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SHOPPING CENTRES
IN CANADA
1956

DOMINION BUREAU
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Reference Paper
No. 87

Published by Authority of
The Honourable Gordon Churchill, Minister of Trade and Commerce

DOMINION BUREAU OF STATISTICS
Industry and Merchandising Division
Retail Trade Section

6505-556-126

Price 25 cents

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Introduction. The shopping centre is a unique retail merchandising development of the last decade. Its initial success and growth is linked with the increase in the Canadian population and the accelerated rate of suburbanization which has occurred in all the major cities. Although the shopping centre is basically a suburban phenomenon, there are numerous shopping centres in new and re-planned communities.

This 1956 survey on shopping centres, undertaken mid-year in 1957, represents the first concentrated effort by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics to publish data on this new retail development. This survey was designed to serve a two-fold purpose. It would serve as an indicator of the rate at which the decentralization of retail merchandising had progressed and the data derived from such a survey would fill a gap in the retail trade statistics published by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics.

The collection and compilation of statistics on the retail sales made by shopping centres has presented many problems, some of which are briefly discussed below.

Definition. It was necessary to develop a definition of the survey unit which would be adequate not only for the needs of this survey but which would be acceptable to the various parties connected with this new development. For this purpose, a tentative definition of a shopping centre was drawn up which was of a general nature. This definition was employed in obtaining a lengthy list of shopping centres in Canada. This list was then analyzed in order to determine the characteristics common to all shopping centres. The analysis yielded information which was used to amend the original definition. For the purposes of this report, a shopping centre is defined as follows:

"A group of stores built in a cluster, strip, or mall with one storey or more. It must contain common off-street parking facilities for the benefit of its customers. It should have a minimum of five retail establishments. The rental of these stores may be either on a percentage-of-sales basis or on a straight rental basis. While a shopping centre is usually designed as

single project, all establishments within the centre do not necessarily have to be leased from a single (private or collective) ownership. An example of this is a shopping centre where a department store owns its own building and land, although it is fully integrated with the centre. A shopping centre usually bears a name. As a rule, matters of common interest to the tenants, such as children's playground, community activities, etc., originate from one authority.

The basis for the decision to place a limit on the minimum number of retail establishments was the almost impossible task of surveying all the small retail developments which would have otherwise fulfilled all the requirements of a shopping centre. It should be noted that the definition given above may require additional modification as more study is given to the subject.

Collection. Many sources were utilized in compiling a list of shopping centres in Canada, the two principal sources of information being chain-store organizations and municipal authorities in Canada. All incorporated cities, towns and villages with populations over 5,000 were surveyed for information on the shopping centres within their corporate limits. City clerks were also requested to supply the Bureau with the names of those surrounding municipalities which contained shopping centres.

Through this "blanket" approach method, it was possible to obtain an almost complete coverage of shopping centres in Canada. However, in a survey such as this, it is impossible to determine the degree of accuracy of the listing.

The second stage of this survey was contacting the lessors of the shopping centres in order to obtain the list of the tenants within each centre. As these lists were obtained, it was necessary to send each retail establishment a questionnaire on which to report 1956 sales, since it is not usually the policy of the lessor to divulge such information. Although a great deal of effort was made to secure information from each retail establishment, it was found necessary in some cases to estimate sales.

Summary of Results

Authorities on shopping-centre development in North America have employed various criteria in stratifying shopping centres, the three most common being: (a) the population which a shopping centre is designed to serve, (b) the floor area of the stores, and (c) the acreage of the shopping centre.

Since neither floor space nor area data were available for this initial survey, stratification of shopping centres was made on the number of retail establishments and was so selected that the limits would produce classes which would correspond closely to the concept of the neighbourhood, community, and regional types of shopping centres.

The range of these classes is as follows:

Type A—shopping centres with 5 to 15 retail establishments

Type B—shopping centres with 16 to 30 retail establishments

Type C—shopping centres with more than 30 retail establishments.

It should be noted that the Dominion Bureau of Statistics is aware of the limitation of this type of stratification for analytical purposes and, in the 1957 annual survey of shopping centres, an attempt will be made to compile data which will make stratification by one of the other criteria more practical.

During 1956, there were 67 shopping centres in operation with a total sales volume of \$238,027,038. This represents 1.7 per cent of the total estimated retail sales in Canada. However, a more realistic appraisal of the percentage of business done by shopping centres would be the comparison of their sales to the sales for similar kinds of business within the provinces in which the shopping centres are located. Trades such as motor vehicle dealers, lumber dealers and farm implement dealers, which are of considerable significance in the total retail trade sales made in Canada, are not represented in shopping centres. The exclusion of these trades from the total retail trade picture raises the percentage of business done by shopping centres in the provinces in which they are located to 2.6 per cent.

Percentage of Shopping Centre Sales to Total Retail Sales¹ by Regions

Province	Provincial retail sales ¹	Shopping centres	
		Sales	Percentage of total sales
	\$	\$	%
Ontario	4,019,990,000	157,008,561	3.9
Quebec	2,484,281,000	45,914,975	1.8
Other provinces ²	2,681,912,000	35,103,502	1.3
Total	9,186,183,000	238,027,038	2.6

1. Excludes the sales of the following trades: general stores, motor vehicle dealers, lumber and building material dealers, and fuel dealers.

2. Includes Atlantic Provinces, Alberta and British Columbia.

While this percentage is relatively insignificant, it should be borne in mind that 1956 saw a continuation in the upward trend in shopping-centre construction. The information at the disposal of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics indicates that the year 1957 saw no signs of any levelling off in this type of construction.

With the construction of shopping centres occurring throughout 1956, many of the reports re-

ceived from the retail establishments surveyed and included in this report covered only part-year operations.

The following table shows the provincial distribution of shopping centres, by type. Ontario accounted for 61.2 per cent of the total number of shopping centres in Canada; Quebec was second with 14.9 per cent of the total. The remaining 23.9 per cent of all shopping centres were located in Nova Scotia, Alberta and British Columbia.

Number of Shopping Centres in Canada, 1956, by province and type

Province	Type A	Type B	Type C	Total
Nova Scotia	1	—	—	1
Quebec	4	6	—	10
Ontario	22	13	6	41
Alberta	8	1	—	9
British Columbia	5	1	—	6
Canada	40	21	6	67

As shown in Table 1, shopping centres in 1956 were composed of 520 independent retail establishments and 378 chain stores¹. Although 57.9 per cent of all retail establishments within shopping centres are independently operated, they account for only 39.7 per cent of the sales. Stores operated by chain organizations accounted for the remaining 60.3 per cent of the retail shopping-centre sales.

Although the dollar aggregates shown in the following tables portray the business done by trades and types of shopping centres, the users should, nevertheless, employ any averages and ratios derived from these tables with caution. It will be

1. A retail chain is defined as an organization operating four or more retail stores in similar or related kinds of business under the same ownership.

found that the arithmetic means of the sales made by all the retail establishments within each type of shopping centre bear a similarity to each other—Type A, \$219,080; Type B, \$281,524; Type C, \$296,472. However, no particular significance should be attached to this fact aside from noting that the similarity is due to the heavy weight given to the dollar volume in each type of shopping centre by the grocery and combination store trade.

In analyzing any of the data that are contained in the following tables, it should be borne in mind that a large percentage of the reports received from the retail establishments covered only part-year operations.

Additional information is given in the following tables.

TABLE 1. Retail Sales in Shopping Centres, Canada, 1956, by Type of Shopping Centre

	Type A 5-15 retail units	Type B 16-30 retail units	Type C Over 30 retail units	Total
Number of shopping centres	40	21	6	67
Number of stores				
Independent ¹	186	234	100	520
Chain	95	198	85	378
Total	281	432	185	898
Sales				
Independent stores ¹	16,952,050	49,061,040	28,475,472	94,488,562
Chain stores	44,609,433	72,557,234	26,371,809	143,538,476
Total	61,561,483	121,618,274	54,847,281	238,027,038

1. Includes department stores.

TABLE 2. Retail Sales in Shopping Centres, Canada, 1956 by Type of Shopping Centre and Kind of Business

No.	Kind of business	Type A 5-15 retail units			Type B 16-30 retail units		
		Independent	Chain	All stores	Independent	Chain	All stores
1	Grocery and combination	4,651,781	35,617,761	40,269,542	1	48,243,615	1
2	Other food and beverage	1,159,259	354,287	1,513,546	1,484,258	717,993	2,202,251
3	Department	1	—	1	1	—	1
4	Variety	1	1	3,131,042	1	7,596,382	1
5	Garages and filling stations	1	—	1	1	1	746,146
6	Men's clothing	844,270	1	1	1,102,978	1,612,103	2,715,081
7	Family clothing	—	1	1	1	1	192,858
8	Women's clothing	455,195	2,279,584	2,734,779	1,031,280	3,924,711	4,955,991
9	Shoe	181,581	1,738,950	1,920,531	224,246	2,300,413	2,524,659
10	Hardware	1,697,236	1	1	1,486,198	1	1
11	Furniture, appliance and radio ..	144,615	—	144,615	994,458	1	1
12	Restaurant	1,255,093	—	1,255,093	1,835,746	1	1
13	Drug	2,396,799	960,754	3,357,553	3,145,083	1,386,111	4,531,194
14	Jewellery	149,162	—	149,162	378,823	564,549	943,372
15	Miscellaneous	845,898	300,231	1,146,129	3,364,146	3,547,011	6,911,157
16	Total, all trades	16,952,050	44,609,433	61,561,483	49,061,040	72,557,234	121,618,274

1. Indicates figures which are withheld to avoid disclosing individual operations but which are included in the totals.

TABLE 3. Percentage Distribution of Stores and Sales in Shopping Centres, Canada, 1956 by Trade and Type of Shopping Centre

No.	Kind of business	Type A 5-15 retail units			
		Independent stores		Chain stores	
		No.	Sales	No.	Sales
		(per cent of total)			
1	Grocery and combination	8.1	27.4	24.2	79.8
2	Other food and beverage	11.8	6.8	9.5	0.8
3	Department	0.5	1	—	—
4	Variety	2.2	1	11.6	1
5	Garages and filling stations	2.2	1	—	—
6	Men's clothing	5.9	5.0	2.1	1
7	Family clothing	—	—	3.1	1
8	Women's clothing	5.9	2.7	20.0	5.1
9	Shoe	1.6	1.1	15.8	3.9
10	Hardware	15.1	10.0	1.1	1
11	Furniture, appliance and radio	3.2	0.9	—	—
12	Restaurant	11.8	7.4	—	—
13	Drug	12.9	14.1	8.4	2.2
14	Jewellery	3.2	0.9	—	—
15	Miscellaneous	15.6	5.0	4.2	0.7
16	Total, all trades	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

1. Indicates figures which are withheld to avoid disclosing individual operations but which are included in the totals.
2. Includes both independent and chain stores.

TABLE 2. Retail Sales in Shopping Centres, Canada, 1956 by Type of Shopping Centre and Kind of Business

Type C Over 30 retail units			Total, all types			No.
Independent	Chain	All stores	Independent	Chain	All stores	
1	17,027,579	1	5,584,302	100,888,955	106,473,257	1
605,537	257,808	863,345	3,249,054	1,330,088	4,579,142	2
1	—	1	56,088,469	—	56,088,469	3
1	1	3,438,453	362,623	13,816,748	14,179,371	4
—	—	—	1	1	1,449,267	5
465,568	1	1	2,412,816	2,389,494	4,802,310	6
1	1	33,828	122,093	322,992	445,085	7
626,595	2,279,761	2,906,356	2,113,070	8,484,056	10,597,126	8
365,269	844,592	1,209,861	771,096	4,883,955	5,655,051	9
780,218	1	1	3,963,652	1,985,812	5,949,464	10
1,295,618	1	1	2,434,691	1,071,198	3,505,889	11
1	—	1	1	1	3,977,764	12
1	1	1,227,242	1	1	9,115,989	13
85,854	190,081	275,935	613,839	754,630	1,368,469	14
1,324,446	458,653	1,783,099	5,534,490	4,305,895	9,840,385	15
28,475,472	26,371,809	54,847,281	94,488,562	143,538,476	238,027,038	16

1. Indicates figures which are withheld to avoid disclosing individual operations but which are included in the totals.

TABLE 3. Percentage Distribution of Stores and Sales in Shopping Centres, Canada, 1956 by Trade and Type of Shopping Centre

Type B 16-30 retail units				Type C Over 30 retail units				Total, all types		No.
Independent stores		Chain stores		Independent stores		Chain stores		No. of stores ²	Sales	
No.	Sales	No.	Sales	No.	Sales	No.	Sales			
(per cent of total)										
0.9	1	10.2	66.5	2.0	1	9.4	64.5	7.8	44.7	1
13.7	3.0	11.6	1.0	8.0	2.1	9.4	1.0	11.3	1.9	2
3.0	1	—	—	3.0	1	—	—	1.2	23.6	3
0.4	1	11.6	10.5	2.0	1	10.6	1	5.6	6.0	4
1.7	1	0.5	1	—	—	—	—	1.0	0.6	5
6.8	2.2	7.2	2.2	7.0	1.6	8.2	1	6.3	2.0	6
0.9	1	1.0	1	2.0	1	1.2	1	1.1	0.2	7
7.6	2.1	20.0	5.4	11.0	2.2	23.5	8.6	13.3	4.4	8
3.8	0.4	12.6	3.2	6.0	1.3	11.8	3.2	7.6	2.4	9
6.0	3.0	1.0	1	4.0	2.7	1.2	1	5.6	2.5	10
5.6	2.0	2.5	1	12.0	4.5	3.5	1	4.3	1.5	11
6.0	3.7	0.5	1	8.0	1	—	—	5.0	1.7	12
5.6	6.4	5.2	1.9	2.0	1	7.1	1	7.0	3.8	13
3.8	0.8	2.5	0.8	3.0	0.3	3.5	0.7	2.9	0.6	14
34.2	6.8	13.6	4.9	30.0	4.6	10.6	1.7	20.0	4.1	15
100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	16

1. Indicates figures which are withheld to avoid disclosing individual operations but which are included in the totals.
 2. Includes both independent and chain stores.



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TABLE 4. Retail Sales in Shopping Centres, 1956, By Provinces and Kinds of Business

Kind of business or store	Canada	Ontario	Quebec	Other provinces
Grocery and combination	106,473,257	77,003,071	22,390,449	6,574,737
Other food and beverage	4,579,142	2,605,362	1,276,358	696,922
Department	56,058,469	1	1	1
Variety	14,179,371	9,366,010	3,309,770	1,503,591
Garage and filling station	1,449,267	833,597	—	565,670
Men's clothing	4,802,310	3,257,929	983,543	560,838
Family clothing	445,085	276,478	—	168,607
Women's clothing	10,597,126	7,932,799	1,806,729	857,598
Shoe	5,655,051	3,372,907	1,887,601	394,543
Hardware	5,949,464	3,054,610	2,183,882	710,972
Furniture, appliance and radio	3,505,889	2,258,790	538,658	658,441
Restaurant	3,977,764	2,489,587	781,790	706,387
Drug	9,115,989	5,944,074	1,721,073	1,450,842
Jewellery	1,368,469	810,217	332,171	226,081
Miscellaneous	9,840,335	1	1	1
Total, all trades	238,027,038	157,008,561	45,914,975	35,103,502

1. Indicates figures which are withheld to avoid disclosing individual operations but which are included in the totals.