**Fence and Retaining Wall Requirements**

This bulletin outlines the permit and constructions requirements for fences and retaining walls. Codes and requirements change over time; be sure to check with the Permit Center or your Building Inspector to verify requirements.

**PERMIT REQUIREMENTS**

The requirements vary according to the type of property:

- **Multi-Family and Non-Residential properties** - Constructing a fence or retaining wall requires a building permit and plan review.

- **Single Family/Duplex properties** - For fences, a building permit is required if the fence height will exceed the limitations described below. The applicant must submit a plan for review and approval in order to obtain the permit. For retaining walls, a building permit is not required if the wall does not support a surcharge and measures 4 feet or less, as measured from bottom of the footing.

All fences and retaining walls on all types of property must comply with the City’s zoning regulations. Call the Permit Center and ask to speak with a planner if you have questions.

**SINGLE FAMILY/DUPEX PROPERTIES - FENCE HEIGHT LIMITATIONS**

Fences for single family and duplex properties are limited to specific heights as follows:

- **Maximum Allowable Height**
  - Front yard - 3 feet
  - Side yard - 7 feet
  - Rear yard - 7 feet

**CORNER LOTS, IRREGULAR LOTS, AND PLANNED DEVELOPMENT ZONES**

Fence heights for corner lots, lots with irregular shapes, and lots in Planned Development (PD) Zones may have different height restrictions – contact the Permit Center and ask to speak with a planner for complete information.

**Corner Lots.** For determining fence heights, these definitions apply to corner lots:

- Front yard - Extends from the front of the house to the front property line.
- Side yard - Extends from the front of the house along the side of the house to the rear yard.
- Rear yard - Extends from the rear of the house to and across the rear property line.

Within the yard spaces defined as above, maximum allowable heights are as follows:

- **Side and rear yard fences** (along the property and street) - 3 feet
- **Side and rear yard fences** if set back 5 feet from property line - 7 feet
- **Sightlines to the street from any driveway** - Side and rear fence heights must be low enough to provide slightlines to the street from the driveway

A schematic of fence height restrictions is provided on the opposite side of this bulletin.
FENCE REGULATIONS
Municipal Code Section 20.30, Part B

Typical plan assuming single-family lot and sidewalk with planting strip.

For more information on fencing for single-family homes or Fence Variances, please contact Development Services Center at (408) 535-3555.

LEGEND
- 7 Foot Max. Height Fence
- 3 Foot Max. Height Fence

* The front property line will always be the short dimension of the lot even if the building entrance is on the long dimension of the lot.