

18.31.200 Architectural and site design review standards and regulations.

A. Intent and Purpose. The architectural and site design regulations provide an administrative review process for evaluating the design and arrangement of development. The architectural and site design regulations are intended to be consistent with and implement the policies of the comprehensive plan. The purposes of these design review regulations are to:

1. Foster good decision-making for development through architectural and site design within the context of the community's built and natural environmental character, scale and diversity;
2. Promote the use of appropriate scale of buildings and the configuration of open space and parking areas for development to safely and comfortably accommodate pedestrian activities;
3. Coordinate the interrelationship of buildings and public and private open space;
4. Discourage monotony in building design and arrangement, while promoting harmony among distinct building identities; and
5. Mitigate, through design and site plan measures, the visual impact of large building facades, particularly those which have high public visibility (encourage the creative use of architectural and landscape features in order to reduce the actual and perceived scale and bulk of structures).

B. Applicability. The following land uses, types of development activities, including all related site improvements, and geographic areas, are subject to the architectural and site design standards and the processes and regulations for conducting design review contained in this chapter:

1. Multiple-Family and Mixed-Use Developments. The following land uses and types of development are subject to the city's multiple-family and mixed-use design standards document unless addressed by a different set of architectural and site design standards applicable to a specific geographic area.
 - a. Multifamily development inclusive of triplexes and fourplexes in all zones in the city where permitted outright or as a conditional use and not otherwise addressed through the city's residential infill development standards (Chapter 18.25 ACC); and
 - b. Mixed-Use Residential Development. Mixed-use development containing residential living units in all zones in the city where permitted outright or as a conditional use; and
 - c. Retirement apartments, congregate living facilities and senior housing complexes in all zones in the city where permitted outright or as a conditional use.
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2. *Downtown Urban Center.* The following locations of development activities are subject to the city's downtown urban center design standards document.

a. Properties located within the boundaries of the DUC, downtown urban center zoning district, as identified on the comprehensive zoning map.

3. *Auburn Junction.* The following locations of development activities are subject to the city's Auburn Junction design standards document.

a. Properties located within the boundaries of West Main Street, 2nd Street SE/SW, A Street SE, and A Street SW as identified with ACC 18.29.070, design standards of the DUC downtown urban center zone.

4. *Northeast Auburn Special Planning Area.* The following locations of development activities are subject to the city's Auburn Gateway architectural and site design standards document.

a. Properties located within the boundaries of the Auburn Gateway Project as defined by the development agreement approved by city Resolution No. 4756, or as may be subsequently amended. The Auburn Gateway architectural and site design is addressed in Section 4 of this resolution and provided as Attachment 4 to the resolution.

C. *Exemptions.* The following activities as determined by the ~~planning director~~Community Development Director shall be exempt from the provisions of the design standards:

1. Any building activity that does not require a building permit; or
2. Interior construction work which does not alter the exterior of the structure; or
3. Normal or routine building and site maintenance/repair that is exempt from issuance of a permit including the repair or maintenance of structural members; or
4. Interior alterations that do not modify an existing site condition; or
5. Site and exterior alterations that do not exceed 10 percent of the assessed valuation of the property building or land per the most recent county records; or
6. Building additions that are less than 10 percent of the existing floor area of the existing building. Any cumulative floor area increase from the adoption date of the ordinance establishing the architectural and site design standard that totals more than 10 percent shall not be exempt unless the ~~planning director~~Community Development Director determines compliance with these standards would be unfeasible and/or unreasonable.

D. *Design Standard Documents.* Adopted by reference are the following architectural and site design documents, copies of which shall be maintained by the city clerk. These documents contain the standards for the design and development of the built environment. These documents contain the

standards for the design and development of the built environment. The Community Development Director~~planning director~~ or designee shall have the authority to apply the standards to specific development proposals. The following specific architectural and design standards documents may be amended upon approval by the Community Development Director~~planning and development committee of the Auburn city council~~:

1. Mixed-use and multiple-family development design standards.
2. Auburn Gateway architectural and site design standards.
3. Downtown urban center design standards.
4. Auburn Junction design standards.

E. Timing of Administrative Design Review.

1. Design review shall be conducted by the ~~planning director~~Community Development Director or designee prior to or concurrent with the processing of building permits and/or review of discretionary land use approvals/permits.
2. The decision on the administrative design review shall be issued prior to issuance of the building permits and/or issuance of discretionary land use approvals/permits.

F. Pre-application Meeting – When Required Associated with a Design Review.

1. A pre-application conference is required for the following instances:
 - a. For multifamily development in the R-10, R-16, and R-20 residential zones; and
 - b. For mixed-use development containing residential living units located within R-10, R-16 and R-20 residential zones; and
 - c. For mixed-use development containing residential living units located within commercial zones; and
 - d. For retirement apartments, congregate living facilities and senior housing complexes located within R-10, R-16 and R-20 residential zones, and all commercial zones.
2. A pre-application conference is strongly recommended for all other projects subject to the city's architectural and site design review but is not required.

G. Design Review Submittal Requirements. In addition to any other documentation required for submittal of a complete application for building permit or discretionary land use approvals/permits, the following items shall be required for the architectural and site design review:

1. Elevation drawings prepared by an architect licensed in the state of Washington of all proposed construction including dimensional drawings at one-eighth inch equals one foot or comparable scale showing the type of exterior materials, accurate color (where applicable), exterior finishes for buildings and accessory structures, location and elevations of exterior lighting for buildings, the type, style and model of exterior lighting fixtures (where applicable), parking areas, and fenestration details;
2. A to-scale landscape plan prepared by a landscape architect licensed in the state of Washington showing existing vegetation to be retained and proposed vegetation to be installed inclusive of the common and botanical name of all vegetation, the location and quantity of vegetation, the initial planting size and methods of irrigation;
3. A context vicinity map that shows all structures on the property and within 200 feet in each direction of the subject property drawn approximately to scale;
4. A neighborhood circulation plan consistent with the provisions of Chapter 17.16 ACC (Neighborhood Circulation Plan); and
5. Conceptual plans for any public infrastructure, including roads, water, sewer, and storm facilities.

H. *Interpretations.*

1. The ~~planning director~~Community Development Director shall be authorized to interpret the meaning of words, phrases and sentences which relate to the implementation of the specific architectural and design standards document. Any interpretations regarding implementation of the specific architectural and design standards document shall be made in accordance with its intent or purpose statements and the intent and purpose statements of this chapter. For interpretations, life safety and public health regulations shall be given priority over all other regulations.
2. Administrative interpretations may be appealed to the hearing examiner as prescribed in ACC 18.70.050.

I. *Design Review Adjustments.*

1. *Authority for Design Review Adjustments.* The ~~planning director~~Community Development Director or designee shall have the authority, subject to the provisions of this section and upon such conditions as the ~~planning director~~Community Development Director or designee may deem necessary to comply with the provisions of this section, to approve design adjustments as follows:
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- a. An adjustment to architectural or site design requirements such that no more than two of the total number of required menu items in the city of Auburn multifamily and mixed-use design standards are out of compliance.
- b. An adjustment to required building wall and roof modulation standards, as contained in the city of Auburn multifamily and mixed-use design standards, up to 20 percent of the amount of any quantified standards contained therein.
- c. An adjustment to the architectural or site design requirements that remains consistent with the purpose and intent of the architectural and site design standards.

2. *Required Findings to Grant Design Review Adjustments.* Each determination granting an adjustment by the ~~planning director~~Community Development Director or designee shall be supported by written findings showing specifically wherein all of the following conditions exist:

- a. That the granting of such adjustment does not constitute a grant of special privilege inconsistent with the limitations upon uses of other properties in the vicinity and/or zone of the subject site; and
- b. That the granting of such adjustment will not adversely affect the established character of the surrounding neighborhood, discourage maintenance or upgrades on surrounding properties, nor result in perpetuation of those design qualities and conditions which the comprehensive plan intends to eliminate or avoid; and
- c. That the project incorporates alternate design characteristics that are equivalent or superior to those otherwise achieved by strict adherence to stated menu options; and

3. *Public Notification and Action on Design Review Adjustment Applications.* Upon the filing of a properly completed application and associated request for a design review adjustment, the ~~planning director~~Community Development Director or designee shall comply with the city's Type II land use review requirements for issuance of a properly noticed and appealable land use decision.

4. *Appeal of Director's Decision on Design Review Adjustments.*

- a. If a written objection to the initial determination notice is filed within 14 business days of said notification, the ~~planning director~~Community Development Director or designee shall reconsider the initial determination in light of the objection(s) as raised and render a final decision on the permit. This final decision shall result in either the ~~planning-~~directorCommunity Development Director's affirmation of the original determination of approval, the approval with additional modifications or denial.
 - b. Upon completion of the ~~planning director~~Community Development Director's reconsideration, all parties notified of the original determination shall receive notification of
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the ~~planning director~~Community Development Director's final decision. Any party aggrieved by the ~~planning director~~Community Development Director's final decision may file an appeal of that decision to the hearing examiner in accordance with the city's land use appeal provisions. Such appeals for hearing examiner review must be filed within 14 business days from the date the written decision was made and shall include the following:

- i. The appeal shall be filed on forms provided by the department of planning and development.
- ii. The appeal shall clearly state the decision being appealed, setting forth the specific reason, rationale, and/or basis for the appeal.
- iii. Fees associated with the appeal shall be paid to the city upon filing of the appeal in accordance with a fee schedule established by resolution.

5. Upon filing of a timely and complete appeal, the hearing examiner shall conduct a public hearing to consider the merits of the appeal. This hearing shall be subject to the city's public noticing and public hearing requirements and shall include notification of all parties notified of the ~~planning director~~Community Development Director's final decision. The hearing examiner may affirm the ~~planning director~~Community Development Director's decision or may remand the matter to the ~~planning director~~Community Development Director for further review in accord with the examiner's direction.

6. If no written objection is filed to the initial determination within the specified time limits, the ~~planning director~~Community Development Director shall render a final decision on the permit in accord with the initial determination.

J. Approval Criteria for Design Review. The ~~planning director~~Community Development Director or designee may approve, modify and approve, or deny an application for an administrative design review. Each determination granting approval or approval with modifications shall be supported by written findings showing the applicant satisfies all the following criteria:

1. The plans and supplemental materials submitted to support the plan meet the requirements of the specific architectural and site design documents;
2. The proposed development is consistent with the comprehensive plan;
3. The proposed development meets required setback, landscaping, architectural style and materials, such that the building walls have sufficient visual variety to mitigate the appearance of large facades, particularly from public rights-of-way and single-family residential zones.
4. In addition to the criteria in subsections (J)(1) through (3) of this section, for multiple-family residential and retirement apartment projects, the director or designee must determine that the following key review criteria have been met:

- a. The proposed development is arranged in a manner that either:
 - i. Provides a courtyard space creating a cohesive identity for the building cluster and public open space furnished to facilitate its use; or
 - ii. Possesses a traditional streetscape orientation that provides clearly identifiable and visible entries from the street, views from residential units onto the street and reinforces pedestrian-oriented streetscape characteristics (e.g., building edge abutting sidewalk, entries onto the street); or
 - iii. Faces and facilitates views of a major open space system;
 - b. The proposed development provides a variety in architectural massing and articulation to reduce the apparent size of the buildings and to distinguish vertical and horizontal dimensions;
 - c. The proposed development contains a combination of elements such as architectural forms, massing, assortment of materials, colors, and color bands sufficient to distinguish distinct portions and stories of the building;
 - d. Residential buildings in large multiple-family projects or mixed-use projects are physically integrated into the complex possessing sufficiently different appearance or placement to be able to distinguish one building from another;
 - e. Unit entrances are individualized by use of design features that make each entrance distinct or which facilitate additional personalization by residents;
 - f. Areas dedicated to parking are sufficiently visually broken up and contain a complement of vegetative materials to project a landscaped appearance;
 - g. Where applicable, a transition is created that minimizes impacts from multifamily and mixed-use development projects on neighboring lower density residential dwelling units in abutting or adjacent single-family zones; and
 - h. Where applicable, in cases of granting density or height bonuses, the project has provided community benefits, facilities or improvements above and beyond those required in the municipal code and supports the goals, objectives and policies of the comprehensive plan. (Ord. 6408 § 1, 2012; Ord. 6287 § 2, 2010; Ord. 6245 § 15, 2009.)
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