

Design Guidelines

Historic Downtown Walden



Design Guidelines

Historic Downtown Walden

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WHERE NOTED.



Historic Downtown Design Guidelines: Introduction

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Historic Downtown Walden is the Village’s Central Business District (CBD). This business area has seen many changes since its birth 150 years ago, but has retained much of its distinct character. The Village of Walden’s 2001 Downtown Revitalization Strategy identified the importance of protecting the integrity of the buildings in the CBD. Over the years, some façade renovations have compromised the architectural integrity of buildings and in turn the cohesiveness of the CBD. In other cases, infill development that is excessively dissimilar to surrounding properties in building materials, building placement, scale or signage has weakened the fabric that ties the historic core together.

The purpose of Historic Downtown Design Guidelines, hereafter referred to as Design Guidelines, is to provide a framework in which to guide the reuse of existing buildings, new infill development, and public investments in a manner that strengthens the fabric of Historic Downtown Walden. These guidelines apply to all development within the B-3 Business Zoning District.

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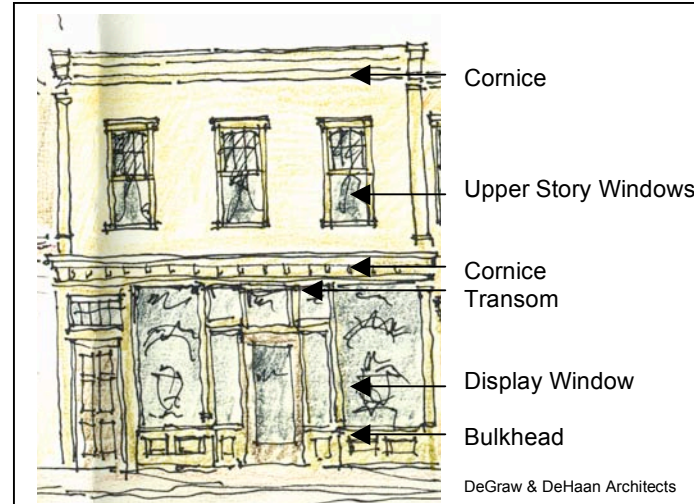
Historic Downtown Design Guidelines: Overview

Buildings within the *Historic Downtown Design District* shall incorporate the basic features of a pedestrian-oriented mixed use CBD. Retail store fronts shall be provided on the first floor of two or three-story buildings. Storefronts shall be oriented to the Street. The following basic architectural features should be incorporated into all storefronts within the B-3 – Business District:

- Recessed entry for storefront
- Bulkhead
- Display window
- Transom
- Cornice
- Upper-story windows in proportion with building and in scale with traditional patterns found in the historic CBD of the Village.
- Quality construction and materials

Façade renovations of existing buildings should preserve as much of the original building fabric as possible. For example, original windows, doors, cornices and building materials should be retained. The use of vinyl or aluminum siding that masks the architectural features of a building shall be prohibited in the Central Business District.

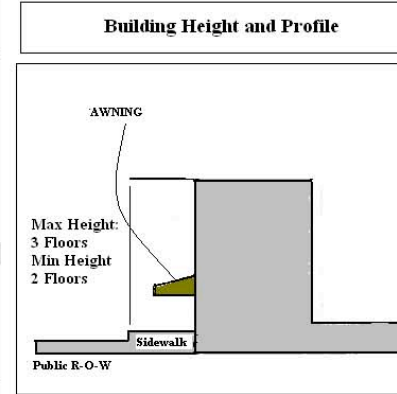
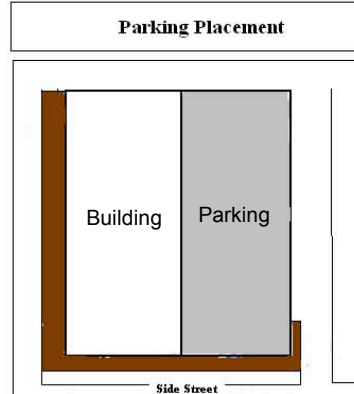
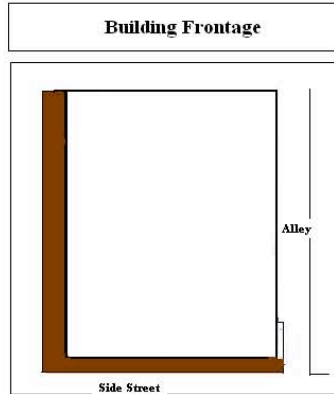
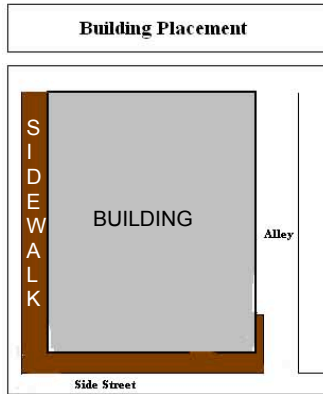
Buildings shall generally align to the edge of the sidewalk in order to maintain a building line along streets within the CBD. Where there is room to provide off-street parking, it should be provided to the rear of buildings. Rear storefront entrances are encouraged. Additional criteria for the placement of buildings are provided under Site Design.



Millspaugh Furniture:
This multi-story commercial building in Historic Downtown Walden. The entire building façade of this building is being renovated in a manner that incorporates the traditional building elements of historic buildings within Downtown Walden. This is an excellent example of the quality construction and materials that should be incorporated in the Central Business District.

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Historic Downtown Design Guidelines: Site Design



Setbacks:

Buildings shall be located within the grey shaded area as shown in the above diagram. The building footprint shall be built to the sidewalk line when facing a public street in the CBD.

Within the B-3 Business District, a building can have a zero setback on the front and side yards; however, there is a 20 foot rear yard setback requirement. A setback to provide sufficient sight distance will be required for buildings located on a corner lot.

Front Setback: 0' Min.
Side Yard: 0' Min. to 12 Max.
Corner Side: 0' Min. to 12' Max.
Rear Setback: 20' Min.

Encroachments Allowed:

Awnings, balconies, and perpendicular signs in accordance with the Village's Sign Regulations, may encroach on the Public R-O-W and shown in the brown shaded area noted above. Such encroachment is permissible provided an 8 foot high clear walkway is maintained in all instances and public access is unobstructed.

Pursuant to Section 148-13 (D) of the Village Code, outdoor cafes shall also be permitted as an accessory use within the B-3 Business District. See Section 148-13 (D) for details.

Parking Requirements:

Within the B-3 Business District, off-street parking shall only be permitted in the rear yard.

Applicants can meet their off-street parking requirements in one or more of the following manners: 1) spaces located on-site, or 2) an exemption or waiver in accordance with Section 148-32 of the Village Code.

Alleys: Where feasible, access to off-street loading should be provided from designated alleys that are at least 15 feet in width.

Maximum Height & Profile:

Within the Historic Downtown Design District, the maximum building height shall be 35 feet.

Minimum: 2 stories
Maximum: 3 stories

Rooflines: Infill building shall incorporate horizontal rooflines. The use of a parapet to rise above the roofline and an upper cornice shall be provided.

Infill Buildings: Shall respect adjacent buildings with respect to height, materials, and building placement.

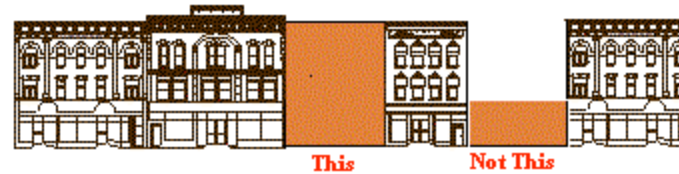
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Historic Downtown Design Guidelines: Building Mass & Scale

New buildings should respect the mass & scale of the traditional building stock in the Historic Downtown Design District. The vertical and horizontal delineation of new structures should match that of traditional structures so that they fit within the context of the existing building stock. In this respect, the mass & scale of new buildings is as important to fitting in as is the placement of new buildings on a site.

The following design principles should be followed when designing new infill buildings:

1. **Building height:** The height of new buildings should not appear excessively higher or lower than surrounding properties [see illustration upper right corner of page].
2. **Floor-to-floor heights:** It is critical that the floor heights of new infill buildings are in keeping with the floor heights of adjacent structures. Furthermore, upper floor windows must be divided into individual window units that are similar in scale to adjacent structures.
3. **Break up the mass of the building elevation:** For large infill buildings, the façade shall be divided into modules to give the appearance of several buildings. This is needed to maintain the traditional building pattern of Historic Downtown Walden. This can be achieved through the use of colors and change in materials to provide a clear distinction between the modules. Recesses may also be used. Building facades should also provide a clear distinction between the first floor and the upper floors of the structure through the use of awnings, a lower cornice and change in materials.



New infill buildings shall be designed in a manner that ensures that they are compatible in scale to the existing building stock within the Historic Downtown Design District. Such buildings shall also provide for a visual transition from commercial buildings and nearby single-family homes when abutting surrounding residential districts.



Infill building: The infill building in the center of the photo above complements the mass and scale of surrounding buildings within the Historic Downtown Design District. The building also incorporates recesses and pedestrian access to parking in the rear of the building.

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Historic Downtown Design Guidelines: Form & Roofline

Main Street, East Main Street & Municipal Square

The existing building stock within the Historic Downtown Design District consists of structures with horizontal roofs and/or pitched roofs concealed from the street view behind a parapet wall. These architectural features help to distinguish the Village's Central Business District from other commercial and residential areas within the Village. To maintain the unique character and cohesiveness of the CBD, horizontal roofs for new structures and additions should be encouraged and where pitched roofs are used, a parapet wall shall be required.

The following additional standards shall apply:

- Roof mounted mechanicals shall be concealed with parapet walls that incorporate a cornice, and
- Upper cornices shall be required on all new infill buildings.



Above: Notice the pitched rooflines in each of these buildings which are concealed behind a parapet wall that also incorporates a decorative upper cornice.



Above: Core of Historic Downtown Walden showing predominant building heights, setbacks, and roofline. The infill building front right incorporates a horizontal roof. This photo shows façade renovation in progress.



Above: The Gridley Building uses a parapet wall to conceal a pitched roofline [see inset].

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Historic Downtown Design Guidelines: Form & Roofline

Orchard Street, Maple Street, & Lower East Main Street

The edge of the Historic Downtown Design District includes buildings with varying roof lines and larger setbacks. These buildings are smaller in mass & scale than the buildings on Main Street, East Main and those on Municipal Square. These architectural features help to distinguish the outlying areas from the CDB and provide a transition to surrounding residential neighborhoods. This distinction should be retained and new infill structures on Orchard Street, Maple Street, and Lower East Main Street should respect the form & rooflines of surrounding structures.

The following additional standards shall apply:

- Renovation of structures in these areas shall retain the integrity of the architecture, setbacks and scale of existing structures.



Above: The traditional development pattern on Orchard Street includes gable roof lines and small front lawns. These elements should be preserved along this street.



Above: View of Fireman's Square and mixed use buildings and residences on Orchard Street. The predominant roofline along this street is the gable roof. Future infill development on Orchard and Maple Street should incorporate a gable roof line.



Above: Octagon House on Maple Street just off of East Main Street. The unique roofline of this historic structure should be preserved.

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Historic Downtown Design Guidelines: Building Entrances

The primary entrance to buildings must be clearly defined and oriented toward the street. For mixed use buildings, separate entrances must be provided for retail/commercial and residential uses. All entrances, however, shall be oriented toward the street and be well defined. The following general standards shall apply:

- Primary entrances shall be accentuated using architectural features such as:
 - Recessed entries,
 - Display windows and signage, or
 - Awnings and lighting.
- Rear building entrances for retail is encouraged in the Historic Downtown Design District.



Above: Eckerd's Drugstore on Market Street in Corning, New York. The entrance to the storefront is well-defined and the owners have used awnings to help accent the entrances. At night, the entrances are well lit.



Above: The Glass Menagerie in Corning, NY incorporates the classic elements of a traditional storefront on Main Street. Note the well-defined bulkhead, display window and transom as well as the recessed entry.



Above: Market Street – Corning, New York. Primary entrance is oriented to the street. The entrance to second floor is located in front center of building façade.

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Historic Downtown Design Guidelines: Architectural Features

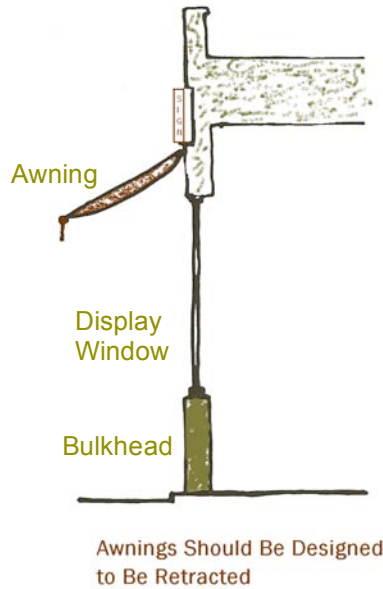
Architectural features of buildings make the streetscape more interesting and visually appealing. Existing buildings within the Historic Downtown Design District incorporate such features. As infill buildings are developed within the B3-Business District attention must be paid to architectural details in order to conserve the integrity and cohesiveness of the historic district. The following are encouraged:

- Design storefronts to incorporate canvass awnings,
- Use brick patterns to provide visual interest, and
- Use a lower cornice to distinguish the first floor from the upper floors of the building.
- Infill buildings: Look to shapes, patterns and scale within the existing building stock and incorporate them into building new infill building design.

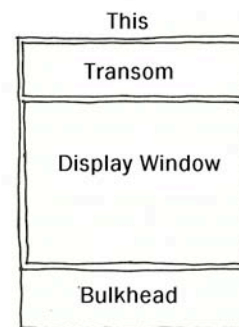
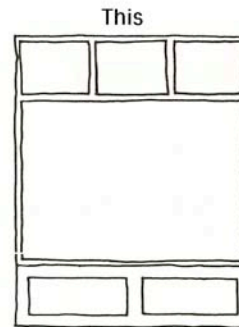


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Historic Downtown Design Guidelines: Architectural Features



The graphic illustrations included here are provided to give a visual interpretation of some of the concepts that are described in the preceding sections. The illustrations provided on this page demonstrate the appropriate and inappropriate means of designing a storefront within the Historic Downtown Design District.



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Historic Downtown Design Guidelines: Architectural Features



Cornices are common in the Historic Downtown Design District and should be preserved on all existing buildings. New infill buildings shall incorporate a parapet wall and decorative cornice. The photos provided on this page include several examples of decorative cornices that can be found within the Historic Downtown Design District.



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Historic Downtown Design Guidelines: Materials & Colors

Building materials and colors are part of the design vocabulary that defines the character of a district. An underlying design theme for Historic Downtown is “Quality”....quality design, quality materials, and quality finishes. Within the Historic Downtown Design District traditional and appropriate exterior finishes include:

- Brick siding.
- Wood lap siding or brick.
- Wood frame windows/doors.

The following exterior finishes are prohibited:

- Vinyl siding or aluminum siding.
- Polished stone, ceramic tile, or mirrored glass.

Building colors should complement the overall character of the Historic Downtown Design District.



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Historic Downtown Design Guidelines: Materials & Colors

Inappropriate building materials and colors can have an adverse impact on the integrity of a Central Business District. The examples provided on this page illustrate inappropriate design. Proposed renovations to storefronts of existing building facades that incorporate any of the design elements shown on this page shall be prohibited in the Historic Downtown Design District. The following exterior finishes are prohibited:

- Mansard-like projections (see bottom right photo – store bottom center),
- Faux stone,
- Vinyl or aluminum siding and/or vinyl awnings,
- Signage that masks architectural elements of a building, or
- Polished stone, ceramic tile, or mirrored glass.

Building colors and materials should complement the overall character of the Historic Downtown Design District.



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Historic Downtown Design Guidelines: Signs & Lighting

Signage within the B3-Business District shall comply with Section 148-35 of the Village of Walden Zoning Code. The Village’s Sign Ordinance anticipated the reuse of historic mixed use commercial buildings and provides the framework in which such signs can be placed. It is important that new infill buildings be designed in a manner that anticipates the incorporation of signage and lighting consistent with Section 148-35.

- New infill buildings should be designed to incorporate signage into the building facade,
- Down lit gooseneck lamps are recommended to illuminate signage, and
- Projecting signs are encouraged in Historic Downtown since they make it easier for pedestrians to find stores (see photos below).



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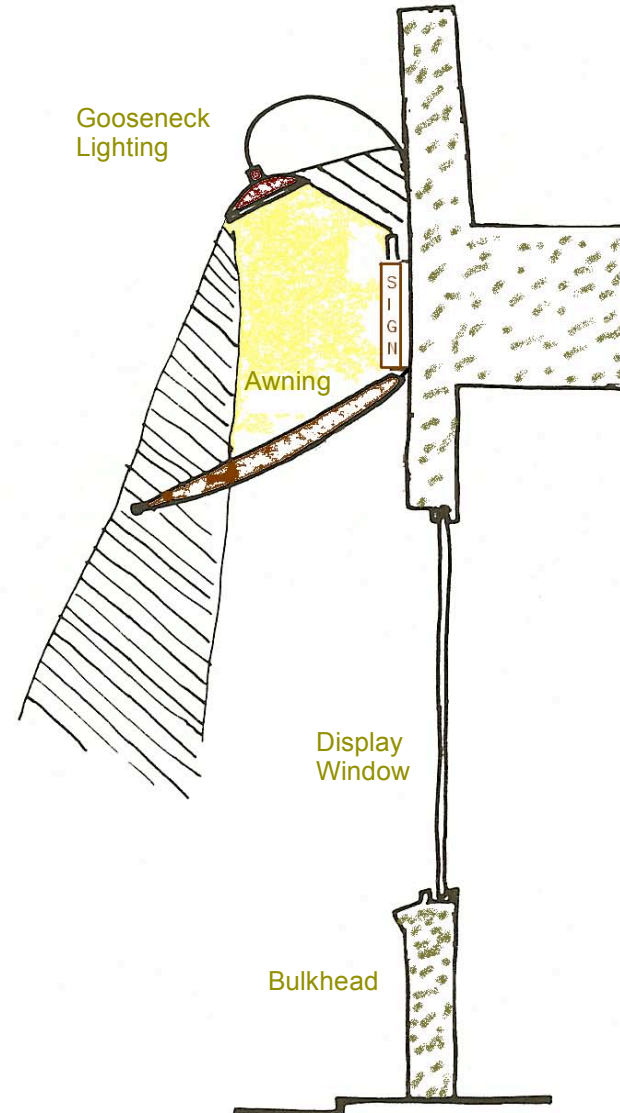
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Historic Downtown Design Guidelines: Signs & Lighting

Lighting of the building façade is important for two reasons: 1) It is necessary to advertise the business after daylight hours and 2) lighting both during and after business hours is a deterrent to crime. Lighting can also be used to illuminate attractive architectural features of the storefront as well as the signage. Interior lighting of the window display is necessary to highlight items for sale and the Village encourages window displays to be lit after business hours. Appropriately designed exterior lighting not only accentuates building design, but it also enhances the ambiance of the Downtown shopping and dining area.

The illustration to the right shows the appropriate placement of exterior lighting. The following standards also apply:

- Infill building design must incorporate the appropriate placement of lighting on the building,
- Down lit gooseneck lamps are recommended to illuminate signage, and
- Lighting should not provide for excessive light or glare –energy conservation is encouraged.



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Historic Downtown Design Guidelines: Outdoor Spaces

Outdoor spaces are places where the public can gather for events, to have dinner, meet friends, and relax. Such spaces add to a community's quality of life and are an integral part of any vibrant central business district. The Village of Walden has three squares in the CBD; McKinley Square, Fireman's Square, and Municipal Square. The latter two have sufficient area to provide an inviting public gathering space. The Village hosts a variety of activities throughout the year in these squares.

Events help to bring people Downtown and the existence of these public squares is a valuable asset for the community. Recent streetscape enhancements [including period lighting that is pedestrian oriented] and new sidewalks have resulted in great public gathering spaces. *It is important that private sector building improvements complement these public investments.*



Photos:

Above: Walden Day at Municipal Square Summer of 2001.
Left: Farmer's Market Fall of 2005.

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Historic Downtown Design Guidelines: Appendices



The placement of buildings to the edge of the sidewalk helps to define the street edge and provide a sense of enclosure of public spaces. The buildings depicted in the illustration above are existing buildings in Village Square in Downtown Walden.
Drawing: *DEGRAW & DEHAAN Architects*

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Historic Downtown Design Guidelines: Appendices

Awnings and canopies have been a part of the streetscape in Downtown Walden for over 100 years. Awnings serve a useful purpose in that they provide protection from inclement weather. Awnings and canopies in the Historic Downtown Design District should be made of heavy canvas and must be maintained in good repair. Aluminum, plastic, or vinyl canopies should not be used within the Historic Downtown Design District.

Awnings should be made to be retractable and installed in a manner that does not hide or mask the traditional architectural elements of the building façade. The illustration to the right shows the proper placement of a retractable awning.



Signage is an important part of every Downtown Business. When placed to fit within architectural design of the building façade, signage can add to the visual interest of the building façade while letting customers know the nature and location of the business. However, when signage is not properly placed on the building, or is excessively large, it results in unsightly visual clutter.

In the illustration to the right, the large bulky sign above the cornice conceals part of the second floor window and masks part of the cornice. Such signage shall not be permitted in the Historic Downtown Design District. The proper placement of the signage within the sign panel above the display window is shown in the lower half of the illustration.



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