

VILLAGEWIDE DESIGN GUIDELINES

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why has the Village adopted these standards or guidelines?

*The Village will “incorporate Guidelines for commercial and industrial building and design guidelines in zoning ordinance Section regarding **Site Plan Approval.**”*

How will this change my building to meet these requirements?

If you apply for a permit to modify or add a feature covered by these guidelines, you will be required to follow the Guidelines that address that feature. Typical examples of changes to existing buildings that require a permit and must follow these Guidelines include new siding, awnings, signs, and exterior lighting. It is not the intent of these Guidelines to require alterations beyond the scope of a proposed change, meaning that, for example, window replacements will not automatically trigger structural changes or awning changes. .

Some of the guidelines use words like “shall” or “prohibited”, others use words like “should” or “encouraged”. What is the difference?

Guidelines with “shall” and “prohibited” are requirements that shall be met. These critical words are highlighted. All other Guidelines are suggestions that the Village would like applicants to consider, sometimes strongly consider. Applicants that do not believe they can or should follow a “required” standard must negotiate with the Plan Commission for a waiver of that requirement.

How do I apply for a waiver?

A waiver is needed only when applicants request an exception to “required” Guidelines. Waivers are granted by the Plan Commission on a case-by-case basis and are decided based on the applicant’s ability to demonstrate one or more of the following conditions:

- A) The required design feature cannot be met on the site*
- B) The requirement would create undue hardship for the applicant as compared to other properties in the district*
- C) The intent of the guidelines can be successfully met with an alternative design*

How does the approval process work?

Applicants should review these Guidelines at the beginning of the design process. The following items must be submitted for review by Village staff and the Plan Commission:

- Design Guidelines Checklist (see last pages of Handbook)*
- Illustrations, Diagrams, Samples, and Spec Sheets*

Village Staff will review submissions for completeness and place the proposal on the agenda for the next scheduled Plan Commission Meeting. Applicants should submit required materials at least six weeks before the meeting to allow time for staff review and distribution of materials. Submissions made less than one week before a Plan Commission meeting may be scheduled for

the following month's meeting. Applicants that wish to appeal the decision of Plan Commission may do so to the Village Board. Requests for appeal should be made to the Village Administrator.

DESIGN TERMS

Design Guidelines were developed to improve and protect the appearance, value, and function of properties along the overlay district. The guidelines are intended to allow for creativity and variety within a framework of basic design parameters. The Village seeks a genuinely collaborative design process that rewards creativity and quality with opportunities to expedite the approval process. Underlined terms differ in Sec. 10-1-101 Signs

Awning sign: a sign that is affixed to an awning, or is designed into the material of an awning.

Building mounted sign: a sign that is affixed to a building and that projects less than six (6) inches from the surface.

Clear glass: glass that is not frosted tinted or obscured in any way, allowing a clear view to the interior of the building.

CMU, Smooth-faced: a concrete masonry unit commonly referred to as concrete block, having a smooth exterior finish.

CMU, Split-faced: a concrete masonry unit with a textured exterior finish.

Discouraged: guideline for something that is neither favored nor prohibited.

Door jamb: vertical portion of the frame onto which a door could be secured.

EIFS (*Exterior Insulation Finishing System*): building product that provides exterior walls with a finished surface, insulation, and waterproofing in an integrated composite system.

Encouraged: indicates a guideline for something that is favored but not required.

Free-standing sign: a sign that is not attached to a building.

Functional public entrance: a building entrance that is unlocked during business hours, and is designated for public use.

Ground floor façade: the ground floor portion of the building exterior facing a public street (for measurement purposes the ground floor façade includes the entire width of the building and first ten (10) feet above grade.

LED sign (Light Emitting Diodes): a variable message sign which is used to create pictures and or text.

Monument sign: a sign that is solid from ground level to the top of the sign, often incorporating a masonry foundation.

Parking lot: any parking area that has five (5) or more stalls.

Parking stall: the area designated for a single vehicle to park.

Projecting sign: a sign affixed to a building or wall in such a manner that its leading edges extends more than six (6) inches beyond the surface of the building.

ROW (right-of-way): land reserved for public use, including streets and sidewalks.

Standard shall: indicates a standard, something that applicants must do or not do.

Standard prohibited: indicates a standard, something that applicants must not do.

Vegetative buffer: a portion of land that uses trees, bushes, grass, etc. to separate two distinct areas visually and physically.

Window sign: a sign that is hung behind or painted on a window such that it is visible from the exterior.

SITE DESIGN

Intent: To focus urban character and activity toward the Highways

1.1. *A site plan shall be submitted with the Design Guidelines Checklist and shall show all of the important features planned for the site, including, as applicable:*

1.2. Building, on lots which are adjacent to the STH 69 or CTH PB, shall be set back from the highway right-of-way or be setback at the State or County setbacks, which ever is greater.

1.3. Building setbacks from any local street right-of-way shall conform to zoning requirements.

1.4. Walkways shall be provided to connect the building entrance to the public sidewalk and should be visually and functionally free of obstructions.

Lighting & Sign Plans

2.1. *A site plan shall be submitted with incorporating **Belleville's Lighting Guidelines.***

2.2. *All signs will comply with the **Village of Belleville's Code of Ordinances Title 10, Chapter 1 Article G "Signs, Canopies, Billboards and Awnings".***

Parking & Buffering

Intent: To improve the appearance of the Highway Area

3.1. Parking lots shall have every row of parking book-ended and separated from perpendicular drive aisles by a landscaped island that is at least five (5) feet wide, back of curb to back of curb, and runs the full depth of the adjacent parking stalls. When trees are planted within the islands, eight (8) feet is preferred. Rows containing 18 or more stalls should be interrupted by additional landscape islands.

3.2. Parking lot access driveways connecting to the street shall be separated from parking stalls by planted landscaping dividers protected by a concrete curb. The landscaping divider shall be at least five (5) feet wide, back of curb to back of curb, and shall extend at least twenty-five (25) feet from the public right-of-way.

3.3. Pedestrian circulation routes should be separated from vehicular parking and circulation by vegetative buffers. Where parking stalls abut a sidewalk or trail a planted strip at least four (4) feet in width shall be established and maintained. Parking curbs shall be located such that parked vehicles will not encroach over this four (4) foot planted strip.

3.4. Trash containers, recycling containers and street-level mechanical equipment (gas meters, air conditioners, etc.) shall be enclosed so that they are not visible from a public street. Electrical service boxes are excluded from this requirement.

3.5. Rooftop mechanical equipment shall be located or screened so that they are not visible from a public street.

Service Areas

Intent: To ensure that the entrance highways and the overall community character

- 4.1. Screening should be compatible with building architecture and other site features. Applicants shall conform to the Village's *Landscape Guidelines* and to the following Design Guidelines Overlay District.
- 4.2. Decorative fences, walls, and/or landscaped edges are strongly encouraged in order to screen front parking areas from the street and public sidewalk. Screening shall be maintained at three (3) feet or lower in height.
- 4.3. All parking lot islands shall be planted and maintained with perennials, shrubs, and/or shade trees. Landscaping should be designed to allow for vehicle overhangs.
- 4.4. Shrubs and planting beds surrounding free-standing signs are strongly encouraged. Any landscaping around free-standing signs shall not exceed three (3) feet in height.
- 4.5. To minimize heat build-up, parking lots should be planted with as many shade trees as practical.

Landscaping

Intents: To add liveliness to the Highway Area by massing building
To reduce the peak rate and volume and improve the Highway properties

- 5.1. Landscaping shall conform to the Village's *Landscape Guidelines* and to the following Design Guidelines Overlay District.
- 5.2. Parking lots adjacent to residential properties shall provide a semi-opaque buffer, a minimum of four (4) feet in height, in order to screen out vehicle lights. Screening options include a berm with plantings, a fence, a line of conifer trees, or a mix of these options. A solid fence without landscaping is discouraged.

Building Height

Building Massing & Articulation

Intents: To establish consistent street wall
To provide visual interest and human scale

- 6.1. Maximum building height shall be 35 feet (2 stories) for business buildings.
- 6.2. Maximum building height shall be 45 feet (3 stories) for industrial buildings.
- 6.3. Minimum building height shall be 16 feet (1.5 stories), measured from the sidewalk to the lowest point of the roof or parapet wall. A full two stories are encouraged wherever feasible.
- 6.4. New buildings are encouraged to establish vertical proportions for the street façade, and for the elements within that façade, rather than long, horizontal blank walls. Verticality can be emphasized using the following techniques: expression of structural bays, variation in material, variation in building plane (projections or recessed bays), articulation of the roofline or cornice, and use of vertically-proportioned windows.

6.5. The street façade of all new buildings are encouraged to utilize details or changes in materials to create a discernible base, middle, and top.

6.6. The base of the building should include elements that relate to the human scale. These should include doors and windows, texture, projections, awnings and canopies, ornament, etc.

BUILDING PROJECTIONS

Roof Expression

Intent: To reinforce the existing character of development
Maintain a scale to the facade.

7.1. A positive visual termination at the top of the building shall be created with a gable facing the public street or with a defined cornice. Projecting the cornice from the building plane is preferred; however, creating a horizontal line accentuating a cornice is acceptable.

7.2. Pitched roofs are preferred, parapet walls and cornices should be appropriate to the site and style of the building.

7.3. Sloped roofs shall have a slope no less than 5:12.

7.4. Canopies, awnings, covered porches, and/or gable-roof projections shall be provided along facades that give access to the building to accentuate entrances and give shelter to visitors. Minimum depth of coverage shall be three (3) feet, and the underside of the projection shall be between eight and twelve (8-12) feet above the sidewalk.

7.5. Awnings may be lit from above, and/or may feature lighting beneath to illuminate the sidewalk, however glowing awnings (backlit, light shows through the material) are prohibited.

7.6. Awning colors should relate to and complement the primary colors of the building façade.

Secondary Building Facades

Commercial Ground Floor

Intent: To provide variety and visual interest to pedestrians from the outdoor elements
To reinforce the existing character of development
To improve the appearance along the highway
To enliven streets

8.1. All exposed sides of a building shall use similar or complementary materials as used on the front facade.

8.2. Any secondary façade facing a public street (corner buildings) shall utilize the same design features as the primary front façade.

8.3. A detailed elevation of each exposed building façade shall be submitted *with the Design Guidelines Checklist. Materials and colors should be noted and samples provided.*

8.4. Buildings should help to enliven the highway and adjacent streets by providing significant visibility through the ground floor façade to activities or displays within the building.

8.5. Any ground floor facade within sixty (60) feet of any access street shall be comprised of at least thirty-five (35) percent clear glass. In order to emphasize the need for visual interest at eye level, clear glass at or above seven (7) feet from grade, shall only count towards the requirement at a factor of 0.75. If an interior wall is constructed behind the clear glass, a minimum of two (2) feet shall be maintained between the glass and the wall to allow for product display.

15.3. The use of reflective or dark-tinted glass is discouraged, especially at the ground level.

Transparency

Intents: To reinforce the existing character of development
 To provide variety

9.1. *A diagram illustrating the percentage transparent glass on each street-facing facade shall be submitted with the Design Guidelines Checklist.*

9.2. Preferred exterior finish materials: kiln-fired brick, stucco, wood siding and details, fiber cement siding.

9.3. Allowed exterior finish materials: vinyl siding (maximum uninterrupted wall width shall not exceed 24 feet), high-quality cultured stone, brick veneer, split faced CMU, or EIFS.

9.4. Prohibited materials: gravel aggregate materials, smooth-faced CMU, vertically-orientated metal siding, and panelized products.

9.5. A picture and sample of each exterior material and a façade illustration that indicates colors and materials shall be submitted with the Designs Guideline Checklist.

9.6. Muted tones are preferred for the primary façade color. Day-glow or fluorescent colors are prohibited.

9.7. Bright colors are discouraged for the primary façade color, but are acceptable as a secondary color to highlight expression lines or details.

9.8. Colors must be indicated on the façade elevation that illustrates materials, and a color sample for each color shall be submitted with this illustration *and the Design Guidelines Checklist.*

Required Submittals

Site Plan

Trash and Recycling Containers

Pedestrian Pathways

Parking and Circulation

Landscaping

Stormwater Management Features

Lighting

Elevations of all exposed facades

Transparent Glass (Ground Floor)

Samples of all building colors and materials

Lighting Spec Sheets

Instructions

This checklist must accompany the submission of any application for a building permit in the Design District (interior alterations excluded). The checklist must be completed in full by the applicant prior to submission. Completed elements should be checked and those that do not apply should be crossed out.

Design Guidelines CHECKLIST

Required Site Design Elements

- 1.2 Buildings on lots along a highway shall abut the county or state setback or be setback at four to ten feet from the highway right-of-way, whichever is greater.
- 1.4 Building's entrance connected by a walkway to public sidewalk
- 2.1 Lighting must conform to the Belleville Lighting Guidelines
- 3.1 Parking lots are book-ended by landscape islands, minimum of five feet wide, and rows containing more than 18 stalls have additional landscape islands
- 3.2 Parking lot access driveways is uninterrupted for twenty-five feet from street right-of-way
- 3.3 Parking areas abutting a public sidewalk has a minimum of four feet landscaped buffer
- 3.4. Trash & recycling containers and street-level mechanical equipment are enclosed.
- 3.5. Rooftop mechanical equipment is screened from public streets.
- 4.1 Screening shall comply with Belleville **Landscape Guidelines**
- 4.2 Screening, between the parking & the public street, is less than three feet in height
- 4.3 Parking islands are planted with perennials, shrubs, and/or shade trees
- 4.4 Landscaping around signs is no taller than three feet
- 5.1 All landscaping shall comply with Belleville **Landscape Guidelines**
- 5.2 Parking lots adjacent to residential properties provide a semi-opaque buffer, minimum of four feet in height

Required Building Design Elements

- 6.1 Building height is no taller than thirty-five feet for buildings in business districts
- 6.2 Building height is no taller than forty-five feet for buildings in industrial or business park districts
- 6.3 Building height is at least sixteen feet tall
- 7.3 Sloped roof has a ratio of at least 5:12
- 7.4 A canopy, awning, covered porch, and/or gable-roof projection over the building's entrance that is at least three feet wide and is between eight to twelve feet above the sidewalk
- 7.5 Awnings not back-lit
- 8.1 Exposed sides of building use similar or complementary materials as used on the front facade
- 8.2 Secondary facade facing a public street uses same design features as the front facade
- 8.5 Meets 35% clear glass requirement for facades within 60 feet of any street right-of-way
- 9.4 No prohibited materials used
- 9.7 No day-glow or fluorescent colors