

**City of Aurora, Ohio**  
**Architectural Board of Review**  
**Residential Guidelines**

The Architectural Board of Review (ABR) is guided by a set of general goals outlined by the City of Aurora that address certain design and development goals as follows:

1. To protect the historic and architectural qualities of Aurora
2. To protect the balance of Aurora's natural resources
3. To ensure development and building consistency as outlined in the Development and Zoning Code of the City of Aurora
4. To promote high standards in the renovation and construction of residential dwellings
5. To promote compatible neighborhoods and quality of life for all residents
6. To ensure the review process is fair and guidelines are implemented in each project

**Residential Projects**

The purposes of the following guidelines (existing dwelling units and new construction) are to protect an important aspect of the economic base of the City of Aurora by preserving the city's character and to preserve a high-quality environment throughout, preventing the destruction of the natural environment while enhancing property values by controlling design, material types, and architectural elements. This city supports encouraging and maintaining unique character traits in the residential neighborhoods. These principles are policies that provide the foundation for both the standards and the architectural review process.

The Architectural Board of Review shall look upon these principles as a framework for making discretionary decisions. While this document provides specific recommendations for new construction and building modifications, it cannot and is not intended to cover all circumstances.

Rather, the structure and content of these guidelines are meant to give applicants and reviewers the perspective to address the unique conditions of each project, while giving applicants the flexibility to develop their own designs that meet the principles and intent of the guidelines. When the provisions of these guidelines and city development code conflict, the more restrictive regulation shall apply.

**ABR Principles of Residential Projects**

- Integrity of architectural design
- Sensitivity to city and neighborhood context
- Acknowledgement and respect for local natural features
- Architectural elements, materials and colors should aid in mitigating height, bulk and scale of development

- Materials, style and details should complement the city's Western Reserve architecture design

### **ABR Requirements of Residential Design**

- **Four-Sided Architecture**

Four-sided architecture is required on all residential structures to show consistency and architectural integrity. If the rear side of the house is facing a public right-of-way, the rear design must be different than the front side of the house. Home design should always consider neighborhood continuity that is responsive to the overall character and context of the surrounding residential and commercial areas. Residential development should improve the general well-being of all Aurora residents and create a strong sense of place and feeling of pride in the community. A site plan that shows the specific model for each lot must be submitted.

### **Architectural Styles**

While the ABR does not mandate architectural styles for specific areas within the city, consideration should be given to the historic, mixed-use, and overlay districts. (Refer to attached exhibits for corresponding maps).



### **Western Reserve Architecture**

Western Reserve architecture consists of a unique mixture of many colonial influences, drawing elements from such prevalent architectural styles of the late 18th and early 19th centuries as Georgian, Queen Anne, Greek Revival, and Federal. Plain and spare brick construction was employed for many important and public structures, punctuated by white or off-white framed windows, and simply decorated with stone accents: columns, courses, capitals, brackets, lintels and such. While shutters are commonly associated with architecture of the Western Reserve they are not always typical. The shutters that do appear are most commonly dark green, black, or white in color.



### Historically Significant Structures

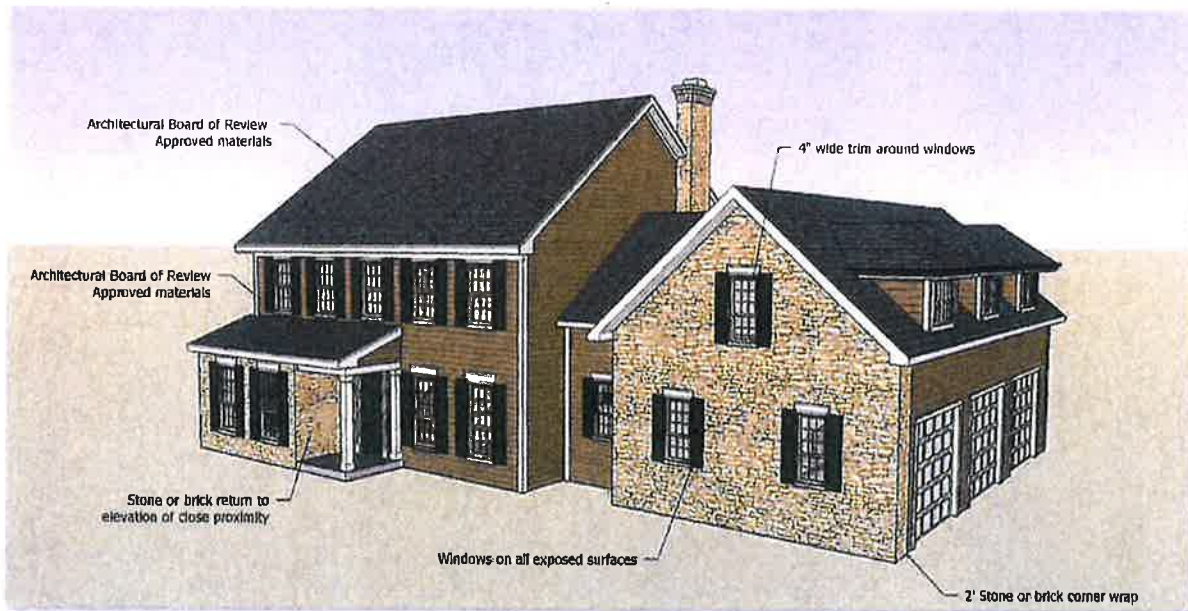
When contemplating renovation or new construction, consideration should be given to existing historic structures and site features including walls and gates. Additional approvals may be required by the Landmark Commission for historic structures listed on the National Registry and/or structures included in the Landmark District. Applicants should contact the City of Aurora



Planning, Zoning and Building Department with any questions.

### Exposed Foundations

All exposed foundations shall be constructed in similar pattern and color of the main structure and be of brick or stone material which gives a permanent dimensional appearance on all sides. When a main structure sits on a sloped lot, all exposed foundation material should be constructed to grade of the property. All exterior materials shall be approved by the ABR. Additionally all exposed foundation materials for additions and accessory buildings shall match the existing residence.



## Roofs

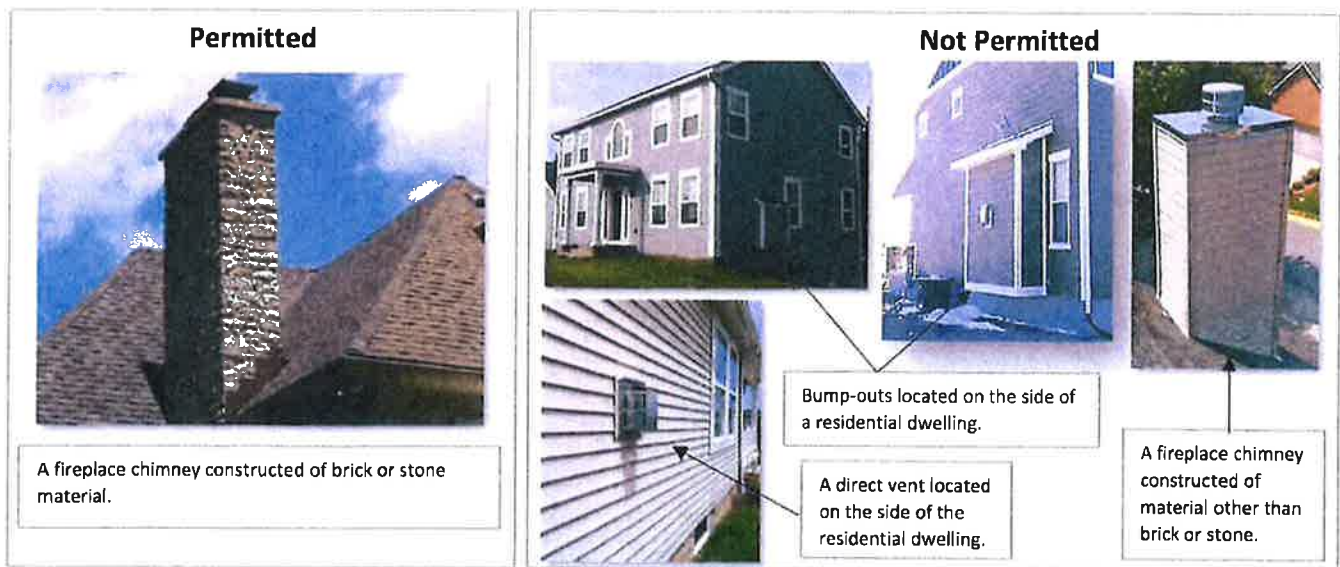
Roof lines shall reflect traditional building types for an individual lot and structure. Roofing materials including slate, copper, clay tile, and wood shakes shall be repaired and maintained whenever possible. If a roof is deteriorated beyond repair, asphalt or fiberglass reinforced asphalt shingles are acceptable alternatives. New roofs shall be compatible in color and texture with the architectural style of the house. Slate, synthetic slate, cedar shakes, and other roofing materials are encouraged for some houses, based on architectural style or historic value. Pitches, overhangs, dormers, and orientation to the street are among the elements of roofs that contribute to the architectural design and integrity of the dwelling. In the case of new homes, a sample of roofing material is required by the ABR.

The roof pitch and orientation also influence the transition between neighboring buildings. Roof design options include varying rooflines through changes in height and form to break up mass. Roofs must be consistent with neighborhood character such as pitch, size, materials, and colors. Multiple roof forms, from projections and recesses in floor plans, can be useful in establishing scale and rhythm and avoiding excess roof mass.

## Mechanical Equipment

### Chimneys

All fireplace chimneys, including direct vents which project through the roof, shall be constructed of brick or stone materials. If a direct vent is located on the rear of a residential dwelling and does not face a right of way, it can be screened with a bump-out. If a direct vent is located on the rear of a residential dwelling and faces a right-of-way, it must be of brick or stone and a full chimney that must travel up to the roof. Direct vent gas fireplace boxes are not permitted on the front or on a side of a residential dwelling. The Architectural Board of Review reserves the right to consider other locations.

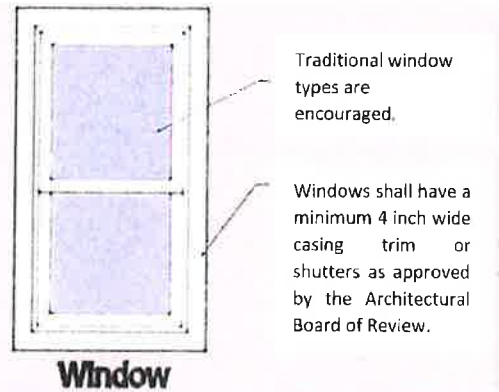


## HVAC

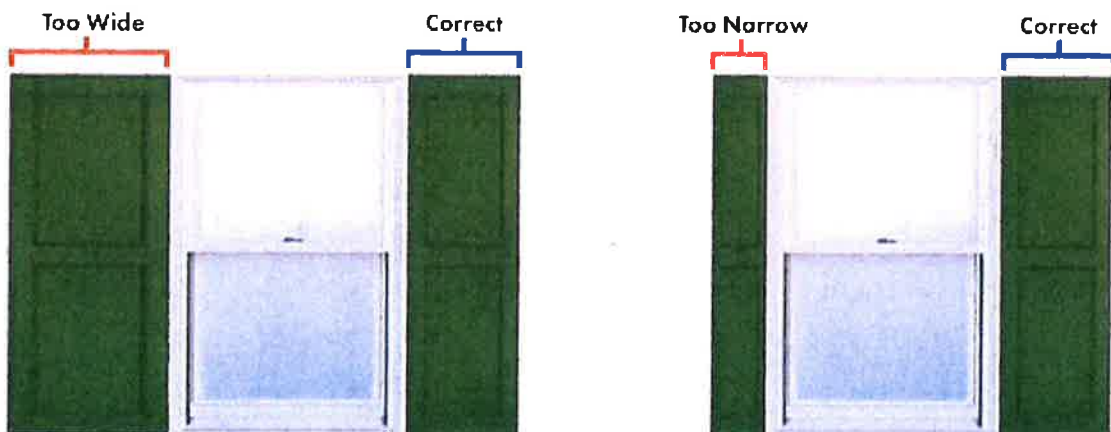
HVAC units, generators, and mechanical units are not permitted to be in the front of a residential dwelling. Screening is required for mechanical units located on the side or rear of the residential dwelling. The screening shall be at least three to four feet (3-4') in height and be natural, non-invasive planting.

## Windows

Windows are required on all elevations of a residence to provide scale and break up wall mass. A balance should exist between the openness created by windows and their placement, with consideration to privacy of surrounding walls and homes. Windows should have visually prominent trim consistent with the style of the dwelling. If windows on the front elevation have muntins, then the side windows shall have muntins. If windows on the front elevation have shutters, the ABR may require the side windows to also have shutters to match for the purposes of consistency. All windows without shutters shall have a minimum of a four inch (4") wrap.



The width of exterior shutters, should take into consideration the width of the window and the distance the windows are spaced apart. Outside shutters are to have the appearance that they can close over the window. Each shutter shall have a width that is close to 50% of the size of the glass and window frame only, excluding the window trim. NO shutter shall be greater than 50% of any window, unless expressly approved by the board. Any window larger than a single window shall not have shutters.



Glass block is not permitted on front elevations or visible from any public right-of-way. The ABR shall have the right to reject glass block windows on other elevations if the windows are considered too large.

On existing dwellings, new window openings or other visible alterations to a façade must be consistent with architectural style. The size of the window must be appropriate to the wall size.



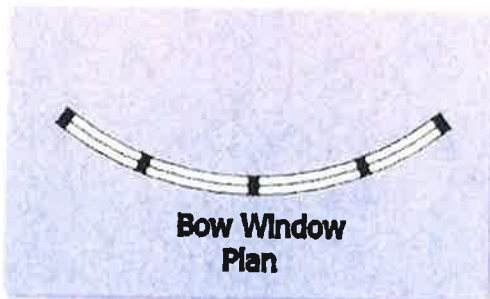
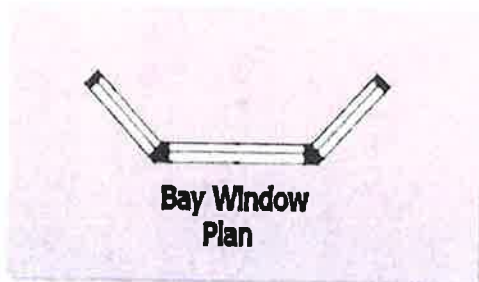
*Not Permitted*



*Permitted*

### **Projecting Windows**

All bay window projections located on the first floor of the front or side elevation must have the appearance of bearing on a solid foundation consisting of materials matching the foundation wall of the house or main structure. All projecting windows that project more than two feet (2') must bear on a foundation on front and side elevation. Projecting windows that project less than two feet (2') on the rear or side elevation do not need a foundation on the first floor. Foundation walls, either in appearance or in function, shall consist of materials matching the foundation walls of the house or main structure.



### Overhead Doors and Garage Doors

All garages must have doors and colors shall complement the residence. Garages should not front or face the street. The location and orientation of a garage may be determined by zoning and lot size. At its discretion, *the ABR may also approve front elevation garages for hardship reasons. Items of hardship may include, but are not limited to, a narrow lot, a ravine, or large trees provided such hardship is not created by the project owner/planner.* Garage doors and façades that face the street may benefit from windows and/or architectural detailing aimed at reducing their visual mass and scale.

### Skylights

Skylights should not be visible from the street or road on which the house/structure fronts. Skylights are to be constructed of the same pitch and color as the roof, and not detract from overall architectural integrity of the structure.

### Exterior Wall Materials and Style of Architecture

All exterior wall materials and the style of architecture shall be approved by the ABR. Residences of an established traditional style shall have all materials, colors, roof pitches, windows, architectural details and proportions consistent with that particular style as approved by the ABR. A change in exterior wall materials from the front elevation to the sides should wrap a minimum of twenty-four inches (24") around the corners and onto the sides to demonstrate the appearance of solid brick or stone. ABR reserves the right to consider wrap variations for individual cases. The use of exterior insulating finishing systems (E.I.F.S.) as a siding material must be no more than a nominal portion of the total exterior and only as approved by the ABR. *When construction of a new dwelling comes before the ABR in an existing development or neighborhood the current guidelines apply in most cases regardless of what is currently prominent in the area.*





Exterior wall materials that wrap from the front elevation to the sides must extend to the roof.

### **Additions to Existing Residences**

All additions shall match the materials, colors, roof pitch, windows, doors, and architectural style of the existing residence or principal structure. Additions shall also be considerate of existing scale, proportions, and rhythm of the principal structure so as not to disrupt them. Any color or material on an addition shall require all remaining areas on the house and all appendages to match the new addition within a year of the ABR approval. *Exceptions: as approved by the ABR.*

### **Accessory Buildings Over 200 Square Feet**

Any accessory building within 50 feet of a residence or visible from the right-of-way or neighboring structure shall match the colors of the residence. Exposed foundation materials for accessory buildings over 200 square feet may be required to match the residence. Accessory buildings over 400 square feet must have a solid foundation as required by the Ohio Building Code. Such exposed foundations may be required to match the residence. Windows may be required by the ABR at its discretion.

### **Accessory Building 200 Square Feet or Less:**

Any accessory building 200 square feet or less shall match the colors of the residence. These structures will not require a review by the ABR.

### **Three-Season Rooms**

All three-season rooms or sun rooms shall match the materials, colors, windows, and architectural style of the residence. All three-season rooms shall have the appearance of a solid foundation. Foundation walls shall consist of materials matching the foundation wall of the house or main structure. A room such as a screened in porch or deck does not require a solid foundation, but may use lattice or appropriate screening.



### **Metal Roofs**

Generally, metal roofs and metal accents are prohibited on any structure unless consistent with neighborhood and surrounding buildings. Aesthetics is desired in the neighborhood. A metal roof is a roofing system made from metal pieces or tiles such as aluminum, galvalume steel, galvanized steel, and copper. A metal accent is made from metal pieces or tiles such as aluminum, galvalume steel, galvanized steel, and copper.

### **Recommendations for Repairs and Maintenance**

Routine repairs and maintenance do not require the approval of the ABR when the work is completed using matching materials and design. Existing architectural details, including trim, shutters, columns, porches, and other elements shall be retained. If certain elements have deteriorated beyond the point of repair, they shall be replaced in the same spirit as they were originally constructed. Any modification of existing exterior architectural details requires the approval the ABR.

- **Re-pointing:** Mortar used to re-point existing brick or stone shall match the color of the mortar on the existing building; the width and profile of the mortar joints shall also match the existing condition.
- **Roofs:** Areas of deteriorated shingles can be replaced without replacing the entire roof if the new shingles match the material, color, texture, and profile of the existing roof. Asphalt shingles shall not be used to patch a slate, wood shake or shingle, or tile roof.
- **Porches, Railings, Steps, and Decks:** When porches, railings, steps, decks, or other exterior elements are replaced, pressure-treated wood is acceptable for structural members.
- **Shutters:** If a single (or a few) shutter(s) are replaced, the new shutter(s) should complement the existing in materials, composition, size, shape, color, and texture. If all shutters are to be replaced, the new should match the existing structure, style, color, and material.

**Note: Exceptions to these guidelines may be made at the discretion of the Architectural Board of Review.**