

# Street Retail Areas

## *Physical Organization and Streetscape Design*

**CityPlan**

*Riley Park/South Cambie* **RPSC**

Successful shopping areas have continuous storefronts at grade, with lots of consumer eye appeal and a diversity of shops. It is important for neighbourhood shopping areas to have a "critical mass" of shops, be compact in length, and occupy both sides of the street.

Shoppers should be able to easily cross the street at several convenient points along the length of the shopping area. Wider pavements and/or faster traffic and/or lack of signalized pedestrian crossings work against this.

Once out of their car or bus, shoppers usually want to walk only a couple of blocks to run their errands. Outside this core area, businesses that don't depend on the synergy of others are found. Sometimes a secondary specialty shopping node may arise on the same retail strip.

Vacant storefronts or large gaps in the shoppers' visual spectrum weaken the appeal of a shopping area, for example:

- stores with windows obscured by posters or shelving;
- parking lots;
- offices with closed frontages.

Exceptions can be seating courtyards associated with a successful café use.

Retail locations above or below grade do not work for the retailer. Enclosed retail malls in a street retail area are difficult to make successful and tend to detract the shopper from the street retail.

Beautification projects can enhance an area's appeal, but will not necessarily create successful areas. Areas need to have basic amenities taken care of: good maintenance, cleanliness, real and perceived safety, and basic comfort (shade trees, sun, rain protection).

### Source

Commercial Marketing Inc.