INTRODUCTION

Fences are used in residential areas for a variety of reasons: to screen your yard, keep your pets on your property, or for privacy. Residents in Falcon Heights must follow the following rules and procedures when thinking about putting up or changing a fence.

PERMIT

A zoning permit is required before changes are started. These are available in City Hall or on the city’s website. There is a flat permit fee of $40.00 for a fence. Typically, a contractor will complete the permit if you hire a company to build the fence.

LOCATION

It is the responsibility of property owners to determine their property lines. The City does not require a survey for zoning permits, but it may be required, at the owner’s expense, if there is a dispute about fence location. Residents can also hire a survey company for their own records. The City also has a metal detector available for residents to borrow, which can be used to find the corner stakes of your property.

Fences are permitted along property lines for all interior side and rear lot lines. In a typical grid block system, this means both sides and rear yard property lines if you are not on a corner or alley. There cannot be any damage to the abutting property when a fence is put up.

If your property is a corner lot or abuts an alley, a fence must be set back one foot from the property lines along the street and alley (known as the right of way line). For all properties, a fence in the front yard facing the street must also have a one foot setback from the front property line.

In corner lots, there is a 30 foot visibility triangle, in which nothing taller than 2.5 feet can be built. This triangle is measured along the property line, thirty feet in both directions.

Two important reminders:

- The curb or street is not the property line. In many cases, the front or side property lines are 15 to 20 feet in from the curb.
- Do not assume that existing fences are on property lines. They could be set back from or extend over a property line.

HEIGHT

Fences in the front yard (between the front lot line and front of the house) cannot be higher than 36 inches (3 feet) from grade. This includes hedges and garden walls.

Fences in the rear yard and side yards (between the front of the house and the rear lot line) cannot be higher than 72 inches (6 feet) from grade.

On all fences, fence posts may extend an additional six inches.

Height is measured from grade, not the top of any footings.

UTILITY EASEMENT

There is a 5 foot utility easement around the perimeter of every lot. If utility work in the easement requires personal property, such as fences, to be moved or removed, the property owner is responsible for costs. This is very rare, but it is good to be an informed property owner.
This diagram is meant to provide general information about fence locations. Refer to the City Code for regulations.