

Public Sector Retail Real Estate Workshop



October 21–22, 2026 • 10:00 am – 1:00 pm ET

This workshop aims at building an essential understanding of the steps to retail recruitment for public sector professionals as they work to advance public-private initiatives.

Program Curriculum

Module 1: Why Retail Matters to Communities

- 1.1 **Introduction to Retail Recruitment**
 - What is retail recruitment? Why does it matter?
 - The role of elected officials in the recruitment process
 - Introduction to ICSC and industry resources
 - 1.2 **Why Communities Need Retail**
 - Sales tax revenue generation and municipal budget impact
 - Where tax dollars go and what they support in your community
 - Quality of life benefits: convenience, services and amenities
 - Meeting resident demand and reducing retail leakage
 - 1.3 **The Tax Revenue Reality**
 - Breaking down the tax dollar: What percentage supports your operations?
 - The choice: Recruit more retail or raise taxes?
 - Long-term fiscal sustainability through retail growth
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Module 2: Retail Real Estate 101

- 2.1 **Understanding Retail Real Estate**
 - Definition of retail real estate
 - How retail fits in the broader CRE industry
 - Key characteristics that differentiate retail from other property types
- 2.2 **Retail Typologies and Shopping Center Types**
 - Common retail formats and center types
 - How different formats serve different markets
- 2.3 **History and Evolution of Retail & Current Retail Trends**
 - Evolution of retail formats in America
 - Suburbanization, autos, and the rise of shopping centers
 - Consumer and shopping trends
 - Store performance indicators, openings/closings

- Emerging trends shaping retail real estate

Module 3: Understanding Your Market

- 3.1 **Trade Area Analysis**
 - Defining your community's trade area and market reach
 - Primary, secondary and tertiary trade zones
- 3.2 **Consumer Analysis**
 - Demographics: age, income, household size, education
 - Psychographics: lifestyle, preferences, shopping behaviors
 - Retail districts and consumer subsets in your community
- 3.3 **Market Demand Analysis**
 - Conducting retail demand analysis
 - Identifying retail leakage and gaps
 - Understanding market saturation vs. opportunity

Module 4: Creating Your Strategy

- 4.1 **Defining What You Want from Retail**
 - Developing a vision statement and goals for retail
 - Identifying desired shops and restaurants for quality of life
 - Aligning retail goals with comprehensive plan and other policy objectives
 - Setting ultimate goals for the retail economic development strategy
- 4.2 **Turning Assessment into Insights**
 - Using trade area, leakage, and demand analysis from Module 3
 - Market gap and opportunity identification
- 4.3 **Developing Your Retail Economic Development Strategy**
 - Translating market data into actionable strategies
 - Prioritizing by opportunity, feasibility and community need

Module 5: Building Your Target List

- 5.1 **Retail Categories and Prospects**
 - National, regional, and local retailer categories
 - Category examples: food service, automotive, apparel, services, specialty
 - Understanding franchise vs. corporate expansion strategies
- 5.2 **Brand Research by Category**
 - Researching retailers expanding in your region
 - Using online tools and resources for prospect identification
 - Identifying retailers focused on markets like yours: college towns, tourist areas, bedroom communities, etc.
- 5.3 **Building and Prioritizing Your Prospect List**
 - Assembling your initial list by category

- Understanding retailer site requirements: size, traffic counts, co-tenancy, access
- Filtering prospects by fit: Do your market and your available sites match what they need?
- Prioritizing your list: Where to focus your outreach first

Module 6: Site Identification and Marketing

6.1 Site Types and Opportunities

- Available site identification and classification
- Redevelopment opportunities and second-generation spaces
- White box/shell space, shopping centers, former malls
- Pad sites, end caps and specialty locations

6.2 Site Characteristics That Matter

- Location factors: interchanges, lighted intersections, accessibility
- Visibility, ingress/egress and traffic patterns
- Understanding and addressing site restrictions

6.3 Packaging and Marketing Sites

- Site marketing materials and data sheets
- Photos, maps, traffic counts and basic assumptions (e.g., size, access, allowable uses)
- Available incentives tied to specific sites
- Linking sites to specific target retailers and categories

Module 7: Organizing for Success

7.1 Building Your Retail Recruitment Team

- Who should be on your retail recruitment team?
- Defining roles: Who is responsible for retail recruitment today?
- Funding strategies for retail recruitment initiatives
- Setting realistic goals and objectives for your retail strategy

7.2 Essential Tools and Resources

- Creating your retail recruitment toolbox
- Trade area maps and demographic profiles
- Market assessment summaries
- Available property inventory
- Targeted retailer prospect lists
- Developing appropriate incentive packages
- One-stop-shop approach: Where developers go for information

7.3 Addressing Market Obstacles

- Common challenges in retail recruitment and practical solutions

- How many agencies or organizations are working on this in your community?
 - Streamlining the development process for retailers
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Module 8: Retail Recruitment Implementation

8.1 The Sales Approach

- Crafting compelling sales pitches that highlight community benefits
- Key messages for different types of retailers (local, regional, national)
- Supporting materials and data presentation techniques

8.2 Making It Happen

- Connecting with retail real estate professionals
- Mobilizing all stakeholders in your recruitment efforts
- Communication strategies: Widely sharing your retail plan
- Continuous evaluation and plan updates

8.3 Building Your Action Plan

- Developing timeline and benchmarks for success
- Immediate next steps participants can take
- Resources for ongoing support and learning