



# Coal City Core Area Commercial Design Guidelines

## **Purpose**

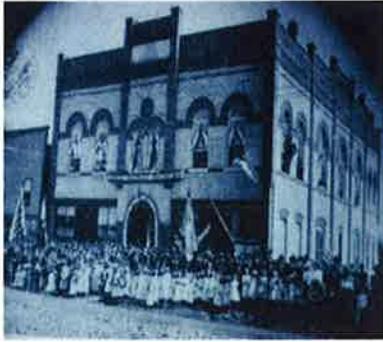
The purpose of these design guidelines is to establish criteria for the construction of new buildings and renovation of existing structures in the core area as defined in the Village of Coal City's Comprehensive Plan. These criteria are not intended to restrict imagination, innovation, or variety, but to assist in focusing on design principles resulting in creative solutions that develop a satisfactory appearance within the Village. These design guidelines are created to preserve taxable values and promote the public health, safety, and welfare of area residents.

## **Broadway's Past**

Coal City's Core Area is a result of the community that has grown up around it and continues to rely upon local retail, commercial, and service-oriented businesses. This Broadway Street's roots are closely tied to the history of coal mining in the area and the workers who were necessary labor to retrieve the natural resources within the region. Mines started opening and towns developed around the mines. These towns included 1854 Gardner, 1858 Braceville, 1898 South Wilmington, 1875 Coal City, Clark City, Braidwood, Harrisonville, Suffernville, East Brooklyn, Central City, Godley, Richmond, Sandtown, Ramsey, Carbon Hill, Eileen, Torino, and Diamond. Miners lived within walking distance of the mines.

Coal City was incorporated in August 17, 1881 with a population of 900. Small businesses started to develop during this time, including Coal City's first two buildings, the Coalfield Hotel, and Charles Fisher's Store. Coal mines owned company stores that provided supplies for the miners, these stores included shoes, groceries, dry goods, and meats. These purchases were then subtracted from the miners' paychecks.

The population fluctuated as old mines closed and new mines opened. As miners moved so did the stores, which provided their supplies. Coal City had established a downtown, which continues to draw from a larger area throughout southern and eastern Grundy County as well as southwest Will County.



Faletti Orchestra. This location is currently utilized by the Family Skate Center.

The marquee building in the Core Area, nicknamed the Opera House is currently occupied by Coal City Pharmacy. The Opera House was opened during 1920's and 1930's. Another piece of history for Coal City's Core Area involved the Coliseum. This dance hall was open during the late 1920's and 1940's. The Coliseum held Saturday night dances with the local Barney



## Application Process

- A Building Permit is reviewed, approved and issued by the Building Official for all developments or redevelopments in the Village.
- To begin the approval process, contact the Village Administrator at (815) 634-8608 for the Design Committee application information. Details are submitted to the Design Committee with a completed Design Committee application and Building Permit application.
- The design guidelines contained in this document provide guidance for the creation of acceptable building design (massing) and site design, lighting, parking facilities, landscaping and site improvements, and sign design. An ad hoc Design Committee will review the proposal for consistency with the intent of the Design Guidelines and determine if a Certificate of Appropriateness should be issued. These guidelines do not cover repair and replace improvements.
- The ad hoc Design Committee will consist of the Village Administrator, two members of the Planning and Zoning Commission, and a member of the Village Board. The Design Committee will provide a decision within 45 days after a written request for review and a complete application has been submitted to the Village Administrator or his/her designee. If the Certificate of Appropriateness is denied by the ad hoc Design Committee, the applicant may appeal through the existing appeal process, Village Code 156.315.

## Building Height, Bulk & Proportion

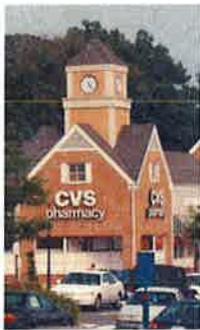
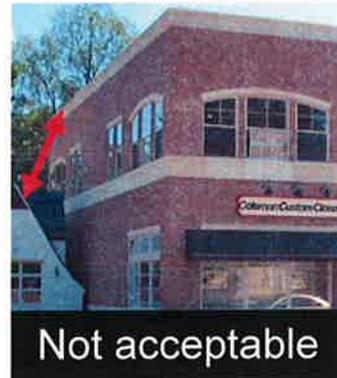
Successful downtowns create an intimate pedestrian atmosphere, resulting in an “outdoor” room for visitors and shoppers. Coal City’s downtown area and pedestrian oriented shopping area is referred to as the Core Area. The Core Area is defined within the Village’s Comprehensive Plan. Much of this atmosphere can be attributed to the bulk and proportion of buildings as they relate to the street and

one another. Development within the Core Area should be comprised primarily of 2-and 3-story buildings. Buildings of this height contribute to a sense of enclosure and an intimate pedestrian scale.



- Core Area Commercial buildings shall create a “streetwall”, creating a sense of enclosure.

- New development within the Core Area shall avoid extreme differences in building height. Careful consideration should be given to the height of adjacent buildings.



- 3 story (and possibly 4 story) design elements may be acceptable in select locations, provided they are in character with the surrounding area. Vertical architectural elements may include clock towers, spires or bell towers. These elements should be considered as design “high-lights” at key locations.

- The 3rd stories of buildings, if permitted within the Core Area, shall be stepped back to soften the bulk and visual scale of the building.



## Building Placement and Orientation

The Core Area is characterized by continuous rows of commercial buildings constructed at the front property line. This development pattern creates a distinctive “streetwall” effect that adds visual interest, enhances the pedestrian environment, and establishes a “human” scale within an area. Building placement and orientation objectives strive to create this development pattern within the Core Area.

- Buildings within the Core Area should be positioned at or near the front property line. Buildings located on corner lots should be built to or near or both fronting property lines except the corners of Broadway and Division.
- Structures constructed along the east side of Broadway and south of Division must utilize a 0-foot setback from the public right-of-way.
- At the intersection of Broadway and Division, there shall be a line-of-sight reservation that disallows the placement of structures along the property line at the intersection of property boundaries adjacent to the intersection of the two roads. From this point, a ten foot setback on each boundary line shall be utilized as endpoints for a chord. This newly established polygon will be reserved and may not have building structures located within.



- On certain properties, buildings may be set back from the sidewalk, to provide front yard landscaped areas appropriate for the site and in keeping with adjacent uses in the district and consistent throughout each block front.

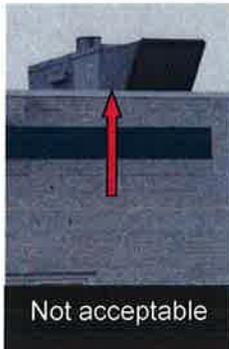
- New construction in the Core Area shall occupy the entire width of the lot to avoid gaps between buildings and discontinuities in the streetwall.
- Where maintaining a continuous streetwall is not possible or desirable, the streetwall shall be maintained through the use of landscaping, pedestrian amenities, and decorative walls or fencing.
- Buildings throughout the Core Area shall face the street, with strong pedestrian orientation.



- Buildings must have clearly defined, highly visible customer entrances with features such as canopies or porticos, arches, wing walls, and integral planters.



- The placement of buildings at odd or irregular angles to the street shall be avoided. However, corner buildings may take advantage of their prominent locations with angled, rounded or recessed corner entrances or other small setbacks.



- Screening of utility meters, transformers and similar hardware, mechanical equipment, such as air conditioning condensers and PVC vents, refuse areas and containers, and/or other potentially unattractive places from view from any street, sidewalk, or adjacent property shall be accomplished by the use of walls, fencing, berms, and/or planting. Plant screening shall be equally effective in the winter and summer seasons. Walls shall be constructed of materials matching the primary building. Fencing shall complement the architectural and landscaping designs on the site. All refuse containment areas shall be located to the rear of buildings and provided with solid access doors or gates which self-close.



## Architectural Style

- Development within the Core Area shall consist of traditional architectural styles. Modern architectural styles are discouraged.
- New buildings need not be historic replicas, but shall offer high-quality and compatible interpretations of the traditional styles present within historic and traditional downtowns.
- Regardless of style, new buildings should use traditional masonry materials and reflect the predominant scale, height, massing, and proportions of traditional downtowns and Core areas.
- New buildings should incorporate decorative cornices, columns, parapets, reliefs, terra cotta tiles, and other significant façade detailing.



- Building facades shall minimize monotony of expansive exterior walls with vertical breaks in the building facades.



## Building Materials

New buildings shall be constructed of high quality, durable exterior building materials, which shall be used on all commercial developments within the Core Area. The materials shall be durable in the local climate and convey design quality and visual interest of structures. Materials shall maintain an intended finish over time or acquire a finish which is understood to be an outcome of normal interaction with the local climate. Materials shall be attached in a manner that will maintain secure connections and closure along surfaces.

Materials shall withstand ongoing contact with the public, sustain impacts without exhibiting substantial change in surface appearance, or be installed in a location where the building is not subject to frequent pedestrian contact.

- Buildings should be constructed of approved masonry building materials such as brick or stone; these materials should be used on all sides of the building. Stucco, siding of all types, and any other exterior wall covering are discouraged for commercial and mixed-use buildings within the Core Area.
- Approved masonry material shall include manufactured building units that are an aggregate of clay, shale, sand, concrete, or any combination thereof and bonded according to architectural specifications.



Approved masonry materials are textured and colored. Products such as architectural concrete masonry units (brick or block), manufactured decorative stone and precast are considered approved masonry material.

- Recommended accent materials include stone, simulated stone, terra cotta, and wood and metal trim.

- Since parking will be promoted in the rear of the buildings, new construction within the Core Area should have “360 degree” appearance; i.e. with design and detail considerations for all visible sides. Those sides that do not face the thorough-fare must be coordinated with the façade.
- Rough sawed wood, aluminum panels and siding, and plastic or metal panels are prohibited within the Core Area.
- Exterior insulation finish systems (EIFS) or Dryvit are prohibited within the Core Area along the street level.



## Doors and Entrances

The doors and entrances to the new buildings in the Core Area shall provide an open invitation to potential customers, be attractive and inviting to pedestrians, and add visual interest to the street. However, doors shall be appropriately sized and in scale with a building’s façade and must comply within the current International Building Code (incorporated within Village Code) regarding proper sizing.

- The front doors of new buildings shall reflect the scale, placement, and proportions of a traditional downtown; recessed entrances are encouraged so that doors do not open into the pedestrian way within the public right of way.
- Main entrances shall be at the front of the building and face the sidewalk. Buildings situated on corner lots may take advantage of their prominent locations with angled, or rounded corner entrances.





- Main entrances shall be designed as an important architectural feature of the building.

- Doors and entryways of buildings shall be compatible with the original style and character of the façade.

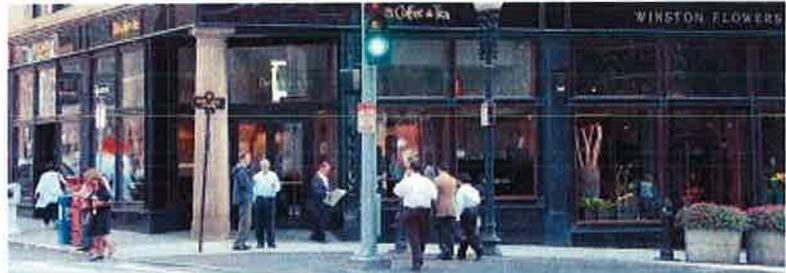


## Windows

Display windows on the ground floor of commercial buildings in a mixed-use downtown are one of the distinguishing features of pedestrian oriented shopping areas. They allow passersby to see merchandise within a commercial building from the sidewalk. Windows on the upper floors of a traditional Core Area buildings should be smaller and less prominent, but shall have attractive detailing and decorative trim.



- Large ground-floor display windows and bays are required for retail and entertainment uses within the Core Area and shall be in consistent proportion with a historic downtown.



- Windows on the upper floors of new buildings shall appear to be “punched” openings within a solid wall, rather than continuous rows of windows separated only by their frames. Curtain-wall window treatments are not permitted along the street level within the Core Area area. Upper floor windows should be recessed, not flush with the surface of the building.

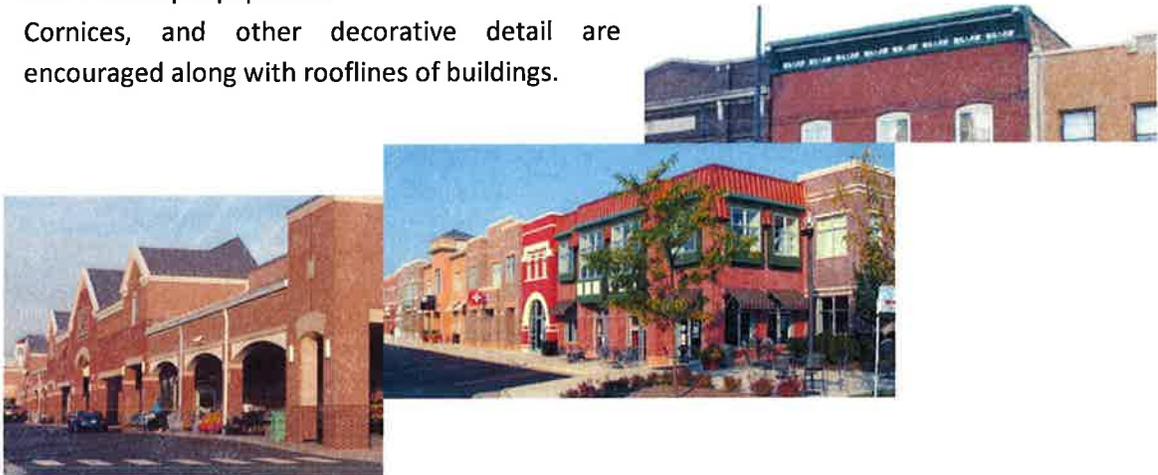
- Window glazing shall be clear or slightly tinted. Dark, mirrored, reflective glass, or glass block is not permitted.
- Existing windows are important architectural features in a building's façade. Window size and configuration must be maintained as a minimum standard. Window openings must not be covered over or boarded up.
- Ground floor windows can be used for displays. Otherwise, business owners shall allow full and unobstructed views into their businesses. Obstructing windows from the interior of a building with shelving, display cases, signage or other objects is not permitted. Utilizing the window area for an attractive display shall be permitted.



## Roofs and Rooflines

The rooflines of new buildings shall be similar to the rooflines of traditional downtowns and the Core Area in terms of shape, alignment, and architectural detailing.

- The roofs of commercial buildings shall be flat, shallow-sloped or gabled.
- Roof parapets should be utilized to create an interesting building profile and to hide vents and other rooftop equipment.
- Cornices, and other decorative detail are encouraged along with rooflines of buildings.



- Sloped mansard style (shake or shingle) roofs are prohibited within the Core Area.
- Rooflines and architectural details shall complement the building's architectural style, and contribute to the Core Area's character, image and appeal.



## Colors

Color should be used to unite the elements of a façade and to highlight architectural features. However, the colors on individual buildings should complement and be compatible with the predominant hues of nearby buildings.

- The predominant colors for Core Area buildings shall consist of earth tones. The natural brick and stone colors shall predominate. Darker or lighter hues may be used as accent trim.
- Ceramic tile, terra cotta, brick, stone, and glass surfaces shall not be painted, unless it is appropriate to the architectural style.

## Awnings and Canopies

- Awnings (temporary/seasonal) and canopies (permanent) protect shoppers from the elements, add color and visual interest to the street, and contribute significantly to an area's pedestrian scale and interest.
- Awnings and canopies may be integrated into the façade of all commercial buildings within the Core Area and must be in character with the architectural style of the building.
- Awnings should be properly placed above entrances and may extend over storefront windows.
- The color of awnings and canopies should complement the overall color scheme of the building façade.



- Awnings and canopies should be positioned a minimum of eight feet above the sidewalk.
- Awnings shall be made of a canvas or durable fabric material that can be easily cleaned. Hard plastic, or other materials that could be cracked or broken are prohibited. Awnings and canopies that become windblown or torn must be removed and/or repaired immediately.
- Back lit awnings and canopies, shingle and mansard canopies, and metal and plastic awnings are prohibited within the Core Area.
- Awnings and canopies shall be used only when they are compatible with, or complement the architectural style of the building. Awnings shall not appear out of place, “forced”, or as an afterthought.

# Lighting

The lighting of a building’s façade can help identify stores and businesses, promote a sense of safety and security, and highlight prominent Core Area buildings and building features.

- Appropriate lighting shall be used to illuminate entries into the Core Area, signage, displays, and pedestrian and parking areas, as well as to highlight significant architectural elements. Improvements must augment the Village’s designated lighting plan.



- Building lighting shall be subtle and understated and must enhance the building design and the adjoining landscape; light fixtures shall be designed and oriented to produce minimal glare, nuisance, and spillover onto neighboring properties.



- Exterior lighting sources shall be concealed with baffles or shields to provide direct illumination; where concealment is not practical, light fixtures must be compatible with overall storefront design. Spot lighting is prohibited for commercial buildings within the Core Area.
- Incandescent lighting creates a warm atmosphere and is encouraged. Diffused, soft white light is encouraged. Excessive lighting should be avoided to reduce light pollution.



- Street lighting within the Core Area should be at a pedestrian scale. Light standards should be between 12’-18’. Parking areas within the Core Area shall contain both pedestrian and vehicular scale lighting.
- A similar style of light fixture, which augments this selection shall be used where appropriate as part of new development and redevelopment within the Core Area.

## Landscaping and Site Improvements

- Native plants to the Northeastern Illinois Region are encouraged for all landscaped areas within the Core Area. Although initially these plants and grasses may be difficult to establish, long-term maintenance costs will be reduced.
- Planters and landscaped areas should be installed to buffer parking and service areas from adjacent uses. Plantings should consist of low evergreen and/or deciduous shrubs planted in conjunction with low-growing annual or perennial plants and groundcover. Large expanses of exposed mulch should be avoided.



- In conjunction with landscaping, decorative fencing is encouraged to delineate and screen parking and service facilities, etc. Chain link fencing is prohibited within the Core Area. Attractive picket fencing may be utilized along the west side of Broadway.



Credit: Carol M. Highsmith

- All landscaping must be maintained in a healthy and attractive condition. Maintenance programs shall be established as part of new development approvals to ensure that private landscaping is adequately cared for and that its value is retained over time. Regular maintenance must include turf mowing, periodic fertilization, pruning, and the clean-up of litter and debris.
- Areas adjacent to entrances, monument signs and other site features should be considered for seasonal flowers or colorful groundcover.
- A Streetscape Improvement Program should be implemented to “visually unify” the Core Area. The Village shall develop and implement a detailed Streetscape Improvement Plan for the entire Core Area to establish a visual identity for the streets, and to link together the diverse land uses. Streetscape improvements to the Core Area should include coordinated landscaping on both sides of the street; pedestrian lighting; distinctive signage and banners; coordinated street furniture including benches, bike racks and trash receptacles; accent landscaping at key locations; and gateway signage.

- Parkway landscaping within off street parking areas shall consist of salt-tolerant street trees, shrubs, groundcover, perennials and shrubs limited to maximum 3' mature height.
- Within the shopping areas, plantings in raised beds, planters, urns, or other containers should be utilized along the curb line in selected locations to highlight key entrances and activity areas. Plantings should be attractively maintained throughout all seasons. Consideration should be given to an appropriate mix of plant materials to ensure screening and greening still occurs during winter months.



- All landscaping within and adjacent to the public right-of-way shall be compatible with existing plant materials in the area and be composed of native and salt tolerant species.
- Street trees and other landscaping along the public rights-of-way shall be protected from motorized and pedestrian traffic by curbs, tree grates, and other devices.



- Dumpster enclosures shall be located at the rear of the building it serves, made of masonry material matching the primary structure and shall have self-closing, lockable solid doors or gates.

## Public Improvements

In addition to site and building improvements of commercial and mixed-use sites, a range of projects should be undertaken within the public rights-of-way publicly owned property to enhance the image and appearance of the Core Area to create a safe, attractive, and “hospitable” working, shopping, living, and leisure-time environment. These public sector improvements can also help promote new private investment and development, and attract additional visitors and business patrons to the area. It is imperative for the Village to undergo a full analysis of design features within the Core Area that will guide public improvements between the alleyways and public roads. The guidelines must provide

design standards for landscaping, signage, sidewalk and alley design, gateway signage consideration, benches, and lighting.

- Pylons and bollard lighting, in matching styles to the decorative lighting units, should be considered as accents and for ornamental purposes. These fixtures could be used to highlight crosswalks, open spaces, seating areas, and major pedestrian ways.
- The Village shall establish a comprehensive signage system that can direct motorists to the Core Area, and guide and direct both motorists and pedestrians to key destinations within the area.