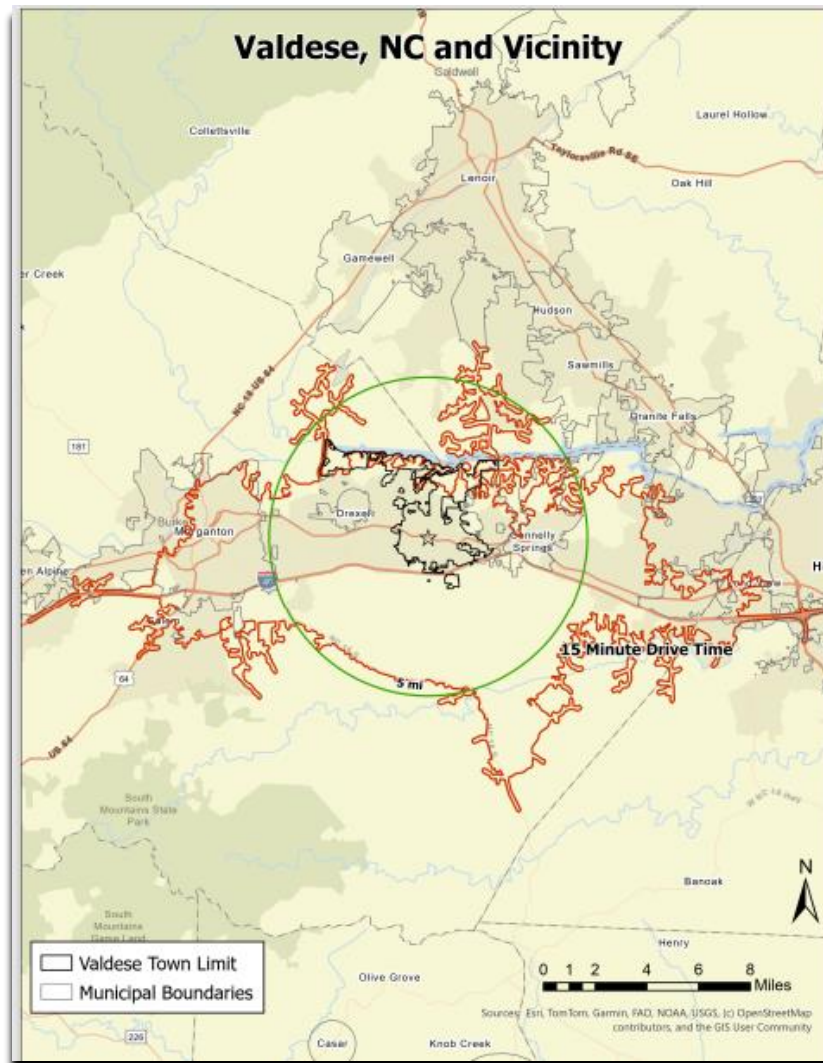
- Understand how well the retail needs of residents are being met.
- Uncover unmet demand and possible opportunities.
- Understand the strengths and weaknesses of the local retail sector.

When consumers spend their dollars outside the specific radii of Downtown Valdese this is known as “Retail Gap” throughout this report. Retail Gap or leakage indicates an **unmet demand in the trade area**. This suggests the possibility the community can support additional retail for those business categories. Residents within the specified primary trade areas are purchasing products outside that area indicating opportunity to capture those dollars within the downtown district.

There are also categories for which Downtown Valdese is exceeding the local market demand. Those are measured as red numbers on the below report. For the 5-mile radius and 15-minute drive time information, this means that Downtown Valdese is exceeding its market potential in these categories. This retail surplus means the community’s trade area is capturing local market plus attracting non-local shoppers. Surplus means the community has possibly developed strong clusters of retail that have broad geographical appeal.

You can also seek additional retail market data that Burke Partnership for Economic Development or the Western Piedmont Council of Government can provide. This report is based on the data collected and should serve as a starting point for your economic vitality efforts.

We highly encourage you to couple this report with consumer surveys to get a complete understanding of the Downtown Valdese potential. The NC Main Street and Rural Planning Center can share examples of consumer surveys and assist with this process as needed.



The above Burke County map outlines the two trade areas within a 5-mile radius of and 15-minute drive time to downtown. Defining the downtown trade area is critical in determining retail opportunities for the downtown market. The NC Main Street & Rural Center staff only reviewed the data within these two segments. Downtown Valdese should be targeting residents within these two areas.

The goal is to capture the retail sales volume leaking to neighboring communities, such as Morganton. The chart below shows total industry summaries for the 5-mile radius of and 15-minute drive time to downtown. It details the total retail sales gap, potential 10% capture and retail square footage needed to attract this sales volume.

The sales per square foot column in the charts is the average number based on recent research across the state. Typically, restaurant annual retail sales are higher than \$300 per square foot. There are variables that impact this number such as building owned versus rented, rental rates either higher or lower as well as overall expenses, such as employee wages, insurance, utilities, etc. **Surplus is shown as a red number and retail gap is shown as a black number.**

Distance	Total Retail Gap	10% Capture	Sales/SF	S.F. Needed
5-mile radius	\$133,142,437	\$13,314,243	\$300	44,380
15-minute drive time	\$112,931,598	\$11,293,156	\$300	37,639

The above chart shows the aggregate number of potential sales within the 5-mile radius of and 15-minute drive time to Downtown Valdese. Below you will see these number broken down by retail category.

5-Mile Radius Around Downtown

Valdese				
Primary Trade Area 5-mile around downtown		DOWNTOWN POTENTIAL		
Business Type	Retail Gap	10% of Retail Gap	Sales/SF	SF
		10%	\$300	Needed
Furniture Stores	\$ 3,372,703	\$ 337,270	\$ 300	1,124
Home Furnishings Stores	\$ 3,602,847	\$ 360,284	\$ 300	1,200
Appliance Stores	\$ 1,634,494	\$ 163,449	\$ 300	545
Electronics Stores	\$ 4,662,974	\$ 466,297	\$ 300	1,554
Home Centers	\$ 17,294,763	\$ 1,729,476	\$ 300	5,765
Paint and Wallpaper Stores	\$ 1,432,266	\$ 143,227	\$ 300	477
Hardware Stores	\$ 980,662	\$ 98,066	\$ 300	327
Nursery, Garden and Farm Supply Stores	\$ 3,395,042	\$ 339,504	\$ 300	1,132
Grocery Stores	\$ 5,453,449	\$ 545,345	\$ 300	1,818
Specialty Food Stores	\$ 1,418,251	\$ 141,825	\$ 300	473
Cosmetics and Beauty Stores	\$ 2,167,147	\$ 216,715	\$ 300	722
Men's Clothing Stores	\$ 605,000	\$ 60,500	\$ 300	202
Women's Clothing Stores	\$ 1,883,835	\$ 188,384	\$ 300	628
Children's and Infants' Clothing Stores	\$ 534,977	\$ 53,498	\$ 300	178
Family Clothing Stores	\$ 9,797,394	\$ 979,739	\$ 300	3,266
Clothing Accessories Stores	\$ 943,631	\$ 94,363	\$ 300	315
Shoe Stores	\$ 2,173,586	\$ 217,359	\$ 300	725
Jewelry Stores	\$ 1,545,693	\$ 154,569	\$ 300	515
Luggage and Leather Goods Stores	\$ 1,651,445	\$ 165,145	\$ 300	550
Sporting Goods Stores	\$ 3,794,526	\$ 379,453	\$ 300	1,265
Hobby, Toy and Game Stores	\$ 969,988	\$ 96,999	\$ 300	323
Book Stores	\$ 830,831	\$ 83,083	\$ 300	277
Department Stores	\$ 4,037,169	\$ 403,717	\$ 300	1,346
Office and Office Supplies Stores	\$ 525,568	\$ 52,557	\$ 300	175
Gift, Novelty and Souvenir Stores	\$ 687,052	\$ 68,705	\$ 300	229
Used Merchandise Stores	\$ 1,257,645	\$ 125,765	\$ 300	419
Pet and Pet Supplies Stores	\$ 2,142,902	\$ 214,290	\$ 300	714
Drinking Places	\$ 2,828,307	\$ 282,831	\$ 300	943
Full Service Restaurants	\$ 20,379,025	\$ 2,037,903	\$ 300	6,793
Limited-Service Restaurants	\$ 31,139,265	\$ 3,113,927	\$300	10,380
Total Gap	\$ 133,142,437	\$ 13,314,243	\$ 300	44,380

15-Minute Drive time to Downtown

Lenoir				
Primary Trade Area 20-Minute Drive Time		DOWNTOWN POTENTIAL		
Business Type	Retail Gap	10% of Retail Gap	Sales/SF	SF
		10%	\$300	Needed
Furniture Stores	\$ 4,302,148	\$ 430,215	\$ 300	1,434
Appliance Stores	\$ 1,324,935	\$ 132,493	\$ 300	441
Electronics Stores	\$ 4,521,700	\$ 452,170	\$ 300	1,507
Home Centers	\$ 16,723,968	\$ 1,672,396	\$ 300	5,574
Nursery, Garden and Farm Supply Stores	\$ 5,320,301	\$ 532,030	\$ 300	1,773
Grocery Stores	\$ 1,280,121	\$ 128,012	\$ 300	426
Cosmetics and Beauty Stores	\$ 1,662,659	\$ 166,265	\$ 300	554
Women's Clothing Stores	\$ 3,415,971	\$ 341,597	\$ 300	1,138
Children's and Infants' Clothing Stores	\$ 944,527	\$ 94,452	\$ 300	314
Family Clothing Stores	\$ 12,391,520	\$ 1,239,152	\$ 300	4,130
Clothing Accessories Stores	\$ 903,472	\$ 90,347	\$ 300	301
Shoe Stores	\$ 3,218,684	\$ 321,868	\$ 300	1,073
Jewelry Stores	\$ 2,278,535	\$ 227,854	\$ 300	760
Luggage and Leather Goods Stores	\$ 2,714,464	\$ 271,446	\$ 300	905
Sporting Goods Stores	\$ 3,964,021	\$ 396,402	\$ 300	1,321
Hobby, Toy and Game Stores	\$ 701,804	\$ 70,180	\$ 300	234
Book Stores	\$ 1,197,279	\$ 119,728	\$ 300	399
Gift, Novelty and Souvenir Stores	\$ 1,272,433	\$ 127,243	\$ 300	424
Used Merchandise Stores	\$ 1,917,437	\$ 191,744	\$ 300	639
Pet and Pet Supplies Stores	\$ 1,676,861	\$ 167,686	\$ 300	559
Drinking Places	\$ 3,366,710	\$ 336,671	\$ 300	1,122
Full-Service Restaurants	\$ 6,242,229	\$ 624,223	\$ 300	2,081
Limited-Service Restaurants	\$ 31,589,819	\$ 3,158,982	\$ 300	10,530
Total Gap	\$ 112,931,598	\$ 11,293,156	\$ 300	37,639

5-Mile Radius Retail Surplus

Category	Retail Surplus
Pharmacies and Drug Stores	\$ 5,108,624
Total	\$ 5,108,624

15-Minute Drive Time Retail Surplus

Category	Retail Surplus
Paint and Wallpaper Stores	\$ 3,895,366
Hardware Stores	\$ 8,625,562
Beer, Wine and Liquor Stores	\$ 2,706,181
Pharmacies and Drug Stores	\$51,310,919
Total	\$66,538,028

The retail surpluses confirm that Downtown Valdese is attracting a disproportionate amount of retail sales in these categories and potential exists to attract additional retail and restaurant establishments to take advantage of the additional business potential.

Below is a table showing the projected sales growth in different commercial categories. This information can help your recruitment process.

5-Mile Radius Measurement

Valdese Demand Growth by Retail Store Types				
Primary Trade Area: 5 Mile Radius				Compound
Business Type	2025	2030	Growth	Growth
	Demand	Demand	\$	Rate (%)
Furniture Stores	\$ 5,643,828	\$ 6,446,122	\$ 802,294	3
Home Furnishings Stores	\$ 4,497,343	\$ 5,052,002	\$ 554,659	2
Appliance Stores	\$ 1,634,494	\$ 1,839,427	\$ 204,932	2
Electronics Stores	\$ 4,868,442	\$ 5,438,746	\$ 570,304	2
Home Centers	\$ 17,294,763	\$ 19,713,638	\$ 2,418,875	3
Paint and Wallpaper Stores	\$ 1,432,266	\$ 1,645,435	\$ 213,169	3
Hardware Stores	\$ 3,204,571	\$ 3,657,805	\$ 453,234	3
Nursery, Garden Center and Farm Supply Stores	\$ 3,615,599	\$ 4,103,187	\$ 487,589	3
Grocery Stores	\$ 57,770,855	\$ 63,604,127	\$ 5,833,271	2
Specialty Food Stores	\$ 1,886,373	\$ 2,078,325	\$ 191,952	2
Beer, Wine and Liquor Stores	\$ 5,028,196	\$ 5,643,419	\$ 615,224	2
Pharmacies and Drug Stores	\$ 25,836,922	\$ 27,637,406	\$ 1,800,484	1
Cosmetics and Beauty Stores	\$ 2,167,147	\$ 2,320,048	\$ 152,901	1
Sporting Goods Stores	\$ 3,997,038	\$ 4,341,157	\$ 344,119	2
Hobby, Toy and Game Stores	\$ 1,419,691	\$ 1,583,377	\$ 163,686	2
Pet and Pet Supply Stores	\$ 2,142,902	\$ 2,392,965	\$ 250,064	2
Drinking Places	\$ 2,838,307	\$ 3,139,116	\$ 310,810	2
Full Service Restaurants	\$ 37,175,738	\$ 40,556,389	\$ 3,380,652	2
Limited Service Restaurants	\$ 31,139,265	\$ 33,827,824	\$ 2,688,559	2
Total Sales	\$ 213,593,740	\$ 235,020,515	\$ 21,436,778	

Note: The compound annual growth rate (CAGR) is the annualized average rate of revenue growth between two given years, assuming growth takes place at an exponentially compounded rate. The most important factor in both charts is the amount of projected growth per category.

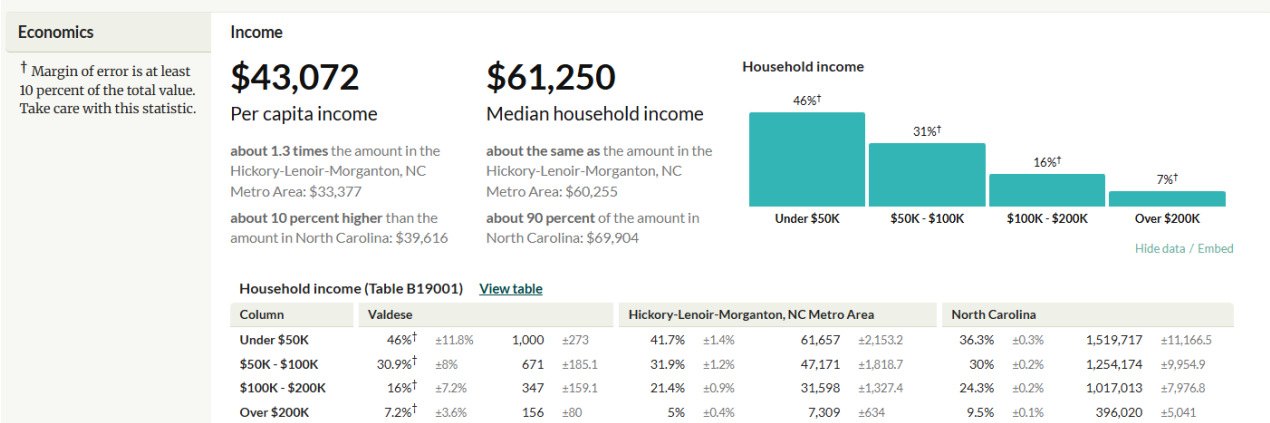
15-Minute Drive Time Measurement

Valdese Growth by Retail Store Types				
Primary Trade Area 15-Minute Drive Time		DOWNTOWN POTENTIAL		Compound
Business Type	2025	2030	Growth	Growth
	Demand	Demand	\$	Rate (%)
Furniture Stores	\$ 9,178,752	\$ 10,488,585	\$ 1,309,834	3
Appliance Stores	\$ 2,675,215	\$ 3,023,691	\$ 348,476	2
Electronics Stores	\$ 8,007,499	\$ 8,994,031	\$ 986,532	2
Home Centers	\$ 28,014,174	\$ 32,062,278	\$ 4,048,104	3
Paint and Wallpaper Stores	\$ 2,303,417	\$ 2,661,957	\$ 358,540	3
Hardware Stores	\$ 5,190,031	\$ 5,948,142	\$ 758,111	3
Nursery, Garden and Farm Supply Stores	\$ 5,886,119	\$ 6,705,507	\$ 819,388	3
Grocery Stores	\$ 96,077,311	\$ 106,175,184	\$ 10,097,873	2
Specialty Food Stores	\$ 3,141,762	\$ 3,473,703	\$ 331,941	2
Beer, Wine and Liquor Stores	\$ 8,227,670	\$ 9,262,793	\$ 1,035,122	2
Pharmacies and Drug Stores	\$ 42,540,093	\$ 45,750,613	\$ 3,210,520	1
Cosmetics and Beauty Supplies	\$ 3,566,025	\$ 3,838,237	\$ 272,212	1
Sporting Goods Stores	\$ 6,533,622	\$ 7,107,439	\$ 573,817	2
Hobby, Toy and Game Stores	\$ 2,351,903	\$ 2,639,350	\$ 287,447	2
Book Stores	\$ 1,367,505	\$ 1,491,430	\$ 123,925	2
Gift, Novelty and Souvenir Stores	\$ 2,236,880	\$ 2,360,188	\$ 123,309	1
Pet and Pet Supply Stores	\$ 3,524,356	\$ 3,953,975	\$ 429,619	2
Drinking Places	\$ 4,560,136	\$ 5,072,077	\$ 511,941	2
Full Service Restaurants	\$ 60,717,818	\$ 66,414,841	\$ 5,697,023	2
Limited Service Restaurants	\$ 51,036,830	\$ 55,601,685	\$ 4,564,855	2
Total Sales	\$ 347,137,118	\$ 383,025,706	\$ 35,888,589	

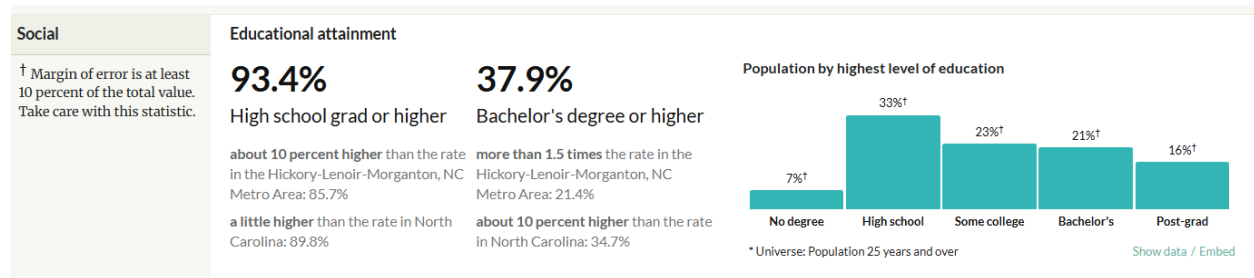
Note: The compound annual growth rate (CAGR) is the annualized average rate of revenue growth between two given years, assuming growth takes place at an exponentially compounded rate. The most important factor in both charts is the amount of projected growth per category.

Valdese Demographics (Source: U.S. Census)

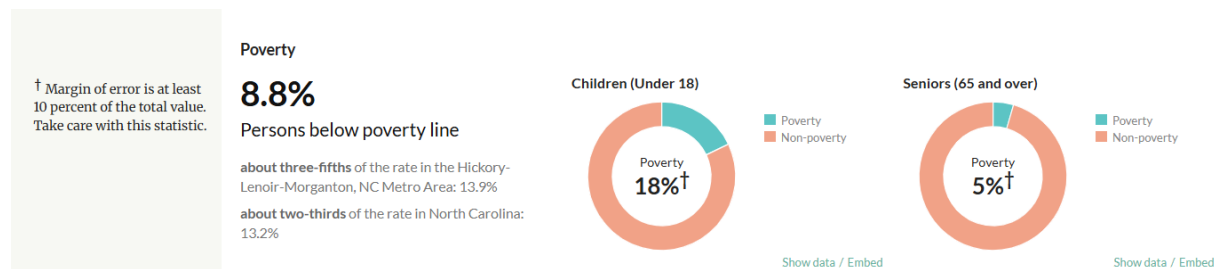
Population: 4,689 2023
4,407 2020
Difference: +6.3%



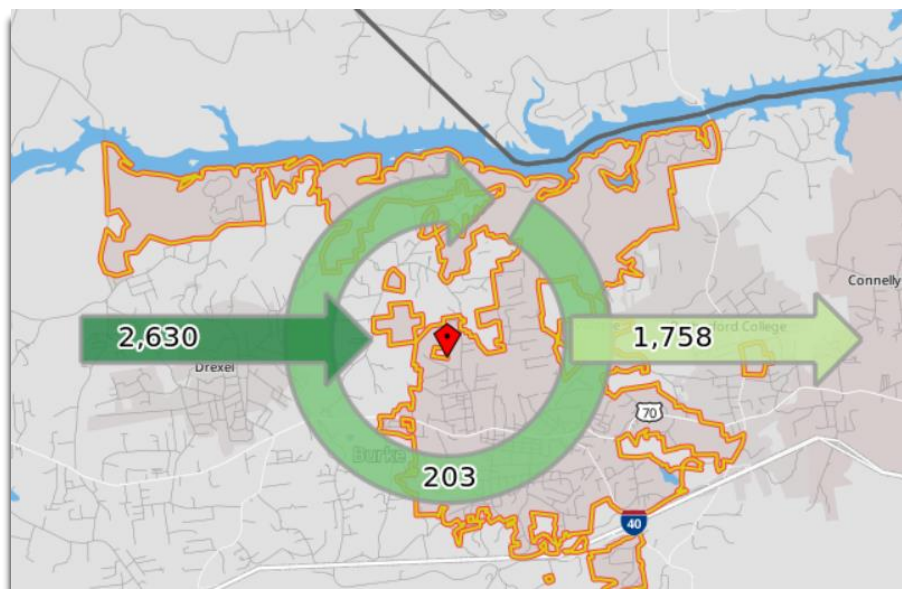
- \$61,250 Median Household Income
- 54% earn above \$50,000; 46% earn below \$50,000



- 37.9% bachelor's degree or higher
 - 87.6% higher than Burke County (20.2%)
 - 9.2% higher than NC (34.7%)
 - 8.2% higher than the U.S.



- 8.8% poverty rate
 - 3/5 of the Hickory-Lenoir-Morganton rate of 13.9%
 - 2/3 of the North Carolina rate of 13.2%



U.S. Census on the map

- 2,630 workers enter Valdese daily for employment.
- 1,758 workers exit Valdese daily for employment.
- 49% more workers enter Valdese daily than exit.
 - These are potential downtown consumers.

The above data can be used to help recruit businesses to Downtown Valdese to meet the unmet potential and reduce the retail gap or leakage. The priorities are to first retain, then expand and finally to recruit new businesses. The categories that show the most potential should be focused within the 5-mile radius of downtown. This data can help existing businesses realize there may be potential to expand to capture additional retail sales.

Walkscore

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100 Main Street West

A location in Valdese

Commute to **Downtown Morganton**

19 min
 50 min
 60+ min
 [View Routes](#)

[More about 100 Main Street West](#)

Walk Score
64

Somewhat Walkable

Some errands can be accomplished on foot.

Bike Score
39

Somewhat Bikeable

Minimal bike infrastructure.

[About your score](#)

[Add scores to your site](#)

Visit <https://www.walkscore.com> for more information.

Summary and Recommendations

1. Retail Gap

At both the 5-mile radius and 15-minute drive time measurements, retail gaps are seen in furniture, appliances, electronics, home centers, nursery, garden and farm supplies, groceries, cosmetics and beauty supplies, women's clothing, children's and infants' clothing, family clothing, clothing accessories, shoes, jewelry, sporting goods, hobbies, toys and games, books, gifts, novelties and souvenirs, used merchandise, pet and pet supplies, drinking places, full and limited service restaurants. At only the 5-mile radius, retail gaps are seen in home furnishings, paint and wallpaper, hardware, specialty foods, men's clothing, department stores and office supplies and stationery.

2. Retail Surplus

At both the 5-mile radius and 15-minute drive time, a retail surplus is seen in pharmacies and drug stores. At just the 15-minute drive time, retail surpluses are seen in paint and wallpaper, hardware, and beer, wine and liquor.

3. Retail Gaps at both measurements

<u>Category</u>	Retail Gaps	
	<u>5-Mile Radius</u>	<u>15-Minute Drive Time</u>
Furniture	\$ 3,372,703	\$ 4,302,148
Home Furnishings	\$ 3,602,847	
Appliances	\$ 1,634,494	\$ 1,324,935
Electronics	\$ 4,662,974	\$ 4,521,700
Home Centers	\$17,294,763	\$16,723,968
Paint and Wallpaper	\$ 1,432,266	
Hardware	\$ 980,662	
Nursery and Garden	\$ 3,995,042	\$ 5,320,301
Grocery	\$ 5,453,449	\$ 1,280,121
Specialty Foods	\$ 1,418,251	
Cosmetics and Beauty Supplies	\$ 2,167,147	\$ 1,662,659
Men's Clothing	\$ 605,000	
Women's Clothing	\$ 1,883,835	\$ 3,415,971
Children/Infants' Clothing	\$ 534,977	\$ 944,527
Family Clothing	\$ 9,197,394	\$12,391,520
Clothing Accessories	\$ 943,631	\$ 903,472
Shoes	\$ 2,173,586	\$ 3,218,684
Jewelry	\$ 1,545,693	\$ 2,278,535
Luggage and Leather Goods	\$ 1,651,445	\$ 2,714,464
Sporting Goods	\$ 3,794,526	\$ 3,964,021

Hobby, Toy and Games	\$ 969,988	\$ 701,804
Books	\$ 830,831	\$ 1,197,437
Department Stores	\$ 4,037,169	
Office Supplies	\$ 525,568	
Gift, Novelties and Souvenirs	\$ 687,052	\$ 1,272,433
Used Merchandise	\$ 1,257,645	\$ 1,917,437
Pet and Pet Supplies	\$ 2,142,902	\$ 1,676,861
Drinking Places	\$ 2,828,307	\$ 3,366,710
Full- Service Restaurants	\$20,379,025	\$ 6,242,229
Limited-Service Restaurants	\$31,139,265	\$31,589,819

4. Intersection of Retail Gaps and Projected Growth

<u>Category</u>	<u>Retail Gap</u>		<u>Projected Growth</u>	
	<u>5-Mile Radius</u>	<u>15-Minute Drive Time</u>	<u>5-Mile Radius</u>	<u>15-Minute Drive Time</u>
Drinking Places	\$ 2,828,307	\$ 3,366,710	\$ 310,810	\$ 5,697,023
Full-Service Restaurants	\$20,379,025	\$ 6,242,229	\$3,380,652	\$ 4,564,855
Limited Service Restaurants	\$31,139,265	\$31,589,819	\$2,688,559	\$35,888,589

The above data shows that there is both current retail gaps in the categories affecting restaurant prospects as well as projected sales growth from 2025-2030. This will give prospective restaurateurs confidence that the Newton market will sustain their businesses.

5. Walkability and Bikeability

The Downtown Valdese Walkscore of 64 is above average. Concerning bikeability, Downtown Valdese scores below average. You will want to work with the local NCDOT division to incorporate bike lanes into their streets in downtown as well as those controlled by the Town of Valdese.

According to a study by real estate advising company Robert Charles Lesser & Co., homebuyers are increasingly looking for green space and trail systems for walking, running, and biking. In fact, green space and trail systems were the No. 1 and No. 2 desirable community features in this referenced article---Source: New Home Source:

<https://www.newhomesource.com/learn/top-community-amenities/>

The list is below:

Parks and green spaces

Paved trail systems for walking, jogging, biking, etc.

Note that in addition to the walking and biking trail amenities, the #3 amenity that new homeowners want is:

Main street village centers with retail services and cafes for gathering and socializing.

Downtown Valdese fits the #3 desired community amenity and will want to see ways to increase walkability and biking options to meet consumer demands.

6. Downtown Development Resources

Hilary Greenberg of Greenberg Development Services is completing a business recruitment manual for the Main Street and Rural Planning Center. It is recommended to access this document when it is available. Also, former Main Street Manager Diane Young created the Downtown Directors' Guide to Working with Development Projects-- <https://www.ncmainstreetandplanning.com/economic-vitality>-- an invaluable resource for downtown revitalization. This is also recommended.

There is additional Claritas retail data and the U.S. Census Quickfacts report to support your retail recruitment efforts.

If you have any questions concerning the above information, please Downtown Development Specialist Mike Dougherty at 336-923-6645 or mike.dougherty@commerce.nc.gov

Sources: Claritas Retail Data

Placer.ai mobile location data

<http://doc.arcgis.com/en/esri-demographics/data/tapestry-segmentation>

Burke County map—Glen Locascio, NC Department of Commerce