



**CITY OF CLEARLAKE**  
**14050 Olympic Drive**  
**Clearlake, CA. 95422**

**FENCES AND WALLS**  
**ZONING ORDINANCE EXCERPT**

**18-5.8 FENCES, WALL AND HEDGES**

**18-5.800 Purpose.**

The purpose of this section is to provide for the erection of fences, walls and hedges for privacy, security and property control while maintaining compatibility with the character of the neighborhood, traffic safety at driveway, alley and street intersections and safety control of materials used in fences. (Ord. #4-87, § 5.800)

**18-5.801 Fences, Walls and Hedges.**

- a. Fences, walls and similar obstructions shall not exceed six (6') feet in height in any required rear and interior side yards. Measurement is to be based on final grade following any permitted cut or fill. Fences, wall, hedges and similar obstructions shall not exceed four (4') feet in height in required front and street side yard, except where additional approvals are obtained in accordance with the following and the required findings contained in subsection 18-5.801b.
  1. Fence permits are required for exceptions to the standard requirements or where additional approvals are required.
  2. Greater than four (4') feet but not exceeding six (6') feet in height, with the fence at least ninety (90%) percent open area. (No vegetation shall be allowed to use the fence for support). Planning Director and City Engineer approval required.
  3. Greater than four (4') feet but not exceeding six (6') feet in height, with the fence having less than ninety (90%) percent open area. Conditional use permit required.
- b. Fences, walls, hedges and similar obstructions exceeding three (3') feet in height, in any required front and street yard, may be permitted if it is determined that:
  1. It shall not interfere with any parking or driveway area; and
  2. Appropriate sight distance areas shall be maintained at street corners, alleys and driveways; and
  3. The obstruction will not endanger traffic and pedestrian safety; and
  4. Design of the fence shall be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

c. Properties in the R-1, R-3 and MUR Zone Districts are permitted fences up to a height not exceeding eight (8') feet adjacent to property lines where the following site or development conditions exist;

1. There is a minimum eighteen (18") inch difference in the ground level for the area within five (5') feet of the fence; or
2. There is a minimum eighteen (18") inch difference between the ground level at the fence and the finish floor elevation of a deck located closer than five (5') feet to a side yard property line or closure than ten (10') feet to a rear property line.

Fences constructed under this subsection shall comply with the following additional standards:

3. The fence cannot be located within the front yard twenty (20') foot setback area or the street side yard ten (10') foot setback area or extend further than five (5') feet forward of the rear wall of the structure containing the dwelling; and
4. The same materials shall be used for the entire height of the fence; and
5. The installer shall obtain a building permit and comply with the requirements for construction of the fence; and
6. Where paragraph c, 1. is applicable, the fence height shall not exceed six (6') feet as measured from the higher grade and eight (8') feet as measured from the lower grade, as determined by the Planning Director.

d. Notwithstanding any provision of paragraph a. of this subsection to the contrary, in the case of corner lots, fences, shrubs, hedges, screen plantings and similar obstructions shall not exceed three (3') feet in height within the sight distance area and no trees shall be located or planted in the sight distance area. Fences having at least ninety (90%) percent open area may be allowed in the sight distance area with City Engineer approval if determinations are made in accordance with paragraph b. of this subsection. Unless otherwise specified by the City Engineer, the sight distance area shall be defined as that triangular area at each corner of a street intersection, as measured back a distance of twenty (20') feet from the point of intersection of the two (2) lot lines along each street frontage and thereby connected by a straight line.

e. Except in the A, O, RP, C-4, I and RR Zoning Districts, fences within the City shall not be constructed of barbed wire or similar material. In no event may approval be granted for the use of barbed wire or similar material within five (5') feet of any public right-of-way. The Planning Director may require as a condition of such fence permit appropriate warning signs upon the barbed wire or similarly constructed fence.

f. In the C-4 and I zoning districts, fences may be permitted in excess of six (6') feet in height upon securing Planning Director approval and a building permit.

- g. Fences may be allowed in excess of four (4') feet in required front and street side yards upon securing Planning Directors approval provided that:
  - 1. Such fence shall not exceed six (6') feet in height.
  - 2. Appropriate sight distance area shall be maintained at street, alley and driveway corners.
  - 3. Design of the fence shall be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.  
(Ord. # 4-87, § 5.800; Ord. # 14-88; Ord. # 16-89; Ord. ORD-48-94, § 1; Ord. ORD-72-96, §§ 60-63; Ord. ORD-81-98, § 7; Ord. ORD-104-02, § 5)

**18-5.802 Setback of Vehicle Gates Access and Driveways.**

Vehicle gates shall be set back from the street right-of-way/property line a minimum of twenty (20') feet. Gates located closer to the street right-of-way may be approved by the Planning Director, provided that the design complies with the following requirements:

- a. The height of the fence and gate in the front yard or street side yard are a maximum of four (4') feet, unless a higher fence is approved in accordance with subsection 18-5.801; and
- b. Either an automatic gate opener is installed or a nine (9') foot wide by twenty-four (24') foot long parallel parking area adjacent to the property frontage is maintained.

Gates must be designed so that they do not open into the street right-of-way area. The gate setback or parking area shall be used for parking vehicles off the street travel way while the gate is being opened.  
(Ord. #14-88; Ord. #16-89)