

City of Auburn Hills Architectural Design Policy

Purpose

The City of Auburn Hills seeks to promote architectural design which is harmonious with adjacent structures and sensitive to the natural environment. No single architectural style will be mandated within Auburn Hills. However, the reliance on or use of a standardized "corporate or franchise" style is strongly discouraged, unless it can be shown to the Planning Commission and City Council's satisfaction that such style meets the objectives noted below. Strongly thematic architectural styles associated with some chain restaurants, gas stations, big box, and service stores are discouraged and, if utilized, will be recommended to be modified to be compatible with the City's design objectives.

The primary purpose of this policy statement is to achieve the following goals:

- Enhance and protect Auburn Hills' quality of life and community image through agreed upon architectural design objectives; and
- Protect and promote Auburn Hills' long-term economic vitality through architectural design objectives which encourage high quality development, while discouraging less attractive and less enduring alternatives.

Design Objectives

The following architectural design objectives are intended to apply to all non-residential and multi-family residential development within the City. New building construction shall provide a sense of permanence and timelessness. High quality construction and materials should be used to ensure that buildings will not look dated or worn down over time, nor require excessive maintenance:

- Exterior building materials should be aesthetically pleasing and compatible with materials and colors of nearby structures. Predominant exterior building facade materials shall consist of high quality, durable products. Durable building materials such as brick, sandstone, fieldstone, decorative concrete masonry units, wood, and glass are recommended. External Insulation Finished Systems (E.I.F.S.) material should be utilized only on the building trim and accent areas. The use of E.I.F.S. as a predominant facade material is discouraged;
- Building colors should accent, blend with, or complement surroundings. Facade colors are recommended to be earth tone colors which are low reflectance, subtle, and neutral (e.g., grays, greens, burgundies, browns, and tans). The coloring of all materials should be integral to the product and not painted on the surface of said product. The use of high intensity colors, metallic colors, black or fluorescent colors is discouraged. Primary colors are requested to be reserved for trim and accent areas. Exposed neon tubing is not an acceptable feature on buildings;
- The pitched roof designs are highly recommended for low-rise retail, office, and multi-family residential buildings utilizing architectural asphalt shingles or standing-seam metal panels. Flat roofs are not encouraged. In the case of strip malls, big box stores, and shopping centers; such buildings shall provide elevations which reflect this objective through variations in facade setback and parapet wall presentations. Roof colors are requested to be muted and compatible with the dominant building color;
- Long blank walls on retail buildings are to be avoided through the use of foundation landscaping and architectural details and features. Large scale retail buildings are encouraged to have height variations to reduce scale and give the appearance of distinct elements; and
- Lastly, in accordance with Zoning Ordinance requirements, roof top mechanical installations shall be appropriately screened so as to block the view from adjacent public and private streets and properties. Such screening shall match or compliment the overall theme of the building.