

# **VILLAGE OF HUNTLEY COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES**



**Village of Huntley  
Development Services Department**

**Planning & Zoning Division**

10987 Main Street  
Huntley, Illinois 60142  
(847) 669-0600

**[www.huntley.il.us](http://www.huntley.il.us)**

**January 19, 2006**

**VILLAGE OF HUNTLEY  
COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES**

**Table of Contents**

Introduction	3
Definitions	3
A. Big Box Retail Standards	4
1. Facades and Building Materials	4
2. Parking Areas	5
3. Street Access	5
4. Signage	6
5. Landscaping	6
6. Accessory Structures, buildings or other equipment	7
7. Lighting	8
B. Stand Alone Retail/Outlot Structures	9
1. Facades and Building Materials	9
2. Parking Areas	10
3. Street Access	10
4. Signage	11
5. Landscaping	11
6. Accessory Structures, buildings or other equipment	13
7. Lighting	13

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Commercial guidelines are an important and necessary component of the Village's development process. While the Village, from an economic development standpoint, is eager to attract "big-box retail" and "super retail" centers, there is an obligation to balance the economic gains with strong planning and architectural principles. Without the proper planning and design, these developments have the potential to be monotonous, unsafe and degrade surrounding property values.

The Village of Huntley, in harmony with its economic development goals, has established these commercial design guidelines to promote quality, visually pleasing and safe commercial areas within the Village. With Huntley being one of the fastest growing Villages in the country, now is the time to establish standards for future big-box and stand alone retail development locating within the Village limits.

These guidelines are not intended to inhibit retail development; in fact, they are focused on promoting upscale, quality development within the Village of Huntley. Communities throughout the state and country have adopted similar guidelines with much success. These guidelines not only benefit the Village, but they also assist the developer and retailer in attracting customers, benefiting the community as a whole.

Two main types of commercial development are outlined in these guidelines: big-box and stand alone retail/outlot sites. This document outlines the goals of the Village and the proposed guidelines associated with these goals. The main areas of consideration are facades and building materials, parking areas, street access, signage, bike paths, and landscaping, lighting and accessory structures.

This document is intended to provide a blueprint for the ideal design of commercial developments within the Village of Huntley.

## **KEY DEFINITIONS:**

**Big Box** - A large scale retailer including, but not limited to, Wal-Mart, Meijer, Target, Costco, Menards, Home Depot, etc. These retailers occupy more than 50,000 *gross* sq. ft. of building space and derive their profits from high sales volumes, including associated inline stores. Also known as "anchor stores".

**Stand alone retail/Outlots (also defined in the Village as Pad Sites)** - Smaller retail uses which occupy less than 50,000 *gross* sq. ft. of store space. These uses tend to be "outlying" from the main "anchor" or big-box retail structures. Stand alone retail/outlot uses are generally developed closer to a main thoroughfare, such as Route 47 and offer greater visibility to motorists.

- **Unless specified otherwise in this document, all other requirements of the Village Code shall apply to any new commercial developments.** -

# **BIG BOX RETAIL STANDARDS**

## **1. FACADES, ROOFS AND BUILDING MATERIALS:**

### **GOAL**

To minimize the massive scale and impersonal appearances that is sometimes associated with big-box retail structures.

### **DESIGN GUIDELINES**

- a. Buildings with a façade of more than 75 feet in length shall incorporate wall recessions or projections at a minimum of 5 feet in depth. These projections or recessions shall cover at least 25 percent of the total building façade.
- b. A multiple-story architectural element, such as a clock tower, spire, or bell tower, may be appropriate as a design “highlight” at key locations along the corridor. At least 50 percent of the total façade shall use such features as windows, awnings, entryways, columns, architectural relief and other façade ornamentation and detailing to discourage long expanses of bare wall.
- c. Covered walkways are encouraged along the fronts of multi-tenant commercial buildings to create a “pedestrian-friendly” orientation, provide weather protection and to add a visual interest at the street level.
- d. Any business permitted to have a drive-thru facility shall be sited so that the drive-through lanes and pick-up windows are not predominantly featured.
- e. Window glazing shall be clear or slightly-tinted; dark, mirrored or reflective glass is not permitted.
- f. Variations in rooflines are required. Parapets, dormers or other features must be used to conceal rooftop mechanical equipment, wall packs and conduits on all sides of the structure.
- g. Metal “seam” and mansard roofs are discouraged. Pitched roofs must be covered with architectural shingles as approved by the Village.
- h. Quality materials shall be used on all sides of the building, providing an attractive “360-degree” appearance.
- i. The following building materials shall be used: textured brick, decorative stone, masonry or other material approved by the Village as the predominating material and as contrasting and complementary accent materials. Plain concrete block, metal, EFIS, Dryvit or other similar materials are prohibited.
- j. All predominant exterior building and signage materials shall consist of earth tone, neutral or low reflectivity colors.

**Example of good architectural  
big-box design and use of  
complementary and contrasting color**



2. PARKING AREAS:

**GOAL**

To minimize the large, uninterrupted asphalt parking lots between the street and the building and to create a more pedestrian safe and friendly environment in the parking areas.

**DESIGN GUIDELINES**

- a. At a minimum, parking areas shall follow the requirements for parking lot landscaping as found in Section 156.073C of the Village of Huntley Zoning Code.
- b. Sidewalks and Landscape aisles shall be located perpendicular to the main building to facilitate the flow of pedestrians from the parking lot to the building in a safe and efficient manner.
- c. Textured main parking aisles, entry ways and pedestrian crossing areas of colored concrete, brick or other material are required to be used.
- d. Only the minimum required parking shall be provided in front of the building. Excess and employee parking shall be located at the side or rear of the building.
- e. Drive aisles (with no parking space access) shall be located between big-box users and outlots to facilitate the flow of traffic through the retail development.
- f. Parking lots shall be screened from view along sidewalks and roadways through the combined use of free forming berms, low masonry walls and plantings. Fencing shall be wrought iron, chain link fencing is prohibited.



**GOOD**



**BAD**

Examples of parking lot landscaping and paving

3. STREET ACCESS:

**GOAL**

To limit the number of access points along Route 47, Algonquin Road, Kreutzer Road and other major arterials or secondary arterials especially in areas adjacent to current access points or traffic lights. This will reduce traffic congestion and accidents while providing a better flow of traffic in and out of retail developments.

**DESIGN GUIDELINES**

- a. Parking areas for big-box users shall be connected whenever possible through the use of cross-access easements.

- b. Curb-cuts should be minimized and traffic shall be funneled to single outlet points that serve multiple retail and big-box users.

4. SIGNAGE:

**GOAL**

To consolidate big-box and retail signage to one or two main locations. Signage shall also be appropriate to the character of the retail area and consistent with the architecture of the buildings.

**DESIGN GUIDELINES**

- a. Multiple retail users (excluding pad sites/outlots) in a big-box center (shopping center anchored by a “big-box” retailer) shall utilize one monument sign (not to exceed 25 feet in height) at the entrance to the development.
- b. Internal illumination is preferred for any signage with external illumination used only in limited and strictly controlled instances.
- c. The architecture and material of the sign shall correspond with the architecture and material of the principal structure.
- d. Pole signs, pylon signs and billboards are not permitted.



Example of retail signage

5. LANDSCAPING:

**GOAL**

To provide for visually appealing sites through the use of landscaping in the form of trees, bushes and berming. This will screen unappealing portions of buildings and parking areas from the roadway/pedestrian areas and any nearby residential development. Landscaping will also break up the long expanse of big-box structures through the use of foundation plantings.

**DESIGN GUIDELINES:**

- a. All big-box retail lots shall provide a minimum 20 foot landscape buffer along the side and rear yards. One shrub per 15 linear feet and one tree per 25 linear feet are required along these areas. These plantings may be clustered in areas to avoid a utilitarian look.
- b. Foundation plantings consisting of one large shrub per 10 linear feet and one 2 ½ inch caliper tree per 20 linear feet shall be required along each wall of the principal structure.

- i. 25 percent of the total perimeter shall include planting beds.
    - ii. These plantings may be clustered to avoid a utilitarian look.
    - iii. Particular attention shall be paid toward screening mechanical equipment, bicycle parking areas, and loading docks; softening large expanses of building walls; and accenting entrances and architectural features.
    - iv. *Ground Cover*: Except where occupied by planting beds, all foundation landscaping areas shall be sodded.
  - c. Planters (preferably of brick ceramic, masonry construction) shall be utilized whenever possible.
  - d. One tree and three shrubs are required per 15 linear feet of street/drive aisle frontage. These plantings may be clustered in areas to avoid a utilitarian look.
  - e. Flower beds and low-rise bushes/shrubs are required at the base of any sign.
  - f. Plantings shall be utilized around accessory structures, buildings or other equipment to effectively screen them from high-traffic areas.
  - g. Irrigation: All landscaped areas shall be irrigated. Irrigation shall provide well hydrated conditions for vigorous growth of turfgrass and woody plant material particularly in areas of prominence adjacent to and along thoroughfares.
    - i. All irrigation shall comply with applicable codes and permit requirements.
    - ii. All irrigation appurtenances shall be housed within the primary structure or be contained in below ground vaults.
    - iii. Irrigation application shall be limited to green space. Over-spray of paved areas shall not be permitted.
    - iii. Irrigation shall be managed by a remote electronic controller scheduled for operation in off-peak hours.
  - h.. Native plantings and salt tolerant species are to be utilized in parking lot islands.
  - i. Plant material implemented in each lot shall comply with these minimum sizes:
    - i. Shade Tree: 2 ½” caliper
    - ii. Evergreen tree: 6’ height
    - iii. Ornamental tree: 10’ height
    - iv. Shrub: 3’ height or spread
    - v. Screening material: 4’ height
  - j. Landscape islands shall be provided at a ratio of one island per 15 parking spaces with one canopy tree (3” to 4” caliper inches) groundcover and/or shrubs (3’ height or spread).
  - k. The Village shall hold the maintenance bond for a minimum of three years to ensure the vitality of all trees, shrubs and ground cover (existing and newly planted) approved as part of the overall landscape plan for the subject development.

6. ACCESSORY STRUCTURES, BUILDINGS OR OTHER EQUIPMENT:

**GOAL**

To provide for aesthetically pleasing accessory structures that are screened from heavily trafficked areas through the use of similar materials that are used in the primary structure.

**DESIGN GUIDELINES:**

- a. Accessory structures such as trash enclosures, ATM machines, truck docks or equipment such as water meters, electric meters, gas meters, air conditioning units or other similar

structures shall be constructed of or enclosed with masonry materials and utilize steel or aluminum access gates.

- b. Accessory structures shall take on the physical and architectural characteristics of the principal structure.
- c. Accessory structures shall not be visible from the roadway.
- d. Temporary outdoor sales displays shall be approved by the Village Board and designated on an associated site plan.
- e. Shopping cart storage shall be inside main structure.



Examples of retail trash/mechanical enclosure

## 7. LIGHTING:

### GOAL

To establish a standard for lighting fixtures within all new commercial developments within the Village.

### DESIGN GUIDELINES

- a. Lighting level at the property line shall not exceed 0.5 foot-candles.
- b. Lighting shall be designed to direct the light down toward parking area or structure.
- c. Accent lighting shall be used whenever possible. Incandescent lighting is encouraged; if neon lighting is used, there use should serve to accent, not predominate and colors shall be compatible with/complement the building façade.
- d. Decorative historic or traditional design lighting fixtures are required, and shall be compatible with the related structure and the surrounding development. Shorter lighting standards are encouraged (*i.e.* 12' to 20') to assist in establishing pedestrian environments within individual developments. Taller light standards (*i.e.* 25' to 40') are discouraged.



## **STAND ALONE RETAIL/OUTLOT (PAD SITE) STRUCTURES**

### **1. FACADES, ROOFS AND BUILDING MATERIALS:**

#### **GOAL**

To provide for visually interesting building exteriors when viewed from Route 47 and from the associated parking areas; also, to establish a high-quality signature character that will distinguish the Village in a positive manner from surrounding areas.

#### **DESIGN GUIDELINES**

- a. When applicable, stand alone retail/outlots shall exhibit similar architectural and design qualities of the principal anchor or big-box structure.
- b. Buildings shall include architectural features and patterns that create visual interest such as recessions or projections in the elevations.
- c. Awnings and covered walkways are encouraged to promote pedestrian orientation and visual appeal at street level.
- d. Metal “seam” and mansard roofs are discouraged. Roofs must be covered with architectural shingles as approved by the Village.
- e. The following building materials shall be used: textured brick, decorative stone, masonry or other material approved by the Village as the predominating material and as contrasting and complementary accent materials. Plain concrete block, metal, EFIS, Dryvit or other similar materials are prohibited.
- f. Window glazing shall be clear or slightly-tinted; dark, mirrored or reflective glass is not permitted.
- g. All exterior building and signage materials shall consist of earth tone, neutral or low reflectivity colors.
- h. Drive through banks, drug stores or restaurants shall locate the drive through towards the rear of the structure.
- i. Buildings are encouraged to be located and oriented towards the main thoroughfare with parking and loading in the rear.
- j. Variations in rooflines should be used when possible. Parapets, dormers or other features shall be used to conceal rooftop mechanical equipment on all sides of the structure.



Example of good architectural outlet/stand alone retail design and use of color



Example of outlot structure oriented towards the main thoroughfare

2. PARKING AREAS:

**GOAL**

To minimize the large, uninterrupted asphalt parking lots between the street and the building and to create a more pedestrian safe and friendly environment in the parking areas.

**DESIGN GUIDELINES**

- a. At a minimum, parking areas shall follow the requirements for parking lot landscaping as found in Section 156.073C of the Village of Huntley Zoning Code.
- b. Sidewalks and Landscape aisles shall be located perpendicular to the main building to facilitate the flow of pedestrians from the parking lot to the building in a safe and efficient manner.
- c. Textured main parking aisles, entry ways and pedestrian crossing areas of colored concrete, brick or other material are required to be used.
- d. Only the minimum required parking shall be provided in front of the building. Excess and employee parking shall be located at the side or rear of the building.
- e. Drive aisles (with no parking space access) shall be located between big-box users and outlots to facilitate the flow of traffic through the retail development.
- f. Parking lots shall be screened from view along sidewalks and roadways through the combined use of free forming berms, low masonry walls and plantings. Fencing shall be wrought iron, chain link fencing is prohibited.

3. STREET ACCESS:

**GOAL**

To limit the number of access points, especially in areas adjacent to current access points or traffic lights. This will reduce traffic congestion and accidents while providing a better flow of traffic in and out of retail developments.

**DESIGN GUIDELINES:**

- a. Parking areas between outlots shall be connected whenever possible through the use of cross-access easements.
- b. Curb-cuts should be minimized and traffic shall be funneled to single outlet points that serve multiple outlots.
- c. When curb-cuts for individual outlots lots are absolutely necessary, right in/right out access points shall be utilized in lieu of full access points.

4. **SIGNAGE:**

**GOAL**

To limit the number and height of signage, minimize street clutter and provide for an attractive and safe environment along the roadway. Signage shall also be appropriate to the character of the retail area and consistent with the architecture of the buildings.

**DESIGN GUIDELINES**

- a. The architecture and material of the sign shall correspond with the architecture and material of the principal structure.
- b. Internal illumination is preferred for any signage with external illumination used only in limited and strictly controlled instances.
- c. All signage must be monument in nature and no taller than 6 feet in height as measured from grade.
- d. Pole signs, pylon signs and billboards are not permitted.



Example of retail signage

5. **LANDSCAPING:**

**GOAL**

To provide for visually appealing sites through the use of landscaping in the form of trees, bushes and berming. This will screen unappealing portions of buildings and parking areas from the roadway and pedestrian areas.

**DESIGN GUIDELINES**

- a. At a minimum, ten percent of the total depth of outlot shall be reserved for landscape/green space requirements along the roadway, exclusive of any bike path or other recorded easements.

- b. All stand alone retail/outlots shall provide a minimum 10 foot landscape buffer along the side and rear yards. One bush/shrub per 15 linear feet and one tree per 25 linear feet are required along these areas. These plantings may be clustered in areas to avoid a utilitarian look.
- c. Foundation plantings consisting of one bush/shrub per 10 linear feet shall be required along each wall of the principal structure.
  - i. These plantings may be clustered in areas to avoid a utilitarian look.
  - ii. 25 percent of the total perimeter shall include planting beds.
  - iii. Particular attention shall be paid toward screening mechanical equipment, bicycle parking areas, and loading docks; softening large expanses of building walls; and accenting entrances and architectural features.
  - iv. *Ground cover*: Except where occupied by planting beds, all foundation landscaping areas shall be sodded.
- d. One tree and three shrubs are required per 15 linear feet of street/drive aisle frontage. These plantings may be clustered in areas to avoid a utilitarian look.
- e. Planting beds and low-rise bushes/shrubs are required at the base of any sign.
- f. Plantings, preferably salt tolerant species, shall be utilized around accessory structures, buildings or other equipment to effectively screen them from high-traffic areas.



Example of good landscaping

- g. Irrigation: All landscaped areas shall be irrigated. Irrigation shall provide well hydrated conditions for vigorous growth of turfgrass and woody plant material.
  - i. All irrigation shall comply with applicable codes and permit requirements.
  - ii. All irrigation appurtenances shall be housed within the primary structure or be contained in below ground vaults.
  - iii. Irrigation application shall be limited to green space. Over-spray of paved areas shall not be permitted.
  - iv. Irrigation shall be managed by a remote electronic controller scheduled for operation in off-peak hours.
- h. Native plantings and salt tolerant species are to be utilized in parking lot islands.
- i. Plant material implemented in each lot shall comply with these minimum sizes:
  - i. Shade Tree: 2 ½" caliper
  - ii. Evergreen tree: 6' height
  - iii. Ornamental tree: 10' height
  - iv. Shrub: 3' height or spread
  - v. Screening material: 4' height

- j. Landscape islands shall be provided at a ratio of one island per 15 parking spaces with one canopy tree (3" to 4" caliper inches) groundcover and/or shrubs (3' height or spread).
- k. The Village shall hold the maintenance bond for a minimum of three years to ensure the vitality of all trees, shrubs and ground cover (existing and newly planted) approved as part of the overall landscape plan for the subject development.

6. ACCESSORY STRUCTURES, BUILDINGS OR OTHER EQUIPMENT:

**GOAL**

To provide for aesthetically pleasing accessory structures that are screened from heavily trafficked areas through the use of similar materials that are used in the primary structure.

**DESIGN GUIDELINES**

- a. Accessory structures such as trash enclosures, ATM machines, truck docks or equipment such as water meters, electric meters, gas meters, air conditioning units or other similar structures shall be constructed of or enclosed with masonry materials and utilize steel or iron access gates.
- b. Accessory structures shall take on the physical and architectural characteristics of the principal structure.
- c. Accessory structures shall not be visible from the roadway.
- d. Temporary outdoor sales displays require the Village's approval.
- e. Shopping cart storage shall be inside main structure.

7. LIGHTING:

**GOAL**

To develop a standard for lighting fixtures within all new commercial developments within the Village.

**DESIGN GUIDELINES**

- a. Lighting level at the property line shall not exceed 0.5 foot-candles.
- b. Lighting shall be designed to direct the light down toward parking area or structure.
- c. Accent lighting shall be used whenever possible. Incandescent lighting is encouraged; if neon lighting is used, there use should serve to accent, not predominate and colors shall be compatible with/complement the building façade.
- d. Decorative historic or traditional design lighting fixtures are required, and shall be compatible with the related structure and the surrounding development. Shorter lighting standards are encouraged (*i.e.* 12' to 20') to assist in establishing pedestrian environments within individual developments. Taller light standards (*i.e.* 25' to 40') are discouraged.

**Example of decorative retail lighting and accent lighting**

