

# FENCE AND ENTRY STRUCTURES

## FENCES

**Fence** means a continuous structural barrier at least ten (10) feet in length generally parallel to the perimeter of a property boundary or use area. Fences may be solid, transparent, or both (e.g., slatted) and of wood, wire, stone, concrete, glass block or other construction. Fences include “walls”, as commonly defined, but do not include “entry structures” as defined by this code.

### MAXIMUM FENCE HEIGHTS BY ZONING DISTRICT (setback refers to the required road & yard setback)

#### AP, AW, RS, RM & PD ZONING DISTRICTS

Location / type of fence	Maximum height of fence
Within front yard setback:	
solid fence	4 Ft.
see-thru deer fencing*	8 Ft.
Within Side and Rear yard setbacks	
Solid Fence	6 Ft.
See-thru fencing (deer or other wire fencing, lattice or chain link)	12 Ft
Outside the combined road and yard setbacks:	
See-thru fencing	12 Ft.

\*see-thru fencing permitted in front yard to support agricultural uses.

#### CN, CL, MC, and IP ZONING DISTRICTS

All fencing must be specified by use permit or site plan approval, except fences associated with agricultural uses.

#### GI and I ZONING DISTRICTS

Fencing permitted in required yards as necessary to provide effective screening and security for permitted uses. All fencing must be specified by use permit or site plan approval, except fences associated with agricultural uses.

#### WHAT IS MEANT BY SETBACK?

The setback refers to the required road and yard setback. The minimum road setback for any public or private road is established pursuant to Chapter 18.112 of the County Code and is measured from the centerline of the right-of-way. The required yard setback is specified by zoning district and is measured from the outer perimeter of the road setback or property line. The road and yard setback is the total measurement of the road setback and the zoning district yard setback.

## DO I NEED A SPECIAL FENCE PERMIT?

NO, if the proposed fence meets the fence regulations regarding design, height and location.

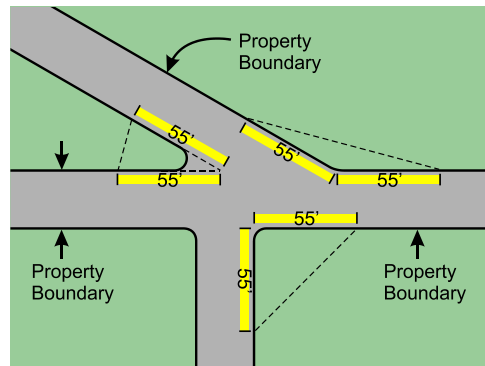
YES, if the design of the fence does not comply with the designated fence regulations or if it will be located within the road setback & requires a building permit, you will need to apply for a Special Fence Permit. A Special Fence Permit may be granted by the Director to modify the requirements provided that a need can be demonstrated for the proposed fence due to the unique nature of the parcel or surrounding environment.

## HOW IS THE HEIGHT OF A FENCE MEASURED?

Fence heights are measured from natural grade that exists prior to fence construction. Any fence that exceeds 6 feet in height may require a building permit from the building department depending on the location of the fence and the fence material. If the fence or a portion of a fence will include a retaining wall, the height of the fence is measured from the bottom of the retaining wall footing to the top of the fence.

## ARE THERE SPECIAL SETBACK REQUIREMENTS FOR FENCES LOCATED AT INTERSECTIONS OR DRIVEWAY ENTRANCES?

YES, solid fence height in all districts shall not exceed 42 inches in height within a 55-foot corner vision triangle as shown in the diagram below.



## DO I HAVE TO SETBACK MY GATE?

Yes, all gates whether electric, solar powered or manual should be located outside the road setback. A building permit will be required for an electric gate; however, prior to installing any gate, the Fire Department should be consulted regarding location and possible requirement for an approved rapid emergency entry gate switch or paddle lock.



## ENTRY STRUCTURES

**Entry structure** means a continuous wall, gate, fence or combination thereof, located contiguous to and on both sides of the main access (driveway) to the property which is designed and intended to control and/or demarcate the access to the property. A gate of the same height and materials as the adjoining fence is not an entry structure. An “entry structure” includes all walls, buttresses, guy wires,

integral signs and decorative features attached thereto up to a maximum width of 30 feet on either side of the driveway centerline.

### **WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN ENTRY STRUCTURE AND A GATE?**

An entry structure is differentiated from a gate in that an entry structure is greater than six (6) feet high or contains supports greater than sixty-four (64) inches around.

### **CAN I HAVE AN ENTRY STRUCTURE?**

One entry structure may be permitted in connection with the primary vehicular entry to a property if it meets certain standards (see below).

### **WHAT ARE THE STANDARDS AN ENTRY STRUCTURE MUST MEET?**

1. No portion may be constructed within the public road right-of-way unless an encroachment permit is approved by the Public Works, Roads Division.
2. No portion of the entry structure may be constructed within a public or private road setback unless a special fence permit is obtained pursuant to subsection (A)(2) of Section 18.104.270.
3. No portion may exceed 16' 6" in height.
4. It may not encroach upon the applicable "visibility requirements for typical intersections and driveways" of the Public Works, Roads Division.
5. Open gates and vehicles waiting for gates to open may not physically obstruct any public road or private road used by the public.
6. It shall not be designed so that it causes a vehicle to back onto the roadway if the entry structure is closed.
7. The turnaround area associated with the entry structure shall not include any part of a public right-of-way.

### **WHAT IS THE ALLOWED DIMENSION FOR AN ENTRY STRUCTURE?**

No part of an entry structure may exceed 16 feet 6 inches in height.



### **ARE THERE ANY ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN CRITERIA THAT MUST BE MET FOR ENTRY STRUCTURES?**

Within required yards and setbacks, other than setbacks for wineries specified in Section 18.104.230, any solid portion of an entry structure that exceeds 42 inches in height may only be approved if all of the following findings are made:

1. The appearance of any solid portions above forty-two inches high would be compatible with the scenic corridor of candidate scenic highways or routes designated by the Napa County General Plan;
2. The architectural design of the entry structure as a whole would be improved by such height; and
3. Each element of height that exceeds 72 inches (6 feet) is harmonious with the balance of the structure.

## DO I NEED A PERMIT FOR AN ENTRY STRUCTURE?

The Director may issue a building permit for one entry structure in connection with the primary vehicular entry to the property if it meets all of the standards as indicated above. A building permit will be required if the structure exceeds 6 feet in height or for electrical connections.

◆  
**PLANNING DIVISION**  
**REQUIREMENTS FOR FENCE AND ENTRY**  
**STRUCTURE PERMIT APPLICATION**

In order to ensure a smooth permitting process, include the following information and materials with your fence or entry structure permit application:

- Scaled site plan (architect or engineer scale) showing the location of all fences, entry structures, gates and supporting pillars, guy wires, etc.;
- Scaled front elevations (architect or engineer scale) for the fence/entry structure that shows the height, width and length of each element of the fence/entry structure applied for, including any decorative or non-functional elements; and
- Identification of the materials composing each element of the structure (e.g. wire, stone, chain-link, wood, etc.).

### **MORE INFORMATION NEEDED?**

Informational brochures regarding the building permit process including submittal requirements, conservation regulations (which includes stream setback requirements and stormwater management plans), etc. are available in Napa County Planning, Building, and Environmental Services. The viewshed manual is also available.

For further information, contact the Planning Division between 8:00 a.m. and 4:45 p.m. weekdays at (707) 253-4417.

***This brochure is a summary of the applicable regulations. In case of any conflict or need for interpretation, provisions of the Napa County Code prevail.***

**Rev. 11/15/2012**