

CITY OF ENCINITAS
 Development Services Department
 505 S. Vulcan Ave
 Encinitas, CA 92024
www.encinitasca.gov
 Phone: 760-633-2710
 Email: planning@encinitasca.gov

RESIDENTIAL FENCES AND WALLS

The following provides a guide for installation or modification to fences and walls.

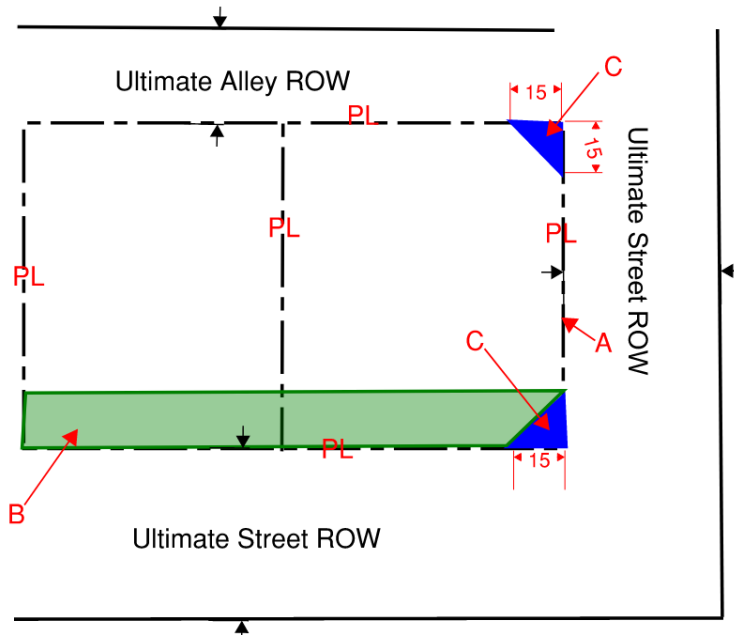
In all residential zones, the maximum fence or wall height in a residential zone is six (6) feet except as noted below. The residential fence standards are contained in Section 30.16.010.G of the Municipal Code.

Location	Front Yard	Rear, Street Side, and Interior Side Yards	Street Corner
Height at property line	4 ft solid + 2 ft 50% open (w/1 15' setback) (see B)	6 ft solid (see A)	4 ft solid within 15 ft of corner (see C)
Height at 15 ft setback/clearance	6 ft solid (see A)		
Maximum height	6 ft	6 ft	4 ft

Note: A wall or fence that is at least 50% open can be 6 feet in height wherever a wall or fence is allowed, except within 15 feet of street corners to ensure sight distance is maintained.

How tall can I build my fence or wall?

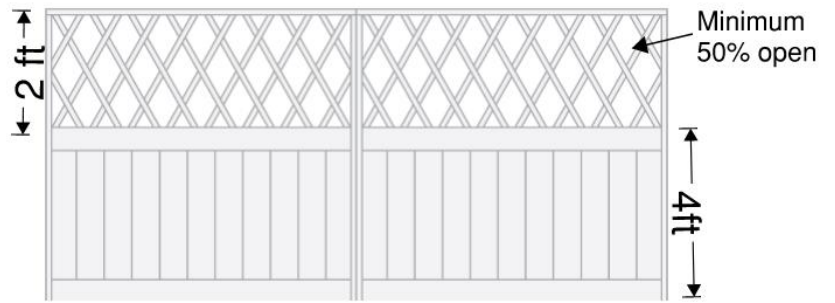
EXAMPLE SITE PLAN



STREET SIDE, INTERIOR SIDE, and REAR YARD: In any street side yard, interior side yard or rear yard, a fence shall be limited to 6 feet in height.

STREET CORNER, SIGHT DISTANCE: Within 15 feet of an intersection of 2 streets or a private easement providing vehicular access to 2 or more primary dwelling units, a fence may not exceed 4 feet. A greater setback may be required by the Director of Engineering Services if the proposed wall or fence is determined to be in an unsafe location.

FRONT YARD: In any front yard within 15 feet from the property line or road easement, a fence shall be limited to 4 feet in height, but may be constructed to a maximum of 6 feet provided that the top 2 feet of the fence is of material being at least 50% open which provides for visibility through that portion of the fence.

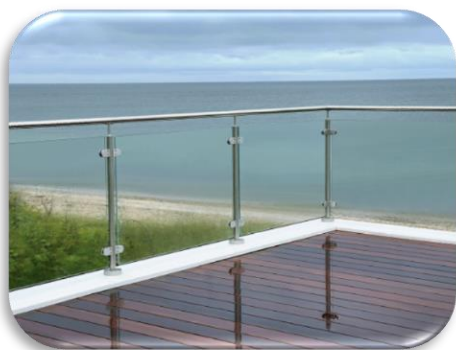
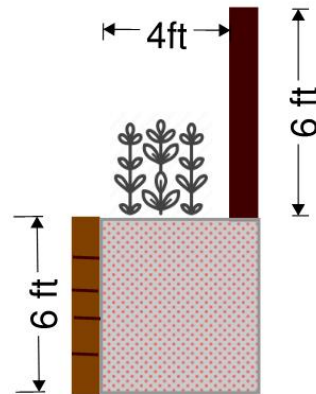


Retaining walls combined with fences or railings

Retaining walls used in combination with freestanding walls, fences or railings above shall be separated by 4 feet from the back of the retaining wall to the front of the wall, fence or railing to allow for landscape screening.

Four feet of separation is not required when utilizing a railing, a cable railing, or glass panes meeting the following criteria:

- Posts are spaced between 4' to 8' on center
- Posts shall be maximum of a 3" diameter
- Railings shall be spaced at not less than maximum spacing allowed per the Building Code
- Cables do not exceed 1" diameter
- Railings shall not exceed 1" in thickness or diameter for intermediate pickets
- Top & bottom rails or cables do not exceed 3" thickness or diameter



When is a permit required?

A building permit is required to construct a fence or wall above 6 feet in height or a retaining above 4 feet (measured from footing to the top of wall) or if the retaining wall has slope surcharge. However, although a permit is not required, fences or walls shall still comply with the height limitations. For questions regarding a permit for a retaining wall please contact the Building Division at building@encinitasca.gov or 760-633-2730.

Are exceptions for the height of walls and fences allowed?

- For freestanding fences that are proposed that exceed the standards outlined above an application for an Administrative Design Review Permit can be requested, subject to the findings in EMC 23.080.080 and the [Design Guidelines](#). The Director of Development Services renders a decision on the request.
- For retaining walls exceeding 6 feet in height a Variance application request must be submitted and will be reviewed relative to the findings of EMC 30.78.024.A. Approval of a variance requires approval by the Planning Commission at noticed hearing.

For questions regarding these processes, please contact Planning at planning@encinitasca.gov or 760-633-2710.

How is height measured for the wall or fence?

Height is measured from grade at the fence line. It is not permitted to raise the grade, and then measure height for the new fence or wall. If a wall or fence is non-conforming and built over height, the new wall shall comply with the height limitations as outlined in the Municipal Code.

How do I determine where the property line is located?

We recommend contacting and obtaining a survey from a private land surveyor. For questions about the ultimate width of a street or alley please contact the Engineering Division at developmenteng@encinitasca.gov or 760-633-2706.

Other FAQs?

- If the site is a bluff top lot, any walls or fences shall be located a minimum of 5 feet from the edge of bluff. Please consult a licensed geotechnical engineer regarding footings for the wall/fence.
- Gates shall be limited to the same standards as outlined for fences and walls above.
- If the site is located within a Planned Residential Development, then it may be subject to restrictions on colors and materials of fencing. Please confirm with the Planning Department or the related HOA.
- If the project site is located within a Specific Plan, then reference to those specific standards.
- A masonry wall, or equal six feet in height from the highest finished grade may be required along the project's rear and side property lines, unless the property line separates two higher density residential projects. Where the adjacent grade of abutting property is four feet or more lower or higher than the project site, the masonry wall shall be a minimum of six feet in height. No walls are required in front or street side yards unless needed for noise attenuation and/or privacy. All masonry walls greater than four feet in height shall be planted with vine cover material (or equal landscaping) (EMC 30.16.010.D.7).
- TEMPORARY FENCE MATERIALS: Fiberglass sheeting, bamboo sheeting, or other similar temporary material shall not be permitted as a fencing material on street yard frontages.
- TENNIS COURT FENCING: Fences surrounding tennis courts may be located within an interior side yard or rear yard provided that the fence is located no closer than five feet to an interior side or rear lot line and said fence does not exceed 12 feet in height, and are subject to the requirement for a Building Permit.
- POOL FENCING REQUIREMENTS: A minimum 5-foot fence with self-latching gate shall be provided to enclose all pools and spas as set forth in Section 11.04.020 L of the Municipal Code which adopts title 7. Alternatives to the fencing are permitted as outlined in Building Code Section 3109.

- NOISE ATTENUATION WALL: A 6-foot solid wall may be approved in any required setback upon review of a noise study prepared by a recognized acoustical engineer demonstrating the need for a noise attenuation wall and. If required by the Director of Engineering Services, an analysis of adjacent road intersection demonstrates that adequate sight distance is maintained. Staff will evaluate the report and any related safety issues with the request.
- BARBED WIRE AND ELECTRICAL FENCING: Barbed wire and electrical fencing are prohibited in all residential zones, except for the following:
 - a. Barbed wire is permitted for agricultural uses only.
 - b. High voltage electrical fencing is permitted for containment of large animals subject to the following regulations:
 - (1) Electrical fencing may be maintained on the property line at a maximum of 6 feet in height. When the electrical fence is adjacent to a public road or access easement, the electrical fence shall be located on the inside of a nonelectrical fence.
 - (2) Permits shall be obtained from the Building Department unless exempt. UL (Underwriters Laboratory) approved and other recognized agencies approved electrical fencing is exempt from permits.
 - (3) Appropriate signage shall be posted to give notice of the electrical fencing.