



Aja Tibbs
Senior Planner
City of Aurora
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Aurora, CO 80012

RE: Painted Prairie Master Plan Amendment with Adjustments

Dear Aja,

We are pleased to submit our Amendment for the Master Plan. We have discussed with the city and incorporated the City's initial feedback.

As you are aware, Painted Prairie has been an endeavor that has been underway for over a decade, and we are excited to continue working with the City on the project. Painted Prairie is a traditional neighborhood development organized around a highly connected street and pedestrian network. Located adjacent to the Gaylord Rockies Resort & Convention Center and near Denver International Airport, Painted Prairie will offer an exceptional experience for new homeowners and visitors alike.

The members of the development team, along with city staff, have been working on a revised fencing strategy to make clear the design intentions for a cohesive and simplified approach to fencing. The impetus for this revised fencing strategy has largely been a result of on site observations of multiple fencing inconsistencies as Phase 1 and Phase 2 are under construction. As part of this effort, members of the development team along with members from numerous departments at the city went on a bus tour to see first hand the fencing concerns and also to identify positive mitigating solutions. One of the overall lessons learned on this tour was the UDO is providing standards and design solutions mostly from a two dimensional plan view, and can't account for all the three dimensional and site specific elements such as the narrow lots and alleys at Painted Prairie (which are key elements to the success of the community). To remedy these fencing inconsistencies a re-tooling of the documents guiding the fencing strategy and construction is required. The over-arching objective is a consistent fencing approach with well designed and properly constructed fence types.

While the amended master plan sheets provide detail of the revised fencing strategy and fence types, here is a summary of the adjustments:

- The demarcation fence was initially 3ft tall, and three options were provided including vertical picket and horizontal open rail options. It was mainly to be located adjacent to open space and paseos. The revised fencing strategy now provides only one option which is near identical in nature to the demarcation fence provided in the UDO; it is 4ft tall, and open rail. Its application at some open spaces has been revised, and will no longer be used in front yard conditions.
- A front yard fence type was initially not included, however, the demarcation fence was initially used in some front yard fence conditions. The revised fencing strategy now includes a specific front yard fence type, which is intended to be used for lots intentionally designed with the front yard as the primary outdoor space, and additional considerations are included in the amended Master Plan sheets. It is a black narrow picket metal fence and its simplicity reduces its visual prominence.
- The signature fence type remains relatively unchanged. The locations are relatively unchanged as well, with the exception of its additional use as a visual buffer between public right-of-way and townhomes facing perimeter streets.
- The privacy fence initially had four options; two vertical picket and two horizontal. Initially, it was used primarily in-between lots. The revised privacy fence now has only two options; one with vertical pickets, and one with horizontal rails. It will still be used in-between lots, and in side yard conditions for privacy and as a visual buffer.

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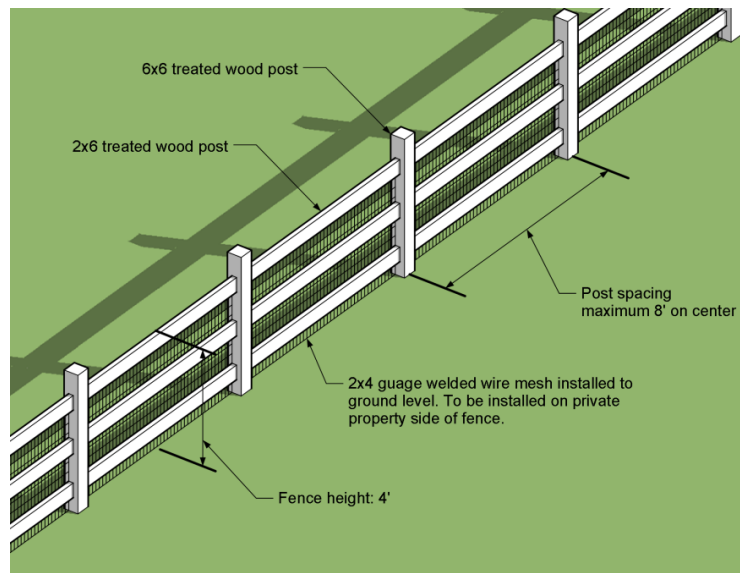
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Again, this is simply a summary of the amendment and detail is provided with-in the amended sheets of the Master Plan. This amendment is only simplifying the number of fence types, removing minor inconsistencies, and making it easier to understand their intended locations. All major adjustments requested and pertaining to this master plan amendment for Painted Prairie are listed below:

MAJOR ADJUSTMENT 1:

Painted Prairie seeks an adjustment from “fences adjacent to open space tracts, trails, and drainage ways shall meet the design standards shown in Figure 4.7-37” (see below), and is requesting the use of 5’ privacy fence for side yards adjacent to dedicated open space.



CONDITIONS:

There are specific conditions through out Painted Prairie where the above UDO fence requirement will be replaced with a different fence type. As discussed with Aja Tibbs and others from the city, this adjustment is only required where fence types do not conform to the UDO at dedicated open space. The conditions are as follows:

- For side yards on dedicated open space, the use of a 5’ privacy fence is being requested
- For front yards of lots on dedicated open space, the use of a 3’ metal picket fence is being requested.
- Specifically, open space demarcation fencing will still be used for lot lines directly adjacent to High Prairie Park, Prairie Retreat Park, and Pioneer Park.

RELEVANT STANDARD:

ARTICLE 146-4 DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Sec.4.7.9 Fence and Wall Regulations

(K) Fences and Walls Along Open Space Tracts, Parks, Reservoirs, Golf Courses, Trails, and Drainage Ways

1. Fences adjacent to open space tracts, parks, trails, and drainage ways shall meet the design standards shown in Figure 4.7-37 and the screening requirements of Section 146-4.7.5.H.2 shall also apply.

MAJOR ADJUSTMENT JUSTIFICATION:

First, it is important to point out the unique approach Painted Prairie is taking to integrate lots into a fine-grain open space system. Creative smaller open spaces through out the community create more lots adjacent to green space, and we see this as adding value to the community. While the UDO provides great guidance for more traditional open space design and community development, an adjustment is necessary where neo-traditional design is part of the vision, such as it is at Painted Prairie.

The intention for the privacy fences for this adjustment is to provide a better quality neighborhood for both residents on lots seeking an adjustment, and also for all residents using the park space adjacent to said lots. The privacy fence at side yards adjacent to dedicated open space will block views into potentially distracting or cluttered side and rear yard areas where grills, yard trimmings, children's play equipment, etc are often kept. Similarly, the side yards for these lots are largely the usable yard space and can have patio space attached to them. Privacy fences in these locations will create a more comfortable living experience for lot owners who will not have their usable yard space and homes exposed to the adjacent and activated park space, nor the sidewalk and street. The fencing required by the UDO is not sufficient in providing privacy for home owners, or screening for park users. Below is an example of the UDO conforming fence which does not provide privacy for the resident of the lot, or a comfortable walking experience.



Mitigating factors for the use of privacy fences at side yard conditions adjacent to dedicated open space will be provided. The privacy fence will only be 5ft tall as opposed to a typical 6ft tall privacy fence. This is only 1ft taller than the UDO demarcation fence. Additionally, enhanced landscaping will be provided as described in the amended sheets at paseo type conditions, and for corner lots. Required enhanced planting is provided with in the amended sheets. The only option for privacy fence in these conditions will be the vertical option which has additional top rail detailing. Along the perimeter open space, the 40' setback from the public right-of-way helps mitigate the "fence-canyon" type effect.

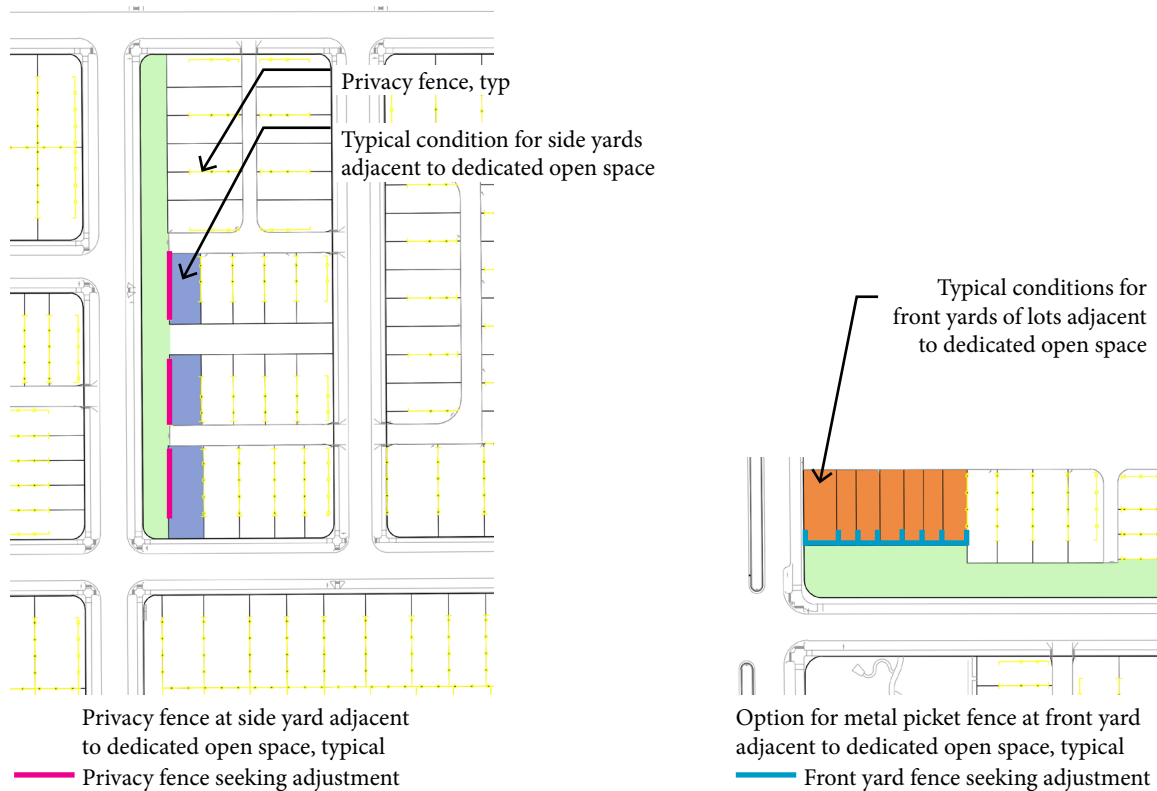
For front yard conditions on lots adjacent to dedicated open space the option for no fence type is being requested, as is the *option* for the use of a 3ft black metal picket fence as decided by the home owner and approved by the Design Review Committee (DRC). Detailed information regarding the option to use a front yard fence is, of course, included in the amended Master Plan sheets. The success of Painted Prairie, and one of its foundational principles of being a traditional neighborhood design, is the neighborhoods interconnected-ness with the abundance of open space. With this emphasis, its residents located on dedicated open space can have the option of using a front yard fence for its practical applications such as demarcating their private front yard, or as space for a dog, among other typical uses. The proposed 3' front yard fence was specifically selected to be simple and reduce its visual prominence so as to maintain the open-ness of the neighborhood. Similarly, homeowners can decide to use no fence, which creates a condition where the adjacent open space will feel like an extension of their yard. With the density of lots intentionally designed for at Painted Prairie, allowing for the sense of a larger front yard is important. The designation of individual lots and their front yard will still be visible by the use of plant material. In this way, the plant material acts as a type of "living front yard fence". Please see below for graphic exhibits.

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TYPICAL LOT CONDITIONS WHERE SIDE AND FRONT YARDS ARE ADJACENT TO DEDICATED OPEN SPACE:



Sincerely,

Brent Martin
Managing Partner
Landscape Architect

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