MASTER LAND USE PLAN

The City of Auburn Hills Master Land Use Plan strives to build a coherent vision of the City's future from the visions of a diverse population. It integrates the aspirations of the City's residents, businesses, neighborhoods, and officials into a clear strategy for managing future growth. The enclosed plan was created jointly by the Auburn Hills Planning Commission and City Council under the authority of the Municipal Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended, to serve as the primary tool for guiding the physical development of our community.





DEFINING AUBURN HILLS

The City of Auburn Hills is a proud and dynamic community with a population of approximately 26,000 people. It is well known for being financially strong, full of vibrant neighborhoods, and home to numerous world-class businesses.

Since its incorporation into a City in 1983, the 17.5 square mile community has carved out its niche as a high-tech center. The City's proximity to I-75, M-59, Oakland University, and Oakland Community College; the natural spread of development north from Detroit; the availability of large tracts of open land; and a progressive tax abatement policy have helped spur rapid growth and development.

The City of Auburn Hills is home to over 80 international corporations from 18 different countries, including most notably the City's largest employer, Stellantis N.V. The City hosts Great Lakes Crossing Outlets, which is the second largest regional shopping center in Michigan, and home to Bass Pro Shops Outdoor World, Sea Life Michigan Aquarium and LEGOLAND Discovery Center Michigan.

Downtown Auburn Hills, centered along the Clinton River, has become a major focus of City investment, reinforcing its role as the community's civic, recreational, and social hub. Public amenities and infrastructure improvements, including Riverside Park, the Knight Amphitheater and Splash Pad, River Woods Park, the Public Square, and expanded pathway and trail connections such as the Clinton River Trail and the Riverwalk, have transformed Downtown Auburn Hills into a year-round destination for community events, recreation, and public gathering. Collectively, these investments strengthen Auburn Hills' sense of place, enhance connectivity, and support a vibrant and active downtown environment.

It should be noted that with the influx of growth and development, City leaders have historically worked hard to protect the community's residential neighborhoods from the encroachment of non-residential development. Our neighborhoods are the building blocks of our City. Healthy, safe, attractive, and diverse neighborhoods are essential to encouraging a strong residential base in the community. Protecting and investing in these areas is a core value in Auburn Hills.

Tax records show that Auburn Hills currently consists of about 75% non-residential taxpayers and 25% residential, which is the reverse of most municipalities. The additional tax revenue raised has allowed Auburn Hills to invest monies into its roads and infrastructure, municipal facilities, and neighborhoods. Further, the City's property tax structure has allowed the City Council to maintain one of the lowest property tax rates in Oakland County without compromising the quantity and quality of City services provided.

In summary, we believe Auburn Hills is master-planned to be a complete and balanced city, which is fiscally prepared for years to come.

EXISTING LAND USE PATTERNS

The predominant land use patterns in Auburn Hills are well-established and have been reinforced over the last forty-five years. Although modest changes and refinement have occurred, and some new issues have arisen, the basic land use patterns in the City have not changed significantly since the adoption of the 1986 Generalized Long Range Master Land Use Plan. The following key characteristics describe the existing land use patterns in the City:

- Auburn Hills is nearly fully developed, with only 9.7% vacant land area. The majority of the City's vacant parcels can be found in the northern part of the community.
- Residential parcels in the central and southern parts of the City are nearly built-out, while opportunities for new residential development remain in the northern part of the community.
- High technology, industrial, commercial service, and public/institutional centers are located throughout the City along key transportation corridors. This provides convenient goods and services and employment opportunities for City residents and areas beyond. These uses constitute 41% of the City's existing land use, which is why the City has a daytime population of nearly 80,000 people.

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The Master Land Use Plan, which appears inside this brochure, provides a graphic illustration of the planned land use for all properties within the City. This document serves as an update to the 2018 Plan and a guide for future land use development decisions. The Plan reflects a policy statement which is directive rather than regulatory, and is subject to change when appropriate conditions and principles of planning can be met. As shown in the table to the left, the City of Auburn Hills is master-planned for a balanced mixture of residential and non-residential uses at build-out.

EXISTING LAND USE BREAKDOWN (2025)

Existing Land Use Classification	Percentage of the City
Residential	23.2%
Industrial	25.1%
Vacant	9.7%
Public/Institutional	7.9%
Commercial/Office	8.2%
Recreation/Conservation	5.9%
Water	1.9%
Trans/Utility/Comm.	0.8%
Road Right-of-Way	17.2%
Railroad Right-of-Way	0.1%
Total	100%

Source: Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services

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INTERPRETATION OF THE MASTER LAND USE PLAN

PUBLIC – Intended to provide for public or quasi-public lands which are designated for the use of the community at large. Such uses typically include the City's parks, governmental facilities, public schools, colleges, and universities.

RESIDENTIAL – Intended to provide for a variety of housing types (e.g., single-family, multiple-family, senior housing, and mobile homes) and other uses customarily related to residential uses of land (e.g., places of worship, public and private schools, and parks). The residential density patterns shown on the master plan map are intended to provide direction as to the community's desired housing density at build-out.

NON-RESIDENTIAL – Intended for all land uses not covered under the public and residential use classifications. Residential and mixed use developments shall only be permitted within areas designated as non-residential via the Planned Unit Development process.

FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES

Land Use Classification	Area in Acres*	Percentage of the City
Public	839	9.2%
Residential	3,600	39.5%
Non-Residential	4,676	51.3%

*Approximate land area of Auburn Hills is 9,115 acres not including road right-of-way.

RELATION OF THE MASTER LAND USE PLAN TO ZONING

The Master Land Use Plan is a guide for future zoning, but not intended to coincide exactly with either the current or future zoning classification of properties. For example, in many instances, there may be more than one non-residential zoning classification that would be consistent with the intent of the Plan, therefore additional factors such as existing land uses in the area, existing zoning patterns, and physical features of the land must be considered in determining the most appropriate zoning of parcels shown as non-residential on the Plan. However, the Plan is intended to provide more specific direction when addressing residential land use.

The Plan clearly identifies locations of residential areas and their corresponding planned housing density. Rezoning and development proposals shall be consistent with density patterns and land use classifications shown on the Plan.

Lastly, the Master Land Use Plan incorporates the findings of the neighborhood master plans, subarea studies, or policies; which are adopted as amendments to the Plan. If there is a conflict between the Master Land Use Plan or the above mentioned plans and studies, the land use recommendations of the neighborhood master plan, subarea study, and policy shall govern.



PLAN COMPATIBILITY WITH NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES

The Master Land Use Plan for the City of Auburn Hills is substantially compatible with the master plans of its surrounding municipalities. The City of Auburn Hills shares mutual concerns with our neighboring communities regarding future development patterns and pressures; the impacts of development on shared transportation facilities and utility systems; and changes being introduced in our communities that may enhance or threaten our existing resources, lifestyles and economy. As the region continues to grow and change, the City of Auburn Hills will strive to coordinate its planning efforts with adjacent municipalities, Oakland County, and the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG).

OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE

WE ENVISION A COMMUNITY THAT...

- Has the heart of a small town that operates with the excellence of a world class city;
- Values effective planning, responsible land use, balanced growth, and responsive government;
- Is racially and culturally diverse;
- Is a "City of Neighborhoods" with housing of all types, quality public ad private schools, places of worship, and convenient parks;
- Supports the economic health of the community by maintaining a strong environment for business to prosper;
- Is widely recognized as a place where residents, business owners, and visitors feel welcome and safe, and where neighborhoods and business districts exhibit a strong, clean, and attractive identity;
- Has a vibrant Downtown which provides a sense of place and pride;
- Honors its heritage and respects its natural areas;
- Is equitable and fiscally responsible in providing, maintaining, and upgrading public services and infrastructure;
- Takes pride in hosting several institutions of higher learning (e.g., Oakland University, Oakland University-William Beaumont School of Medicine, and Oakland Community College) and welcomes them as vital members of the community.

Each of us has a vision of what Auburn Hills should be like in the future. Although our visions are different, they share common qualities. We aspire to create a safe, beautiful city for ourselves, our children, and future generations. We envision a city with diverse housing opportunities where the natural environment is protected, excellent services are provided, and where citizens have a voice in government. We aspire to create a city that is economically healthy and a good place to live, work, and play.

AUBURN HILLS CITY COUNCIL

Eugene Hawkins, III, Mayor
Brian Marzolf, Mayor Pro Tem
Jack D. Ferguson
Dr. Shawanna Fletcher
Henry V. Knight
Ron Moniz
Cheryl Verbeke

PLANNING COMMISSION

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CITY ADMINISTRATION

Thomas A. Tanghe, City Manager
Brandon Skopek, Assistant City Manager
Steven J. Cohen, AICP, Director of Community Development
Devin Lang, Assistant Director of Community Development