

## VILLAGE CORE DOWNTOWN (VCD)



This section of the Guidelines and Standards applies to all parcels in the Village Core Downtown area and may also be applicable within Community Facilities (including Public Facilities and Parks), and Mixed Use districts as shown on the Design Overlay District Map.

An objective of the **Village Core Downtown** area is to enhance and maintain a compact, active street frontage with commercial uses that attract pedestrians. A visual continuity should be maintained through site design and compatibility of scale and materials.

### MIXED USES WITHIN THE DISTRICT

There are properties within the Village Core, Mixed Use and Community Facilities overlay districts that have residential architectural styles, and are currently being used as stores, shops, residences, or offices. In order to preserve and enhance mixed use, the character of any new building or renovation shall be consistent with the surrounding area.

### EXISTING CHARACTER

Many of the Downtown district historic commercial buildings were erected in the period from 1885 to 1910, and represent a variety of architectural styles. Although building material and detail differ, there are definite patterns that should be respected and incorporated into new development and

renovation. Common elements of design include façade height and structure, strong pedestrian orientation, and attention to ornamentation.



### Similarity in Height, Mass and Scale

Most buildings are one or two stories high and range from about eighteen to thirty feet in height. The majority of the buildings in the Village on Branch Street between Traffic Way and Mason Street are also narrow as well, which emphasizes their vertical character.

The most common façade design is two stories high, although some buildings use a “false front” to achieve the impression of height. This façade treatment, when used on a relatively narrow building, stresses the strong vertical elements in the structure and creates an impressive image.

Buildings are also made to appear larger by creating a series of attached facades, linking several smaller structures to create the appearance of one large building. These techniques lead to a more impressive appearance without losing pedestrian scale or blocking views and light.



**Site Design**

1. All new projects or renovations shall adhere to the site development standards of the Development Code.
2. The existing front setbacks of zero to fifteen feet (0' to 15') shall be required with main entries facing the street. A majority of the building frontage shall face the street and incorporate design features oriented to the pedestrian.
3. **Streetscape** improvements shall complement the existing design sidewalk paving, lighting schemes and street furniture within the district.
4. All enclosures for service areas, trash or recycling containers shall be designed as part of the overall project or building. Materials, textures and colors should be consistent with those of the proposed project and compatible with adjacent buildings.
5. Landscaping shall retain existing trees and plants as much as possible. Street trees and sidewalk planters shall be incorporated where feasible and pedestrian circulation will not be obstructed. (**Streetscape** elements within the public right-of-way, require an Encroachment Permit from the Public Works Department.) Landscaping in parking areas shall conform to the requirements of Title 16 of the Municipal Code (Development Code).

**Building Design**

1. The height of new buildings shall not exceed development standards allowed in Title 16 of the Municipal Code. Scale and massing of any building within this area shall be consistent with that of the neighboring buildings, as described above in "Similarity in Height, Scale and Massing".

2. The existing pattern of building façades shall be incorporated into new development projects. Dominant façade designs incorporate either brick front elements or parapet features. Roof patterns generally associated with residential buildings such as gable, hip or gambrel are generally not appropriate for commercial building frontages in the Village Core Downtown District.
3. For retail commercial buildings, display windows should complement the design of surrounding historic buildings and shall be oriented to pedestrian traffic.
4. Transoms are common over display windows, and were used for light and ventilation. When possible, transoms should be incorporated into new building design, and existing transoms should be used in building renovations.
5. New construction should include elements such as cladding, roof structure and ornamentation common to the district. All new projects shall use materials – including roof materials – that fit within the character of the Village Core Downtown district. By using similar materials or replicating these materials on all projects and restorations, the existing character will be reinforced and extended.
6. Decorative fixtures, including awnings, signs, and lighting, shall be integrated with other design elements of the structures.

**Construction Materials**

1. Brick and stone masonry are the most common façade materials used on historic character structures in the Village Core Downtown district, and are acceptable façade materials. Some brickwork has been painted, and this is consistent with design style of the 1870-1939 period.

When sidewalks are replaced due to normal maintenance, the new sidewalks shall be exposed aggregate, where required.

### Signs

1. All public signs shall be subject to a fee-exempt design review by the Architectural Review Committee. Public signs shall be detailed to conform to the area. This includes painting all new poles, sign backs, and other appurtenant hardware a color that is consistent with other public signs in the Village area.

### Street Furniture

1. **Street furniture** shall be compatible and consistent with City approved street furniture. Variations shall be subject to approval of the Architectural Review Committee. Trash and recycling receptacles shall be clearly differentiated. Advertising on benches, shelters or furniture is inappropriate in the Village Downtown and Mixed Use districts.
2. Ornamental streetlights shall be required in the same areas as exposed aggregate sidewalks, and are encouraged in other public or private pedestrian or parking areas throughout the Downtown and Mixed Use districts.
3. Bike racks shall be located in parking lots, with smaller racks in high traffic areas near building entries or plaza areas. Bike racks shall be painted dark colors, similar to sign and light poles. Bike lockers, where proposed, shall be darker wood tone colors and shall not be located in areas where they could detract from the pedestrian character of the Downtown and Mixed Use districts.
4. New projects that propose potential newspaper racks shall include a

designated area designed consistent with the building architecture.

5. Vending machines in public view shall be placed within an enclosed structure. Plans for the enclosed structure shall be subject to Architectural Review Committee approval and consistent with the architecture of the principal adjoining building.

### Public Art

1. Public Art shall be consistent with the City's Policy on Public Art, and in character with the historic period.

**PUBLIC AREA IMPROVEMENTS**



**Sidewalks**

1. Exposed aggregate sidewalks with brick, stone or tile bands are required along Branch Street from Traffic Way to Tally Ho Creek and on Bridge Street between Branch Street and Nelson Street, in the Downtown district. Other streets within the Village Core Downtown and Mixed Use districts may have exposed aggregate sidewalks or conventional concrete, as approved by the City.
2. New building and substantial renovation projects within the Downtown and Mixed Use districts shall include replacement of existing conventional sidewalk with exposed aggregate sidewalk where required. Building permits shall include construction of sidewalk in areas without sidewalk.