

CITY OF PALOS VERDES ESTATES
SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES
Updated February 2021

General Requirements

Floor Area

Maximum allowable floor area (including the garage) = the smaller of 30% (lot size) + 1750 or 50% (lot size) Example: lot size = 10,000 sq. ft. maximum floor area = 30% (10,000) + 1750 = 4,750 sq. ft.

Building Coverage

Maximum allowable building coverage = 30% (lot size) Example: lot size = 10,000 sq. ft. maximum building coverage = 30% (10,000) = 3,000 sq. ft. The percentage of the lot covered by the building outline, as defined as a structure per PVEMC 17.08.400.

Total Lot Coverage

Maximum allowable lot coverage (building, pool, driveways, patio, etc....) = 65% (lot size) Example: lot size = 10,000 sq. ft. maximum lot coverage = 65% (10,000) = 6,500 sq. ft. The percentage of the lot which is covered between the ground and the sky. This quantity shall include foundations, decks, patios, porches, pools, roofs, overhangs, chimneys, trellises, gazebos, driveways, walkways, trash yards, sports courts and other similar improvements. This quantity shall also include all areas included in building coverage.

Garages

Each single-family residence shall have at least two (2) accessible automobile storage spaces in an enclosed garage. Lots less than 12,000 sq. ft. in area shall not have more than three (3) garage spaces.

Building Height

"The maximum building height in the R-1 zone shall be two and one-half stories; provided, however, that in no event shall any building exceed thirty feet in height at any point above natural grade at that point; except, that on a down-slope lot with a single street frontage, when the slope of the lot measured from a plane defined by the two front corners of the lot and the natural grade at either of the rear corners of the building exceeds two and one-half to one, the height of the building may be one additional story and may be thirty-five feet in height at any point above natural grade at that point, so long as it does not exceed a height of sixteen feet above the centerline of the street directly in front of that same point." (Municipal Code Section 18.04.040)

Soils and/or Geology Reports

Soils and/or geology reports may be required for a project where existing conditions warrant the study of the subsurface conditions on the lot. Although the requirement for a report varies due to the varying soils and geologic conditions in Palos Verdes Estates, new homes, additions to bluff top or hillside homes, and second story and substantial additions generally require a report. If you are unsure whether or not your project requires a report, it is recommended that you apply for a preliminary review to have this determination made before submitting your final plans to the City.

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Setbacks

Information regarding setbacks is available at the Homes Association. (310-373-6721)

1. Incidental architectural features, including, but not limited to, eaves, fire places and bay windows, may intrude into a side yard setback, provided such intrusion does not exceed forty (40) percent of the side yard setback distance otherwise required by this section, or five (5) feet, whichever is less.
2. The setbacks for residentially zoned property shall remain as set forth in the covenants of record applicable to the lot as of July 27, 1993, unless a variance for an alternative setback is obtained.

Fences

No fence or wall in the R1 or RM zones shall exceed the following heights:

1. Any fence or wall in the minimum required setback adjacent to a public street shall not exceed 3 feet, 6 inches in height. Setbacks from an alley adjacent to the rear or side of a lot are not included in this requirement.
2. All other fences or walls shall not exceed 6 feet, 6 inches in height.

Outdoor Lighting-

Light bulbs shall not exceed 150 watts each; except that the aggregated of all outdoor lights shall not exceed 1,000 watts for any lot less than 15,000 sq. ft. On larger lots, an additional 100 watts may be used for each 1,500 sq. ft. (or major portion thereof) in excess of 15,000 sq. ft. but not to exceed a total wattage of 2,000.

Sports Courts-

A sports court is any hardscape area of dimensions exceeding 20' x 30', excluding pools and driveways used exclusively for access to a garage. A sports court requires Planning Commission approval and must conform to the following general requirements.

1. No more than 25% of the lot shall be covered by the court.
2. No portion of the sports court hardscape shall be closer than 7 ft. from any property line except, if adjacent to City Parkland, it may be 5 ft.
3. A minimum distance of 50 ft. from any part of an adjacent residential building is required.
4. A landscape plan has been submitted as part of the application.
5. The applicant has made provisions to minimize the noise impact.
6. No retaining walls are to exceed 8 ft. on the downhill side or more than 10 ft. on the uphill side.
7. No fences surrounding the court located near public streets or adjacent residences are to exceed 8 ft. as measured from the court surface.
8. Wind screening and lighting are not permitted.

Neighborhood Compatibility

Certain development projects are subject to the approval of the Planning Commission per the City's Neighborhood Compatibility Ordinance. Please review the separate document entitled "Single Family Residential Guidelines" to fully understand this process.