

City of Hendersonville
Department of Building & Codes

Constructing Retaining Walls

This policy has been established by Building & Codes Department to provide guidance to any individual who proposes to construct retaining walls within the City of Hendersonville. This policy is not intended to limit or supersede any other department or entity that may also regulate the construction of retaining walls. This policy does not apply to fences or walls which are not intended to serve as retaining walls. The term “regulated” when used as part of this policy refers to retaining walls that because of their location, height or other special circumstances may be required to meet certain specific additional criteria or requirements.

- A permit or other approval is normally not required for retaining walls less than four (4) feet in height measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall. Although permits may not be required, all retaining walls must still comply with any applicable construction and/or design requirements, specifically but not limited to, Section R404.5 of the 2006 IRC and Section 1806.1 of the 2006 IBC. Additional assistance as to how to construct a retaining wall may be found by referring to our publication - *Typical Retaining Wall Details*.
- Retaining walls that exceed four (4) feet in height are required to obtain a permit. For additional information regarding permitting requirements you can refer to our publication - *Retaining Walls – Permit Guidelines*. A separate permit will not be required for any wall that is part of a construction already specifically approved and/or permitted.
- Retaining walls that are directly or indirectly connected structurally with the construction of any structure will be considered regulated. This would include, but not be limited to, retaining walls that may carry any portion of the house load where the house load is deemed to extend from the bottom of the footing at a forty-five (45) degree angle.
- Additional requirements and/or documentation, such as as-built inspection reports, may be required at the discretion of the City.
- Retaining walls that are approved and constructed as part of an overall developmental plan or process (i.e. Site Plan and/or Subdivision Plats) will not be additionally regulated by the Building & Codes Department.