INTRODUCTION

Garages are mandatory for residents in Falcon Heights. While some are attached to the home, others are detached or are accessed from the alley. One goal of the zoning code is to promote orderly development and protect the character of neighborhoods. Residential properties are allowed one garage, either attached or detached.

PERMIT

A building permit is required before changes are started. This would include tearing down a wall, demolishing the entire garage, or converting an attached garage to living space. The permit is available at City Hall or on the city’s website. The permit fee is based on the value of the project. Typically, a contractor will complete the permit if you hire a company. Zoning approval is part of the building permit review process.

LOCATION

Attached Garages

In the R-1 one-family residential district, attached garages must follow the setback requirements of homes. For street access, this means a 30 foot front yard setback from the property line, five foot setback from the interior side property line, and 30 foot setback from the rear property line. If the property is located on a corner and the garage faces the side street, the setback is 20% of the width of the lot. For example, if the lot is 75 feet wide, the garage would need to be 15 feet from the side street property line.

Detached Garages

Similar to attached garages, there is a 30 foot front yard setback and 5 foot setbacks from both sides. A corner side yard setback is 20% of the lot width. The rear yard setback is 5 feet. If the lot is a though lot, meaning it has streets on both the front and back, the rear yard setback is 30 feet. If a detached garage is accessed by an alley, the entire garage must be located in the rear 30 feet of the lot. Detached garages cannot occupy more than 40% of the rear yard, and they cannot be more than 1,000 square feet.

There are other exceptions for existing garages being replaced and in which the current garage is located within the 5 foot rear and interior side setbacks. Read City Code Section 113-240 for more information.

Impervious Surface

In the R-1 zone, impervious surface is measured with a formula to determine how much coverage is allowed. The amounts are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lot Area (sq. ft.)</th>
<th>Maximum Impervious Lot Coverage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7,370 or less</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 7,370 to 15,800</td>
<td>3,320 sq. ft. or 30%, whichever is greater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 15,800 to 34,000</td>
<td>4,940 sq. ft. or 20%, whichever is greater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 34,000</td>
<td>6,800 sq. ft. or 15%, whichever is greater</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Property Lines**

It is the responsibility of property owners to determine their property lines. The City does not require a survey for garage projects, but it may be required, at the owner's expense, if there is a dispute about property lines. 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. It is also important to remember that 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.

**HEIGHT**

Attached garages cannot be taller than the principle structure.

Detached garages have a maximum height of 15 feet from grade to the midpoint on a peaked roof.

**GARAGE CONVERSION**

If an attached garage is converted to residential space, two stipulations must be met:

- A replacement garage that meets City Code must be built
- The driveway that leads to the former garage must be removed and the curb cut restored