ZONING ADMINISTRATION
VirginiaBeach.gov/Zoning
(757) 385-8074 | Zoning@VBgov.com

Fence and Wall Bulletin

Article 2, Section 201 of the City Zoning Ordinance regulates the location, height, planting requirements and other fencing provisions within the City.

Intent

The intent of this bulletin is to provide guidance regarding fencing laws associated with the City of Virginia Beach Zoning Ordinance. This bulletin contains information pertaining to how tall a fence can be within different areas of a yard and when a fence permit is required to be issued through the Zoning Office. Please understand that this bulletin does not contain all possible fencing scenarios. As such, it is important to call or visit the zoning office during the planning stage of your fence project.

Fence Permitting Details

- A permit shall be required for the construction, reconstruction, replacement or relocation of any fence or wall located within thirty (30) feet of a public right-of-way, except fences or walls used principally for agricultural or horticultural purposes in an AG Agricultural Zoning District.
- The fee for a fence permit is $61.
- Zoning-issued fence permits may only be obtained by the owner of the property or Virginia licensed contractors.
- A current physical survey (or site plan) showing the location of all existing and proposed fencing must be presented to zoning staff prior to the issuance of a permit. The survey or site plan must be sealed by a Virginia registered design professional (surveyor, architect, or engineer).
- Prior to digging, call Miss Utility at 811 or 1-800-552-7001. Miss Utility will locate and mark underground utility lines free of charge.
- If the fence will be located in an easement, the property owner may need to obtain an additional approval for the fence from the entity that controls the easement. Depending on the easement, additional approval may be needed from, but not limited to, a homeowner's association, a condominium association, a utility company, or a city department such as Public Works or Public Utilities. In these cases, it is the responsibility of the property owner or permit holder to obtain all necessary approvals for fencing within an easement.
- Any fence or wall located on more than one lot requires a separate permit for each lot, except lots under common ownership.

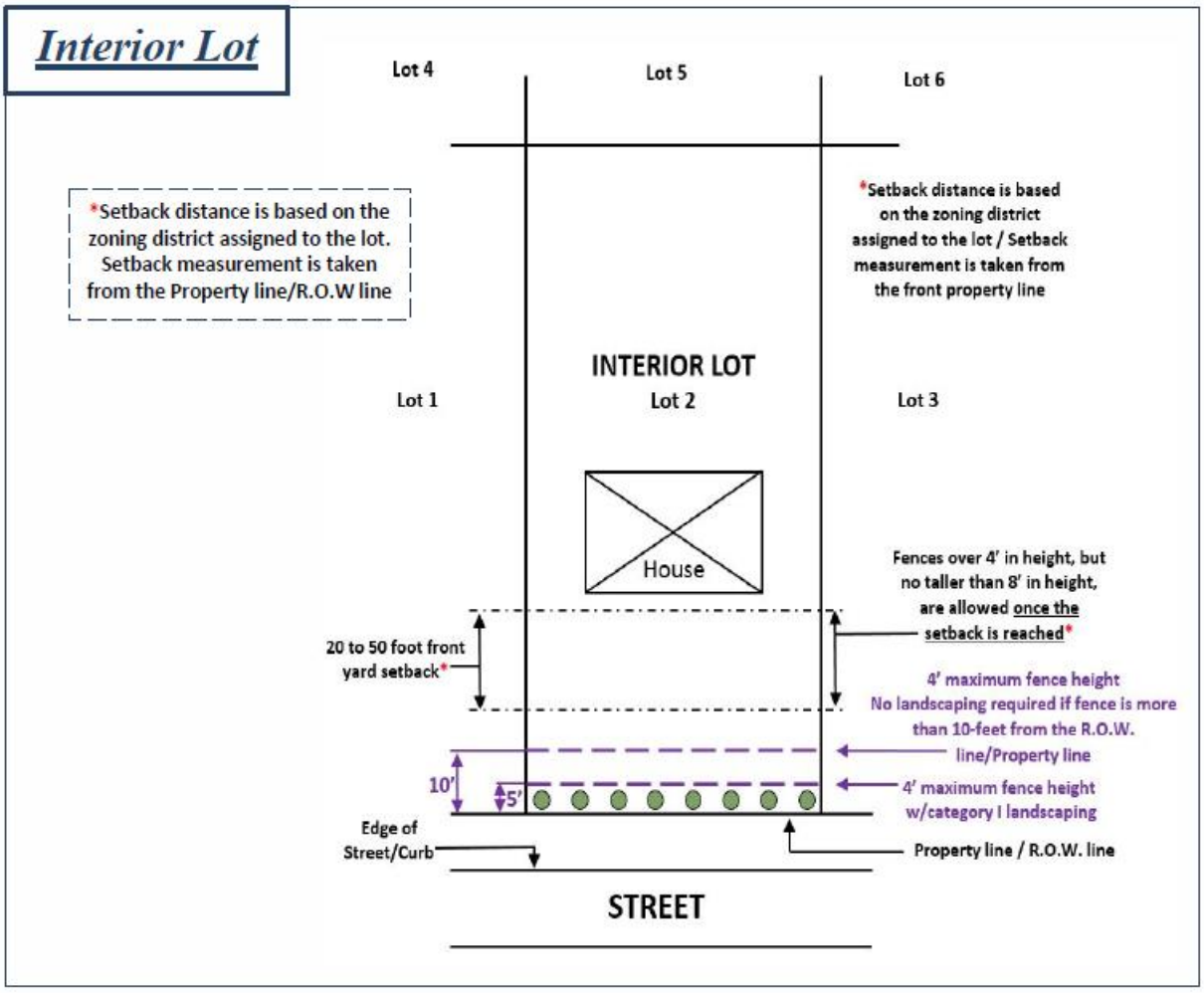
Fence Requirements

- Fencing shall have the finished side of the fence facing the right-of-way.
- Barbed wire and electric fences – This type of fencing is prohibited in all residential, apartment, and many other zoning districts. If this type of fence is desired, please contact the zoning office for details.
- Chain link fences - Chain link fences are allowed; however, category I landscaping must be installed between the entire length of the fence and any public right-of-way.
- Fencing adjacent to sound-walls - Where there exists a city, state, or federal road project sound-wall located directly adjacent to and substantially parallel with a right-of-way line, fences or walls located within thirty (30) feet of the right-of-way line adjacent to the sound-wall may be placed up to the right-of-way line directly behind the sound wall where the following conditions are met; 1) Such fences or walls shall not exceed a height of eight (8) feet, 2) Such fences or walls may only be erected directly

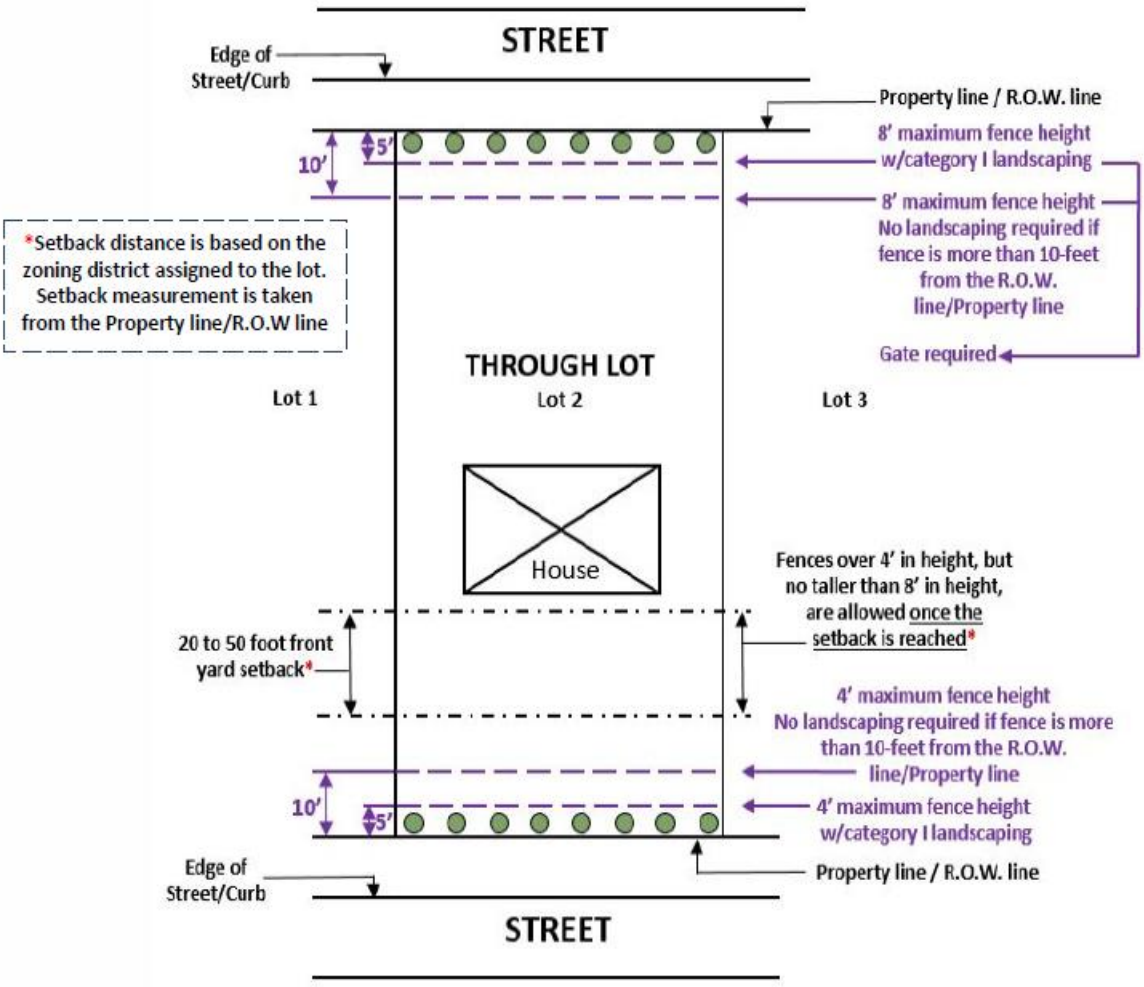
behind the sound-wall, 3) Such fences or walls cannot cross into the right-of-way without first obtaining any/all necessary approvals from the Public Works Department of the City of Virginia Beach, 4) No such fence or wall exceeding four (4) feet in height shall be permitted within the front yard setback in front of the wall closest to the dwelling.

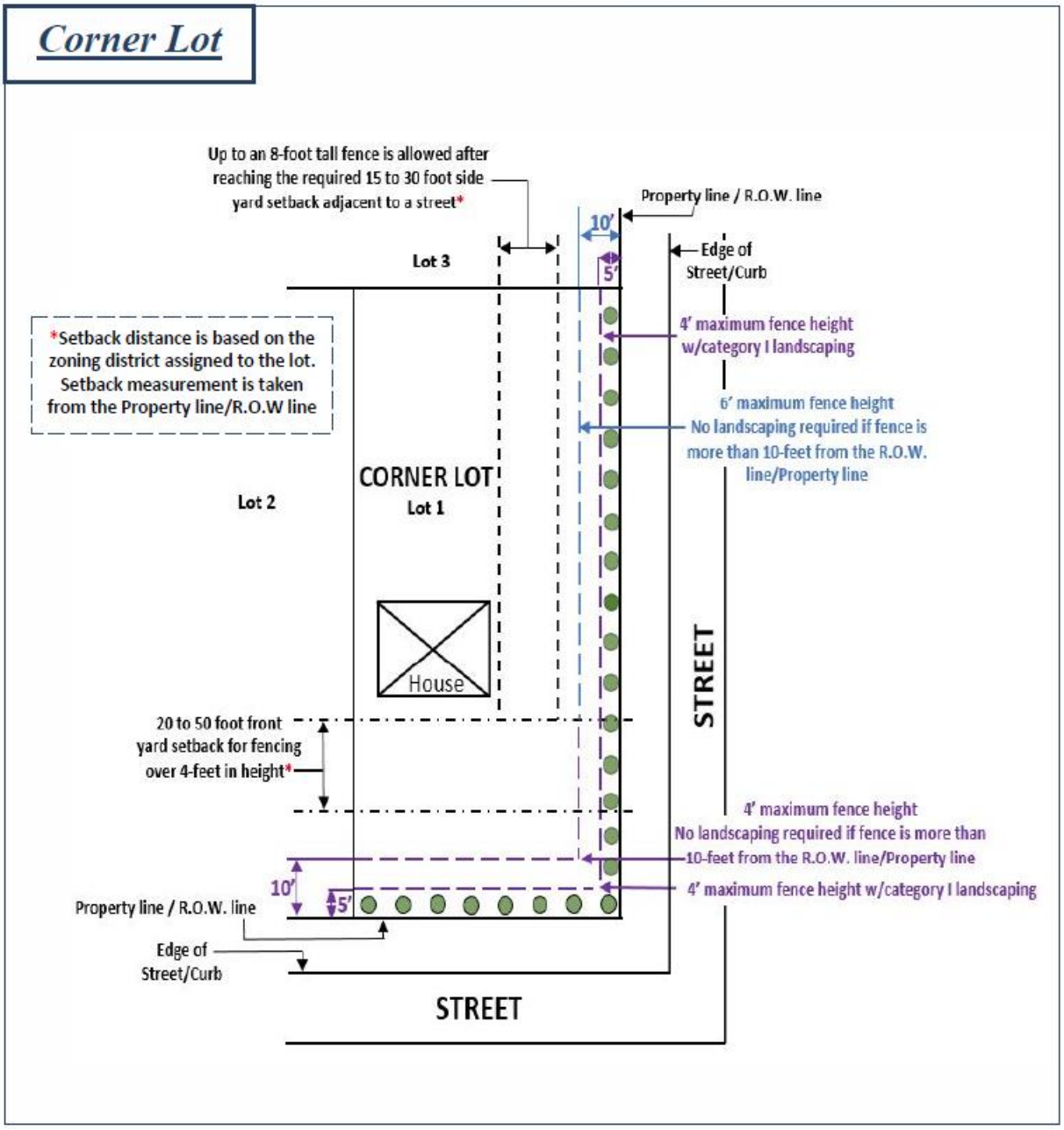
- Vinyl & Aluminum Fences - Fences constructed of materials generally recognized on an industry-wide basis as maintenance-free, such as vinyl and aluminum, may be located on a right-of-way line, provided the following is met: 1) Category I landscaping shall be installed immediately inside the entire length of any such fence; (ii) the height of any such fence shall not exceed the limits set forth in subsection (e)(1) above; and (iii) any such fence shall be no greater than fifty (50) percent opaque.
- Category I Landscaping Requirements – The City's Please visit the web page address below in order to view all tree and shrub choices that satisfy the requirements of Category I landscaping (please be aware that pages 11-14 lists all UNACCEPTABLE types of landscaping).

Fence Requirements by Lot Type



Through Lot


STREET
Edge of Street/Curb
Property line / R.O.W. line
10'
5'
8' maximum fence height w/category I landscaping
8' maximum fence height
No landscaping required if fence is more than 10-feet from the R.O.W. line/Property line
Gate required
*Setback distance is based on the zoning district assigned to the lot. Setback measurement is taken from the Property line/R.O.W line
THROUGH LOT
Lot 1
Lot 2
Lot 3
House
Fences over 4' in height, but no taller than 8' in height, are allowed once the setback is reached*
20 to 50 foot front yard setback*
4' maximum fence height
No landscaping required if fence is more than 10-feet from the R.O.W. line/Property line
10'
5'
4' maximum fence height w/category I landscaping
Edge of Street/Curb
Property line / R.O.W. line
STREET


Corner Lot
Up to an 8-foot tall fence is allowed after reaching the required 15 to 30 foot side yard setback adjacent to a street*
Property line / R.O.W. line
10'
5'
Edge of Street/Curb
Lot 3
*Setback distance is based on the zoning district assigned to the lot. Setback measurement is taken from the Property line/R.O.W line
4' maximum fence height w/category I landscaping
6' maximum fence height
No landscaping required if fence is more than 10-feet from the R.O.W. line/Property line
CORNER LOT
Lot 2
Lot 1
House
STREET
20 to 50 foot front yard setback for fencing over 4-feet in height*
4' maximum fence height
No landscaping required if fence is more than 10-feet from the R.O.W. line/Property line
4' maximum fence height w/category I landscaping
10'
5'
Property line / R.O.W. line
Edge of Street/Curb
STREET