Retail Coach Summary Update
Prepared for the Carroll City Council
May 12, 2021

Project Summary

The last update for the Council was April 12, 2021 in written format. Since that time, the CADC has received more store specific data and has now requested data for a total of 32 different stores and restaurants in Carroll, i.e. the Bomgaars report that you receive in last month's update. It has become the goal to educate existing business owners on the Primary Retail Trade Area and the population of 33,000 people who consistently shop in Carroll. There has also been strong movement with business recruitment only two months after the original point of contact. Generating early excitement for the Carroll market post-COVID.

The CADC has finalized the marketing and communications strategy to shed light on the positivity that comes from working with Retail Coach. Our marketing and communications will help bring a consistent brand for this project, educate the constituents of Carroll, and excite existing and new businesses.

Similar to the store specific data, Retail Coach has run data on our entire downtown. Showing the large foot-print it has along with shopping trends, i.e. time of day, time spent, busiest day of the week, etc. It shows the recovering in our downtown, post-COVID, and that Carroll has recovered stronger and more quickly than most communities.

Existing Business Effort

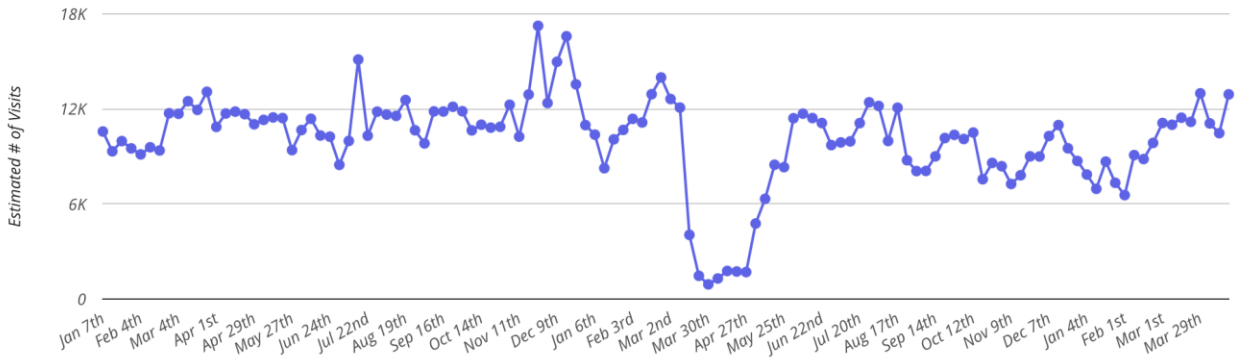
The CADC has requested store specific data for a total of 32 different retailers and restaurants around Carroll. This "geofenced" data tracks customers that come in and out of that specific location by tracking the GPS on the cell phone. Specifically this data helps the retailer see the town in which their customers live, the average time of day they visit, the day of the week with the most visits, how long the visit lasts, where the customers are prior/post the visit, their largest competitors, and more. This data given to our retailers is the same data that Retail Coach provides for companies like Target, showing just how valuable it is.

Of the 32 data sets requested, the CADC has received 16 and will continue to receive the rest over the coming weeks. Once the data is received, we visit with that retailer/restaurant to go over the data and deliver them a copy for their use.

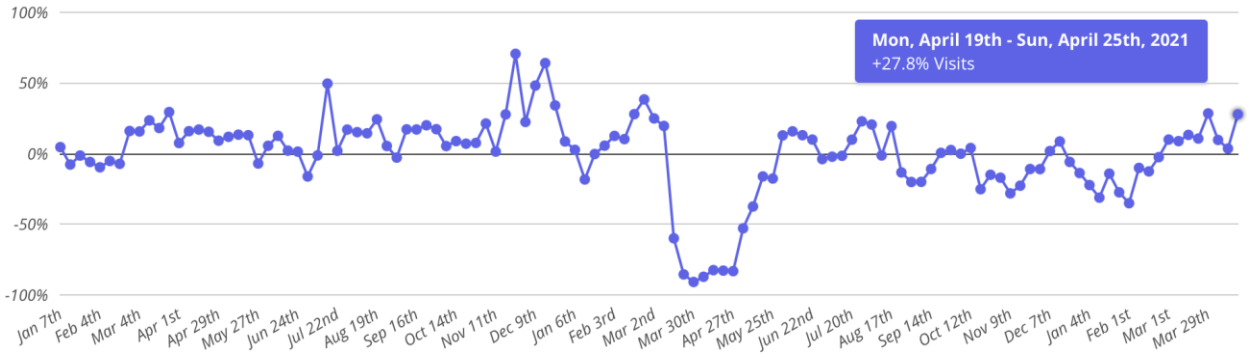
Requested		**Received**		**Delivered**	
April	May	April	May	April	May
29	32	7	16	7	11

Recently, Retail Coach ran a report of downtown Carroll, dating from January 1, 2019 to February 28, 2021. This report shows the estimated number of visits and geographical pull businesses in downtown Carroll have. It also shows the downtown's retail trade area, visitor profile, and more.

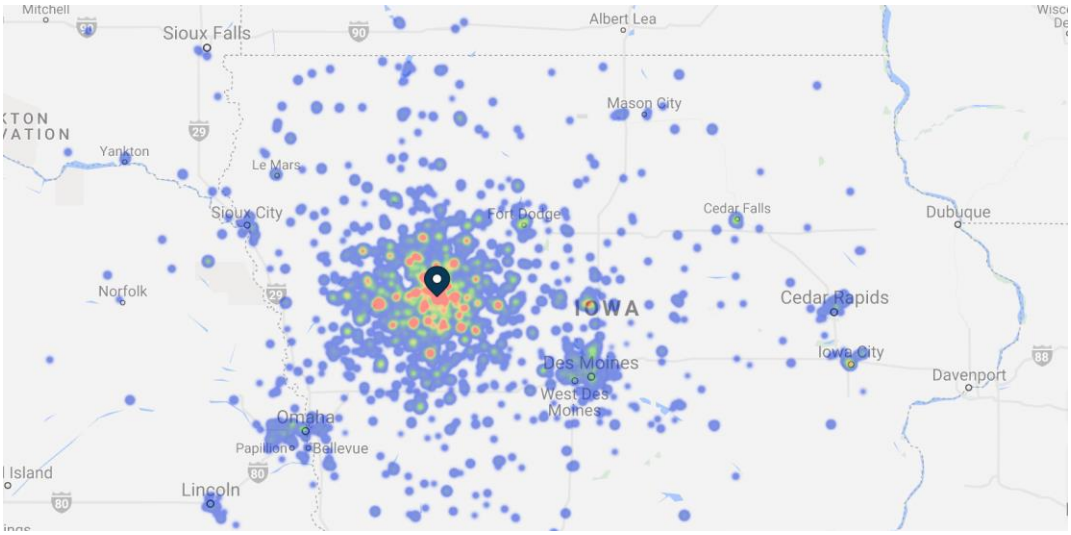
The first graph is of estimated weekly visits in downtown, which you can see the effects of COVID and the strong return that took place.



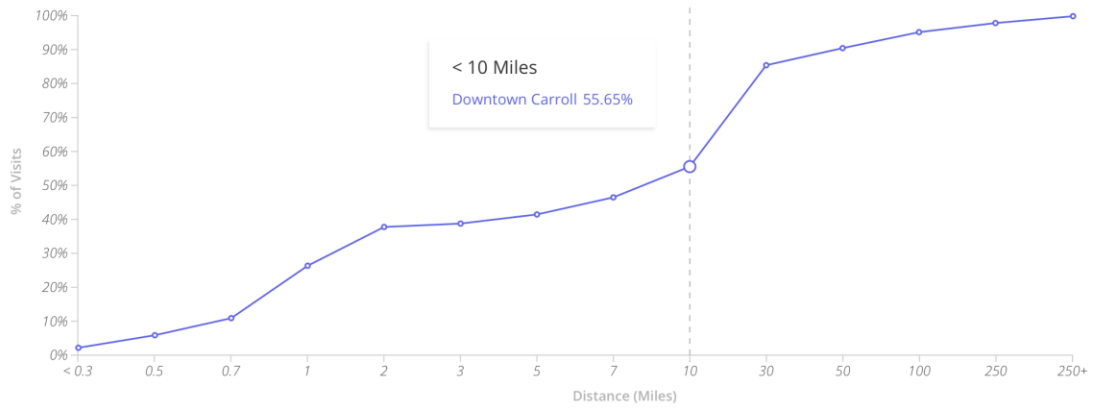
The next graphic shows a baseline change in weekly foot traffic in downtown Carroll. Again this chart shows the effects of COVID, and an overall steady return.



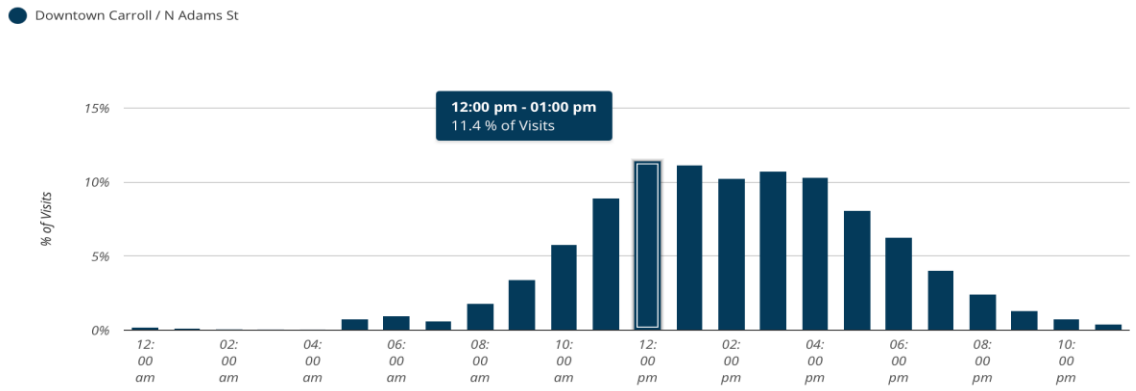
The heat map shows the downtown's specific retail trade area. This trade area is above average in a town that is a similar size to Carroll.



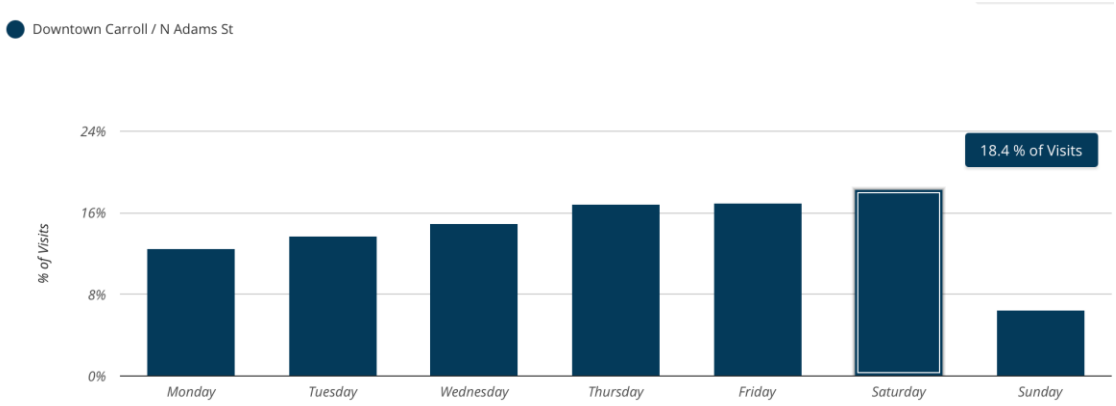
On par with communities similar to Carroll, approximately 45% of visitors come from over 10 miles away.



As expected, the most popular time of day for customers to visit is between 12pm-1pm with 11.4% of customers. This is a largely in part that most stores close at 5pm giving little to no time for visitors to come after they are off work. In terms of creating a synergy in the downtown of Carroll, more consistent hours would be helpful, and if stores closed at 6pm or 7pm instead of 5pm.



Historically, Thursday nights are known as shopping nights. However, on this chart, Thursday comes in at around the second or third busiest day in downtown Carroll.



Business Recruitment Effort

Retail Coach has made contact with 37 potential new businesses about the Carroll market and the possibilities of having a Carroll location. Shortly after Retail Coach made their first contact, they have already seen a lot of movement and interest in Carroll from these retailers. Retail Coach monitors the interest of the retailers by using a dashboard that categorizes the business based on their feedback. The categories on the dashboard are as followed:

- Reviewing Market Info: This means Retail Coach has sent them initial information on the Carroll market. Any business that is in this category has not given a response.
- Review Sites: This category means that the retailer is reviewing potential sites to see if the Carroll market would meet their needs.
- Not Interested: This means that the retailer does not believe the Carroll market is currently a good fit for their company. Just because the retailer may not be interested, does not mean they never will be in the future.
- Not Right Now: This category means that the retailer is interested in Carroll, but this is just not the right time for an expansion into the Carroll market.
- Interested: This category means a retailer is interested in coming to the Carroll market.
- Interested, Need Franchisee: This means the retailer is interested in the Carroll and needs to find a franchisee to make it a possible option.
- Looking for a Site: This category means the retailer is interested in the Carroll market and is looking for a site that will suit their needs.
- Site Visit: This means the retailer is now visiting Carroll to physically look at site options.
- LOI/Opening/Opened: This category means the retailer is opening a new location in Carroll or has opened a new location.

Based on the CADC update meetings with Mr. Farmer, the Carroll market has seen faster movement and interest than many other communities they have worked with of a similar size. Conversations with retailers are going smoothly this early in the process.

	Category	*Number of Retailers (April)*	*Number of Retailers (May)*
Business Recruitment Dashboard Update	Review Market Info	18	20
	Review Site	5	5
	Not Interested	3	2
	Not Right Now	4	4
	Interested	0	1
	Interested, Need Franchisee	4	3
	Looking for a Site	2	2
	Site Visit	0	0
	LOI/Opening/Opened	0	0

Marketing and Communications Plan

Due to any negativity and/or false assumption as to why Retail Coach is being used, the CADC has put together a plan to better communicate and market to Carroll County the purpose of Retail Coach. The CADC is taking an intentional and proactive approach to promote Retail Coach and the work they are doing.

Marketing Goals: Promote Retail Coach and the work it does to help existing businesses and bring new business throughout Carroll County.

- Ensure a consistent brand image for CADC and the work it does with Retail Coach.
- Develop a schedule and implementation of ongoing communications.
- Evaluation of communications and promotion for CADC and Retail Coach.
- Promote workshops and business data.
- Presentation to local communities on Retail Coach Data.

To start, the CADC will use the following sources to communicate and market Retail Coach activity.

- Social Media
- Press Releases
- Area Development Meetings
- City Council Updates

Correctly using these sources will drive positive communication throughout the community and bring even more excitement to the work Retail Coach is doing.

Final Summary

In total, between the data given to existing businesses and the movement of recruitment for new businesses, the Carroll community has a lot to be excited about. We have hard data to show that Carroll has recovered well from COVID and this is a strong market for economic growth. The proper steps will continue to be taken to maximize growth opportunities, both for existing and new businesses. The CADC will continue to market and communicate the success we are having early on and hope others do the same. The most success will come from the community working as a team to optimize the most success.