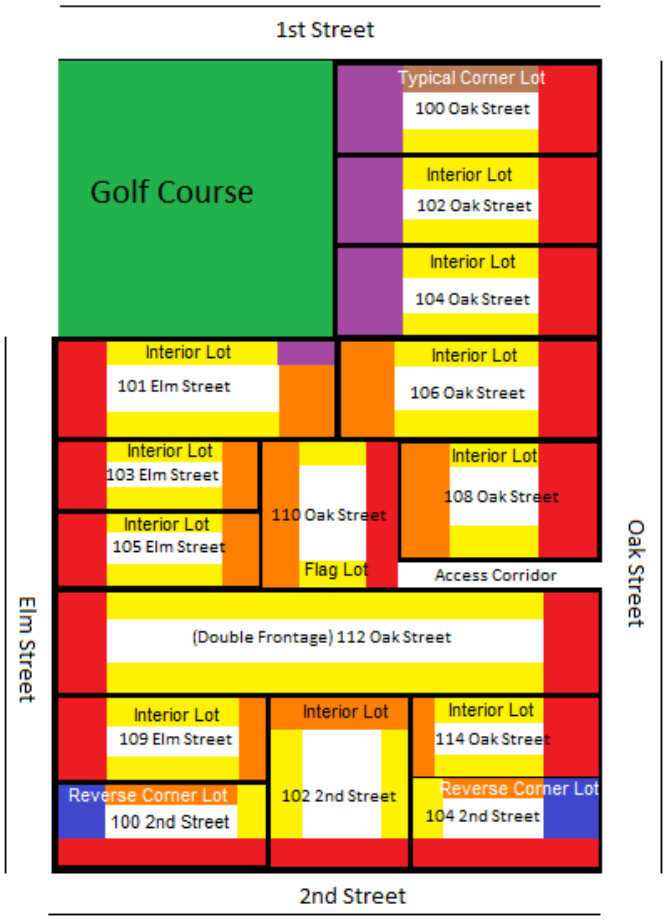
City of Lago Vista
Fence Worksheet

Lago Vista Code of Ordinances and Current Adopted Codes

What Kind of property do you have?



Front Yard Setback*

A up to 6' wrought Iron or 4' picket or 4' rail fence may be in the front yard setback. Outside the 25' setback any fence under 6' and under fence may be used.

Rear Yard Setback

Any fence is allowed.

Reverse Street Side Setback*

A up to 6' wrought Iron or 4' picket or 4' rail fence may be in the reverse street side setback. Outside the 25' setback any fence under 6' and under fence may be used.

Side Yard Setback

Any fence may be used in a typical side yard setback.

Golf Course Rear Yard Setback

Up to 6' wrought iron, Picket, or rail fences may be used in the rear yard setback adjacent to a golf course. Outside the 25' rear setback any 6' and under fence may be used.

Typical Street Side*

A up to 6' wrought Iron or 4' picket or 4' rail fence may be in the typical street side setback. Outside the 15' setback any fence under 6' and under fence may be used.

*Property adjacent to streets must account for the Right of Way that would add anywhere from 15' and over from the edge of road measurement.
Note 1: Setback dimensions may vary.
Note 2: Construction that will hamper drainage may not be place in the Drainage Easement no matter the location.

What's the difference between a "Reverse Side Setback" and "Typical Side Setback"?

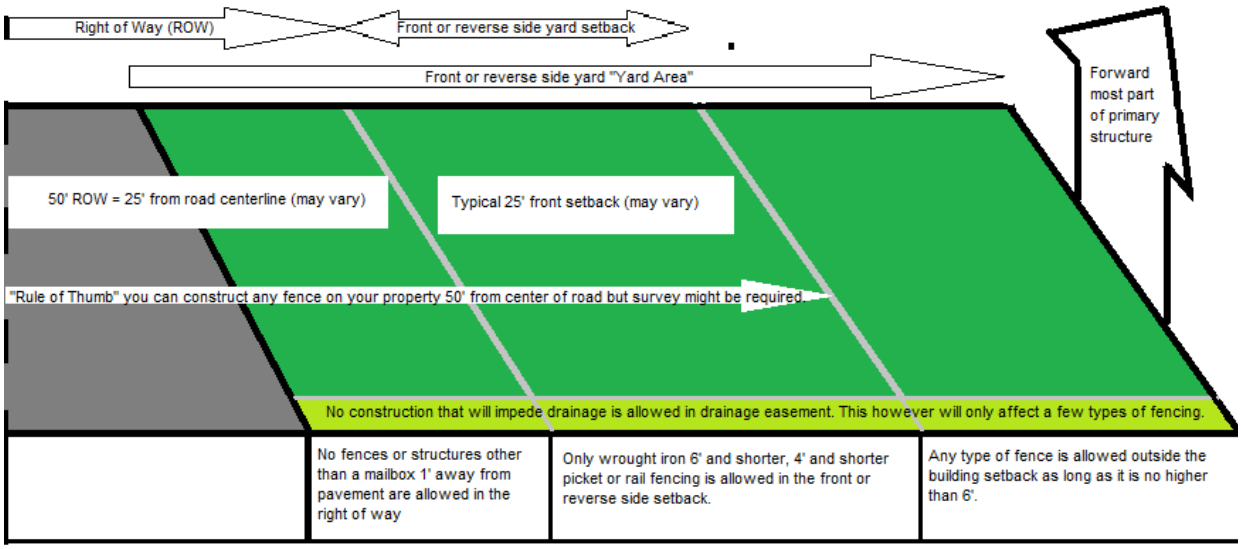
"Reverse Side Setback" shares its street side with other properties that use that same street as their frontage. In order to make all the setbacks consistent it is necessary for the reverse side setback properties to respect the front setbacks of their neighbors. In the diagram note 100, 102, and 104 2nd street all front on 2nd street. Even though 100 2nd Street doesn't front on Elm Street it has to respect the front setbacks of 101, 103, 105 and 109 Elm as well as the double frontage of 112 Oak. In addition, 104 2nd must respect the front setbacks of the properties fronting on Oak.

"Typical Side Setback" as with 100 Oak street in the diagram, shows the residence having no neighbors fronting Oak street, therefore they may utilize the 15' setback for a Typical Side Setback.

What is a Right of Way?

All municipalities have a right of way reserved as part of their roadways. These rights of ways are utilized for utilities, drainage, expansion, etc. and are not owned by owner of the addressed property. The right of way starts at the center of the roadway in most cases. In Lago Vista typical right of ways in residential districts are 50', meaning the measurement extends 25' from the center of the road into the property. In most cases that means 10-15' from the edge of the pavement is dedicated right of way. So, a front setback of 25' really appears more like 35-40'. But more importantly for fences it means the fence may never be installed in that right of way, which might be 10-15' from the edge of the road.

Front and Reverse Side Yard Setback Diagram



What Types of Fences May I Use?

The most popular types of fences in Lago Vista are Privacy and Wrought Iron but there are several other common types as well as some less seen options, here are just a few. For additionally approved fencing please view the City of Lago Vistas Code of Ordinances at The City of Lago Vista website at www.lagovistatexas.org under "Our Government" and "Code of Ordinances", or just look over the section uploaded to the Development Services Fence Folder.

Privacy (or Stockade)

Typical Privacy or referred to as “stockade” fencing in the Lago Vista Ordinances is considered the best option for creating a private setting on your property and works well for keeping pets and children in the yard and wildlife out. When new or maintained this type of fence is a very attractive option but over time can take significant upkeep. As wood deteriorates pets can work their way through broken and damaged boards. Galvanized steel posts are recommended instead of wooden posts due to the likelihood the wood post will rot before the fences desired lifespan is met. Gate hinges and locks often wear out and need adjusting. Privacy fences block wind which in the Texas heat is more a negative than positive. Additionally, consider this type of fence blocks your view of the landscape as well as others into your property.

Privacy fence requirements:

a. Only allowed outside the setbacks in the front yard, reverse side lot, a typical side lot, and a rear yard adjacent to a golf course. It is allowed bordering the sides and rear (exception adjacent to golf course) of an interior lot. Privacy fences may be a maximum 6’ measured from the ground.
b. May use steel, wooden, or stone posts with wood cross bracing. All posts and beams need to be installed on the inside of the fence.
c. *Can be used for a pool barrier if taller than 4’ but spacing between pickets may be no greater than 4”, there may be no accessible diagonal bracing at less than a 45-degree angle and no space between cutouts 1 ¾” or greater. Horizontal members facing the exterior must be spaced 45” or greater.

*See additional pool barrier notes page 10

Common Privacy Fence Designs

Typical with Steel Posts



Shadow Box



Fancy



Horizontal



Wrought Iron

Wrought Iron fences are the most flexible type of fencing and can be installed in any location outside of the Right of Way. Wrought Iron fences are no longer actual solid wrought iron but manufactured tubing and powder coated to prevent rusting or deterioration. Wrought Iron is a good choice if wanting a durable long-term investment given it stands up to the elements far better than wood. You may use a wrought iron fence up to 6' in height and it works well keeping pets and children in the yard and wildlife out. With wrought iron you do not gain the privacy advantage of the privacy fence, but you will be able to benefit from cooling winds and have better views of the surrounding landscape.

Wrought Iron Fence Requirements:

a. Allowed anywhere a fence is allowed, including it the rear setback along golf courses but must be no taller than 6'.
b. Open spaces between pickets must be equal or wider than the picket. All posts, rails, and supports must be to interior.
c. *In order to be used for pool barrier must be 4' or greater in height with no more than 45" between horizontal protrusions or bracing facing outside the barrier. The maximum spacing between bars may not exceed 4'. The space between any cutouts should not exceed 1 ¾". Diagonal members must be 45 degrees or greater and not create an opening greater than 1 ¾".

*See additional pool barrier notes page 10

Common Wrought Iron Designs

4' Wrought Iron



6' Wrought Iron



With "Puppy Guard"



Ornamental



Chain-Link

Chain-link fencing has proven to be one of the more durable types of fencing over the years. It adds good visibility and access to breezes much like a wrought iron fence. Chain link is unmatched for keeping kids in the yard and active pets from getting out our wildlife getting in. Variations are available to create a privacy type fence but at a loss of blocking winds and visibility.

Chain-Link Fence Requirements.

a. Only allowed outside the setbacks in the front yard, reverse side lot, a typical side lot, and a rear yard adjacent to a golf course. Is allowed bordering the rear and sides of an interior lot (exception adjacent to golf course). May be no taller than 6'.
b. All posts and bracing must be metal and placed on the interior. Must use metal top rail and minimum 14-gauge wire along the bottom of the chain-link.
c. *When used as a pool barrier must have squares no greater than 1 ¼", fence height no less than 4', and no horizontal elements or bracing to the exterior less than 45" apart. Diagonal members must be 45 degrees or greater and not create an opening greater than 1 ¾". No gaps more than 4" are allowed.

*See additional pool barrier notes page 10

Common Chain Link Designs

Galvanized



Coated



Privacy (slats)



Privacy (net)



Picket Fence

A picket fence is somewhat the medium between a wrought Iron and privacy fence. Generally constructed of wood it is characterized by having open spaces between the pickets at least the width of the picket being used. Picket fences create a more rustic look that is more easily built on site than a wrought iron and while sharing some of the benefits the wrought iron fence it suffers the downsides of being constructed of wood material. Picket fences may be placed anywhere on the property (not in the right of way) and in some cases up to 6'.

Picket Fence requirements:

a. Allowed inside the setbacks in the front yard, reverse side lot, a typical side lot at 4' maximum height. Additionally, a picket fence up to 6' may be installed in the rear yard setbacks (including adjacent to golf course) and interior yard side setbacks or outside the setbacks of the front, typical side, and reverse side yards.
b. Open spaces between pickets must be equal or wider than the picket. All posts and bracing must be and placed on the interior.
c. *In order to be used for pool barrier must be 4' or greater in height with no more than 45" between horizontal protrusions or bracing facing outside the barrier. The maximum spacing between pickets may not exceed 4'. The space between any cutouts should not exceed 1 ¾". Diagonal members must be 45 degrees or greater and not create an opening greater than 1 ¾".

*See additional pool barrier notes page 10

Common Picket Fence Designs

Standard



Painted



Scalloped



Other



Rail

Rail fencing is primarily used to mark boundaries and keep large livestock enclosed. Rail fencing will not keep children and pets in and wildlife out. In urban settings it is more an ornamental option than practical one. It however, like the picket, may be used in a variety of areas.

Rail Fencing Requirements:

a. Allowed inside the setbacks in the front yard, reverse side lot, a typical side lot at 4’ maximum height. Additionally, a picket fence up to 6’ may be installed in the rear yard setbacks (including adjacent to golf course) and interior yard side setbacks or outside the setbacks of the front, typical side, and reverse side yards.
b. All posts and bracing must be and placed on the interior. Open spaces between rails must be equal or wider than the picket.
c. *Rail fences cannot be used as pool barriers.

*See additional pool barrier notes page 10

Common Rail Designs

Split Rail



Lumber



Cross Rail



Other



Wire

Wire or “Hog Wire” fencing is very versatile with many of the characteristics of a wrought iron fence with a more rustic look. Wire fences work well for keeping pets and children in and wildlife out. Wood posts and frame are an option but might have a more limited lifespan than the metal or stone post options.

Wire Fence Requirements:

a. Only allowed outsid*e* the setbacks in the front yard, reverse side lot, typical side lot, and a rear yard adjacent to a golf course. Is allowed bordering the rear and sides of an interior lot (exception adjacent to golf course). May be no taller than 6’.
b. Must use wire mesh 14 gauge or heavier and may use wood, stone, or metal posts and wood or metal crossbars. All posts and braces must be placed on the interior.
c. *When used as a pool barrier must have squares no greater that are greater than 1 ¾” and fence height no less than 4’, and no horizontal elements or bracing to the exterior less than 45” apart. Diagonal members must be 45 degrees or greater and not create an opening greater than 1 ¾”. No gaps more than 4” are allowed.

*See additional pool barrier notes page 10

Common Wire Fence Designs

Paneled



Wood Frame



Cross Rail



Other



Restrictions Other Than Previously Noted

All structures placed on residential properties falls under certain guidelines. It is important you gather as much information prior to making your final decision on what type of fence to use. Below are a few points to note.

Barbed Wire Fence:
Not Allowed.

Drainage Easements (DE):
Drainage Easements are common along the border of all properties and therefore can easily be impacted by fences. Fences like masonry have a high likelihood to cause adverse conditions if placed in a drainage easement while a wrought iron would have no effect. Often property owners may want to build a footing under their fence either for the purpose of diverting water or just for security, however this too can affect drainage and will not be allowed in a drainage easement. Know your property and even if there is no drainage easement where you want to place a fence but you are aware of issues with drainage in that area, avoid making a bad thing worse and diverting the water somewhere it can do more damage.

Maintenance:
Conforming Fences- It is the responsibility of the property owner to maintain the condition of the fence. Permits are not required to do typical maintenance.

Nonconforming Fences:
A nonconforming fence is a fence that does not meet the current Code of Ordinances even if when installed it did meet them. Once a nonconforming fence is damaged and requires 50% or more to be replaced, it is moved for reasons other than road or utility work, or the fence has been heavily altered, it requires to be permitted and meet the current Code.

Permitting:
All newly constructed fences except an electric fence, must first obtain a permit from The City of Lago Vista.

*Pool Barrier Requirements:
Pool Barriers are an issue into themselves and although fencing is part of a barrier the fences themselves take on different requirements as a “Pool Barrier” then they do as a “Fence”.
Below Are some of the universal requirements to consider when planning a pool barrier.

a. Spas and hot tubs with a lockable safety cover that complies with ASTM F 1346 is exempt from barrier requirements.
b. Swimming pools with a powered safety cover that complies with ASTM F 1346 is exempt from barrier requirements.
c. Pool barriers (such as fencing) are required to be 48” tall for a distance 3’ in front of the barrier. Additionally, no structure that can be used to climb on may be placed in front of the barrier less than 3’.
d. There can be no more than 2” between the ground below the barrier and the bottom of the barrier for soft surfaces and 4” for hard surfaces.
e. Solid barrier surfaces can not have protrusions, handholds, or footholds.
f. A barrier shall not be less than 20” from pools edge.
g. Pedestrian gates shall open outward, be self-closing, and have a self-latching device.
h. The latch release mechanism shall be elevated at least 54” from grade. Where the release mechanism is located less than 54” from grade it should be located on the interior and at least 3” below the top of the gate.
i. Double gates shall have one leaf secured and have a not less than 18” barrier with no greater than ½” openings.
j. Service gates shall always stay locked.
k. Doors and windows below 48” opening into the pool barrier require a pool alarm approved per UL 2017, sounding an 85DB warning at 10’. The deactivation switch must be 54” or higher.

The “Neighbor down the street” argument:
Lago Vista like all communities has had numerous changes to the ordinances as well as varying levels of enforcement over the years. Many fences were installed prior to any regulation and others were installed unpermitted but the City may have no way of back track these and can do little about it, unfortunately. It is best to just work with the current ordinances and permitting standards rather than worry about citing the neighboring non-conforming fences.