

Case Study: Aurora, Colorado

Mayor Paul Tauer said his city was tired of being a “dumping ground” for shoddy housing. Two years ago, they did something about it, passing an ordinance requiring all new homes to have facades of at least 50% brick. Councilmember (and the Mayor’s son) Ed Tauer said, “I think it sends a pretty strong message to builders and, more importantly, to buyers that Aurora’s going to be a quality area.”

Countering claims that the brick requirement will make housing unaffordable for lower income buyers, city officials said that adding three to six percent more to the cost of a new home would pay off down the road – for the community and the homeowners.

On the process of choosing the exact figure for the masonry requirement, Mayor Tauer notes, “It’s a balancing act. It’s not easy to pick a perfect number, but everybody wants to stop bad development. Everybody’s in favor of some kind of masonry standard.”

Adding a long-term perspective, Ann Sullivan, executive director of the Rocky Mountain Masonry Institute, said, “I think you can look to Denver’s history to see what brick has done to communities, You look at such beloved neighborhoods as Washington Park, Bonnie Brae, Park Hill. Despite boom and bust times, those neighborhoods retained their good looks and quality. I think that’s what Aurora can expect.”

JUST THE FACTS

City:	Aurora, Colorado
Population:	290,000
Founded:	1907
Masonry Requirement:	Residential = 50% Multi-Family = 60%
Contacts:	Council Member Ingrid Lindemann 303.341.1735 ilindema@ci.aurora.co.us Mayor Paul Tauer 303.739.7015 ptauer@ci.aurora.co.us www.ci.aurora.co.us