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**TOWN OF HILLSBOROUGH**  
*California*

**Design Review of Fences, Walls, Entry Gates,  
Columns and/or Light Posts along the street**

July 2021

**Design Approval Required:**

Design Review Approval is required before submitting an application for a Building Permit (which is also required) for the following:

- All fences, walls, columns and gates (regardless of height) that are along or within the street setback(s) of a property (typically the front 25 or 30 feet of the lot along the street); and,
- All fences and walls over six feet in height (regardless of location).

The Administrative Design Review process typically take 2-3 weeks to complete, unless revisions to the project proposal are required to meet minimum requirements of the Hillsborough Municipal Code.

**Public Notification:**

Projects reviewed administratively require public notification to all adjacent property owners (as provided by the Building and Planning Divisions), which are those properties contiguous to the subject property (including properties separated by public rights-of-way)\*. Public notices will be completed by Planning staff on the day of application submission. The Public Notice period shall be the 15 calendar days from mailing date. The mailing will consist of a Public Notice with attached reduced size plans; one set must be submitted with the application for mailing purposes of the public notification.

*\* Please note that if your project is determined (by the Planning Director) to have little or no negative visual effect, the public notice requirement may be waived, according to HMC Section 2.12.070(A) (2).*

**Building Permit Required:**

All other fences, walls, gates and columns require only a Building Permit prior to installation, unless they are part of a larger project. For Building Permits, submit three sets of construction drawings (including a site plan and footing details) to the Building Division. Fees are based on valuation.

## Guidelines and Standards

### Design Guidelines:

- Front fencing and gates are considered to be the “front door” to the community; as a result, these applications are reviewed in detail and are expected to meet high standards of design.
- Most successful are simple designs that are compatible with (but do not necessarily match) those in the neighborhood that are well-designed.

### Maximum Height:

- The fence height most often approved is six feet (including the light fixtures, if they are mounted on top of posts).
- The maximum height permitted by ordinance is eight feet. For fencing, gates and/or columns along the street, this eight-foot height is measured from the surface of the street, or from the ground at the front property line, whichever is higher. In other words, if a driveway slopes up from the street, the height of the fencing may not exceed eight feet from the ground at the front property line.

### Driveway Gates:

- Driveway gates must be set back at least 15 feet from the street to allow a vehicle to pull safely off the street in front of the gate. In some instances, additional space may be required.
- The minimum width of driveways (space between the posts, columns, etc.) is 14 feet.

### Location:

- The Municipal Code prohibits private construction in the public right-of-way without prior approval from the City Council; therefore, all fences, walls and posts should be installed within the private property boundaries.
- For proposals where any portion of the planned outdoor fixture is or will be located within the right-of-way, the applicant must first obtain a right-of-way fixture approval from the city council, as set forth in [HMC Section 12.12.030](#).
- All plans must accurately document the location of the property line in relation to the proposed fencing; the location of neighboring fencing is not necessarily an accurate representation of the property line.

### Design of Fencing Along a Street:

- Fencing design should be compatible with well-designed fencing in the neighborhood.
- If the house is visible from the street, the scale, materials and quality of design of the fencing should also be compatible with those of the house.
- Fencing should be screened with landscaping—locate the landscaping between the street (or parking strip) and the fence.
- To reduce visual clutter, incorporate house numbers (min. 4” high) and mailbox (if it is approved by the U.S. Post Office) into the design and provide details in your plans.

period follows your Planning approval. You may submit to the Building Division after the appeal period ends.

- Be sure to provide a clear line-of-sight for exiting driveways; consult the Public Works Department to be sure you will be able to meet the minimum sight distance requirements.

**Cyclone Fencing:** If cyclone fencing is used, it should have a vinyl coating (black or green). Please specify the color on the plans.

**Wrought Iron Fencing and Gates:** Keep the designs simple. Gold-tipped spear features are not permitted.

**Lights and Light Fixtures:**

- No more than two posts along each street frontage should have light fixtures.
- Fixtures should have a maximum of 60 watts and be identified as such on the plans.
- Address numerals should not be internally illuminated.
- Face-mounted light fixtures, rather than top-mounted, are preferred.

**Parking Strip:**

Whenever work is done in the public right-of-way, the Code requires installation of a parking strip if none already exists. The ADRB often expects the development of a parking strip as part of the project, even if it isn't required by the Code. See attached handout for specifications.

# Fences, Walls, Entry Gates, Columns and/or Light Posts

## *Application Requirements*

Only complete applications can be accepted. Included here are the minimum requirements for most applications; however, each project is different. Rely on your professional judgment and expertise to ensure that your project is adequately and accurately described in your plans. If you have questions, call the Planning Division, 375-7422. Use whatever scale you believe is necessary for legibility.

A complete application will contain the following items:

1. **Application:** The attached application form completely filled out and signed (original signature, not a fax) by the current property owner.
2. **Plans:** One plan set of full-size plans (standard sheet size is 24" x 36"; larger plans will not be accepted). Plans must be collated, stapled, folded, and addressed on the outside as indicated in the attached handout. Each plan page shall contain the property address, date of the plans, and the name, address and phone number of the person who prepared the plans. Plan set should include:
  - A. **Location Map:** On the first page of your plans, show the project site in relation to neighboring properties. Show addresses of properties, names of streets, landmarks, etc. See example on page 6.
  - B. **Site Plan:** Drawn to scale (with scale noted) and fully dimensioned (include dimensions of driveway width, location of key features from property line or other landmark, such as the edge of pavement, back of curb, etc.).
    - Property lines and easements (if any) must be clearly and accurately indicated.
    - Show relative location of the street, adjoining lots, key features (existing posts, trees, mailbox, etc.).
    - Show the proposed locations (with dimensions) and sizes of fencing, posts, etc.
    - Include specifics (materials, finishes, colors, etc.) on all proposed hardscape.
    - Include details such as the swings on gates, location of keypads, etc.
    - For proposals along streets, clearly show the property lines, curb, gutter, and parking strip. Dimension these elements and indicate whether they are existing or new.
    - For proposals including work within the public right-of-way, documentation showing that a revocable encroachment permit has been issued by the Town shall be submitted.
  - C. **Elevations:**
    - For fencing along street frontages, dimensioned elevations of the full length of the proposed fencing are required.
    - For fences along a common property line, only a representative section is required.
    - Show a typical section at a larger scale for detail, if necessary.
    - Show the relationship between the fencing and the actual site grade.
    - Height dimensions from the ground and from the street grade must be provided for all columns, gates, and fencing along a street.
    - Specify finishes and colors.

D. **Details:**

- ❑ Provide sufficient detail, such as the sizes and shapes of the horizontal and vertical members and other design features.
- ❑ Wrought Iron: indicate sizes, shapes, spacing and color (flat back, glossy black, verde gris, etc.).
- ❑ Columns: provide information regarding the cap detail, etc. If the column contains a mailbox, include it and the house numerals (min. 4" in height) in elevation.
- ❑ Show architectural light fixtures (low-level landscape lighting need not be shown): draw the fixture to scale and attach a manufacturer's cut sheet to each plan set; the cut sheet must specify the dimensions, finish and maximum wattage (no more than 60 watts) of the fixture.

E. **Landscaping:**

- ❑ Show existing landscaping (to remain and to be removed), with sizes (show actual, rather than stylized, canopies for trees) and species indicated.
- ❑ For new plant material, include species (botanical and common names), sizes rates of growth (fast, medium, slow), spacing, and total numbers for each plant material.
- ❑ Trees – For all trees (12" in diameter or greater) to be removed and for all existing pine trees within the public right-of-way and front setback area, provide an arborist report and incorporate the recommendations into the plan. Provide a copy of the arborist report with each plan set.

3. **Photos:** To the set of plans, attach one set of photos showing the proposed location of the fencing and/or posts. Snapshots and color photocopies are acceptable; Polaroid photos are not. Attach a photo key if there will be any question as to the location from which each photo was taken.
4. **Samples:** If you are proposing to use any unique or special materials or colors, provide a materials/sample board (no larger than 8.5" x 11").
5. **Fee:** The fee for an application for only gates and/or columns (including fencing along a street) is \$481.00. A supplemental fee of \$163.00 will be collected to cover staff costs, materials and postage for the Public Notification process. If more than one preliminary staff review is required, or if there is a required revision, additional fees will be charged to cover the Town's costs.
6. **Public Notification:** Public notices will be completed and mailed by Planning staff on the day of application submission. The Public Notice period shall be the 15 calendar days from mailing date. The mailing shall include the Public Notice with attached reduced size plans; one set must be submitted with the application for mailing purposes to the Planning Division.

When the plans and the application form are complete, submit the application package, along with the filing fee, to the Planning Division for review. A complete package must be submitted or your application will be deemed incomplete. A 10 day appeal period follows your Planning approval. You may submit to the Building Division after the appeal period ends.

**Design Review of Fences, Walls, Entry Gates, Columns and/or Light Posts along the street**

**Application Form**

*(Please Type or Print Legibly)*

Address of Site: \_\_\_\_\_

**Authorization of property owner(s):** In signing this application, I/we, as property owner(s) have full legal capacity to, and hereby do, authorize the filing of this application. I/we understand that conditions of approval are binding. I/we agree to be bound by those conditions, subject only to the right to object at the hearing or during the appeal period.

Please circle: Mr. and Mrs. / Mr. / Mrs. / Ms. / Dr.

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street or P.O. Box)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(City, State and Zip Code)

Phone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Project Designer/Contractor:** \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street or P.O. Box)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(City, State and Zip Code)

**TOWN OF HILLSBOROUGH BUSINESS LICENSE #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CALIFORNIA STATE LICENSE #:** \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Attachments: Authorization Form, General Data Sheets, Location Map, & Folding Diagram**