

# Fence and Wall Standards



## City of Corvallis - Development Services Division

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*The City of Corvallis supports a diverse  
and sustainable community*

## CONSTRUCTING A FENCE OR WALL IN THE CITY OF CORVALLIS

The Building Code, the Land Development Code, and the City's Engineering Standards regulate fences and landscaping walls in the City of Corvallis.

The Building Code does not restrict the height or material appearance of a fence or wall but does require certain structural and material specifications.

The Land Development Code (LDC) regulates the height and material appearance of fences through setbacks and design standards. The LDC also regulates the heights of hedges, walls, and berms.

The City's Vision Clearance Standards regulate the height of fences so that drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians can safely see each other at driveways and street intersections.

### IS A BUILDING PERMIT REQUIRED?

The Building Code requires that a building permit be obtained for construction of any fence greater than six (6) feet in height measured from grade. This includes any portion of the fence such as lattice or decorative top banding that exceeds the 6-foot height. A building permit is required to ensure that fence post footings are of adequate design to resist wind loads that will affect the fence, and that the materials used in the fence construction will withstand the elements.

### LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE (LDC) STANDARDS

Fences are classified as Accessory Structures per the LDC. The construction of a fence or wall requires that an individual know the zoning district setbacks (yards) of the subject property and the location of the property lines. Interested parties can call Development Services at (541)766-6929 or reference [www.corvallispermits.com](http://www.corvallispermits.com) for zoning information. The property lines can be determined by locating the survey markers, or by hiring a surveyor.

## HEIGHT STANDARDS (REFER TO SECTION 4.2.50.01 OF THE LDC)

The allowable height of a fence or wall is determined by the location of the fence on the property.

**Front Yards** – Fences constructed in front yards are limited to a maximum height of three (3) feet. Additionally, vision clearance standards apply which may reduce the permissible height.

**Interior Side and Rear Yards** - Fences up to six (6) feet in height and hedges at any height are allowed in *interior side* and *rear yards*. Fences higher than six (6) feet in these locations require a building permit.

**Exterior Side Yards** - Hedges, fences, and walls located in *exterior side yards* shall be limited to three (3) feet with the following exception:

- A fence or screen can encroach two (2) feet into the required *exterior side yard* setback and be a maximum five (5) feet in height if it is designed and constructed with offsets to prevent visual monotony and is located outside of a vision clearance area.
- There are special fencing provisions for through lots or along multi-use paths. Please contact Development Services to discuss fencing requirements for these situations.

In addition, some subdivisions have private party restrictions (typically called CC&Rs), which may also affect the location & height of fences. Title reports are a good source of information for determining if such restrictions apply.

## VISION CLEARANCE STANDARDS

Vision clearance areas are located where private driveways intersect with streets, and at the intersections of streets (for corner lots). For driveways, vision clearance should be maintained for both the subject property, as well as for neighboring properties where driveways are located in close proximity to the common property line.

Fences, hedges, walls, and berms are limited to a maximum height of two (2) feet in vision clearance areas (with some exceptions for post caps or other small, minor decorative elements). A clear space shall be maintained between 2 feet and 8 feet, within the vision clearance areas, as measured above the affected driveway or street elevations.

## CAN I VARY FROM THESE STANDARDS ?

The Land Development Code provides a means to vary from height requirements. The Lot Development Option process allows an increase in height where it can be demonstrated that specific review criteria have been satisfied. Contact the Planning Division at (541) 766-6908 for more information about the variance process.

## MORE INFORMATION

Many fencing scenarios are not included in this brochure. Please feel free to discuss your fencing proposal to ensure your plan complies with current City standards. Please contact Development Services at (541) 766-6929.

