

## ***Fences and Retaining Walls***

All fences and walls that are extending to the front yard must be approved by the City concerning visibility to in-coming traffic, clearances to fire hydrants, gas and water valves, and utility boxes

### **When is an Encroachment Permit Required?**

When a fence or retaining wall is to be constructed over a City easement or in the public right-of-way (the street), it is the responsibility of the property owner or their agent to check with the Daly City Public Works / Engineering Division first if construction of a fence or a retaining wall will be allowed and an encroachment permit may be required. The City easement or in the public right-of-way (the street) is a strip of lawn behind the sidewalk which may be between zero and twelve feet (12') from the back of the sidewalk or before the water meter. This area typically contains utilities such as PG&E gas and electric, City water and sewer lines. **(Figure 3)**

### **Easement:**

An easement can be located on the front, side and/or rear of the property.

In some areas, the backyard of a property may have an easement where a certain width of rear yard is granted to an utility company to install an electrical post or other utilities to provide access for limited purposes. Extending fences within the easement may be removed by the utility company in order to gain access to an equipment for maintenance and repair and replacement of the fence will be at the owner's expense. Construction of a permanent retaining wall that prevents access to the easement will be subjected to the removal of the construction made by the property owner in the easement.

### **Fences:**

Fences in all zoning districts shall not exceed six feet (6') in height in side and rear yards and shall not exceed three feet (3') in height in any required front yard or within thirty-five feet (35') of the street corner on any corner lot.

### **(Figure 2)**

The fence height is determined by measuring from the highest ground level adjoining the fence on either side (DCMC 17.40.020). **(Figure 1)**

The construction and installation of fences that is six feet (6') high or less does not require a building permit.

### **Retaining wall:**

The height of a retaining wall is measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall.

A retaining wall typically supports a horizontal force of adjoining soil and/or adjoining structures or hillsides and in most cases, retaining walls are structures designed by a licensed professional engineer.

Retaining walls less than forty-eight inches (48") in height may be constructed of wood, provided:

1. They sustain no loads other than backfill soil mainly used for landscaping.
2. They are constructed of pressure treated lumber or species naturally resistant to decay

### When is a Building Permit Required?

Retaining walls greater than forty-eight inches (48") in height **or** less than 48 inches in height and supports a surcharge or an excavated uphill slope requires a building permit and must be designed by a licensed professional engineer.

Construction documents are required to be submitted for structural review.

The difference between a fence to a retaining wall is that a fence supports its own weight.

### Contact:

Building Division for permits  
(650) 991-8061

Planning Division for fences,  
(650) 991-8033.

For clearances, encroachment permits, easement or right-of-way issues, Engineering Division (650) 991-8064.

Code Enforcement for fences that are more than 6 feet high (650) 991-8260.

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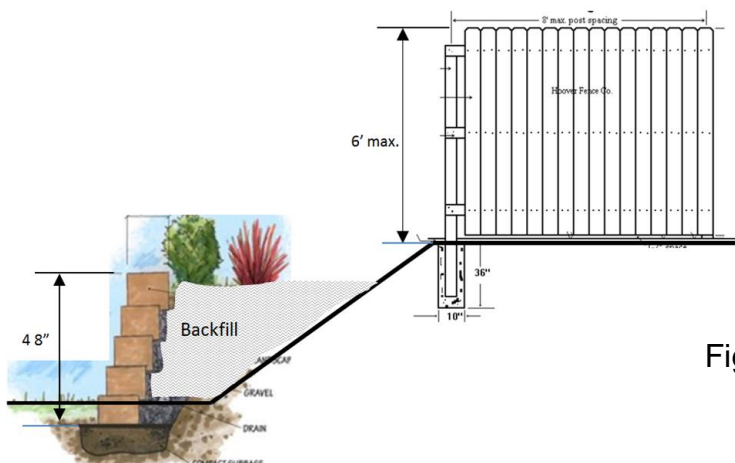


Figure 1

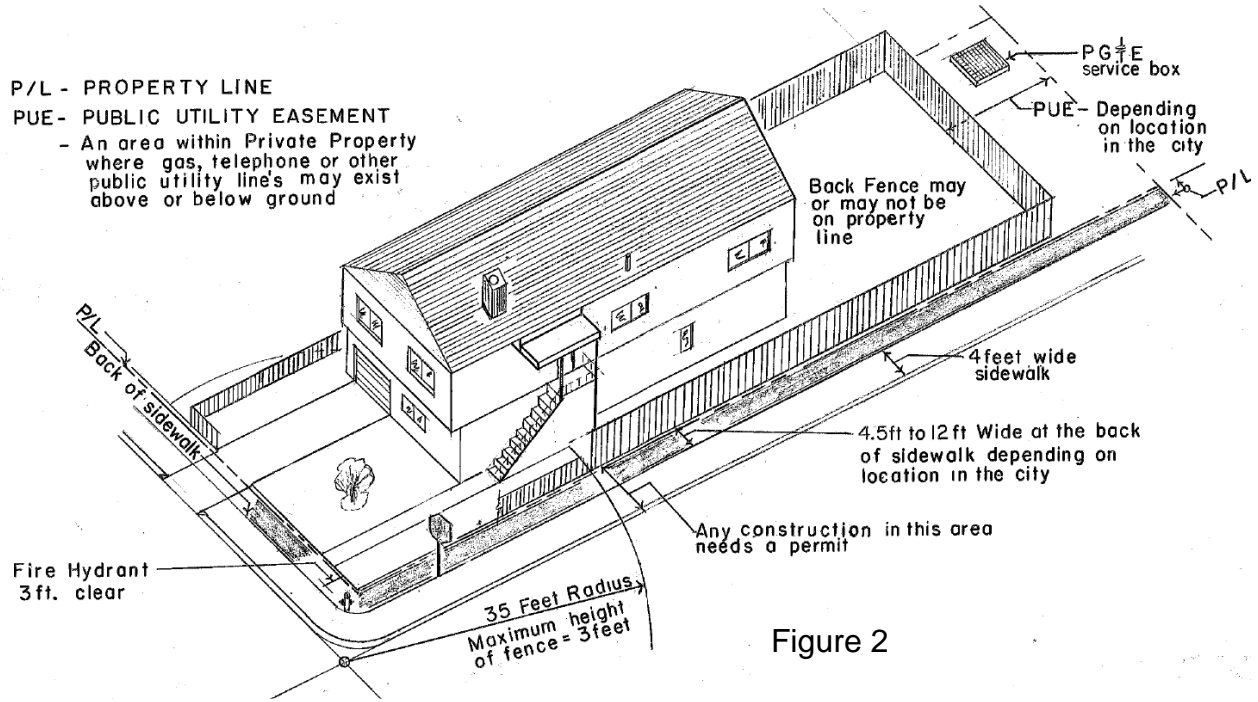
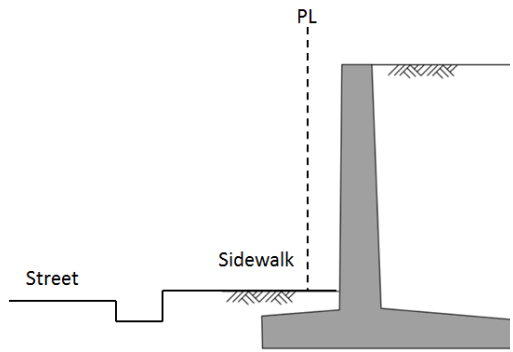


Figure 2



Retaining Wall Footing On Public Right of Way  
 Consult Public Works Engineering Division  
 Before Constructing a Retaining Wall

Figure 3