



Splawn Family 1880

HISTORIC OVERLAY

DISTRICT DESIGN CRITERIA

Aurora Texas - Historic Preservation Commission

INTRODUCTION

Settlement began in Aurora, in the late 1850s. Impressed by the beauty of the place, William O. Stanfield suggested "Aurora" for the name of the community. For the first twenty years the population grew rapidly, and the town became a trading center for county farmers. By the mid-1880s Aurora had two schools, two cotton gins, two hotels, a switching yard, fifteen businesses and six saloons. A post office was opened in 1873, and the town was incorporated on August 21, 1882.

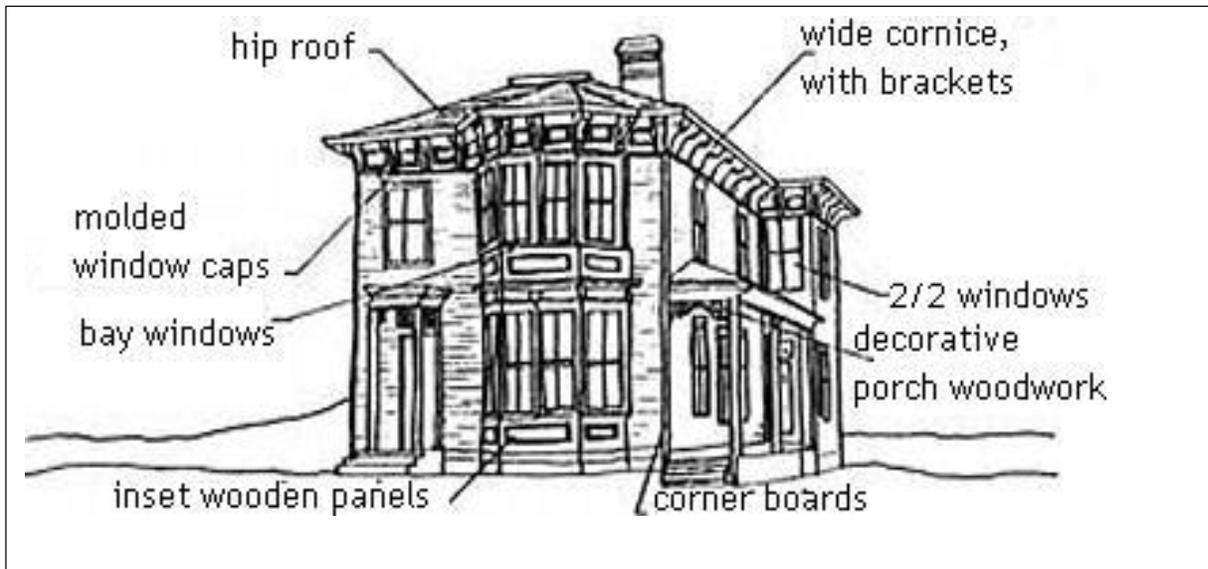
**Planning & Zoning Commission
in conjunction with the
Historic Preservation
Commission**

CITY OF AURORA TEXAS

HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICT – 114 Corridor, Including the Old Town Square

HOD – Development Standards

Circa 1870-1920



Intent

The development standards and guidelines included in this document are intended to be clear, concise, and user-friendly. The development review process is intended to be predictable and flexible, and to facilitate the timely approval of conforming projects.

Vision

Members of the Aurora City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission envision a Historic Overlay District along the 114 Corridor and Old Town Square which reflects the city's western culture and character. Development in the area shall have a high level of quality and aesthetic character that will facilitate economic development, yet retain the historic features of the "the town which almost wasn't." The Design Standards and Guidelines will provide the direction for this development while maintaining a cohesive sense of western culture. The vision shall be attained by focusing on primary design elements such as site planning, architectural character, streetscape, lighting, signage and landscaping.

General Development Principles

The following principles are the building blocks upon which The Design Standards and Guidelines are created and through which the development can best represent the desires of the community.

Maintain a Sense of Place:

The Historic Overlay District shall maintain its distinct sense of authentic western culture and extend its “brand” throughout. This cohesive design, reinforced through the use of unique, specific site layouts and architectural standards, shall promote a unifying sense of development through architectural design and pedestrian-friendly walkability, these Design Standards and Guidelines shall enhance the existing sense of western pride and illustrate the unique identity of our past.

Maintain a High Standard of Development:

The Design Standards and Guidelines will promote high quality and exceptional design, encourage creativity, and support the diversity of a mixed use environment. It will ensure positive growth and development of quality site layout, architectural character, streetscape, lighting, signage, and landscaping.

Restoration of Historic Features:

One of the key objectives of The Design Standards and Guidelines is to preserve the history historical fabric and character of the western atmosphere, which made “Aurora” the beauty William Stanfield saw, in the mid-1850’s.

Commercial Development Design

Storefronts, Doors and Windows

GOAL: To restore and maintain the character defining features of the traditional storefront.

Storefronts

- The storefront entrances shall be pedestrian friendly and be a distinctive part of the overall design of the building.
- Buildings shall have historic recessed entrances where possible.

Entry Standards

- Windows, floors, stoops, and porches shall front the street.
- Primary building entrances shall be clearly articulated using any of the following:
 - Awnings
 - Canopies
 - Recessed entry
 - Other similar treatments may be considered on a case by case basis by city staff and the Historic Preservation Officer.
- Primary pedestrian building entrances shall be located on the street frontage of the building.
- For buildings fronting other public spaces, the primary pedestrian entrance shall be oriented to and accessible from the public space.
- Individual retail entrance – each retail use with exterior ground level exposure along a street or public space shall have an individual public entry from the street or public space.



Entry Guidelines

- Where office and retail/entertainment spaces coexist consider, placing the retail entrances and prime exposure at the corners and the office entrances at mid-block locations.
- Corner entrances are encouraged for strong visibility at intersections.
- Entrances to corner buildings with ground floor retail shall be located at the corner



Doors

- Doors shall have large glass panels whenever feasible.
- Doors may be constructed of wood, steel or aluminum, but shall maintain compliance to the code requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and any subsequent code revisions as mandated by the Federal Government.
- Commercial buildings shall use an accent color for the door and trim to make the storefront entrance distinctive.
- Maintain historic hardware or use reproductions that are compatible with the historic period of the building.
- When appropriate use kick plates made of metal that are compatible with the other door hardware.

Windows

- The display, transoms and upper story windows of a commercial building represent a vital component of its architectural character.
- Preserve historic window sash and glass whenever possible.
- Replacement glass shall be clear, not colored or reflective.
- Glass is preferred, both as historically accurate and as a good source of natural light in the building's interior.
- Wood is the preferred material for window frames and seals; however, if vinyl or aluminum is used it must be painted with an enamel finish, in similar color to the existing trim color.
- Upper story windows shall be unobstructed, uniform in design and cohesive with the existing façade.
- Hurricane rated windows are highly recommended.
- Display windows shall provide maximum natural light and a full view of the merchandise or service within. If privacy is needed, curtains or shades are to be used instead of blocking windows.
- Maintain or restore the transom space if possible to maintain the alignment of the storefront with others in the block.
- The transom space may also be used as a sign or decorative panel.
- Retain the historic size and shape of openings.
- If the commercial building is a two story structure, all upper façades shall have an occupied look. This will improve the building's aesthetic quality as well as reinforce the visual character of the upper floors. It will also enhance the perceived safety and security of the area.



Building Materials

- Primary Materials:
 - Brick
 - Stone, or stone veneer with cavity wall construction
 - Stucco
 - Metal Panels – individual or curtain wall systems
 - Concrete – finish shall be to an architectural level
 - Wood
 - Cement composite board (not simulating wood)
 - Tile – terra cotta, porcelain, or ceramic

- Limited Accent and Trim Materials:
 - All primary materials listed above
 - Metal – galvanized, painted, or ornamental
 - Pre-cast masonry (trim and cornice only)
 - GFRC (Glass Fiber Reinforced Concrete)
 - Glass curtain wall system
 - Concrete fiber simulated wood siding

- Inappropriate Materials:
 - Applied stone without cavity wall construction
 - Vinyl or aluminum siding
 - Mirrored or highly reflective glass

Brick Façades – Historical Colors

<http://www.historicalbricks.com/products/antique-building-materials/building-brick>



“Old Tuscany”

A wide range of colors and sizes gives installations made with Old Tuscany bricks a quintessential Old World look, such as one might see in the Italian countryside. The key to the effect is the broad spectrum of colors, from deep red and purple to orange and rose to white mortar stains.



“Antique Warehouse Reds”

Oversized bricks from the 19th century make a bold design statement in the 21st century. Rescued from demolished buildings throughout the Midwest, they come in a wide range of shades from dark red/purple to orange. Note: not all colors represented. Contact us to discuss the perfect brick for your project.





“Antique Depot Bricks”

Reclaimed from Old Chicago buildings, these classic antique bricks bring a century of architectural history to your home. On many of them you can see the "union made" logo stamped into the clay, bearing witness to a proud tradition of quality craftsmanship. Colors range from buff to pink.



Historic Paint Colors

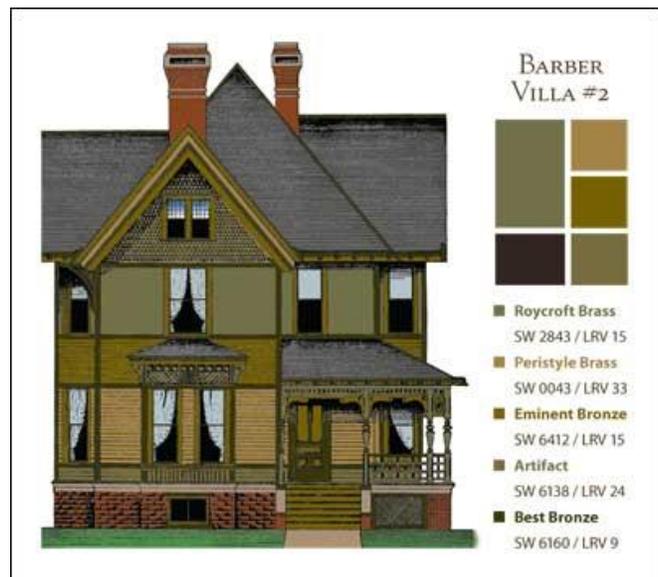
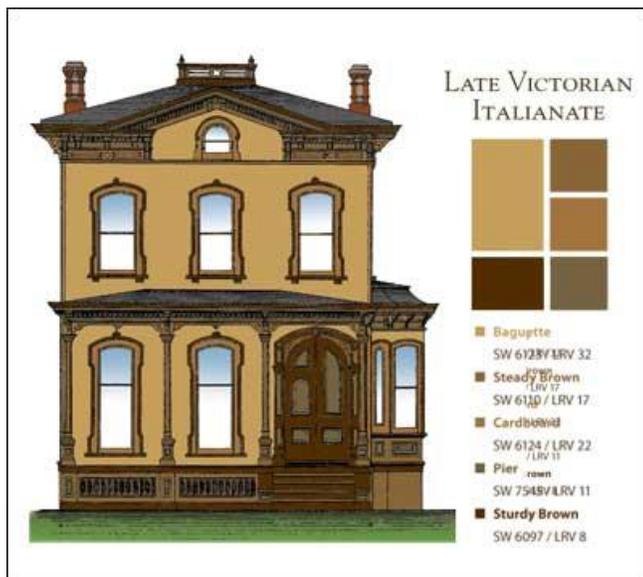
GOAL: Ensure each building in the HOD uses historically appropriate colors and finishes of the time period.

- The texture of exterior wall surfaces shall be simple and unobtrusive.
- Avoid finishes that do not reflect the historic period.
- No more than three colors shall be used to highlight a façade.
- A muted background color will work best with contrasting colors to accent architectural details, such as cornices, bulkheads and window trim.

<http://thecraftsmanblog.com/historic-paint-colors/>



http://www.oldhousejournal.com/living_life_in_colors/magazine/1522



Building-Mounted Signs

Signs are a necessary part of a commercial district. Signs need to contribute and not detract from the overall design of the building. Signs shall be simple and express direct messages.

GOAL: To use attractive and effective signs, which advertise the business, but do not detract from the historic character of the building.



- A storefront shall have no more than two signs, one primary and one secondary.
- Signs or logos shall be compatible with the scale of the building's façade.
- Street level signs shall be sized and positioned for pedestrians.
- Signs in the display windows shall not obscure the display area. The color of the painted lettering shall contrast with the display background.
- Signs and lettering shall reflect the historic period of the building in scale, font and color.
- The following sign types shall

be avoided: canned backlit boxes, bubble or backlit plastic awnings, plastic blade signs, and banners (except as a 30-day temporary).

- Flush mounted signs may be made of painted wood or metal and positioned to fit within the architectural features, usually above the storefront display windows and below upper story windowsills. Flush mounted signs shall not be more than 2.5 feet high. In general, lettering shall be between 8 and 18 inches high and occupy only about 65 percent of the signboard. Use the existing sign panel or band, if part of the historic building design.
- Projecting or blade signs may be used, if they are historically appropriate for the building. They shall be located at least 8.5 feet above the sidewalk and shall project no more than 5 feet, but also positioned for pedestrian viewing. Blade signs shall be made of painted metal or wood.
- Other appropriate signage may include fabric awnings with lettering, and individual letters of wood, metal or plastic.
- Neon or flashing light signs are strictly prohibited.
- Signs on secondary elevations shall be compatible in scale and style with façade signage.
- **The fonts approved for signage are:**

**ROSEWOOD STANDARD
REGULAR**

Playbill

ENGRAVERS MT

MESQUITE STD

QUENTIN CAPS

RIO GRANDE

PROCAIDIERO

**HARRY
HOUDINI**

VANILLA WHALE

WESTERN

Guideline 1

- A sign shall preserve, complement or enhance the architectural composition and features of the building.
- Covering or obscuring significant architectural details shall be avoided.
- Damage to architectural detail when attaching the sign shall be avoided.

Guideline 2

- Consider the overall sign design as an integral part of the building façade.
- Signage shall be coordinated with the overall façade composition, including ornamental details and other approved signage.
- Signs shall be in proportion to the building, so they do not dominate the building appearance.

Guideline 3

- A master sign plan shall be developed for the entire property to guide individual sign design and location decisions.
- This is especially important when a building includes multiple businesses.
- A master sign plan shall specify the location, number and size of all signs on the property.
- The materials, methods of illumination and graphic standards shall also be defined.
- A master sign plan shall make all signs on the building cohesive, linking one to another, ultimately creating a central theme for the site.

Guideline 4

- A sign shall be designed to be in proportion and scale with the building.
- A sign shall be in scale with the façade of the building.
- Signs that would cover more than 20 percent of the façade shall be avoided.

Guideline 5

- A sign shall be designed to be a part of the overall building composition.
- A sign shall be located on a building so it emphasizes the architectural elements of the façade.
- A sign shall be mounted to fit within existing architectural features.
- The shape of the sign shall be used to reinforce the relationship of moldings and transoms seen along the street.

Guideline 6

- Signs shall have a human scale, and be pedestrian oriented.
- Signs that are illegible when viewed from the sidewalk, or are located too high upon a building are not encouraged.
- A sign shall be located on a building so that it draws an individual's attention toward the building or the use that it is intended to support.



Guideline 7

- Position a sign so that it does not obscure or conflict with architectural features of the building.
- A wall sign shall be placed so that it is framed by the architectural details of the building.
- A wall sign shall be placed to reflect the fenestration pattern of the building.
- Placing or dimensioning a wall sign so that it spans the pilasters or detailing of a building shall be avoided.
- A projecting sign shall be positioned where it will not damage or visually intrude upon architectural details.
- A projecting sign shall be placed where it will not obscure a wall sign.

Guideline 8

- Position a sign primarily to serve the pedestrian at the street level.
- The majority of signs shall be concentrated at the street level close to the entrance of the building.
- Signs at a higher level shall be considered only where the premises may be limited in sign location at street level, where otherwise, the sign would be obscured or if it is the name of the building.

Guideline 9

- The use of signs placed on upper levels of a building shall be limited since they will be visible over an extended distance and are not related to the street or entrance level of the premises.
- Generally, signs shall be placed in an architecturally appropriate location no more than 20 feet above the sidewalk.
- Illumination of signs on upper levels shall be limited to the brightness of lower level signs. Illumination shall adhere to the criteria of the "Dark Skies Ordinance," or any currently adopted light pollution ordinance, for the City of Aurora.

- In certain cases, signs on commercial buildings along arterial streets may be placed higher on a façade when it is determined that the sign will not have a negative impact on the design, or design elements of the façade.
- Signs which do not relate to the business within the building generally would not be considered appropriate, unless they relate to the historic use or owner of the building.

Guideline 10

- The projection of a wall sign shall be minimized to the depth of the sign panel or letter.
- A wall sign shall be relatively flush with the building facade.
- A wall sign shall be designed to sit within rather than forward of the fascia or other architectural details of the building.



Guideline 11

- A projecting sign shall be designed to equate with the sign projection seen traditionally.
- Projecting a sign from the building wall shall be attuned to the mass and scale of the building to which it is attached. A large projecting sign on a small building would compete with the architectural feel of the structure and therefore would not be encouraged.
- Projecting a sign that exceeds that of the immediate surrounding area is discouraged, but shall be reviewed on a case by case basis.
- The sign bracket of a projecting sign shall be designed as a decorative or complementary element of the sign.

Guideline 12

- Sign colors shall complement the colors of the building.
- The number of colors used on a sign shall be limited. In general, no more than three (3) colors shall be used, although accent colors may also be appropriate.
- Sign colors shall be coordinated with overall building colors.
- Color shall be used both to accentuate the sign design and message, and also to integrate the sign or lettering with the building and its context.

Landmark/Monument Entry Sign to the City of Aurora

Location – Entry Road to the Ballpark
101 North Pecan Street

The purpose of the landmark monument sign is to serve as a gateway to the City of Aurora. The monument shall embrace the currently adopted City logo, as well as a storyline

Historic Overlay District – Design Criteria

representation of the Legend of the Spaceship Crash. This sign shall establish the unique quality of our Legendary City, welcoming all who wish to stop and experience local lore.

