

---

---

The following Design Guidelines are expected to accompany a modified version of the current D-1 Downtown District. The D-1 District and the design review process is essential in the formation of the Town Center. A rough draft of the modified D-1 zone is found in Appendix B of this document.

---

---

The Design Guidelines implemented under this Town Center Development Plan are expected to encourage architectural and development excellence. Fairfield's Town Center will illustrate a harmonious mix of architecture, landscaping, land use, and planning. The following guidelines are intended to supplement the design concepts established in the Town Center Development Code. They address the quality and compatibility of elements that compose the area and determine the character of Fairfield's Town Center. The guidelines will help developers, property owners, architects, and engineers in creating a project that promotes a cohesive whole image for the Town Center.

### **Design Review**

The design review process is intended to establish a positive working relationship between developers, property owners, and the review committee in creating Fairfield's Town Center. Owners, architects and builders participating in the review process should expect a consistent approach by the Design Review Committee to insure quality and compatibility of all proposed and existing development.

Design Review will occur prior to the commencement of, but is not limited to any of the following:

- site alteration
- tree removal
- construction alterations or additions
- painting or staining involving color change
- sign installation or modification
- landscaping
- exterior lighting
- fencing
- waste receptacle screening

### **Review Procedure**

A Design Review Committee shall be established in ordinance form by City Council. The Committee shall be charged with the responsibility to review the development activity in the Town Center, D-1 District. No building permit shall be issued without plan review by the Design Review Committee and plan approval by the Planning Commission.

---

---

There shall be created a Design Review Committee consisting of nine members to be determined as follows:

- One member shall be appointed by a majority vote of the City Council from among its membership. Such member may be removed from the Committee, without cause, by a majority vote of the Council members;
- One member shall be appointed by a majority vote of the Planning Commission from among its members. Such member may be removed from the Committee, without cause, by majority vote of the Planning Commission;
- One member shall be the Director of the Planning Department, or a staff representative appointed by the Planning Director;
- One member shall be the City's Building Division Superintendent;
- One member shall be a Fairfield citizen at large, such member shall have no financial interests to Town Center businesses or residences;
- Four members shall be business owners or operators from the four Town Center Quadrants. One person representing each quadrant. These members shall be appointed by a majority vote of Council. The quadrant members shall serve for overlapping terms of two years each, except that the members first appointed shall serve for the following terms of office: two quadrant members serve for one year and the other two quadrant members serve for two year terms; and thereafter, each member shall serve for a term of two years.

It is expected that the Design Review Committee have one Registered Architect as a member. If this requirement is not fulfilled an architect may be asked to join the meetings to aid in the review of plans. The architect would be signed into contract with the city and would be used on an as needed basis.

City Council will advertise the openings of the public Design Review Committee positions. Afterwhich, submitted applications of interest will be reviewed and appropriate applicants chosen by the City Manager with City Council approval.

The Design Review Committee will submit written recommendation to the Planning Commission, which will then approve or disapprove the plans. A project receiving Design Review recommendation or disapproval will be presented to the Commission with one set of drawings with revisions and suggestions from the Design Review Committee. The Fairfield City Council shall act as the appeals board for unreconcilable situations.

---

---

## **Plan Submittal**

Eight (8) copies of complete site development and building plans to scale must be submitted prior to development activities, at least seven days prior to a scheduled meeting of the Design Review Committee, to the Building Department, 5350 Pleasant Avenue, Fairfield, Ohio 45014. The plans must illustrate the following:

- Contours reflecting existing topography at two foot intervals or less
- Existing environment features, i.e., ravines, creeks, trees
- Proposed building pad or building addition with dimensions and lot setback distances
- Proposed retaining walls and materials
- Driveway locations with dimensions and type of surface material
- Proposed landscaping with identification and size of plantings
- Walkway locations with dimensions and type of surface material
- Location and description of exterior lighting
- Proposed fencing
- Parking layout
- Signage
- Heating, air conditioning, ventilation and exhaust equipment locations
- Trash storage location
- Pavement specifications
- Utility location
- Architectural plans and specifications including types of material, color, trim and detail for each side of the structure
- Any other plans, drawings or calculations requested by the Design Review Committee

The plans will be reviewed by the Design Review Committee, presented to the Planning Commission, then returned to the individual project developer with comments enabling them to proceed with preparation of final drawings.

Upon approval of the site and/or building plans by the Planning Commission a building permit may be obtained from the City Building Division with payment of the appropriate fee.

---

---

## **Guidelines for Design**

### **Guideline Compliance**

The guidelines set forth for the D-1 district of the Fairfield Town Center shall be applied to both existing structures and new construction. New development occurring on undeveloped or vacant land must adhere to the guidelines from the project's inception. Renovation to existing structures, however, follows a different rule of compliance.

Alterations of any kind to existing structures within the Town Center must comply to the Design Guidelines and follow the Design Review procedure, although in some cases the existing building itself may also need to be brought into compliance with the Guidelines. It is necessary to limit the amount of renovation or change that may occur without causing complete compliance. As described in the Existing Structures section of the proposed D-1 chapter of the Zoning Code any alteration or addition to an existing structure in the D-1 District making up less than 33% of the exterior faces of the building may occur without causing the building itself to be brought up to complete compliance with the Town Center Design Guidelines. All alterations or additions involving at least 33% of existing property or exterior structure triggers the compliance of the entire existing property or structure with the requirements of the Design Guidelines. For instance, the addition of an awning to an existing structures storefront may make up 15% of the structures exterior. Drawings of the awning depicting color and its location must be submitted to the Building Department for review by the Design Review Committee. The awning itself as it is new construction must meet the guidelines for such. The entire building from which the awning will be hung is not required to be renovated or changed in order to be in compliance with the Guidelines because only 15% of an existing elevation is altered. If any of the elevations' renovation exceeds 33%, the entire project must meet the requirements of the Town Center Development Guidelines. The Design Review Committee has the authority to determine the percentage of the building that is under review. Furthermore, the Committee shall decide whether the percentage of exterior face should be determined in square footage or linear footage. As specified in the guidelines the building front, back, and sides must be treated in a like manner.

### **Specific Design Guidelines**

#### **Setback**

Parking is encouraged to locate on the side and rear yard of new development in the Town Center. The 25 foot minimum front yard set back is expected to allow for five feet of natural planted green space between a front driveway and the pedestrian sidewalk. The green space shall be covered with well manicured vegetation, including grass, shrubs, trees, and living types of ground cover.

---

---

## Area Requirements

Minimum lot area is 10,000 square feet.

Minimum lot frontage is 75 feet.

Minimum front yard depth is 25 feet.

## Height

Three stories or 40 feet shall be the maximum height for multi-story buildings.

Single story buildings requiring more than 20 feet of height below the roof line must be reviewed by the Design Review Committee.

Foundations of all buildings shall not have more than one (1) foot exposed surface.

## Architectural Character

The Town Center should project a positive image. This will be achieved in part through well designed buildings, which will come to represent the Town Center and the City of Fairfield.

## **Facade Organization**

All sides, including the rear elevation, of a building shall be treated as a front elevation by continuing the same colors, materials and detailing to all sides. The Design Review Committee may decide that this requirement may be waived or altered when reviewing existing structures.

Building entrances shall be treated as the facade focal point.

- The entrance should be compatible with overall design.

Rear entrances shall create an identity similar to or related to the front facade.

- All surfaces must be clean and in good condition.
- Trash receptacles and service/storage areas must be screened from view.
- Adequate lighting and signage must be present.

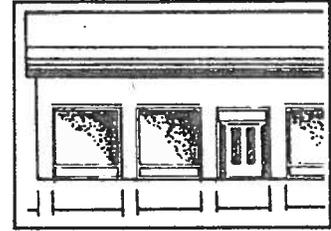
Blank walls (side or rear) shall not contain advertising; painted murals, however, are acceptable upon Design Review Committee approval.

---

---

Piers play an essential role in organizing and unifying the architectural framework at the street level. Piers visually support as well as anchor the facade.

- Piers shall segment wide, horizontal storefronts into equal sized bays to improve proportional balance and continue street level rhythm.
- Where upper-story facades are present, the same material should extend downward and be used for the piers also.



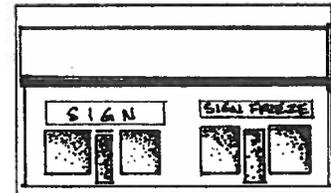
Windows add articulation and visual interest to the upper stories.

- Window proportions and rhythm shall be considerate of surrounding context on street level facades as well as upper-stories.
- Display windows may be bay windows or oriel windows. Such windows should be framed by piers to either side and a sign frieze above.

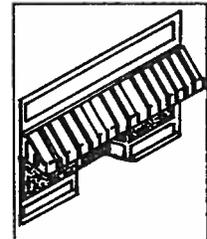
### Storefronts

Storefronts shall be articulated by piers and a sign frieze that separates the upper story or roof line from the street level facade. Storefronts should be designed to show interior activities with the street, through the use of large window areas.

A consistent sign frieze and continuous, consistent window display pattern across a blockface must be incorporated into storefront design. These elements will add in the creation of a consistent block of storefrontage, by ensuring a strong horizontal presence. In order to achieve this required storefront appearance creativity should not be sacrificed.



Awnings provide color, variety and interest to the streets as well as focus attention on the storefront. They should be attached directly to the building.



### Roofs

The preferred roof types are gable and hipped.

Mansard, shed, flat, gambrel and low pitched gable or hip roofs shall not be permitted on one or one and one half story buildings. The Design Review Committee may, however, grant permission of such roofs on multi-story buildings.

Dormer windows are acceptable with the approval of the Design Review Committee. In order

---

---

to receive approval the dormer windows must be aesthetically proportional with overall project design.

Cornice lines which shall not be wider than 18 inches, shall be articulated through bands or dentils.

## **Materials**

Well-finished, well-designed buildings should characterize the Town Center. The building materials used for a particular project should blend with the surrounding buildings. In all instances high quality materials appropriate for a town's center should be used.

Red brick and natural stone masonry using traditional coursing treatments and laying techniques, such as running bond, soldier coursing, Flemish bond, English bond, ashlar and stone facing, are acceptable. Use of conventional size brick is recommended. Brick colors of red, gold, or brown relate to the existing brick structures in the Town Center. Tinted mortar should be used in all cases. White mortar creates a harsh contrast.

Milled and shaped lumber and wood or vinyl siding are acceptable materials. They have a long-standing precedence for use in urban settings.

Glass is an appropriate material that adds architectural interest by revealing interior activity to the passer-by and portraying movement.

Ceramic tiles can be used to introduce accents of color to the facade.

Brick, clay and ceramic tile pavers are acceptable.

Slate, metal panels, glazed-ceramic tile roofs may be used.

Concrete lintels and columns used with care.

Steel and iron, traditionally used for sashwork, handrails, construction hardware and ornament is appropriate. Scroll and ornament wrought ironwork is inappropriate and not recommended.

## **Colors**

The regulation of the color of materials will create a cohesive town center, while a mix of colors will allow for an unharmonious experience.

---

---

---

---

Color can be applied to almost any material and surface: walls, roof, doors, windows, fascias, downspouts, cornices, lintels, brackets and sills. In most cases two colors will be chosen for a structure: a base color, which is the predominate color and the accent color for trim and doors, etc.

Natural colors should be chosen as the base colors for most structures in the Town Center. A guide to choosing natural colors would be to use colors found in the natural landscape throughout the area. For example, dark green, gold, muted browns and grays, beige, terra-cotta, brick red, blue gray and warm gray are all acceptable.

Trim and detailing allow the use of an accent color. Accent colors should be chosen with care. Light trim creates a crisp clean look. Dark brick red, forest green, and any other deep tone which blends with brick and stone may create a rich blend. In the case of window trim, dark colors will subdue windows, while light colors will feature them, causing them to pop.

Bright colors and glosses may be used as focal points, such as a door, architectural detailing, windows, etc. White is the brightest of all colors and should be used with careful consideration. In addition, white will require high maintenance.

## Site Design

Site Design along with a positive architectural character will attract people to the individual businesses within the Town Center. By portraying a comfortable and attractive atmosphere the Town Center as a whole will prosper.

## **Ingress and Egress**

Unless modified by the Design Review Committee, driveways opening onto public streets shall be limited to one driveway per one lot. Curb cuts shall not exceed 35 feet in width. Curb cuts shall not be any closer than fifty (50) feet

Curbs shall be provided along all drives that do not abut parking spaces. All parking areas shall be edged with curbs. All parking areas shall be designed to prevent parked vehicles from encroaching on or over sidewalk, bikepath or street.

Whenever possible, parking lots with bays containing more than 20 spaces, shall provide ingress and egress at both ends of each parking bay or parking lot. Additionally, adjacent developments shall share ingress and egress wherever practical.

---

---

## **Parking**

Sidewalks that cross a driveway or parking lot must be made of a material different from that of the lot or driveway. Materials that may be used are stone, brick, and other materials approved by the Design Review Committee. This brick or stone sidewalk crosswalk will visually separate the parking lot or driveway from the pedestrian path, as well as create a continuous pedestrian connection between businesses.

The most important part of parking lot landscaping is screening the lot from the street. Earth berms or vegetation screen must be used to screen the lot from view. Shrubs, grass covered berms and flowering plants, of less than three (3) feet are acceptable screening devices.

Tree planting in parking lots is required for three reasons: aesthetic improvement, screening and buffering between different parking areas and adjoining land uses, and shading within the lot. A ratio of one 2" caliper tree is required for every thirty (30) spaces.

Parking islands, 9 feet by 18 feet, which shall be placed every twenty (20) spaces must consist of manicured vegetation; shrubs, grass, flowers, grass, and the required amount of trees.

All parking lots shall contain a landscaped area equal to five (5) percent of the entire parking lot. The area shall contain shrubs, flowers, or trees. This landscaped area is exclusive of the five foot of green required in the front yard.

## **Loading Requirements**

There shall be provided at the time any building is erected or structurally altered, off street loading space in accordance with the following requirements:

- All commercial uses, unless modified by the Design Review Committee, where such structure is located in a manner that a truck must back directly from a major street into the loading space, a maneuvering space of not less than 49 feet shall be provided.
- Each loading space shall be not less than 10 feet in width, 25 feet in length.
- All loading docks must be screened from view.
- Loading areas must meet the requirements of Chapter 1183.01, Off-Street Loading Space.

---

---

• Unless waived or modified by the Design Review Committee, no building or part thereof that is erected shall be enlarged or extended unless off-street loading space is provided in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.

## **Landscaping**

Landscaping is defined as an improvement to land by contouring and planting flowers, shrubs, and trees. Unless equivalent plans are approved by the Design Review Committee, the following landscaping standards shall be included:

All parking areas shall contain a landscaped area equal to five percent of the entire parking lot, which shall contain trees or shrubs. Rows of parking spaces shall be interrupted every 20 spaces by a planter island. A ratio of one 2" caliper tree shall be provided for every 30 parking spaces.

Any part of lot area not used for buildings or other structures, or for roads, walks, parking, service areas, or accessways shall be landscaped with grass, ground cover, trees and shrubs.

A planting strip of five feet shall be established and maintained within the required front yard. A minimum ratio of one 2" caliper shade tree or three 1" caliper grouped ornamentals shall be planted within the five-foot wide planting strip for each 50 feet of linear front footage. This is exclusive of the landscaping required in the parking lots.

All existing trees on a project site with a caliper of 4" or more shall be mapped prior to site planning. When appropriate, all such trees shall be incorporated into the project site plan in any area to be landscaped.

Foundation plantings should be planted and maintained along all front and side exterior walls of all buildings.

Earth berms are acceptable screening devices between parking lot and street. No berm shall exceed 4 feet in height from the existing ground elevation. Berms shall be completely landscaped with ground cover, grass, or shrub plantings in mulch.

During all seasons the berm must be maintained.

Any required vegetation that dies must be replaced in kind.

---

---

## **Pedestrian Circulation**

Sidewalks shall be provided for internal pedestrian circulation in order to connect parking spaces with the building. Additionally, sidewalks shall be provided along the front property.

All projects shall have a four foot sidewalk located adjacent to the building. The sidewalk shall be articulated in brick pavers, cement, concrete, or a combination of these. Ceramic tile may also be incorporated into the design, in such areas as to where the sidewalk may cross a parking lot grade. The different pavement pattern will visually separate the parking lot or driveway from the pedestrian way, as well as create a continuous pedestrian connection between businesses.

All businesses must have a sidewalk linking to the public sidewalk located along the right-of-way. A four (4) foot sidewalk, perpendicular to the street, constructed of concrete, shall link the street-side sidewalk to the building's sidewalk. This sidewalk may be shared by two adjacent businesses, with both sharing equally in the maintenance.

## **Buffering/Screening**

Screening and buffering shall be provided along the common property line separating all Agriculture and Residential Districts from the D-1 District.

Provisions for such buffer areas and construction of required screens shall be the responsibility of the property owner or developer introducing the construction within the D-1 zone.

All screens required or personally provided shall be constructed of any combination of natural and man-made elements to comply with the height and material requirements of the D-1 zoning. Natural screens made of vegetation having a mature height greater than the required six feet may be required in cases where the difference in topography and/or intensity of the two uses being screened merits such action.

All maintenance facilities, work areas, service areas, utility boxes, and other unsightly appurtenances shall be screened with a solid fence or wall at least six (6) feet in height, or by other means approved by the Design Review Committee. Dumpsters shall be enclosed with face brick walls and with wood doors of appropriate design, completely closing off the front of the dumpster enclosure.

---

---

All buffer areas shall be unobstructed from ground to sky, except for required screens and natural plantings, and planted in grass or other natural ground cover upon which no activity, use or structure shall be placed. Screening and buffering will extend along the common property line forward to the building line of the adjoining use except when the new use conducts primary and/or accessory activities excluding driveways of two lanes or less in front of the primary building of the adjoining use. In that situation, the screening and buffering shall be extended to provide screening and buffering between such primary and/or accessory activity and the adjoining property. The height of such screen may be adjusted to prevent limits to visibility that may affect safety.

For the purpose of screening incompatible land uses, the property owner may utilize any combination of the following: masonry wall and opaque wooden fences both of which shall have shrub frontage, earthen mounds, natural vegetation hedges and plantings, and other materials approved by the Design Review Committee.

All buffers and screens shall be maintained in a condition reasonably representing the original condition, recognizing growth of natural vegetation, and shall be replaced as necessary. The property owner shall be responsible for such maintenance and/or replacement of buffer areas and screens, including but not limited to, appropriate trimming of natural vegetation, painting and general repair.

### **Signage**

Signs should add to the Town Center's character, not detract from it, causing a negative image. The Design Review Committee will use the following standards in evaluating signage:

Business signs. Each individual business shall be permitted a total aggregate sign area of three-fourth square foot of sign area for each lineal foot of lot frontage on its principal street or one and one-half square foot for each lineal foot of the building frontage on its principal street, whichever is greater. The sign may be apportioned in any fashion between wall, canopy, awning, marquee, or projecting signs, but are subject to the limitations and general design limitations in Chapter 1187 and the Design Guidelines. The Design Guidelines override general design standards where discrepancies occur. In no case shall the total aggregate sign area per parcel exceed 300 square feet. Window signs are permitted herein and shall not be included for purposes of calculating the total permitted sign area.

---

---

Shopping Centers. Any group of businesses meeting the definition of shopping center may add one additional ground sign of total aggregate area not to exceed 100 square feet. Such sign may include the logo or other identification of the shopping center.

Wall mounted fascia signs Such signs should be located in the most appropriate place, which is the sign frieze located immediately above the first floor. The sign frieze will not be lower than nine feet nor higher than twelve feet. No wall mounted sign shall exceed three feet in height. Total permitted sign square footage shall be completed on the basis of three-fourth square foot for each linear foot of building frontage on the principal street.

Projecting signs Such signs shall be considered if the sign does not obscure or overpower the building, exceed nine (9) square feet in area, is in keeping with the character of the specified use of the building and is approved by the Design Review Committee. Awning signs will be considered if attached to the surface thereof; indicate only name, address of occupant or building, display only the official design trademark or logo of the occupant. Back lit awnings are acceptable, but the entire awning, if back lit, will count as signage.

Ground signs. Sign shall not exceed 50 square feet of sign area provided that such sign serves an individual business on a single parcel with greater than 75 feet of frontage on its principal street.

Under no conditions shall roof signs be permitted.

Construction signs. One construction sign not exceeding 20 square feet in area and five (5) feet in height shall be permitted on a parcel of property during construction of building(s) on the property. Only the name identifying the project and the developer and architect are permitted and any identifying logo or design. Construction signs shall be no closer than 150 feet to another project.

Real Estate signs. One sign not exceeding fifteen square feet of sign area advertising the sale, rental or lease of only the building or premises on which it is located.

Political signs. As permitted in Section 1187.03 (m) Signs.

---

---

## Lighting

In all projects, lighting must be compatible in color and intensity to what is provided by the City. Black light poles and structures shall be used in all cases.

Front yard lighting of parking lots shall be no taller than 15 feet high and of simple styling. Locations and design shall be submitted as part of the architectural plans.

Wall mounted sconces are considered appropriate architectural features.

Back-lit awnings are acceptable, but will be included as signage.

