

17.50.340 Fences and Walls

A. *Definitions* As used in this chapter:

1. *FENCE*. A barrier constructed of materials other than living shrubbery erected for purpose of protection, confinement, enclosure or privacy. For purposes of this chapter, there shall be not distinction between fences and walls.
2. *FRONT YARD*. An open unoccupied space on the same lot with a main building extending the full width of the lot and situated between the street line and the front line of the building projected to the side line of the lot. The depth of the front yard shall be measured between the front line of the building and the street line.
3. *HEIGHT*.
 - a. For fences and walls shall be defined as the vertical distance from the top rail, masonry unit, board or wire to the ground directly below.
 - b. When a fence or wall is located on top of a retaining wall, the height for fences or walls shall be defined as the vertical distance from the top rail, board or wire to the ground elevation on the uphill side of the retaining wall. When the ground elevation on the uphill side does not meet or exceed the top of the retaining wall, the height of the fence or wall may be increased up to 6 inches to account for standard fence material heights.
4. *RETAINING WALL*. A wall designed to resist the lateral displacement of soil or other materials.
5. *SECOND FRONT YARD*. In the case of a corner or double-frontage lot, a yard abutting a street that is not designated as the street address of the property.
6. *WALL*. A barrier constructed of materials other than living shrubbery erected for purpose of protection, confinement, enclosure or privacy. For the purposes of this chapter, there shall be not distinction between fences and walls.

B. *Residential, general agricultural, park forest and public zoning districts*

1. *Fences and walls*. Fences and walls may be erected or maintained; provided that no fence or wall over 4 feet in height shall be erected or maintained in any front yard. On corner lots and double frontage lots, fences shall be no more than 4 feet in height in the required front yard; however, fences no more than 6 feet in height may be allowed in the second front yard when setback a minimum of 10 feet from the property line. In no case shall fences and walls exceed a height of 6 feet unless an exception is granted pursuant to §17.50.340(F)(1).
2. *Constructed on top of retaining walls*. Fences or walls may be constructed on top of retaining walls provided that the maximum height requirements for fences and walls set forth in subsection A. of this section are met.
3. *Guardrails required on retaining walls*. Unless a fence is already present, guardrails shall be constructed on top of retaining walls in accordance with, and if required by, the current building codes adopted by the City of Rapid City. Such guardrails shall be limited in height to the applicable maximum height for a fence or wall.

C. *Commercial zoning districts*

1. *Fences and walls in front yards*. Fences and walls may be erected or maintained; provided that no fence or wall over 4 feet shall be erected or maintained in any required front yard. On corner lots and double frontage lots, fences shall be no more than 4 feet in height in the required front yard; however, fences no more than 8 feet in height may be allowed in a second front yard when setback a minimum of 10 feet from the property line. In no case shall fences and walls exceed a height of 8 feet unless an exception is granted pursuant to §17.50.340(F)(1).

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2. *Constructed on top of retaining walls.* Fences or walls may be constructed on top of retaining walls provided that the maximum height requirements for fences and walls set forth in subsection A. of this section are met.
3. *Guardrails required on retaining walls.* Unless a fence is already present, guardrails shall be constructed on top of retaining walls in accordance with, and if required by, the current building codes adopted by the City of Rapid City. Such guardrails shall be limited in height to the applicable maximum height for a fence or wall.

D. Industrial and mining and earth resources extraction zoning districts

1. *Erected in front, side, and rear yards.* Fences and walls may be erected in front, side and rear yards. In no case shall fences and walls exceed a height of 8 feet unless an exception is granted pursuant to §17.50.340(F)(1).
2. *Constructed on top of retaining walls.* Fences or walls may be constructed on top of retaining walls provided that the maximum height **from the highest point of grade on either side of the structure does not exceed 8 feet** requirements for fences and walls set forth in subsection A. of the section are met.
3. *Guardrails required on retaining walls.* Unless a fence is already present, guardrails shall be constructed on top of retaining walls in accordance with, and if required by, the current building codes adopted by the City of Rapid City. Such guardrails shall be limited in height to the applicable maximum height for a fence or wall.

E. Airport zoning district.

1. Erected in front, side, and rear yards. Fences and walls may be erected in front, side and rear yards. Fences shall not exceed a height of 12 feet.
2. Constructed on top of retaining walls. Fences or walls may be constructed on top of retaining walls provided that the maximum height requirements for fences and walls set forth in subsection A. of the section are met.
3. Guardrails required on retaining walls. Unless a fence is already present, guardrails shall be constructed on top of retaining walls in accordance with, and if required by, the current building codes adopted by the city. Such guardrails shall be limited in height to the applicable maximum height for a fence or wall.

F. Variances and Exceptions

1. **Variances to the requirements of this section shall be subject to the Board of Adjustment process in § 17.54.020 and Administrative Exceptions process in § 17.50.070. Additional fence requirements approved as part of a Planned Development Overlay District shall follow the major and minor amendment procedures process in § 17.50.050. Additional fence requirements approved as part of a Planned Unit Development shall follow the PUD Zoning Document Amendment Procedures in § 17.50.060. The Common Council may approve exceptions to the height requirements if it is determined that the exception is not contrary to the public interest and the exceptions will not be injurious to the surrounding neighborhood. The design and materials of the fence shall be subject to prior approval by the Common Council. Adjacent property owners shall be notified by written notice, sent by certified mail, of the Common Council meeting at which the exception shall be considered.**
2. **Barbed wire is allowed on rural properties being used for agricultural purposes such as containing livestock, but not zoned as such, as determined by the Director of Community Planning & Development Services.**

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3. Chain link fences for tennis courts, basketball courts, baseball fields, or similar outdoor recreational uses may be constructed to a with a maximum height of twenty-four (24) feet provided that the fence is not located within the required setback area.-In addition, mesh netting is allowed for these outdoor recreational uses.
4. The Director of Community Planning & Development Services may permit the use of prohibited fencing materials if it is determined that the allowance is not contrary to the public interest and will not be injurious to the surrounding neighborhood.

G. Fences over 6 feet-Permit required.

A building permit is required for all fences over 6 feet in height.

H. Location

No fence or wall shall be placed in designated easements unless approved in writing by the City Engineer. No fence or wall shall be erected in public right-of-way, except as approved by the Common Council.

I. Visibility at intersections.

1. No fence, wall, plant material or earthen berm shall be placed or maintained which obstructs the required sight triangle as provided in § 17.50.335 except as follows:
 - a. A fence may be allowed in the required site triangle if the fence is not more than 30% solid.
 - b. Trees may be allowed in the required site triangle if the tree is located more than 30 feet from the intersection of the curb lines and the trees shall have a minimum of 40 feet spacing between trees; provided that the canopy of the tree is 10 feet or more above grade.

J. Prohibited fences.

1. No electrified fences nor fences designed to function as an electrified fence shall be permitted in any zoning district except the general agricultural zoning district and the airport zoning district. Any electrified fence lawfully installed shall have a controller which is labeled and listed by an accepted testing laboratory.
2. No barbed wire fencing shall be permitted in any park forest, residential, mobile home, neighborhood commercial, center, public or floodway zoning district except in association with hazardous utility substations. When used in association with a utility substation, the barbed wire fencing shall be not less than 6 feet above the ground.
3. Barbed wire fencing may be permitted in a general agricultural zoning district to contain livestock and in the airport zoning district.
4. Barbed wire fencing materials may be used as a fence in a central business, general commercial, light industrial, heavy industrial or mining and extraction zoning district when the material is located not less than 6 feet above the ground.
5. Exceptions. The Common Council may permit the use of prohibited fencing materials if it is determined that the allowance is not contrary to the public interest and will not be injurious to the surrounding neighborhood. Area property owners shall be notified by published notice of the Common Council hearing at which the exception will be considered.