

What to look for!

Whether you are buying your first or fifth home, buying a new construction or a 40-year-old home, keep these things in mind as you shop:

- ◆ Is the house in move-in condition?
- ◆ Are minor repairs needed?
- ◆ Is the home a “fixer-upper”?
- ◆ Does the house need a complete rehab?

As you go through the home, make notes of what you would like to do (paint, hang window treatments, replace carpet, and wood floors, replace storm doors, etc.).



Building Department Inspection

Inspectors perform an occupancy inspection when a change of occupancy occurs within a dwelling.

Our inspection is a visual, functional inspection. We check to see that sinks, tubs, water faucets, switches, cover plates, smoke alarms, doors, and windows are present and in proper working order. We look for required shut-off valves for gas ranges, water heaters and furnaces, and check drainpipes. We also check the yards, house, driveway, and walkways.

If we find that a severe condition exists, we can request certification that the faulty system or item has been checked by a licensed – and Village of Park Forest registered – plumber, electrician, etc., to ensure its proper operation.

The inspection is very general in nature. The Building Department inspects the home to help ensure it meets housing code. The homeowner should inspect specific items as outlined in this brochure.



Home Buying Guide



Building Department
350 Victory Drive
Park Forest, IL 60466

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Hours: Monday–Friday, 9 am–5 pm

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Remember...

Purchasing a home is one of the biggest investments you will make. If you need more than a 15 or 20 minute walk-through of the house, ask for additional time through your realtor or with the seller.

The Village always recommends the “Buyer-Beware” approach to purchasing a home. You may be more comfortable having a friend or relative review the property with you. This double check may prove to be to your advantage.

A buyer can also hire - at their own expense - a private professional company to perform an inspection. Private inspections cannot be used for Village-required inspections.

For current housing standards, please refer to the Village of Park Forest Code of Ordinances located in Chapter 18—Buildings and Building Regulations at MuniCode.com: https://library.muni_code.com/ill/park_forest/codes/code_of_ordinances or contact the Building Department for more information.



Unified Development Ordinance & Grandfathered Structures

Park Forest has a rich history as a planned community with current structures dating to the 1940s. While developments can last for years, new building codes and development ordinances have been introduced to help ensure the health, safety, and quality of life for our residents.

This means some homes may have grandfathered structures or design features like out of regulation fences, building setbacks, or driveway widths, to name a few.

If this home is going to be a “fixer-upper,” have renovations or upgrades completed, **please be aware** the Village’s unified development ordinance, adopted in 2018, is continually updated to meet the needs of the community.

If you have questions about what the building features can be developed, **please visit the Building Department to learn more.**



195 Washington, Park Forest, Illinois 60466

Home Buying Guide

Key Areas to Check & Inspect

- ❑ **Roof:** Flat or pitched/shingled? How old is the roof? Are there shingle overlays? Has the house been re-roofed? Evidence of a leak (discolored marks on ceiling or in room corners)?
- ❑ **Electrical System:** Wiring age? Does the system offer enough amperage for central air, an electric clothes dryer, or a freezer? Is there electric service to the garage?
- ❑ **Heating System:** Heating system age? Is it energy-efficient? Wall and attic insulated? Where are the heat ducts located (underground or overhead)?
- ❑ **Water Heater:** Water heater age? Energy-efficient? What is the capacity (30 or 50 gallon)? Does the size suit your needs?
- ❑ **Tuck Pointing:** Are there cracks in the mortar, discoloration, or mold?
- ❑ **Driveway & Walkways:** Are there cracks or are they sunken below grade level?
- ❑ **Foundation:** Are there any cracks in the walls?
- ❑ **Gutters:** Is there evidence that water leaks behind the gutters onto the fascia?



Kitchens can include plumbing, electrical, natural gas, and ventilations systems

- ❑ **Windows:** Metal or wood? Evidence of water damage or mold? Do storm windows exist? If the glass is double-pane, is the seal broken (e.g. condensation between the window panes)? Are there screens for windows that open?
- ❑ **Electric Outlets:** Are they painted over or do they have spark marks on them? Do the lights switches work the lights? Do the vent fans work?
- ❑ **Plumbing:** Do faucet handles or drain pipes leak? Is there sufficient water pressure? Are there shut-off valves to the water and gas-supplied appliances?
- ❑ **Walls & Floors:** Are there cracks and/or holes in the walls or ceiling? Are the floor covers torn, buckled or ripped?
- ❑ **Fences:** Do I have fences? How tall are they? Are they within regulation or have they been grandfathered in? Can I build new fences?

What about the yard?

Consider the outside yard areas. Check how the property is graded. Does water flow away from the building? What is the location of the house on the block (highest or lowest point)? Is a sewer cleanout installed? Where are the property lines and any easements? Are trees or bushes that are dying, diseased, or dead? Check for outdoor lights and outlets at the home and if there are streetlights in the area.



Fence and Wall Regulations

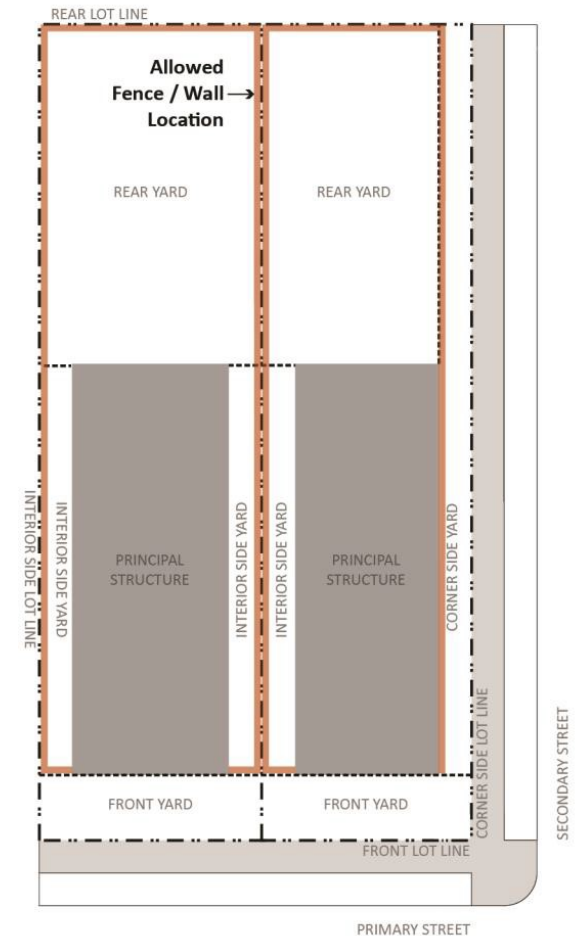
Fences and walls are allowed in the front yard, interior side yard, and rear yard, however, **corner side yard fences and walls are only allowed between the front façade of the principal structure and the rear lot line** (see graphic at right).

Maximum Heights

- ◆ Three feet in front and corner lot side yards
- ◆ Eight feet in the interior side or rear yards.

Materials and Construction

- ◆ **Allowed materials:** fences and walls may be constructed of treated wood, simulated wood, vinyl, metal, chain link with or without slats, metal mesh, corrugated metal, brick, stone, cinderblock, and concrete block.
- ◆ **Prohibited Materials:** Fences shall not be constructed of barbed wire, or razor wire except in C-3 or M Zoning Districts.
- ◆ **Construction:** Both sides of a fence or wall shall be similar in construction, design, and appearance. The finished side of a fence or wall shall face outward from the lot so that all posts are located on the property owner's side of the fence or wall.



Example of Allowed Fence or Wall Locations

