Community Design

Strip Centers
and
Big Box Retailers

Peachtree City Outreach
S. Brown, Mayor
Country Club Plaza in Kansas City, Missouri, opened in 1924. It is reputed to have been the first shopping center specifically designed to accommodate automobiles. Note the parking lot across the street from the stores. [post card]
Open-air Hamden Plaza opened in 1955 near Hamden, Connecticut. It is now a one-level open-air horse shoe-shaped community mall with 40 stores. [1950s Post card]
A typical linear open-air plan from the early 1960s can be seen in the Dewitt Shopping Center, Dewitt, New York. [Post card]
# Shopping Center Classification

Based on criteria of the International Council on Shopping Centers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Neighborhood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retail space</td>
<td>30,000 to 100,000 (square feet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stores</td>
<td>Fewer than 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typical anchor stores</td>
<td>Supermarket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typical market area</td>
<td>Within a 15-minute drive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Shopping Center Classification**

Based on criteria of the International Council on Shopping Centers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type</strong></td>
<td><strong>Regional</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Retail space</strong></td>
<td>300,000 to 1,000,000 (square feet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stores</strong></td>
<td>30 to 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Typical anchor stores</strong></td>
<td>One or more large stores or big boxes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Typical market area</strong></td>
<td>Multi-city/county, traffic congestion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Shopping Center Classification

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type</strong></td>
<td><strong>Super regional</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Retail space</strong></td>
<td>1,000,000 and larger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(square feet)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stores</strong></td>
<td>More than 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Typical anchor stores</strong></td>
<td>Large mall, large power center clusters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Typical market area</strong></td>
<td>Up to 100-mile radius or larger, <em>major traffic congestion</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Strip Shopping Center

- An open-air shopping center
- Largest stores are discount or drug stores or supermarkets
- Located on major roads with parking areas in front
- Strips can adjoin each other making for non-stop stores for miles on end
Big Box Retail

- A large stand-alone store
- Specializes in a single line of products
  - home improvements, toys, or office supplies
- No-frills discount stores that sell in volume
A New Trend
“Out of the Mall and into the Strip”

- Traditional mall stores are moving into New Urban strip centers.
- Stores that would be on second and third floors of malls don't get the sales they desire while open-air shopping centers afford them more visibility.
A New Trend

“Out of the Mall and into the Strip”

- These new types of strip shopping centers serve as "open-air community centers" with medium-sized and occasionally big-box stores.

- Such centers can provide "laser shopping" opportunities, where people can park in front of the store of their choice without having to walk through an entire mall.
Who’s Using the New Urban Strip Centers?

- Target
- Borders
- Kohl's
- Talbots
- Coldwater Creek
- J. Jill
- Chico's
- Ann Taylor Loft
- Jos. A. Bank
- Old Navy
- Banana Republic
Big Box Retail
The 800 lb. Gorilla!
Negative Impacts of Big Boxes

- Non-Pedestrian in nature
- Doesn’t work well next to residential zoning
- Detracts from the community’s character with “dead architecture” and large asphalt parking
- Increased traffic/noise/light/crime
- Big boxes cause gray fields in the community (A dying shopping center, specifically – according to Price-Waterhouse-Coopers – a center in which annual sales are less than $150 per square foot of retail space)
Big box retail is not designed to create mutually-beneficial partnerships between retailers and community citizens, much in the way traditional town centers once did, so how do we control this type of development?
Keeping the Lid on Big Boxes

- Create a new zoning classification for large scale retail
- Set limits on the “foot print” of retail stores
- Create “impact assessments” to weigh projects
- Create overlay zones to assure community friendly design (Roswell, Peachtree City)
Keeping the Lid on Big Boxes

- Require sidewalks linking stores to transit stops, street crossings, and building entrances
- Create arterial road capacity requirements and ban such development within a specified distance from residential zoning
- Ban outdoor merchandising in parking lots
Not allowing merchandise to be stored in the parking lots improves the aesthetics of the development.
Design without character
No Better Than an Industrial Warehouse
Adding Character to Design
How to Handle Big Box Causalities (Gray Fields)

- Change the architecture of the buildings
- Create a new layout for the shopping ctn.
- Switch usage to residential, office or mixed uses
- Examine ways to condemn long-term, uninhabited former big box stores
What is the Future Trend?

- Time and convenience are two of the main factors driving our personal lives.
- The increases in drive through windows and Internet shopping are signs for the future.
- An average American currently spends 34 minutes a day shopping, as opposed to 54 minutes in 1960.
Prediction

As the population and traffic congestion continues to grow over time, huge big box-type retailing operations will evolve into warehouses and goods will be delivered to homes for the sake of convenience.
Credits:

“Big-Box Sprawl and How to Control It” by C. E. Beaumont and L. Tucker

Rich McLaughlin, charrettecenter.net
Minneapolis, MN; July, 2003

Ellen Lyon, The Patriot-News
June 20, 2004

deadmalls.com

Eastern Connecticut State University, postcards

International Council on Shopping Centers