

RETAINING WALL REFERENCE GUIDE



This document is intended for guidance only and does not relieve property owners of the requirements of the Municipal Code Article XII Retaining Wall Standards. *City code references follow each statement below.

PERMIT REQUIRED	All retaining walls 2.5' and higher must obtain a Miscellaneous Improvements building permit from the Community Development Services Department. However, walls designed as part of a primary structure authorized by a building permit are exempted.(107-339)(a)
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EXEMPTIONS (107-339)(c)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Retaining walls less than two and one-half (2.5) feet in height, unless such retaining walls separate land from bodies of water. (107-339)(c)(1) 2. Retaining walls designed as part of a primary structure authorized by a valid building permit.(107-339)(c)(2) 3. Retaining walls designed as part of a public capital improvement project. (107-339)(c)(3)
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PERMIT SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS (107-341)(a-d)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completed application and permit fee. 2. Site Plans, drawn to a standard engineering scale should depict: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Property lines; b. Existing and proposed structure locations; c. Existing walls on or adjacent to the property that will remain in place; d. Existing walls that will be replaced, if applicable; e. Proposed wall locations; f. Septic drainage field location, if applicable; g. Drainage ways and drainage easements on or adjacent to the property; and h. Utilities and utility easements on or adjacent to the property. 3. Details: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Dimensions and height of the wall; b. Cross section(s) of the wall including footing design; c. Elevations above and below the wall; and d. Proposed wall material. 	DESIGN PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS
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GENERAL DESIGN REQUIREMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Prohibited Materials</u>: Walls that will come in contact with bodies of water <i>may not</i> be constructed of treated wood or railroad ties. (107-340)(d) ▪ <u>Slopes</u>: Slopes of 1:1 or steeper will be treated as a retaining wall and comply with the regulations. (107-340)(a) ▪ <u>Drainage</u>: All walls must provide a means alleviating hydrostatic pressure and provide a means of water conveyance. (107-340)(c) ▪ <u>Safety Railings</u>: Railings <i>may</i> be required for walls 2.5' or more in height, depending on specific site conditions and applicable building codes. (107-340)(b)
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QUESTIONS?	<p>Community Development Services Department 616 W. Lancashire Blvd. Bella Vista, Arkansas 72715 (479) 268-4980</p>
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SEAWALL (107-340)(g)	Minimum Elevations for Retaining Walls Separating Land from Bodies of Water: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retaining walls that separate land from bodies of water must maintain a minimum elevation of twenty-four (24) inches above normal pool elevation. (107-340)(g)(2) Uneven walls will have twenty-four (24) inches minimum averaged from several points along the entire length. (107-340)(g)(3) 	Water Body	Normal Pool Elevation
		Loch Lomond	1120
		Lake Avalon	1075
		Lake Windsor	1069
		Lake Norwood	1060
		Lake Ann	1055
		Lake Rayburn	1090
		Lake Brittany	1200

LOCATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walls must be located outside of the public right-of-way. (107-342)(a) Walls must be located on private property and shall not encroach on neighboring properties. <i>It is the contractor and/or property owner responsibility to correctly locate property boundaries.</i> (107-342)(b) Walls located near street intersections must be located outside of the sight distance triangle. (107-342)(c) Easements: (107-342)(d) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utility Easements: Walls <i>can not</i> restrict access to utilities. If utilities are not present or are planned to be relocated, walls may be placed within the easement. (107-342)(d)(1) Drainage Easements: Walls <i>can not</i> impede the normal flow of storm water or cross drainage channels. Placement of walls in drainage easements will be on a case by case basis. (107-342)(d)(2) Access Easements: Walls <i>may not</i> be constructed over a public or private access easement. (107-342)(d)(3) Setbacks: (107-342)(e) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From Structures: Walls must be placed 10' or 1.5 times the height of the wall, whichever is greater, away from existing or proposed structures. (107-342)(e)(1) From Property Lines: Walls shall be placed a minimum of 7.5' or 1.5 times the height of the wall, whichever is greater, away from property lines. (107-342)(e)(2) Walls <i>may not</i> be placed over an existing or proposed septic drain field or any closer than 10 feet in any direction of a septic leach field. (107-342)(f) If walls are terraced, the upper wall can be located no closer to the lower wall than 1 times the height of the tallest wall. (107-342)(g)
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INSPECTION CLOSEOUT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walls from 2.5' to 4' in height: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspection: The applicant is responsible for contacting the Community Development Services Department prior to construction to request a footing inspection, and upon completion to request a final inspection. (107-340)(e)(1) Close Out: If the wall is constructed in accordance with the regulations and submitted permit materials, a Certificate of Completion will be issued. Otherwise, the Building Inspector will prepare an inspection report detailing the deficiencies. (107-340)(e)(2) Walls in excess of 4' in height: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspection: Walls shall be field inspected by the design engineer for plan compliance. (107-340)(f)(1) Close Out: Upon completion, the design engineer shall file a certification letter with the Community Development Services Department stating that all code and plan requirements have been fulfilled. (107-340)(f)(2) Walls next to water bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspection: At final inspection the Community Development Services Department will measure height of wall with a GPS unit. (107-340)(g)(3)
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