

**ZONING HANDBOOK  
FOR THE  
SINGLE-FAMILY HOMEOWNER  
R1 ZONING DISTRICT**



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## I. USE OF THE BOOKLET

### What Is the Purpose of This Booklet?

This handbook has been prepared as an aid for homeowners with zoning regulations pertaining to R1-zoned properties, determining allowable uses, and assisting in the planning of a residential construction project.

### What Information Is in This Booklet?

This handbook has two sections:

- I. **Use of the Booklet** describes where to get information.
- II. **Zoning Rules** describes the criteria every construction project must meet.

The information contained in the booklet is in the Mountain View Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 36 of the City Code). It is available online at <http://www.mountainview.gov/zoning>.

This handbook intends to present zoning regulations into clear, everyday language. To locate the specific regulations in the Zoning Ordinance, the ordinance section numbers have been included in parentheses at the end of each relevant section.

### What is Zoning?

Zoning is the land use regulation for each property in the City adopted by the City Council. A zoning ordinance establishes permitted uses and distinguishes them

from incompatible uses. The Zoning Ordinance is based on the City's General Plan and promotes public health, safety, morals, comfort, and general welfare.

### Who Can I Contact for Help?

For questions concerning the information in this handbook or a proposed construction project, please contact the City of Mountain View Community Development Department by phone at 650-903-6306, by e-mail at [community.development@mountainview.gov](mailto:community.development@mountainview.gov) or in-person by visiting the public counter to speak with the Planner-on-duty at City Hall. Additional information is available on our website at [www.mountainview.gov/communitydevelopment](http://www.mountainview.gov/communitydevelopment).

Unfortunately, the City cannot assist in resolving neighborly disputes regarding trees or fences located on private property along shared property lines. *Mountain View Mediation Services*—a partnership between the City of Mountain View and Project Sentinel—may be able to assist in identifying a mutually acceptable outcome to disputing parties. *Mountain View Mediation Services* is available by phone at 650-960-0495. Leave a voice message outlining what you need assistance with and contact information. A representative will follow up within 48 hours.

## II. ZONING RULES

### A. USES OF PROPERTY IN THE R1 DISTRICT

#### What Uses Are Allowed by Right in the R1 District?

The R1 District is primarily intended for single-family residential dwelling units. A dwelling unit is defined as a structure containing one kitchen and one or more rooms for living and sleeping purposes. By State law, small- and large-family child-care businesses (ranging from eight to 14 children) and small licensed residential care homes (up to six unrelated residents) are allowed in single-family dwelling units. A complete list of all allowed uses is located in [Section 36.10.05](#).

#### What Are Accessory Uses?

The following uses are permitted as “accessory” uses in the R1 District:

- Rooming and boarding of not more than two persons.
- Home occupations. ([Section 36.28.75](#))
- Other accessory buildings or uses which are related to a single-family home, such as garages/carports, storage sheds, greenhouses, arbors, pergolas, etc. ([Section 36.12.35](#))

#### What Other Types of Uses Are Allowed in the R1 District?

The following uses may be permitted if a Conditional Use Permit is granted by the City and if appropriate licensing is obtained from the City, County, or State, as necessary ([Section 36.10.05](#)):

- Child-care centers.
- Rooming and boarding houses of more than two persons.
- Residential care homes (seven or more unrelated persons).
- Churches or religious institutions.
- Community Centers.
- Senior Care Facility.
- Schools or educational facilities.
- Public utility or safety buildings.
- Parking lots.

## B. BASIC DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS IN THE R1 DISTRICT

### PROPERTY LINES

#### Where Are My Property Lines?

The Santa Clara County Assessor's parcel map, or a grant deed, will provide the dimensions of a particular property. Parcel maps are available online at the Santa Clara County Assessor's website: <https://www.sccassessor.org/index.php/>. If measurements between fences indicate a discrepancy between the dimensions described by the County Assessor and a grant deed, then a civil or land surveyor can determine the exact location of property lines. Fences do not establish legal property lines.

It is important to note front property lines are often not located at the back edge of the sidewalk. For the majority of properties, the City right-of-way extends 3' to 5' behind the sidewalk. This area behind the sidewalk is typically maintained by the homeowner. In considering an addition or installing new fencing, it is important to find out where the front property line is located. The Public Works Department can assist in estimating the location of a front property line relative to the City right-of-way. Please contact them by phone at 650-903-6311, by e-mail at [public.works@mountainview.gov](mailto:public.works@mountainview.gov), or in-person at the public counter with the Engineer-on-duty.

#### What Is the City Right-of-Way?

The City right-of-way is land owned by the City where streets, street trees, and sidewalks are located. The dimension of the right-of-way per street is established by the City based on an estimated number of vehicle lanes or width of sidewalk(s) to be built. The right-of-way is often wider than the existing street and sidewalk and may incorporate a portion of landscaped area in a homeowner's front yard (see Figure 1).

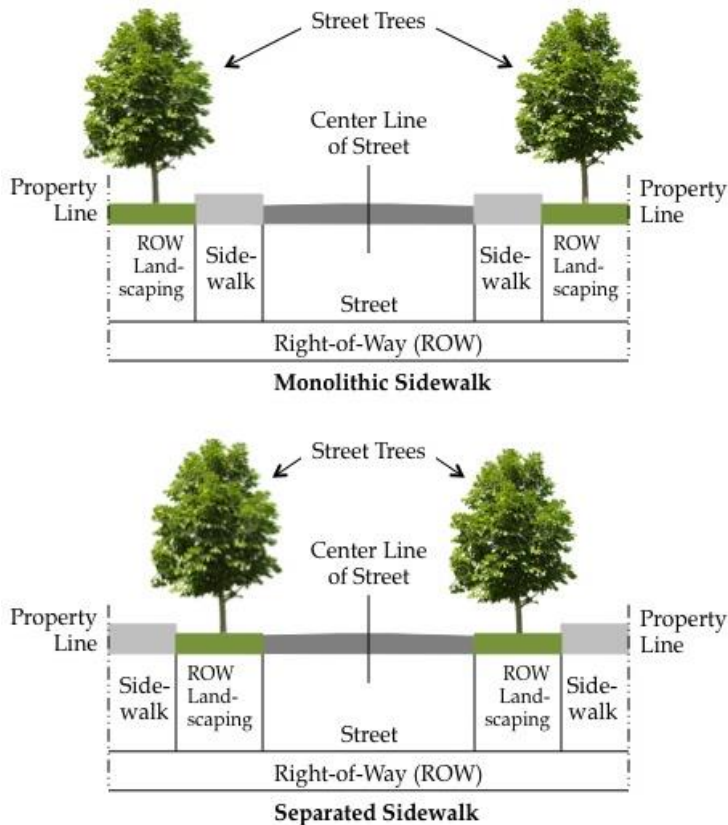


Figure 1

## CORNER LOTS

### Which Side Is My Front Yard if I Live on a Corner Lot?

For zoning purposes, the front yard is typically the narrowest lot width fronting a street, where the house has a minimum 20' setback measured from the property line. The front yard, as identified by zoning, may be on a different side of the home from the front door, garage, or street address. After identifying the front yard, the other remaining property line at the street is considered the street side yard. For assistance in identifying a front or street side yard on a corner lot, please contact the Community Development Department and speak with the Planner on duty.

## SETBACKS

### What Are Setbacks?

A setback is the open area between a property line and a structure. Required building setbacks are the minimum distance from a property line that a structure can be located. A structure can always have a greater setback than the minimum required.

### How Do I Determine My Setbacks?

There are minimum setback requirements for the front yard, side yards, and rear yard for all homes. The requirements are different for the first and second story depending on lot area and width. See example setbacks in Figure 2 on Page 6. If you have an irregularly shaped lot, please consult with a Planner to determine setbacks.

### Front Setback – For All Properties

- First Story: 20' minimum from the front property line.
- Second Story: 20' minimum from the front property line and an additional 5' front setback for any portion of the second story above a garage.

### Rear Setback – For All Properties

- First Story: 20 percent of the lot depth or 15', whichever is greater, but not to exceed 40'.
- Second Story: 25 percent of the lot depth or 20', whichever is greater, but not to exceed 40'.

### Side Setbacks – Vary Based on Lot Width and Area

- First and Second Stories: See Side Setbacks Chart on following page for specific setbacks based on lot width and area.
- Street Side Setback: Street side setback for corner lots is 15' minimum for first and second stories.
- For All Side Setbacks: Side setbacks are calculated as a minimum distance for any one side of the home and a sum total of both sides. Second-story setbacks may differ for portions of the building located in the front half versus the rear half of the lot.

[\(Section 36.10.25\)](#)



**Side Setbacks Chart**

**Lot Width (in feet)**

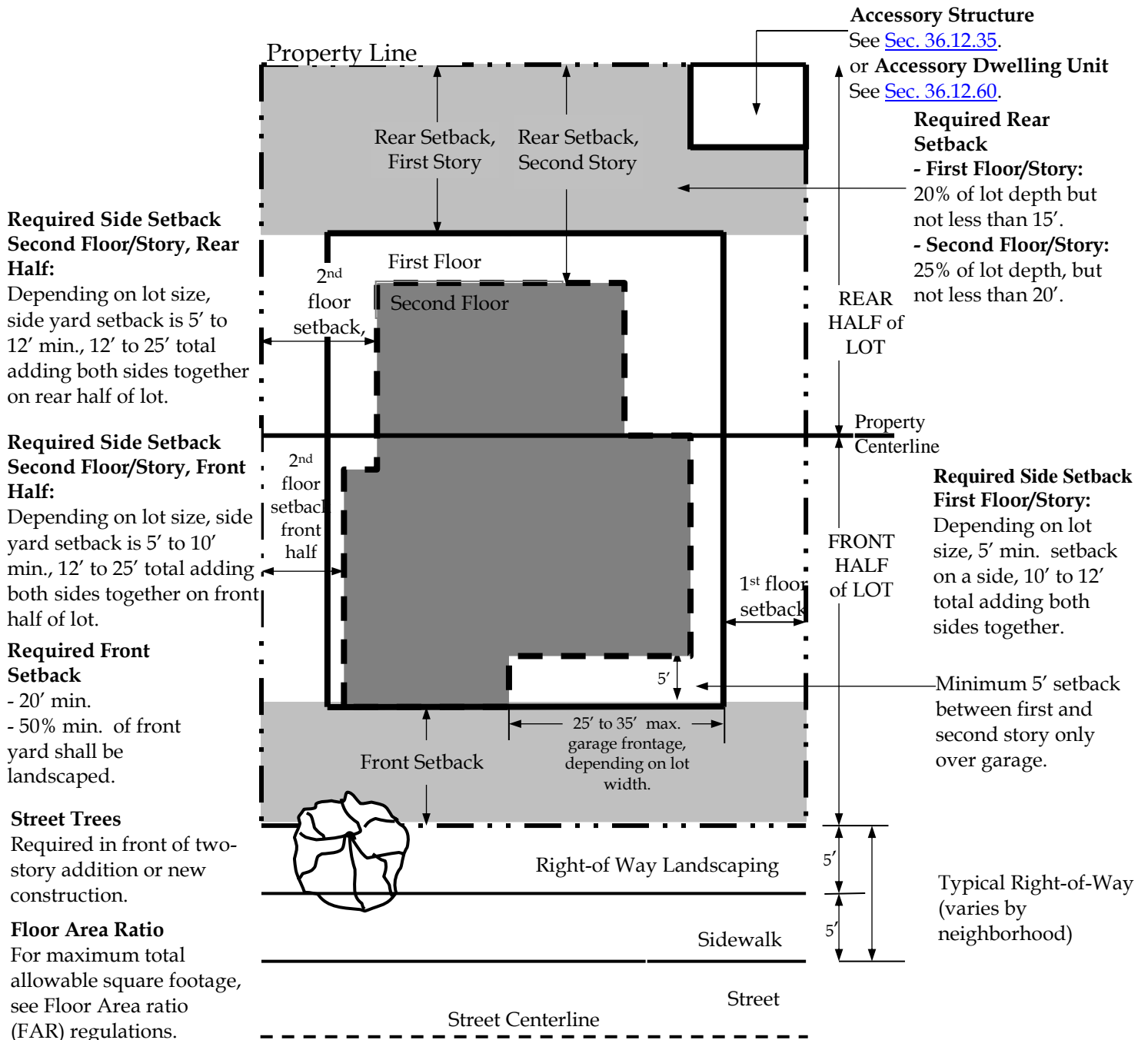
		< 40'	40'-59'	60'-65'	>65'
		<b>Lot Area (in square feet)</b>	<5,000	<b>1st story:</b> 5' min, 10' total	<b>1st story:</b> 5' min, 10' total
<b>2nd story:</b> 5' min, 12' total	<b>2nd story:</b> 5' min, 12' total			<b>2nd story:</b> 5' min, 12' total	<b>2nd story:</b> 5' min, 12' total
5,000 - 5,999	<b>1st story:</b> 5' min, 10' total		<b>1st story:</b> 5' min, 10' total	<b>1st story:</b> 5' min, 10' total	<b>1st story:</b> 5' min, 10' total
	<b>2nd story:</b> 5' min, 12' total		<b>2nd story:</b> front half of lot: 7' min, 15' total; rear half of lot: 12' min	<b>2nd story:</b> front half of lot: 7' min, 15' total; rear half of lot: 12' min	<b>2nd story:</b> front half of lot: 7' min, 15' total; rear half of lot: 12' min
6,000 - 9,999	<b>1st story:</b> 5' min, 10' total		<b>1st story:</b> 5' min, 10' total	<b>1st story:</b> 5' min, 12' total	<b>1st story:</b> 5' min, 12' total
	<b>2nd story:</b> 5' min, 12' total		<b>2nd story:</b> front half of lot: 7' min, 15' total; rear half of lot: 12' min	<b>2nd story:</b> front half of lot: 7' min, 15' total; rear half of lot: 12' min	<b>2nd story:</b> front half of lot: 7' min, 15' total; rear half of lot: 12' min
>10,000	<b>1st story:</b> 5' min, 10' total		<b>1st story:</b> 5' min, 10' total	<b>1st story:</b> 5' min, 12' total	<b>1st story:</b> 5' min, 12' total
	<b>2nd story:</b> 5' min, 12' total		<b>2nd story:</b> front half of lot: 7' min, 15' total; rear half of lot: 12' min	<b>2nd story:</b> front half of lot: 7' min, 15' total; rear half of lot: 12' min	<b>2nd story:</b> 10' min, 25' total

**Are There Setbacks for Second-Story Decks and Balconies?**

Second-story decks and balconies are limited to a total size, cumulative of all decks and balconies, of 150 square feet and can only be located on the front and rear elevations of the home. For corner lots, they are permitted on the street side yard.

Second-story decks and balconies are subject to the second-story setbacks, except when located on the rear of a house, where an additional 5' setback is required. No decks, balconies, or similar features are permitted on the roof of a single-family home. ([Sec 36.10.25](#))

## R1 District Lot Setback Requirements: Interior Lot



**Figure 2**

For Reference Only  
May Vary By Lot

## **BUILDING WITHIN SETBACKS**

### **Can I Build Anything in the Required Setback Area?**

A homeowner can propose an addition to a home that extends into the required front, side, or rear setback areas on a limited basis as described below. As long as the projection of the structure into the setback complies with the zoning regulations, no planning permit is needed, but a building permit is required. Projections into the setback are required to match the existing exterior of the home.

#### ***Projections into Front or Side Setbacks***

A portion of the home, including roof eaves, may project into the front or side setback up to 3', but the projection cannot exceed 10' in length (or width) and the total area of the projection cannot exceed 50 square feet. This requirement is cumulative, so when looked at in total linear length or square footage, multiple projections on the same building must meet this standard. The projection(s) may be on the first or second story or both. ([Section 36.14.85.a](#))

*NOTE:* This projection must be for an addition of enclosed living space, not a porch or other architectural feature. See Architectural Projections for further details.

#### ***Projections into Rear Setback***

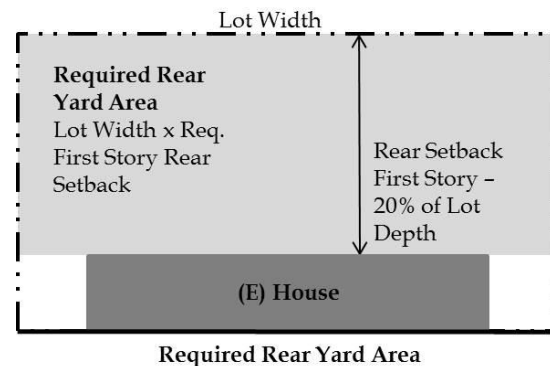
A portion of the home may project into the rear setback for the first floor only and must be consistent with the design of the house. The projection can be no more than 24' in height, measured from top of street curb to the top of the roof, and no

more than 15' at the top of the wall plate, measured from adjacent grade. The projection must be a minimum of 10' from the rear property line, including any eaves or overhangs, and cannot cover more than 12.5 percent of the required rear yard area, inclusive of all existing projections. ([Section 36.14.85.b](#)) *NOTE:* This projection must be for an addition of enclosed living space, not a porch or other architectural feature. See Architectural Projections for details.

Accessory structures detached from the principal structure are allowed to be constructed in the required setback area, subject to specific regulations. See the Accessory Structure section in this booklet for more information.

### **What Is My Required Rear Yard Area?**

The required rear yard area is calculated by multiplying the lot width by the required first-story rear setback. This calculation is required to determine the maximum building area permitted to projection into the rear yard and for determining the size of allowable accessory structures.



### **What About Architectural Projections within the Required Setback?**

Various architectural projections are permitted to encroach into the required setback. These projections are identified below based on height:

#### ***Under 18" in Height***

Decks, stoops, landings, concrete patios, and driveways that are less than 18" in height above grade may encroach into any front, side, or rear setback, provided the projection does not drain onto adjacent properties. ([Section 36.14.95.a](#))

#### ***Over 18" in Height***

Architectural features attached to the house or accessory structure(s), which are not part of an enclosed living area and greater than 18" in height above grade, may encroach into the front, side, or rear setbacks. These projections include, for example, eaves, canopies, trellises, arbors, open porches, patio covers, awnings, outside stairways, chimneys, and first-floor bay windows (no more than 12' in length). For the *first and second stories*, they may encroach as follows:

- 6' into the front setback;
- 2' into the side setback; and
- 6' into the rear setback.

EXCEPT second-story bay windows, balconies, and decks are not allowed to project into the side and rear setbacks. ([Section 36.14.95.b](#))

### **Can I Add onto a Portion of My House Located Within a Required Setback?**

Any building, or portion of a building, which is located within a required setback and does not comply with permitted setbacks or projections is considered to be nonconforming. The Zoning Ordinance allows these buildings to remain for their normal structural life, so long as it was constructed with a proper building permit(s). Any new addition to a nonconforming home must follow the current development regulations and cannot result in any structural modifications to the nonconforming portion of the home. All nonconforming single-family homes with a proposed conforming addition must obtain a Development Review Permit from the Planning Division, prior to submitting for required Building permits. Consultation with a Planner in the Community Development Department is encouraged to help determine what addition, or improvements, may be feasible. ([Section 36.06.60](#))

## **FAR**

### **What Is Floor Area Ratio or FAR?**

Every property is limited to a maximum amount of building square footage, also known as floor area. The ratio used to determine allowable square footage on a property is known as the Floor Area Ratio, or FAR.

The FAR is a measurement for limiting the bulk and mass of structures. The measurement is expressed as a ratio of building square footage (floor area) to lot size. It is calculated by dividing the total square footage of all structures on the property by the total square footage of the property.

Mountain View has a sliding scale FAR based on exact lot size.

<b>Lot Size</b>	<b>FAR</b>
≤5,000 sf	0.45
6,000 sf	0.44
7,000 sf	0.43
8,000 sf	0.42
9,000 sf	0.41
≥10,000 sf	0.40

For lot sizes in between those listed above, the floor area is calculated to three decimal places. For example, the allowable FAR for a 6,500 square foot lot is 0.435. Decimal places are not rounded up or down. To calculate the FAR for your particular lot, apply the following formula:

$$\text{FAR} = .50 - (.00001 \times \text{Lot Area})$$

### **What Counts Toward FAR?**

The floor area ratio includes the following (in square feet):

- All area enclosed within the walls of the structure (measured from the outside perimeter of the walls), including each building story;
- All covered parking, including garages and carports;
- The total area of all enclosed accessory structures, including garages and sheds; and
- Any enclosed space that contributes toward the overall mass or bulk of the building, including areas with three walls and a roof.

Openings for stairways, chimneys, or shafts are not deducted. Stairway areas are counted per floor.

Any basement level where more than one-half of the height is above grade constitutes a story and counts as floor area. If less than one-half of the height of the basement is above grade, then the basement does not count toward floor area.

Any high-volume or high-ceiling interior area resulting in building mass similar to a second story is counted toward floor area. Specifically, portions of the home with a height equal to or greater than 16', measured from the finished floor to the top of the exterior roof, will count as additional floor area. This may include attic and nonhabitable spaces.

## HEIGHT

### How High Can I Build?

The maximum building height for a one-story home is 24' with a maximum first-floor wall plate height of 15'. The maximum height for a two-story home is 28' with a maximum second-floor wall plate height of 22'. The **wall plate height** is the distance from adjacent grade to the top of the wall plate, or intersecting point of the wall frame and roof frame (see Figure 3).

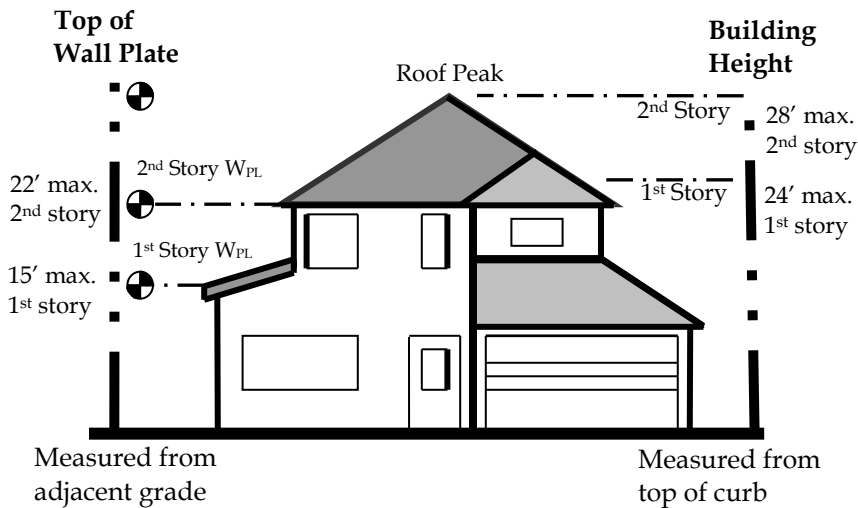


Figure 3

The maximum **building height** is measured as the vertical distance from the top of the street curb along the front property line to (see Figure 4):

- The highest point of a flat roof (which may be the coping); or
  - The top of a mansard roof; or
  - The ridge of a gable or hip roof, excluding chimneys or vents.
- ([Section 36.10.25](#))

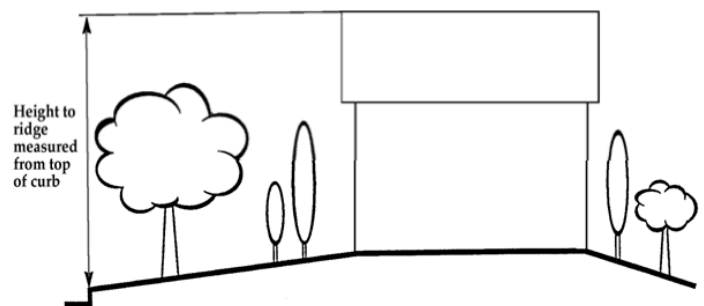
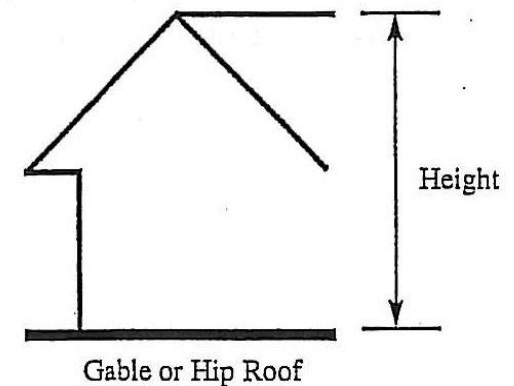
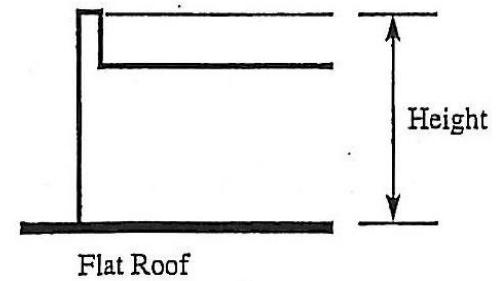
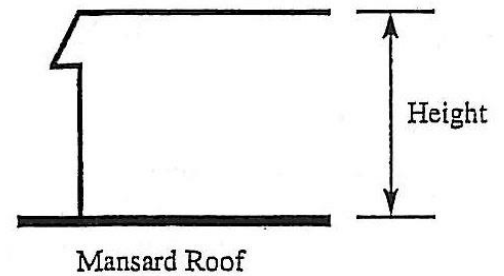


Figure 4

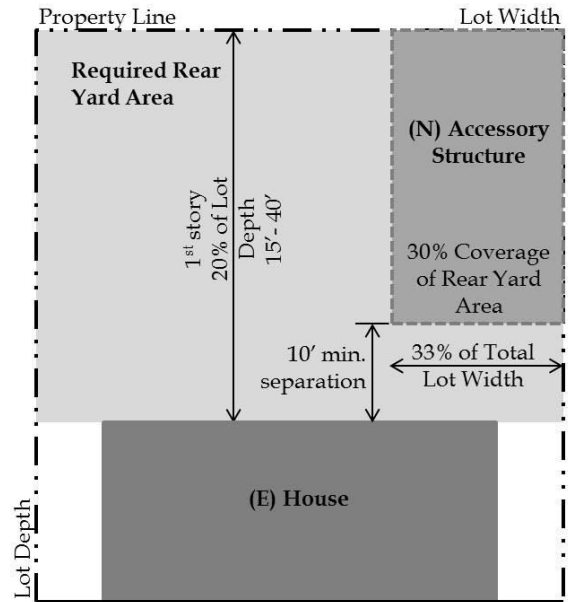
## ACCESSORY STRUCTURE

### What Is an Accessory Structure?

Accessory structures are buildings that are attached or detached, subordinate in use from the main house, and can be enclosed or open. Examples of *enclosed accessory structures* are greenhouses, storage sheds, enclosures for pool equipment, detached garages, and carports. All enclosed accessory structures count toward the total FAR permitted on a property. Examples of *open accessory structures* are arbors, gazebos, and trellises. All open accessory structures do not count toward the total FAR permitted on a property. An open accessory structure cannot have building walls or features that enclose space, but may contain a roof.

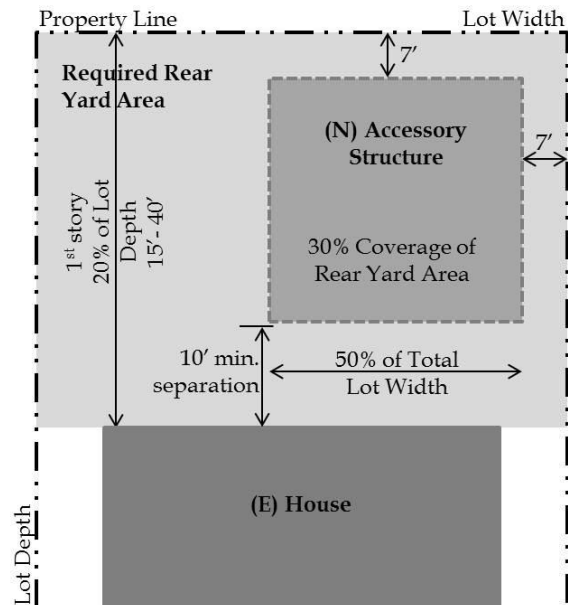
### How Large of an Accessory Structure Can I Have?

The maximum size of an accessory structure is 500 square feet. The size may be limited based on lot width and required rear yard area, resulting in an allowance of less than 500 square feet. An accessory structure(s) cannot cover more than 30 percent of a required rear yard area, cumulative of all accessory structures, and the cumulative width of all accessory structure(s) cannot exceed 33 percent of the lot width to have a zero setback from the rear and side property lines (see Figure 5). The cumulative width of the structure(s) can increase up to 50 percent of the width of a lot if it is located at least 7' from the property lines (see Figure 6). These limitations are to maintain a level of privacy in the rear



Accessory Structure with Zero Setbacks

Figure 5



Accessory Structure with 7' Setback

Figure 6

yards of adjacent neighbors, while still permitting additional floor area for homeowners. Accessory structures less than 5' in height do not count towards the lot coverage. Roof eaves greater than

1' in depth count towards rear yard lot coverage; eaves of 1' or less do not count toward rear yard lot coverage. ([Section 36.12.50](#))

### **Where Can I Put an Accessory Structure(s)?**

Accessory structures are permitted in the rear or side yards in compliance with required setbacks. They are prohibited in front yards. All detached accessory structures used as garages may have a zero setback from the side property line; required rear setbacks depend on the width of the structure. Other accessory structures may have a zero setback from the rear or side property line, if they comply with the maximum size, rear yard coverage, and width requirements. A zero setback is only permitted if roof drainage from the structure does not drain onto the neighboring property. Additionally, an accessory structure must be located at least 10' from the house and any other structure on the property. There are no setbacks for open accessory structures or enclosed accessory structures less than 5' in height. ([Sec 36.12.50](#))

### **How Tall Can an Accessory Structure Be?**

An accessory structure can only be one story with a maximum building height of 16', measured from top of curb, and a 9' maximum wall plate height, measured from adjacent grade. ([Sec 36.12.50](#))

### **How Many Accessory Structures Can I Have?**

There is no limit to the number of accessory structures permitted on a property so long as they comply with the accessory structure requirements of [Section 36.12.50](#) and do not exceed the maximum permitted FAR.

### **Can I Have an Arbor or Trellis?**

Arbors, gazebos, or trellises are classified as an open accessory structure and allowed in the rear yard. Building walls or features that enclose the space are not allowed, but a roof is permitted.

### **Can My Accessory Structure Have Plumbing and Electricity?**

An accessory structure can have electricity and a maximum of three plumbing fixtures, in addition to a water heater. However, an accessory structure cannot have a kitchen and cannot be used as a separate dwelling unit. If electrical and plumbing are added to an accessory structure, a building permit is required to be obtained irrespective of the size of the structure. ([Section 36.12.50](#))

### **Can I Have An Outdoor Barbecue or Fire Pit?**

Barbecues, fire pits, chimneys, outdoor kitchens, or similar smoke-producing cooking facilities are allowed in the rear yard. A minimum 5' setback from the side and rear property lines must be provided. ([Section 36.12.50](#))



### **Can I Have an Accessory Structure Attached to My House?**

An accessory structure can be attached to the main house, but must be architecturally compatible with and structurally a part of the house. Attached accessory structures must comply with the setback requirements of the house and cannot have direct, internal access to the home. ([Section 36.12.40](#))

### **Does an Accessory Structure Require Permits?**

Accessory structures less than 120 square feet in size with no plumbing, electricity, or foundation do not need to obtain building permits. All other accessory structures require building permits. Contact the Community Development Department with any further questions.

### **Can I Add a Porch to My Accessory Structure?**

Porches are permitted on accessory structures, but the porch counts towards the maximum 30 percent coverage of the required rear yard area. The porch can encroach no more than 2' into the required side setback and 6' into the required rear setback of the primary house. ([Section 36.14.95](#))

## **ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT**

### **What is an Accessory Dwelling Unit?**

Accessory Dwelling Units (or ADUs), also referred to as a companion unit, in-law unit, or granny flat, is a dwelling unit that provides complete, independent living facilities on the same

lot as a single-family or multi-family dwelling. Independent living facilities include permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation (restroom facilities). An ADU can be attached or detached from the single-family home, including located interior to the home. The development regulations for ADUs are located in [Section 32.12.60](#).

### **What is a Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit?**

A Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit (JADU) is no more than 500 square feet and includes an efficiency kitchen and a sleeping area, but may include separate or shared sanitation facilities with a single-family dwelling. A JADU must be contained within the single-family home. The development regulations for JADUs are located in [Section 32.12.60](#).

### **How Many ADUs/JADUs Can I Have on My Property?**

A property with a single-family home in the R1 Zoning District can have up to one ADU (detached, attached, or interior to the home) and one JADU.

### **Do ADUs or JADUs Require a Permit?**

A new ADU or JADU requires a building permit; no planning permit is required. However, City staff strongly encourages you to consult a Planner prior to submitting for building permits to ensure your plans are zoning-compliant. In addition to a building permit, a covenant must be recorded on the property for a JADU, which is signed by the property owner and City.

## **PARKING**

### **How Much Parking is Required?**

Two parking spaces are required for each single-family home, one of which must be covered in a garage or carport. A parking space must meet a minimum unobstructed interior dimension of 9' in width by 20' in depth and provide a minimum ceiling height of 7'6". If an addition is proposed to an existing home which does not currently meet the covered parking requirement, then a covered parking space must be included in the scope of construction work. ([Section 36.10.25](#))

## **DRIVEWAY**

### **How Wide Can I Build My Driveway?**

The minimum driveway width is 9' with direct access to at least a one-car garage or carport. Properties with one-car garages are allowed a maximum 20' wide driveway in the area visible from the street. Properties with two- or three-car garages are allowed a maximum 30' wide driveway in the area visible from the street. ([Section 36.10.25](#))

Any new curb cut, or driveway apron, for a new or modified driveway for a single-family home requires a Public Works permit. Please note, the City does not permit multiple driveways or driveway curb cuts on the same property in order to maintain the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists.

## **GARAGE WIDTH**

### **How Large of a Garage Can I Build?**

For properties less than 75' wide, an attached or detached garage facade that faces the street may not exceed 25' in width. On properties that are more than 75' wide, the attached or detached garage facade may be up to 35' in width.

For attached garages, there is no maximum size so long as the required parking is provided. Detached garages may not exceed the size requirements per the Accessory Structure regulations in [Section 36.12.35](#). Any detached and/or attached garage square footage counts toward the allowable floor area of a property.

## **FRONT YARD LANDSCAPING AND PAVING**

### **How Much of My Front Yard May Be Paved?**

At least 50 percent of your required front yard area must be landscaped; therefore, no more than 50 percent of the front yard may be paved, including walkways, driveways, and porches. Permeable pavers do not constitute landscaping. ([Section 36.10.25](#))

### **What Is My Required Front Yard Area?**

The required front yard area is calculated by multiplying a lot width by the required front setback of 20'.

## FENCES

### Where Are Fences Allowed and at What Height?

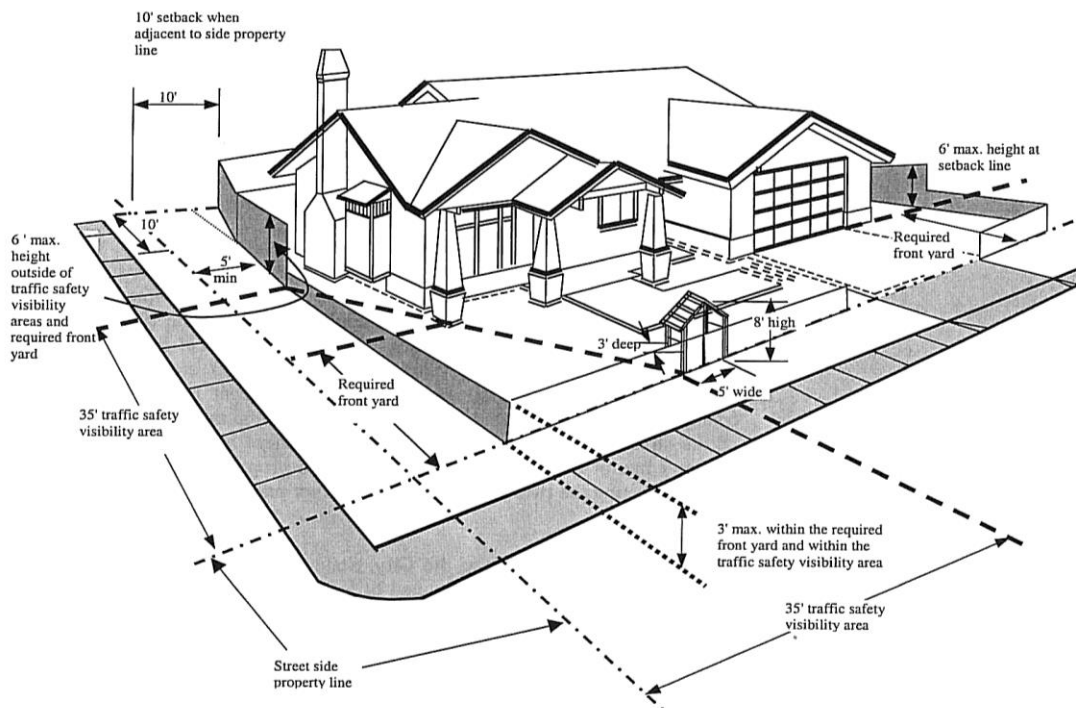
Side and rear yard fences can be a maximum height of 6' and do not require permits to be installed. You may apply for a Development Review Permit with the Planning Division to increase the height up to 7' with written consent from adjacent neighbors. Fence height is measured from adjacent grade to the top of the fence, inclusive of lattice or other decorative features.

For fences within the *front yard setback*, the maximum height is 3'. Open-lattice trellises and arbors used as entry features are allowed in the front setback and are limited to 8' in height, 5' in width, and 3' in depth. ([Section 36.06.50.C](#) and Figure 7)

For *corner lots*, any fence within the traffic safety visibility area of the intersection (measured 35' along the front and street side property lines) is limited to a maximum height of 3' to preserve safe visibility for vehicles and pedestrians. A 5' setback from the street side property line applies for corner lots. An additional 10' setback applies for any shared fences installed where a neighbor's side property line meets an adjacent neighbor's rear property line to preserve visibility for the driveway. ([Section 36.06.50.C](#))

Fences may be constructed of wood, brick, masonry stucco, or other materials commonly found in residential neighborhoods. Fences over 6' in height and any masonry wall require building permits.

Figure 7



## **NONCONFORMING STRUCTURES**

### **What are Nonconforming Structures?**

A nonconforming structure is one which does not meet current requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, but which was legal at the time it was built.

### **What Are the Rules about Existing Nonconforming Structures?**

As long as the structure was legal at the time it was built, meaning it conformed to the codes at that time and obtained proper building permits, it may remain for the structural life of the building.

### **What Are the Rules for Adding onto Nonconforming Structures?**

Additions to nonconforming structures are permitted as long as the addition meets all current zoning requirements, does not structurally modify the nonconforming portion of the structure, and receives a Development Review Permit from the Planning Division and building permits. However, if the house is being expanded to more than twice its original size, the entire structure must be brought into conformance with current zoning standards. ([Section 36.06.60](#))

## **HERITAGE TREES**

### **What Are Heritage Trees?**

A Heritage tree is defined as any tree which is greater than 48" in circumference when measured 54" above the ground. For oaks, redwoods, and cedar trees, the minimum circumference to be

a Heritage tree is 12". Because these trees enhance the scenic beauty of the City, they may only be removed under certain conditions and with a City permit.

If removal of a tree is requested due to a proposed building addition or new construction of a single-family home, a Heritage Tree Removal Permit is required to be reviewed and approved by the Community Services Department, Forestry Division, prior to issuance of a building permit. Please contact by phone at 650-903-6273, by e-mail at [parks@mountainview.gov](mailto:parks@mountainview.gov), or visit [www.mountainview.gov/heritagetrees](http://www.mountainview.gov/heritagetrees) for more information.

## **STREET TREES**

### **What Are the Rules Regarding Street Tree(s) in Front of My Property?**

Street trees are the trees located in the City right-of-way. They are either located in a landscape strip next to the street or in the landscaped area between the sidewalk and the front property line of a property.

The Forestry Division of the Community Services Department is in charge of all existing City street trees, including their maintenance. However, the property owner is responsible for watering street trees.

Removal of a City street tree requires a permit from the Forestry Division. Removal is strongly discouraged unless a tree is badly diseased or poses a safety threat. With removal, the City may

require the planting of a replacement tree.

To add a street tree in front of a property, please contact the Forestry Division at 650-903-6273. The tree will need to be planted so as not to conflict with any underground utility lines.

If constructing a new residence or a new second-story addition, a street tree is required to be planted on the property if none currently exist, if an existing tree does not currently meet City specifications, or if the existing street tree is diseased or dying. To determine the appropriate tree species for your street, visit the Forestry Division's webpage at: [www.mountainview.gov/street\\_tree](http://www.mountainview.gov/street_tree).

## **STREETS AND SIDEWALKS**

### **Who Is Responsible for the Street and Sidewalk in Front of My House?**

The Public Works Department oversees any issues related to the public street in front of a house. This area may be City-owned or used by the City for street purposes, and is called the City right-of-way. It includes street paving, street trees, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and streetlights as well as utility lines under the street pavement.

Permits from the Public Works Department are required anytime a property owner wishes to do work in the right-of-way, including widening or relocating a driveway, repairing sidewalks, etc. The Public Works Department also requires permits for private structures, such as fences, that

encroach into the public right-of-way. The Public Works Department can be contacted at 650-903-6311 or by e-mail at [public.works@mountainview.gov](mailto:public.works@mountainview.gov).

## **PERMITS**

### **When Do I Need Permits?**

Permits must always be obtained prior to construction. We encourage you to speak with City staff early to ensure you are informed and knowledgeable prior to drafting plans, hiring an architect or contractor, and prior to construction.

*Planning permits* are required when a property owner is seeking a specific exception to the development standards or has unique components of their project or site that requires additional review.

The following is a list of planning permits that may be required:

- *Historic Permit*—If you are proposing exterior improvements or an addition to an existing historic home;
- *Creekside Permit*—If you are proposing an addition or new construction on a lot 10,000 square feet or larger adjacent to a creek;
- *Variance Permit*—If you are seeking an exception from the development standards due to a unique lot where it is infeasible to construct a home similarly found in the neighborhood;
- *Nonconforming Permit*—If you are proposing a conforming addition on a property with an existing

nonconforming single-family home;  
and

- **Fence Exception**—If you wish to install a 7' fence along a shared property line.

If you need assistance determining if your project needs a Planning permit or would like additional information regarding any of the listed permits, please contact the Planner-on-duty by phone at 650-903-6306, by e-mail at [planning.division@mountainview.gov](mailto:planning.division@mountainview.gov), or in-person by visiting the Public Counter. Additional information can also be found on the City's Planning Division webpage at [www.mountainview.gov/planning](http://www.mountainview.gov/planning).

**Building Permits** are required for all new construction, including most interior and exterior improvements to an existing single-family home. Please contact the Building Inspection Division to determine the necessary permits for your project, which may include plumbing, electrical, mechanical, or building permits. Building Inspection Division staff is available by phone at 650-903-6313, by e-mail at [building@mountainview.gov](mailto:building@mountainview.gov), or in-person at the Public Counter. Additional information is available on the City's Building Inspection Division webpage at [www.mountainview.gov/building](http://www.mountainview.gov/building).

**Public Works Permits** may be required for any work in the City right-of-way, including new driveway curb cuts, upgrades to utility lines to serve a single-family home, etc. For questions, please

contact the Engineer-on-duty by phone at 650-903-6311, by e-mail at [public.works@mountainview.gov](mailto:public.works@mountainview.gov), or in-person by visiting the Public Counter at City Hall. Additional information is available on the City's Public Works webpage at: [www.mountainview.gov/landdevelopment](http://www.mountainview.gov/landdevelopment).

Public Counter appointments may be required to speak with Planning or Building staff. The Public Counter is open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. During COVID-19 City Hall Closure, all Public Counter services are being conducted over the phone or electronically.