

Residential Fences

When is a permit required?

A building permit is required for a fence or retaining wall if the fence or retaining wall is new, the repair or replacement of an existing fence exceeds 50% or 25 feet of the original, or any portion of a retaining wall is being replaced.

When a permit is required, a site plan is required to be submitted along with the application. A site plan is essentially an aerial view of your property. It should include the location of your property lines, structures on site (your house, shed, detached garage, etc.), and the location of the fence you are planning on building. The site plan should also indicate the materials that you are using for your fence, as well as the planned height. **A sample plan is on the back of this flyer.**

What materials can I use for my fence?

Your fence must be built from one of the following materials:

- Masonry
- Decorative metal
- Chain link
- Wood materials designed specifically for fencing purposes
- Vinyl, plastic, or composite fence products designed specifically for fencing purposes limited to 50% open design in residential districts
- Steel or aluminum woven wire designed for fencing
- Decorative Architectural Materials (may be incorporated into the design of fences upon the approval of the Director of Community Development)

Prohibited fencing materials include:

- Creosote or chromated copper arsenate (CCA) treated wood products, utility poles, railroad ties, plywood, fiberboard, salvage wood, corrugated metal, sheet metal, scrap or salvage metal, PVC pipe, chicken wire, snow fences, plastic weaving, or plastic slats for use in chain link.
- Electrically charged fences.
- Plastic construction fencing may be used only for temporary construction fencing.

How tall can my fence be?

The height of your fence depends on where you are placing it and what it is being built from. The typical fence is constructed to provide privacy to your side and rear yards, while other fences are constructed to provide a decorative accent to the front yard. In the case of fences, the most important distinction to be made is the difference between the front yard setback, and the remainder of your yard (see *Figure 1*).

From UDC Table 8-6: Fence Height and Location	
Front Yard	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 3-foot high if solid▪ 4-foot high if at least 25% open▪ 6-foot high if decorative material and 50% open
Side and Rear Yards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 6-foot if behind the front building line

****Keep in mind that your property line may not always be located at the back of the sidewalk. It is up to you as the homeowner, or your contractor, to locate your property lines****

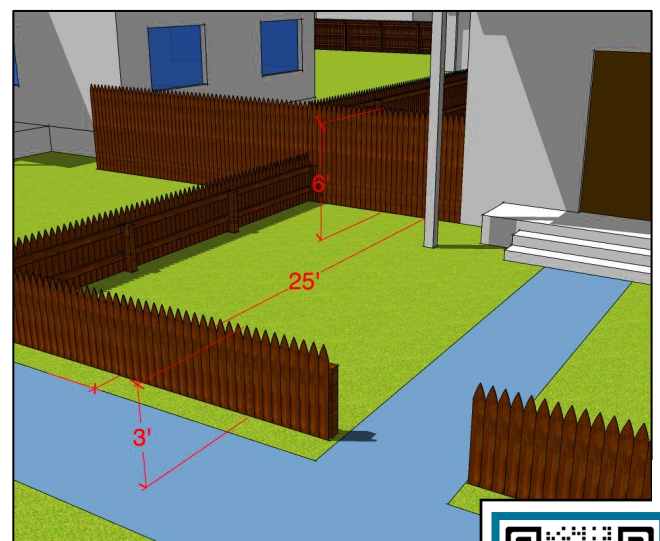


Figure 1: Demonstration of fence height measurements.



Want to find out what zoning district you live in? Click on our [Online Zoning Map](#), or use your phone and scan here.

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Additional Information

- All fences shall be at least one foot from any public sidewalk, and gates shall be prohibited from opening into or over any public sidewalk, street, or alley.
- All fences shall be located to not interfere with the sight distance requirements in EMC § 16-3-4.D.2. Sight Distances
- Height is measured from the grade the fence is erected on.
- Height of fences erected on top of a retaining wall shall be measured from the top of the retaining wall (see Figure 2).
- Find the zoning district handout for your property to help you determine your setbacks.

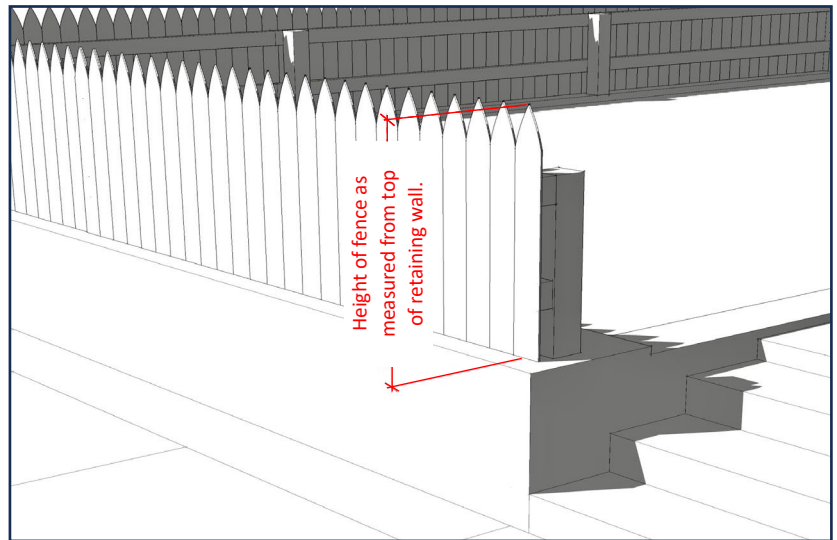
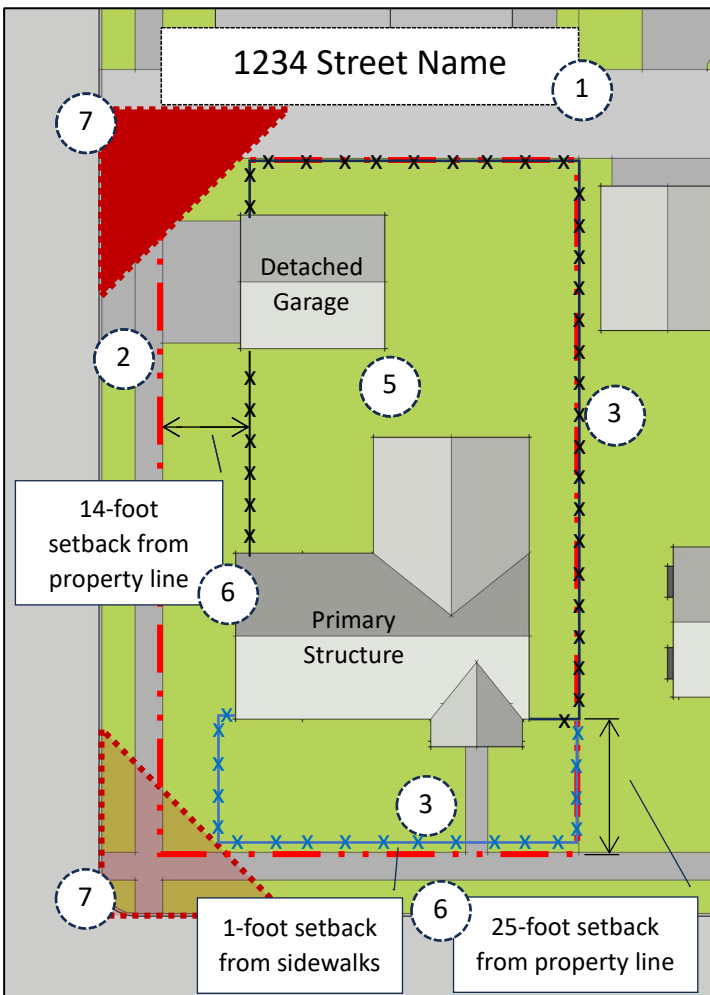


Figure 2: Fence height measurement for a fence on top of a retaining wall.

Sample Site Plan



- ② - - - - - Property Line
- ④ x x x x x 206 linear feet of new fence
 - Six (6) feet tall
 - Cedar, dog-eared
- ④ x x x x x 129 linear feet of new fence
 - Three (3) feet tall
 - Cedar, dog-eared (50% open)

What to include on your site plan.

1. Property address
2. Property lines
3. Highlight proposed section of fence
4. Label proposed fence with length, height, and materials
5. Label any existing structures
6. Label and dimension all setbacks (from sidewalks and from street side property lines to proposed fence)
7. Sight distance triangles



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