

Comparative Assessment

As part of the market analysis for Fennville City, a comparative assessment was performed as one of two primary analyses used to identify business “gaps” and opportunities. The identified business gaps defined through this process may or may not be appropriate for Fennville City because of the nature of operations, scale, or other factors.

Methodology

This part of the analysis required comparing the larger Allegan County business structure to that associated with counties that are “similar”. In determining communities for which the comparison can be made, the following criteria were used:

- ✓ The population size and household numbers had to be similar to those associated with Allegan County, since demand for goods and services are ultimately dependent largely upon the size of the market served.
- ✓ The most recent reported annual median household incomes for both the selected counties and Allegan County were comparable.
- ✓ The counties were all in close proximity to recreational bodies of water such as lakes and rivers.
- ✓ Transportation access had to be somewhat similar.

Based on the criteria, a total of eight counties throughout the country were identified for which the comparison in economic structure was made. These eight counties are:

Cape May, NJ
DeSoto, MS
Fond du Lac, WI
Kankakee, IL

La Porte, IN
Ontario, NY
Skagit, WA
Windham, CT

It is noted that all population and household estimates upon which the comparisons are made were derived from the same source for comparability. That source was the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau data. Also for consistency purposes, a single source was employed to define the business structure and activity within all nine counties. That source was the United States Census Bureau’s 2001 County Business Patterns.

The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) was introduced in 1997 as a more effective business classification system that identifies and groups establishments according to the activities in which they are primarily engaged. It replaces the older Standard Industry Classification (SIC) coding system that was first employed in 1938. NAICS identifies and groups 1,170 different types of “industries” or establishments into twenty major industry sectors ranging from Agriculture (Sector 11) to Public Administration (Sector 92). This analysis examined and extracted data from all twenty of these sectors for all nine counties. These twenty sectors are:

- ✓ Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting (Sector 11): Crop and animal production, forestry and logging, fishing, hunting, trapping, support activities for agriculture and forestry.
- ✓ Mining (Sector 21): oil and gas extraction, mining, support activities for mining.
- ✓ Utilities (Sector 22): power generation, transmission, and distribution, water, sewage, and other systems.
- ✓ Construction (Sector 23): building, developing, general contracting, heavy construction, special trade contractors.
- ✓ Manufacturing (Sector 31-33): food, beverage and tobacco product, textile and textile product mills, apparel, leather and allied products, wood product, paper, printing and related support activities, petroleum and coal products, chemicals, plastics and rubber products, nonmetallic mineral products, primary metals, fabricated metal products, machinery, computer and electronic products, electronic equipment, appliances, and components, transportation equipment, furniture and related products.
- ✓ Wholesale Trade (Sector 42): durable and nondurable goods.
- ✓ Retail Trade (Sector 44-45): Motor vehicle and parts, furniture and home furnishings, electronics and appliances, building material and garden equipment and supplies, grocery and beverage, health and personal care, gasoline stations, clothing and accessories, sports, hobby, books and music, general merchandise and miscellaneous store retailers.
- ✓ Transportation and Warehousing (Sector 48-49): air, rail, water, and truck transportation, transit and ground passenger transportation, pipeline transportation, scenic and sightseeing transportation, support activities for transportation, postal service, couriers and messengers, warehousing and storage.
- ✓ Information (Sector 51): Publishing, motion picture and sound recording and exhibition, broadcasting and telecommunications, information services and data processing.
- ✓ Finance and Insurance (Sector 52): Monetary authorities, credit intermediation, securities, commodities, insurance, funds, trusts, and other financial vehicles.
- ✓ Real Estate, Rental and Leasing (Sector 53): Real estate, rental centers and leasing services.
- ✓ Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (Sector 54): Lawyers, accountants, engineers, computer services, veterinary services, etc.
- ✓ Management of Companies and Enterprises (Sector 55): Management, holding companies, corporate and regional offices.
- ✓ Administrative and Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services (Sector 56): Administrative and facilities support services, employment and business support services, travel arrangements, investigative and security systems and other business services.
- ✓ Educational Services (Sector 61): Public sector schools, business, technical, trade schools and instruction.

- ✓ Health Care and Social Assistance (Sector 62): Ambulatory health care services, hospitals, nursing and residential care facilities and social assistance.
- ✓ Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation (Sector 71): Performing arts, spectator sports, museums, historical sites, amusement, gambling and recreation industries.
- ✓ Accommodation and Food Services (Sector 72): Accommodations, food service and drinking places.
- ✓ Other Services (Sector 81): Repair and maintenance, personal and laundry services, and religious, grant making, civic and professional organizations.
- ✓ Public Administration (Sector 92): executive, legislative, and other general government support, justice, public order, and safety activities, administration of human resource programs, administration of environmental quality programs, administration of housing programs, urban planning, and community development, administration of economic programs, space research and technology, national security and international affairs

Under-represented Industries

Under-represented “industries” were then defined as those where Allegan County had a lesser number of businesses than at least five other counties. Thus, the number of businesses in Allegan County compared to the other communities was below what might be expected.

It is also noted that in some cases, the differences are great, or no businesses in the under-served categories were identified in Allegan County. Once again, under-representation does not mean that the identified categories of businesses are desirable for any part of Fennville City.

The following are the “industries” or businesses identified as being under-represented in Allegan County. About 83 are identified. Highlighted, in gray, are retail and service operations that may be appropriate uses.

Type of Business
Water Sewer & Pipeline Construction
Painting and Wall Covering Contractors
Carpentry Contractors
Floor Laying and Other Floor Contractors
Structural Steel Erection Contractors
Iron and Steel Mills
Dental Laboratories
Lumber, Plywood, Millwork & Wood Panel Wholesalers
Office Equipment Wholesalers
Computer and Computer Peripheral Equipment and Software Wholesalers

Type of Business
Electrical Apparatus & Equip., Wiring Supplies, and Construction Mat'l Wholesalers
Plumbing and Heating Equipment and Supplies (Hydronics) Wholesalers
Industrial Supplies Wholesalers
Industrial & Personal Service Paper Wholesalers
General Line Grocery Wholesalers
Flower, Nursery Stock, and Florists' Supplies Wholesalers
Paint, Varnish, and Supplies Wholesalers
Motorcycle Dealers
Tire Dealers
Furniture Stores
Floor Covering Stores
Household Appliance Stores
Radio, Television & Other Electronic Stores
Paint and Wallpaper Stores
Meat Markets
Baked Goods Stores
Confectionary & Nut Stores
Beer, Wine, and Liquor Stores
Cosmetics, Beauty Supplies & Perfume Stores
Optical Goods Stores
Men's Clothing Stores
Women's Clothing Stores
Clothing Accessories Stores
Shoe Stores
Jewelry Stores
Sporting Goods Stores
Hobby, Toy & Game Stores
Sewing, Needlework & Piece Goods Store
Book Stores
Prerecorded Tape, CD, & Record Stores
Department Stores
Office Supplies & Stationary Stores
Used Merchandise Stores
Pet and Pet Supplies Stores
Vending Machine Operators
Used Household & Office Goods Moving
Limousine Service
Motion Picture Theaters (except Drive-Ins)

Type of Business
Cable & other Program Distribution
Savings Institutions
Consumer Lending
Real Estate Credit
Offices of Real Estate Agents and Brokers
Residential Property Managers
Nonresidential Property Managers
Offices of Real Estate Appraisers
Video Tape & Disc Rental
Offices of Lawyers
Offices of Certified Public Accountants
Engineering Services
Custom Computer Programming Services
Photography Studios, Portrait
Temporary Help Services
Janitorial Services
Sports and Recreation Instruction
Offices of Physicians (Except Mental Health)
Offices of Dentists
Offices of Optometrists
Offices of Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapists, and Audiologists
Offices of Podiatrists
Medical Laboratories
Home Health Care Services
Child & Youth Services
Services for Elderly & Disabled Persons
Child Day Care Services
Independent Artists, Writers & Performers
Limited Service Restaurants
Snack & Nonalcoholic Beverage Bars
Mobile Food Services
Drinking Places (Alcoholic Beverages)
Appliance Repair & Maintenance
Reupholstery and Furniture Repair
Cemeteries and Crematories

There are several “clusters” of activity identified upon which downtown Fennville could focus, resulting in enhanced “critical mass”. These include medical, professional and other offices. From a retail perspective, home improvement activity is a reasonable cluster. In both cases, Fennville could take advantage of its central county location, relative to the County seat, and affordability compared to coastal communities. The third area would be general merchandise retail. However, the gap in such businesses is not uncommon in Michigan because of the dominance of Meijer’s.

Over-represented Industries

Over-represented “industries” were then defined as those where Allegan County had a greater number of businesses than at least five other counties. Thus, the number of businesses in Allegan County compared to the other communities was above what might be expected.

It is also noted that in some cases, the differences are great, or no businesses in the over-served categories were identified anywhere except Allegan County. Once again, over-representation does not mean that the identified categories of businesses are detrimental to any part of Fennville City. In fact, it could mean that the area has a niche dominance that might further be pursued.

The following are the “industries” or businesses identified as being over-represented in Allegan County. About 80 are identified.

Type of Business
Soil Preparation, Planting & Cultivating
Water Supply & Irrigation Systems
Land Subdivision & Land Development
Single Family Housing Construction
Manufacturing & Industrial Building Construction
Commercial & Institutional Building Construction
Bridge & Tunnel Construction
Power Communication Transmission Line Construction
Plumbing, Heating & AC Contractors
Electrical Contractors
Tile, Marble, Terrazzo & Mosaic Contractors
Concrete Contractors
Excavation Contractors
Other Animal Food Manufacturing
Non-chocolate Confectionery Manufacturing
Fruit & Vegetable Canning
Women's and Girls' Cut and Sew Apparel Contractors
Sawmills
Reconstituted Wood Product Manufacturing
Wood Container & Pallet Manufacturing
Glass Product Manufacturing Made of Purchased Glass
Ready-Mix Concrete Manufacturing
Metal Stamping
Hardware Manufacturing
Machine Shops

Type of Business
Metal Coating, Engraving & Allied Services
Electroplating, Plating, Polish, Anodize, Coloring
Fluid Power Valve & Hose Fitting Manufacturing
Fabricated Pipe & Pipe Fitting Manufacturing
Plastics & Rubber Industry Machinery Manufacturing
Industrial Mold Manufacturing
Special Die, Tool, Die Set & Fixture Manufacturing
Cutting Tool & Machine Tool Accessory Manufacturing
Conveyor & Conveying Equipment Manufacturing
Gasoline Engine and Engine Parts Manufacturing
Motor Vehicle Metal Stamping
Boat Building
Office Furniture (Except Wood) Manufacturing
Automobile and Other Motor Vehicle Wholesalers
Furniture Wholesalers
Construction & Mining (Except Petroleum) Equipment Wholesalers
Farm & Garden Machinery & Equipment Wholesalers
Industrial Machinery & Equipment Wholesalers
Drugs & Druggists' Sundries Wholesalers
Meat & Meat Product Wholesalers
Livestock Wholesalers
Plastics Materials & Basic Forms, Shapes Wholesalers
Boat Dealers
Hardware Stores
Nursery & Garden Centers
Grocery (Except Convenience) Stores
Convenience Stores
Art Dealers
Manufactured (Mobile) Home Dealers
Liquefied Petroleum Gas (Bottled Gas) Dealers
General Freight, Trucking, Local
General Freight, Trucking, Long Distance
Pipeline Transportation of Natural Gas
Freight Transportation Arrangement
Lessors of Non-Residential (Except Mini-warehouses) Property
Truck, Utility Trailer & RV Rental & Leasing
Consumer Electronics & Appliance Rental

Type of Business
Tax Preparation Services
Payroll Services
Building Inspection Services
Other Scientific & Technical Consulting Services
Commercial Photography
Veterinary Services
Facilities Support Services
Solid Waste Landfill
Residential Mental Retardation Facilities
Homes for the Elderly
Golf Courses & Country Clubs
Bowling Centers
Bed & Breakfast Inns
Caterers
Automotive Exhaust System Repair
Automotive Oil Change and Lubrication Shops
Commercial Equip. (Except Auto & Electronic) Repair and Maintenance
Coin Operated Laundries & Drycleaners