

§ 10-2.1524. Fences, hedges, walls, and obstructions in all zones.

(a) Purpose. This section is intended to provide for the regulation of the height and location of fences, walls, and similar obstructions, for the purpose of providing for light, air, and privacy and safeguarding the public welfare by preventing visual obstructions at street and highway intersections. The provisions of this section shall not be deemed to set aside or reduce the requirements established for security fencing, either by local, State, or federal laws, or by the safety requirements of the Board of Education, regulates the height, location, maintenance, and enforcement of fences, hedges, walls, and similar obstructions throughout all zones of the City of Redondo Beach. The purposes of this section are to:

- (1) Provide for light, air, and privacy for residents and property owners throughout the City;
- (2) Safeguard public welfare by preventing visual obstructions at street, highway, alley, and driveway intersections that may endanger persons in motor vehicles, pedestrians, or other members of the traveling public;
- (3) Promote traffic safety and emergency access by maintaining clear sightlines at driveways and intersections;
- (4) Promote crime prevention through natural surveillance by maintaining reasonable visibility of residential and commercial properties from the public right-of-way;
- (5) Protect the character and livability of Redondo Beach neighborhoods by preventing the creation of walled-off streetscapes that isolate properties from the public right-of-way;
- (6) Ensure that fences, hedges, and walls are kept free of overgrown, unsightly, or hazardous conditions and do not encroach upon utilities or the public right-of-way; and
- (7) Establish a fair, efficient, and legally sound enforcement framework that prioritizes genuine neighbor impacts and public safety concerns, while minimizing unnecessary enforcement actions for minor, trivial, or inconsequential violations.

Nothing in this section supersedes, limits, or replaces any remedy or enforcement authority available under any other provision of this Code, including without limitation Chapter 10 of Title 4 (Nuisances), nor does anything in this section prevent enforcement of any violation that also constitutes a violation of another provision of this Code or of local, state, or federal law.

(a)(b) Height. For the purposes of this section, "height" shall mean the vertical distance from existing grade to the top of the fence, hedge, or wall to the grade directly below.

The height shall be measured from the side of the fence, hedge or wall with the highest-grade elevation, except in a required front or exterior side setback where the finished grade is lower than the existing grade, height shall be measured from the finished grade. The following standards shall apply:

(1) All residential zones.

- a. Front setbacks. No fence, hedge, or wall over 42 inches in height shall be permitted within any required front setback.
- b. Rear and side setbacks. Except as permitted in subsections (c) and (e) of this section, no fence, hedge, or wall greater than six feet in height shall be permitted within any required rear setback or side setback.
- c. Reverse corner lots in residential zones. Notwithstanding subsection (b)(1)(b) of this section, no fence, wall, or hedge over 42 inches in height shall be permitted within a triangular area at the corner of the lot abutting the front setback of the key lot, which triangle shall be formed by the rear and exterior side lot lines and a diagonal line drawn between two points located 15 feet along the rear and exterior side lot lines from their point of intersection (see illustration below).

(2) All nonresidential zones.

- a. Front and exterior side setbacks. No fence, hedge, or wall over 42 inches in height shall be permitted within any required front or exterior side setback.
- b. Rear and interior side setbacks. Except as permitted in subsections (c) and (e) of this section, no fence, hedge, or wall greater than six feet in height shall be permitted within any required rear setback or interior side setback.

~~(b)~~(c) Walls required.

- (1) Multiple-family residential zones, wall required. A six foot high decorative masonry wall, or a six foot high decorative wall of mixed construction utilizing a masonry base and masonry pilasters, which shall compose at least 30% of such wall, and such other materials as the Planning Division may approve for not more than 70% of such wall, shall be provided along the side and rear lot boundaries for two or more dwelling units, except along the street side of corner lots. The requirement may be waived under the following circumstances:
 - a. The wall would be between two adjacent lots which are being developed concurrently, and not requiring a wall will enhance the aesthetic character of the project;
 - b. The wall would be duplicating the function of an existing wall on the adjacent property which conforms to the intent and requirements of this subsection;

- c. Where the multiple-family residential zone shares a common boundary with the Artesia and Aviation Corridors Area Plan area as adopted by resolution of the City Council, the wall may include access to the adjacent commercially zoned property.
- (2) Boundaries between zones, wall required.
- a. Where a residential and a commercial zone share a common boundary along a property line, a wall shall be constructed with a minimum height of six feet and a maximum height of eight feet, except where such wall abuts the required residential zone front setback, such wall shall not exceed 42 inches in height, and except where the residential zone shares a common boundary with the Artesia and Aviation Corridors Area Plan area as adopted by resolution of the City Council, the wall may include access between the residentially and commercially zoned property.
 - b. Where a residential and an industrial zone or a commercial and an industrial zone share a common boundary along a property line, a wall shall be constructed with a minimum height of six feet and a maximum height of eight feet, except where such wall abuts the required residential or commercial zone front setback, such wall shall not exceed 42 inches in height.

~~(e)~~(d) Maintenance of visibility at street and alley corners in all zones.

- (1) All corner lots shall maintain for safety vision purposes a triangular area at the street intersection corner of the lot, which triangle shall be formed by the front and side lot lines and a diagonal line drawn between two points located 15 feet along the front and side lot lines from their point of intersection or, in the case of a rounded lot corner, from the point of intersection of such lot lines if extended. Within such triangular area, no tree, fence, shrub, or other physical obstruction higher than 36 inches above the established sidewalk grade shall be permitted.
- (2) Where a lot abuts both a street and an alley, a triangular area shall be maintained for safety vision purposes at the intersection of the street and alley, which triangle shall be formed by the lot lines abutting the street and alley and a diagonal line drawn between two points located 15 feet along each lot line from their point of intersection or, in the case of a rounded lot corner, from the point of intersection of such lot lines if extended. Within such triangular area, no tree, fence, shrub, or other physical obstruction higher than 36 inches above the established curb grade shall be permitted.

~~(d)~~(e) Swimming pools and hot tubs in all zones. Swimming pools and hot tubs shall be entirely enclosed by buildings, fences, or walls not less than six feet nor more than eight feet in height. Such fences shall be equipped with self-latching gates with the latches not less than four feet above the ground. All fencing shall be in place and approved by the Building Division before water is run into the pool.

~~(e)~~(f) Prohibited fences. The following fence types are prohibited in all residential zones:

(1) Barbed wire, razor wire, electric fences, and similar fences;

(2) Chain link and other industrial type fencing in the front yard setback or on portions of a lot visible from the public right-of-way.

(g) Definitions. For the purposes of this section, the following terms shall have the meanings set forth below. "Height" is defined in subsection (b) above and is not repeated here. Where a term defined in this subsection is also defined elsewhere in this Code, the definition in this subsection governs for purposes of this section.

(1) Bona Fide Complainant means an owner or occupant of record on a lot that:

- a. Shares a property line with the property alleged to be in violation; or
- b. is located within 100 feet of the lot with an alleged violation.

(2) Critical and/or Urgent Violation

- a. Traffic safety – sight obstruction. Any fence, hedge, vegetation, wall, or other structure so located with respect to a driveway, intersection, path, or street approach as to prevent a clear view of approaching vehicles or members of the traveling public in sufficient time for a driver traveling at a reasonable speed to come to a full stop, or any Visual Obstruction within a Sight Triangle that exceeds the height limits in subsection (d).
- b. Traffic safety – traffic control devices. Any fence, hedge, wall, or vegetation that obstructs the clear visibility from the public right-of-way of any traffic control device, including without limitation stop signs, speed limit signs, street name signs, and traffic signals.
- c. Address visibility. Any fence, hedge, wall, or vegetation that obstructs the clear visibility of property address numbers from the public right-of-way, impeding the ability of emergency responders or the public to identify the property.
- d. Emergency access. Any fence, hedge, wall, or vegetation that obstructs, conceals, or impedes access to gates, entryways, pathways, or any portion of the property by emergency responders, or that prevents emergency responders from clearly observing conditions at or around the property from the public right-of-way.
- e. Crime prevention and natural surveillance. Any fence, hedge, wall, or vegetation located within a required front setback that eliminates or substantially reduces the visibility of front doors, ground-floor windows, or the front yard of a residential or commercial property from the public right-of-way, in a manner that provides concealment for criminal activity as determined by the Chief of Police or designee.

- f. Nighttime safety. Any fence, hedge, wall, or vegetation that substantially blocks the illumination of driveways, intersections, entryways, or sidewalks by streetlights, porch lights, or other required or customary lighting, in a manner that creates a safety hazard for pedestrians or motorists.
 - g. Fire hazard and defensible space. Any hedge, tree, shrub, or other vegetation of flammable character maintained within twenty (20) feet of any dwelling or structure used for human habitation where the vegetation is dead, dying, or inadequately maintained, such that it presents a fire hazard.
 - h. Public right-of-way encroachment. Any fence, hedge, wall, or vegetation that encroaches into, over, or upon any public sidewalk, parkway, alley, street, or other public right-of-way in a manner that obstructs pedestrian or vehicular traffic, impedes ADA-required pedestrian access, or poses a hazard to persons using the right-of-way, including without limitation vegetation higher than twenty-four (24) inches in a parkway, and toxic, sharp, spiky, or nuisance vegetation adjacent to or overhanging a public right-of-way.
 - i. Walled-off streetscape. A continuous fence, hedge, wall, or combination thereof, exceeding six (6) feet in height, extending along a single sheet frontage for a cumulative linear distance of fifty (50) feet or more, whether on a single parcel or across two or more immediately adjacent parcels under common or related ownership or control.
 - j. Other public health or safety hazard. Any other condition involving a fence, hedge, wall, or vegetation that the City Manager, or their respective designees, determines presents a risk to public health, safety, or welfare based on objective, articulable conditions.
- (3) Hedge means a continuous living screen, barrier, or boundary marker formed by a row, series, or grouping of two (2) or more closely spaced woody shrubs, bushes, trees, or other vegetation planted, cultivated, or maintained in close proximity so as to form, or that has grown to form, a substantially continuous physical or visual obstruction to passage or view, having a height greater than twelve (12) inches.
- (4) Sight Triangle means a triangular area at the corner of a lot at any street intersection or street-alley intersection, maintained clear of visual obstructions for traffic safety purposes, as further described in subsection (d).
- (5) Shrub. A woody plant, generally smaller than a tree, typically with multiple stems branching from or near the ground.
- (6) Tree. A plant having at least one well defined stem or trunk and normally attaining a mature height of at least 15 feet, and having a trunk that shall be kept clear of leaves and branches at least six feet above grade at maturity.

- (7) Vegetation means all types of plants, bushes, hedges, shrubs, and trees.
- (8) Visual Obstruction means any fence, hedge, tree, shrub, wall, structure, or other physical obstruction that limits the visibility of persons in motor vehicles, pedestrians, or the traveling public approaching intersecting or intercepting streets, alleys, paths, driveways, or other public rights-of-way.
- (9) “Wall” or “fence” means any artificially constructed barrier of wood, masonry, stone, wire, metal, or other manufactured material or combination of materials erected to enclose, screen, separate, or define areas of land.
- (h) Safety, Nuisance, and Right-of-Way Violations – All Zones. The following conditions constitute violations of this section and are enforceable by the City independently of, and without regard to, the Bona Fide Complainant requirement set forth in subsection (j). Each condition described in this subsection may also independently constitute a violation of RBMC §4-10.02 or other applicable provisions of this Code or state or federal law, and nothing in this section limits or supersedes that independent enforcement authority.
 - (1) Traffic sight obstructions. It shall be a violation of this section for any property owner or occupant to tolerate, allow, or permit:
 - a. Any tree, hedge, vegetation, wall, fence, or other structure to be so located with respect to a driveway or street intersection as to prevent a clear view of approaching motor vehicles, pedestrians, or the traveling public in sufficient time for a vehicle driven at a reasonable speed to come to a full stop before such intersection or driveway approach is reached; or
 - b. Any Visual Obstruction within a Sight Triangle that exceeds the height limits established in subsection (d).
 - (2) Obstructions over and upon streets, sidewalks, and public rights-of-way. It shall be a violation of this section for any property owner or occupant to tolerate, allow, or permit any fence, wall, hedge, or limbs, branches, or other vegetation to be so situated or located as to encroach upon, obstruct, or overhang any public street, alley, parkway, or sidewalk in a manner that:
 - a. obstructs or may reasonably be expected to obstruct the free passage of vehicular or pedestrian traffic;
 - b. impedes or may reasonably be expected to impede ADA-required pedestrian access; or
 - c. poses a risk to persons traversing streets, paths, or sidewalks in the immediate area.

A violation under this subsection does not require proof of actual injury or endangerment; a reasonable likelihood of harm based on objective, observable conditions is sufficient.

- (3) Fire and flammability hazard. It shall be a violation of this section for any property owner or occupant to tolerate, allow, or permit any hedge, tree, shrub, or other vegetation of flammable character to be maintained within twenty (20) feet of any dwelling or other structure used for human habitation where the vegetation is dead, dying, or inadequately maintained, such that it presents a fire hazard.
- (4) Obstruction of traffic control devices, address numbers, and emergency access. It shall be a violation of this section for any property owner or occupant to tolerate, allow, or permit any fence, hedge, wall, or vegetation to obstruct the clear visibility from the public right-of-way of any traffic control device, property address numbers, or fire hydrants, or to obstruct emergency responder access to the property.

(i) Maintenance Encroachment

- (1) Maintenance required. All fences, walls, and hedges on any property within the City, regardless of zone, shall remain free of overgrown, unsightly or hazardous conditions and be maintained at all times. Maintenance includes regular trimming to prevent overgrowth beyond permitted heights, repair or removal of damaged or structurally unsound sections, and removal of debris or dead vegetation. Maintenance violations that affect utilities or the public right-of-way are enforceable by Bona Fide Complaint or by city-initiated action where the condition constitutes a Critical and/or Urgent Violation.
- (2) No encroachment onto public right-of-way. No fence, wall, or hedge shall encroach into, over, or upon any public sidewalk, parkway, alley, street, or other public right-of-way. Encroachment onto the public right-of-way constitutes a Critical and/or Urgent Violation enforceable by the City without a Bona Fide Complaint.

(j) Enforcement

- (1) General. Enforcement of the height and location standards of this section shall be primarily complaint-driven for violations that are not Critical and/or Urgent Violations. Nothing in this subsection restricts any person's right to petition the City or submit information to City staff, nor does anything in this subsection limit the City's enforcement authority for Critical and/or Urgent Violations as defined in subsection (g)(7), for violations described in subsection (h), or for violations of RBMC §4-10.02 or any other applicable provision of this Code or local, state, or federal law.
- (2) Bona Fide Complainant requirement – non-Critical and/or Urgent Violations. Absent a written complaint submitted by a Bona Fide Complainant as defined in subsection (g)(6), the City has no duty to investigate a violation that is not a Critical and/or Urgent Violation. The submission of a complaint by a Bona Fide Complainant does not, standing alone, obligate the City to initiate enforcement action; the City retains full discretion, after an investigation, whether to initiate enforcement action under this section. Anonymous

complaints and complaints from persons who do not qualify as Bona Fide Complainants may be logged for informational purposes but do not obligate the City to initiate an investigation or formal enforcement action.

(3) City discretion – Critical and/or Urgent Violations. The City retains full discretion whether to initiate enforcement action for Critical and/or Urgent Violations.

(4) Good faith requirement. Complaints submitted under this section shall be made in good faith based on a genuine belief that a violation exists and that the complainant is materially affected by the alleged violation. The City reserves the right to decline to pursue enforcement where it determines that a complaint has been submitted for an improper purpose, including without limitation harassment of a property owner or an attempt to manipulate City enforcement resources for purposes unrelated to the welfare of the complaining party. A pattern of complaints by the same complainant targeting multiple unrelated properties in different parts of the City within a short period of time is a factor the City may consider in evaluating whether a complaint was submitted for an improper purpose.

(k) Notice and Opportunity to Cure

(1) Standard notice procedure. Prior to initiating formal enforcement proceedings for a violation that is not a Critical and/or Urgent Violation, the City shall provide the property owner with written notice of the alleged violation. The notice shall:

- a. Identify the specific provision(s) of this section alleged to be violated;
- b. Describe the condition constituting the alleged violation with reasonable specificity;
- c. State the corrective action required to achieve compliance;
- d. Provide a minimum of sixty (60) days from the first date of notice to achieve voluntary compliance; and
- e. Advise the property owner of the right to contact the City to discuss the alleged violation and to submit information or evidence relevant to the enforcement determination.

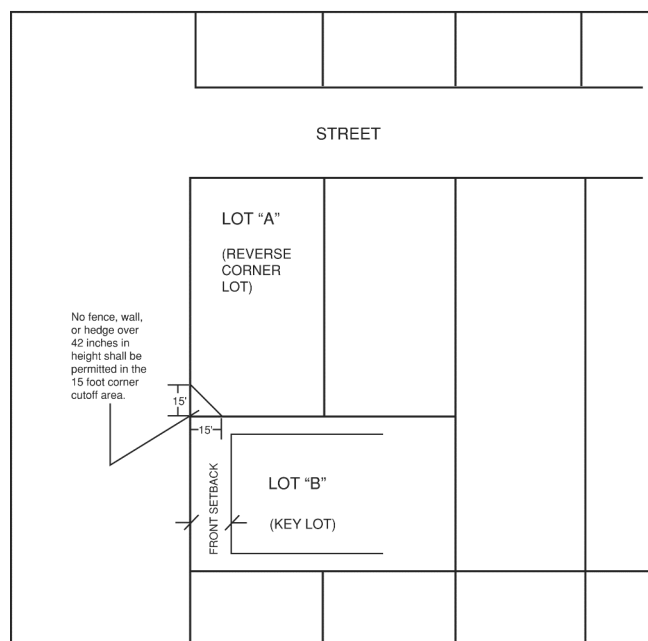
(2) Critical and/or Urgent Violations. The notice and cure period in subsection (k)(1) shall not apply to Critical and/or Urgent Violations. For such violations, the City may proceed to enforcement upon such notice as is reasonable under the circumstances.

(3) No waiver. The provision of notice under this subsection shall not be construed as a waiver of any enforcement right or remedy available to the City.

(l) Penalties – Infractions and Misdemeanors

- (1) Classification. Violations of this section are offenses that may be prosecuted as either an infraction or a misdemeanor, in the discretion of the City Attorney's Office, depending on the nature, severity, circumstances, and history of the violation, consistent with RBMC §1-2.01(b). Penalties shall be assessed consistent with RBMC §1-2.02.
- (2) Cumulative violations. Each day that a violation of this section continues after the expiration of any applicable notice and cure period constitutes a separate offense.
- ~~(2)~~(3) Preservation of remedies. Nothing in this section limits the authority of the City to pursue abatement, civil penalties, injunctive relief, or any other remedy available under this Code or applicable local, state, or federal law. Nothing in this section limits the rights of any person to pursue any civil or other remedy available under California law or any other applicable law. Enforcement under this section does not preclude concurrent or subsequent enforcement under RBMC §4-10.02 or any other applicable provision of this Code or local, state, or federal law.

ILLUSTRATION OF SECTION 10-2.1524(b)(1)(c)
RELATING TO FENCE HEIGHT FOR REVERSE CORNER LOTS



(Ord. 2756 c.s., eff. January 18, 1996, as amended by Ord. 2802 c.s., eff. July 3, 1997, and § 8, Ord. 3257 c.s., eff. August 17, 2023)