



Retaining Wall Information Guide

These are general guidelines only; more information may be required depending on the application. Below the following requirements are listed and explained.

Required Documents for building permit application

- Fully completed application form, including all required schedules
- Owner Authorization form, if applicant is not the property owner
- Comprehensive site plan (see example below)
- Drawings including: Design, Structural,
- If your property is located under a Conservation Authority you may need approval by:
 - Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA)
 - Credit Valley Conservation Authority (CVC)
 - Source Water Protection (if applicable)

Site Plan Requirements

A comprehensive site and plan of the entire property showing:

- Location and dimensions of:
 - Proposed retaining wall
 - Existing structures/buildings
 - Existing well and septic system (if applicable)
- Setback distances to:
 - Property lines
 - Existing structures/buildings
 - Septic/well system

Construction Drawings Requirements

- Drawings of retaining wall
 - Fully dimensioned and noted (Stamped by a professional Engineer)

Building Permit Fees

Refer to [2018 Building Permit Fee Schedule](#). Once application is received and reviewed an invoice will be created and sent to you based on the information and drawings provided. All fees and charges listed in the invoice are payable prior to processing the building permit application. Building permit fees include:

- Building permit fee:
 - Residential: \$200
 - Non- Residential: \$750

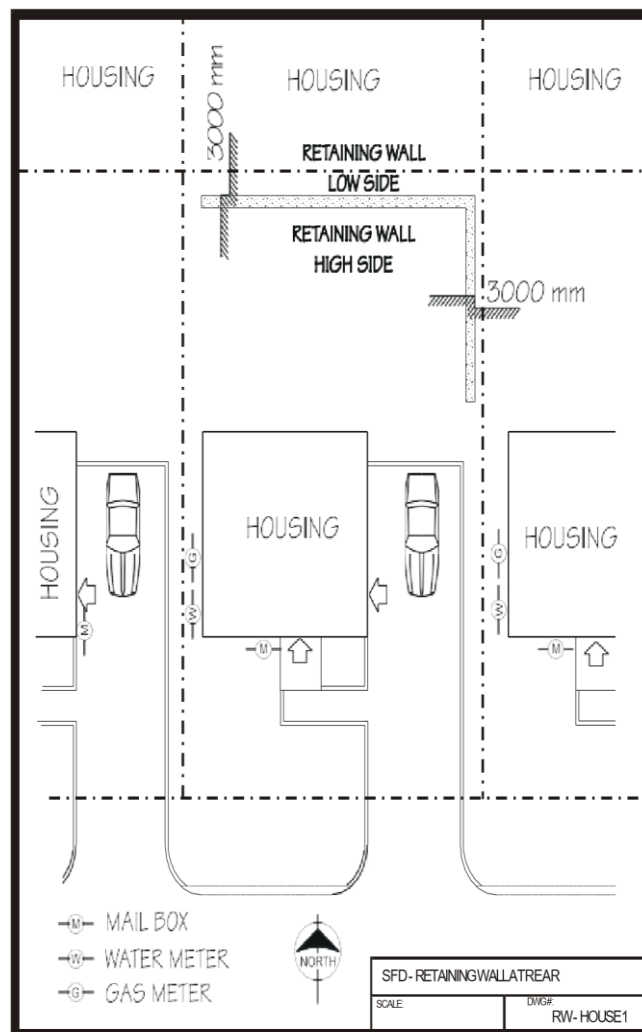
Retaining Wall Examples

The Ontario Building Code does not define “adjacent to” or the types of property in the definition of a retaining wall deemed to be a designated structure. The objective is to protect public safety by reviewing permit applications for retaining wall requirements.

To clarify when a retaining wall is deemed to be a designated structure and/or when guards may be required, the following examples are provided:

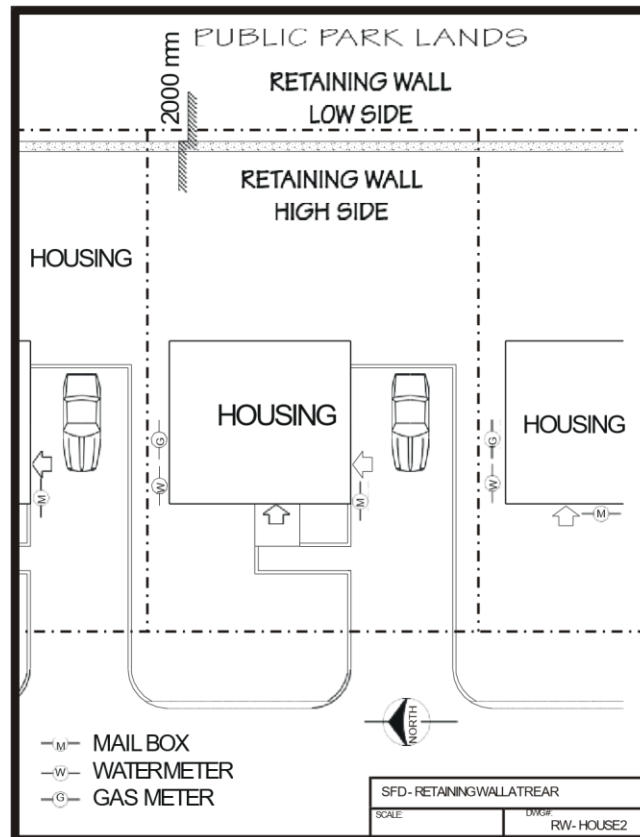
Example 1: Residential Property Adjacent to Other Residential Property

- Retaining wall, varying in height from 3m to 1m along its length
 - Its length faces only *other residential property*
- This scenario would NOT be a designated structure since public does not have access to the wall.
- No guards required by the OBC but Building Service would recommend their use.



Example 2: Residential Property Backing onto a Public Park

- Wall is 2m in height, extends across rear of property
 - Property backs onto public park
- The retaining wall in this scenario IS deemed to be a designated structure since it is adjacent to public property, even if the wall itself is on private property, given that in the event the wall collapses it could pose danger to public
- Guards are NOT required as no public access is provided
- Exception may be given if the retaining wall is set back further from the public property than its height
- A building permit along with drawings prepared by a competent design professional is required

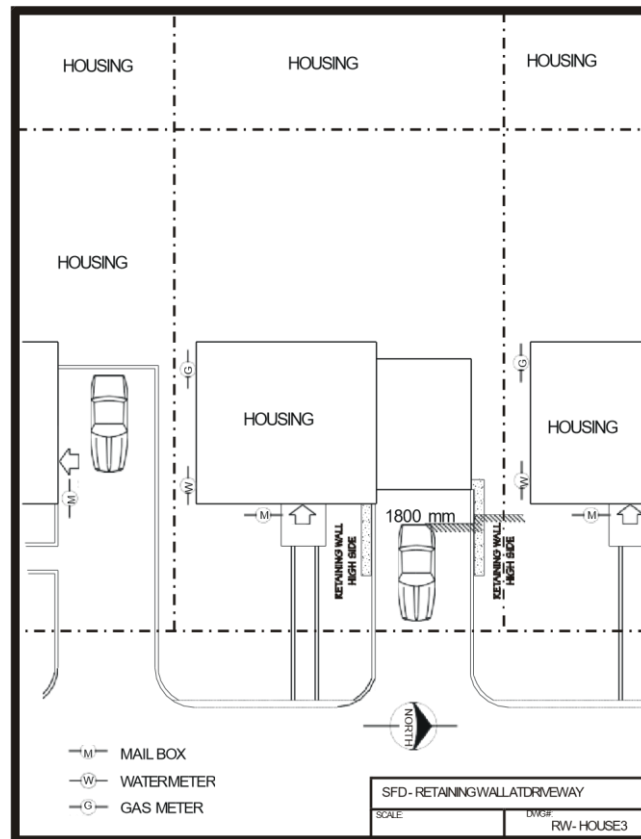


- Wall is 3m in height on 2 sides of residential property
- Property adjacent to public sidewalks

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- Diagram illustrating the layout of a housing unit, showing the house, driveway, and surrounding features. The plan includes a public sidewalk on the left, a retaining wall, and a driveway leading to a car. A north arrow is located at the bottom center. A legend at the bottom left identifies symbols for a mail box, water meter, and gas meter. A title block at the bottom right reads "SFD - RETAINING WALL AT SIDEWALK" and "RW - HOUSE 4".

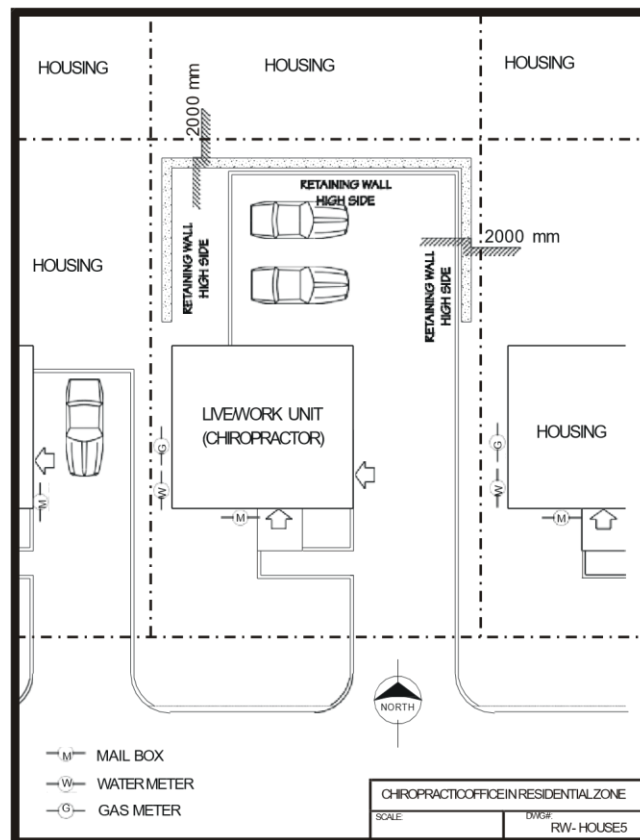
Example 4: Residential Property Adjacent to a Residential Driveway

- The retaining wall is 1.8m in height on either side of a residential driveway between residential properties
 - Property adjacent to residential property.
- The retaining wall in this scenario IS deemed to be a designated structure since it is adjacent to a structure (driveway), even if wall itself is on private property, given that in the event the wall collapses, it could pose danger to public.
- Guards ARE required for the retaining wall adjacent to the side property line as the driveway is considered access to the dwelling.
- A building permit along with drawings prepared by a competent design professional is required.



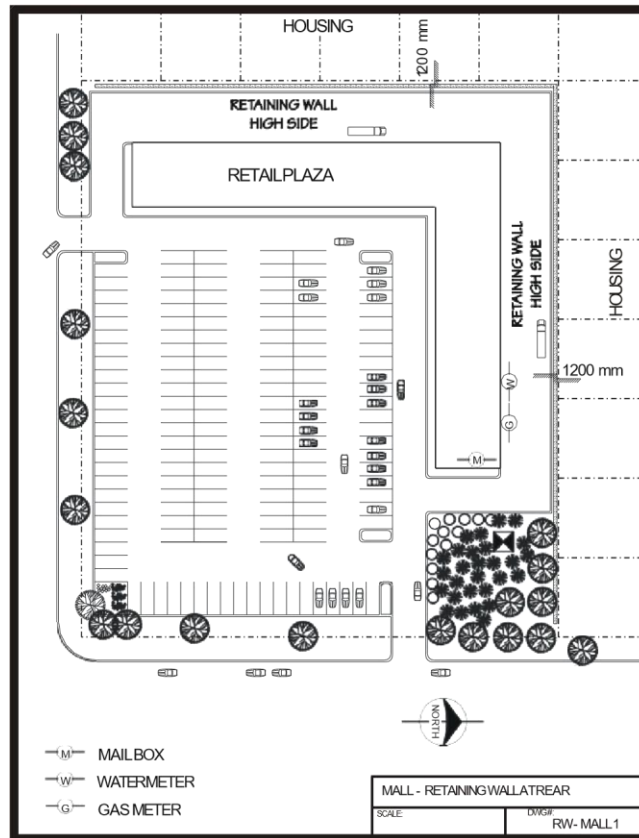
Example 5: Commercial Property

- The retaining wall is 2.0m in height and located entirely on private property of a commercial enterprise to which the public has access to (via a parking lot).
 - Property adjacent to residential property.
- The retaining wall in this scenario IS deemed to be a designated structure
- Guards ARE required for the retaining wall given that the public has access to the area served by the retaining wall.
- A building permit along with drawings prepared by a competent design professional is required.



Example 6: Commercial Property

- The retaining wall is 1.2m in height and located entirely on private property adjacent to a service route of a commercial enterprise to which the public has access (delivery drivers, etc.)
- Property adjacent to residential property.
 - The retaining wall in this scenario IS deemed to be a designated structure
 - Guards ARE required for the retaining wall given that the public has access to the area served by the retaining wall.
 - A building permit along with drawings prepared by a competent design professional is required.



Ontario Building Code Standards

Designated Structures:

1.3.1.1.(1), Div. A:

(1) The following structures are designated for the purposes of clause (d) of the definition of building in subsection 1 (1) of the Act:

(a) a retaining wall exceeding 1 000 mm in exposed height adjacent to,

- (i) public property,
- (ii) access to a building, or
- (iii) private property to which the public is admitted

Guard Requirements:

4.4.3.1., Div. B Guards over Retaining Walls

(1) Every retaining wall that is designated in Sentence 1.3.1.1.(1) of Division A shall be protected by *guards* on all open sides where the public has access to open space at the top of the retaining wall.

Guards may be required in other circumstances, for instance:

9.8.8.1., Div. B Required Guards (See Appendix A.)

(1) Except as provided in Sentences (2) and (3), every surface to which access is provided for other than maintenance purposes, including but not limited to flights of steps and ramps, exterior landings, porches, balconies, mezzanines, galleries and raised walkways, shall be protected by a guard on each side that is not protected by a wall for the length, where,

- (a) there is a difference in elevation of more than 600 mm between the walking surface and the adjacent surface, or
- (b) The adjacent surface within 1.2m from the walking surface has a slope of more than 1 in 2.