



Measuring Height Information Bulletin

Revised: May 2025

Purpose

The purpose of this bulletin is to provide clarification and consistency for staff, developers, contractors, and the general public when measuring the height of a building or structure. This information is for illustrative purposes only and all plans will be reviewed for compliance with City bylaws upon formal application.

Background

Height measurement regulations were changed following the adoption of the City of West Kelowna's **Zoning Bylaw No. 0320**. While previous bylaws enacted single building wall height regulations for certain zones, the current bylaw has simplified measurement regulations.

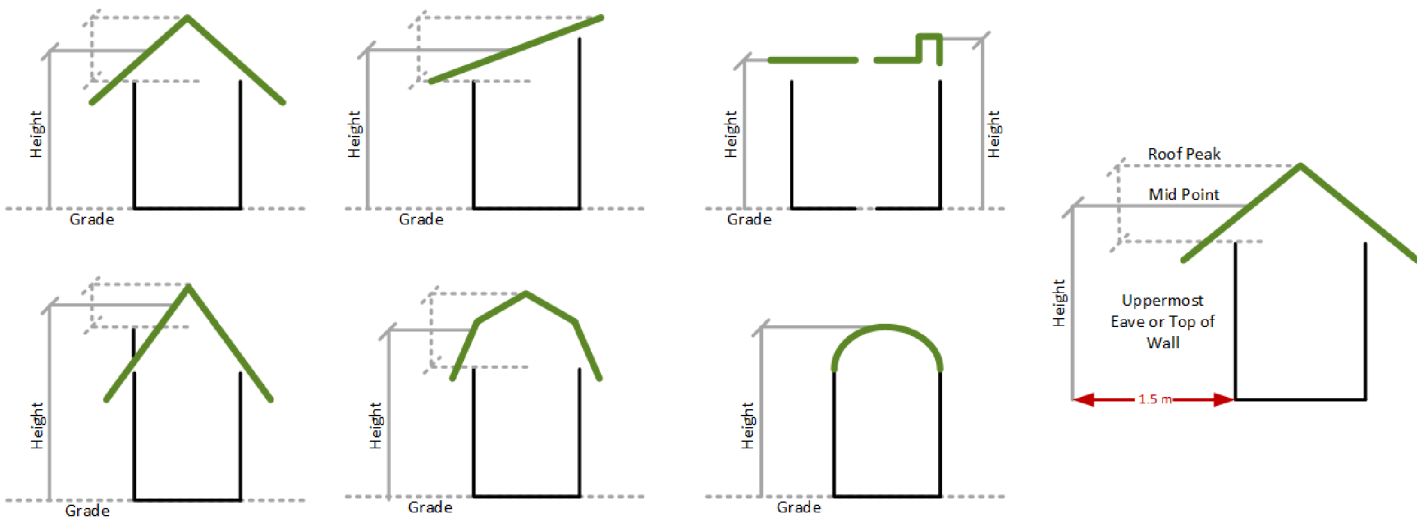
Measuring Height

HEIGHT means the vertical distance measured from grade 1.5 m from the base of the wall, except for buildings or structures with a setback requirement of less than 1.5 m, to:

- The highest point of a building or structure with a non-sloping roof (less than 4% slope) or domed roof;
- The midpoint of a sloping roof, measured as the distance between the uppermost eave or top of wall and the peak of a roof; and
- In the case of a structure without a roof, the highest point of a structure;

Except for:

- Cantilevered buildings or structures which are separated from another portion of the building or structure at grade, where height for the cantilevered portion shall be calculated separately and is measured from the bottom of the cantilevered portion of the building or structure.



Definitions

Grade means the finished ground at every location along the outside walls of a building or structure, with the following exceptions:

- Localized depressions;
- For single dwellings, carriage houses, duplexes, townhouses, and accessory structures where a retaining wall or manufactured fill slope is within 1.5 m (4.9 ft) of the base of an exterior wall or structural support:
 - o Grade means shall be measured from the finished ground at the base of the retaining wall; or
 - o Grade means the finished ground at the base of the slope or at the property line if the distance is less than 1.5 m; and
- For apartments in any zone, or buildings and structures in a commercial, mixed-use, institutional or industrial zone where a retaining wall, or manufactured fill slope over 10% grade is within 3.0 m (9.8 ft) of the base of the exterior wall or structural support:
 - o Grade means shall be measured from the finished ground at the base of the retaining wall; or
 - o Grade means the finished ground along the slope at 3.0 m from the base of the exterior wall or structural support, or at the property line if the distance is less than 3.0 m.

Localized Depression means a necessary portion of an exterior wall that drops below the average finished ground level of the wall to provide vehicular or pedestrian access to a building, such as a secondary suite.

Ground, Finished means the final elevation of the ground surface after development.

Height Examples

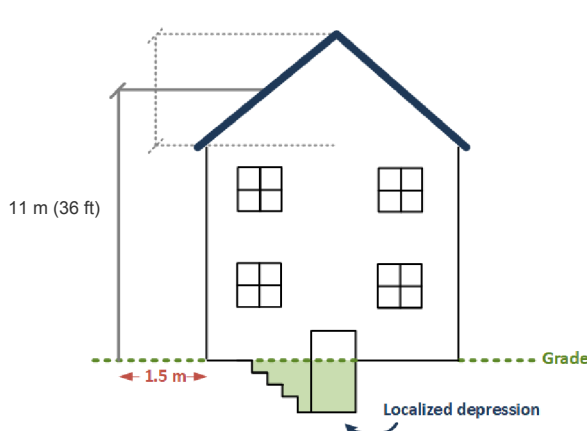


Figure 1: Building with a Localized Depression in Compliance with Zoning Bylaw

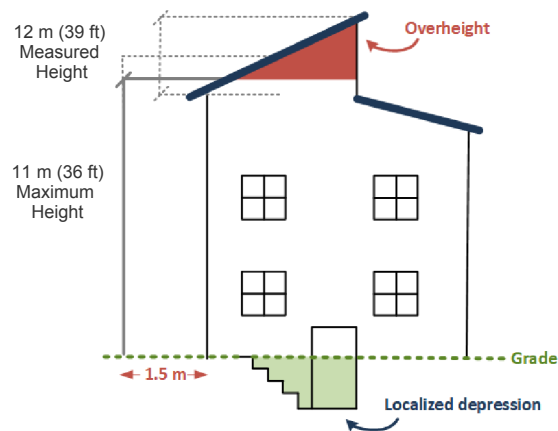


Figure 2: Building with a Localized Depression Not in Compliance with Zoning Bylaw

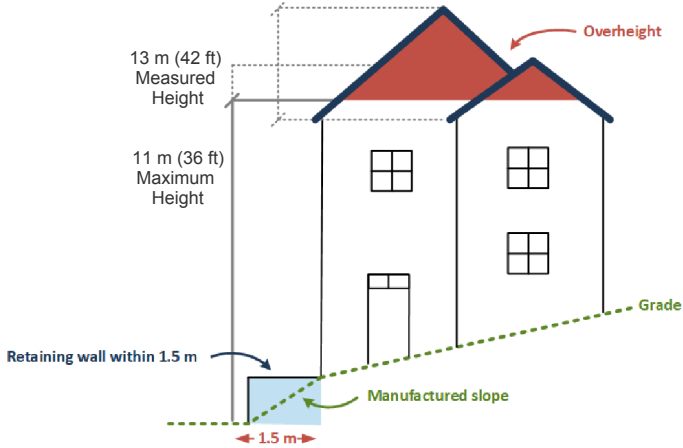


Figure 3: Single Detached Dwelling with Retaining Wall or Manufactured Slope Not in Compliance with Zoning Bylaw

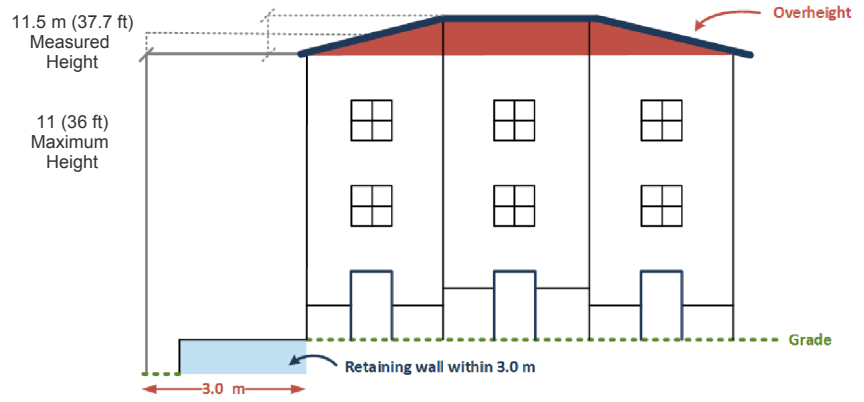


Figure 4: Commercial Building with Retaining Wall Not in Compliance with Zoning Bylaw

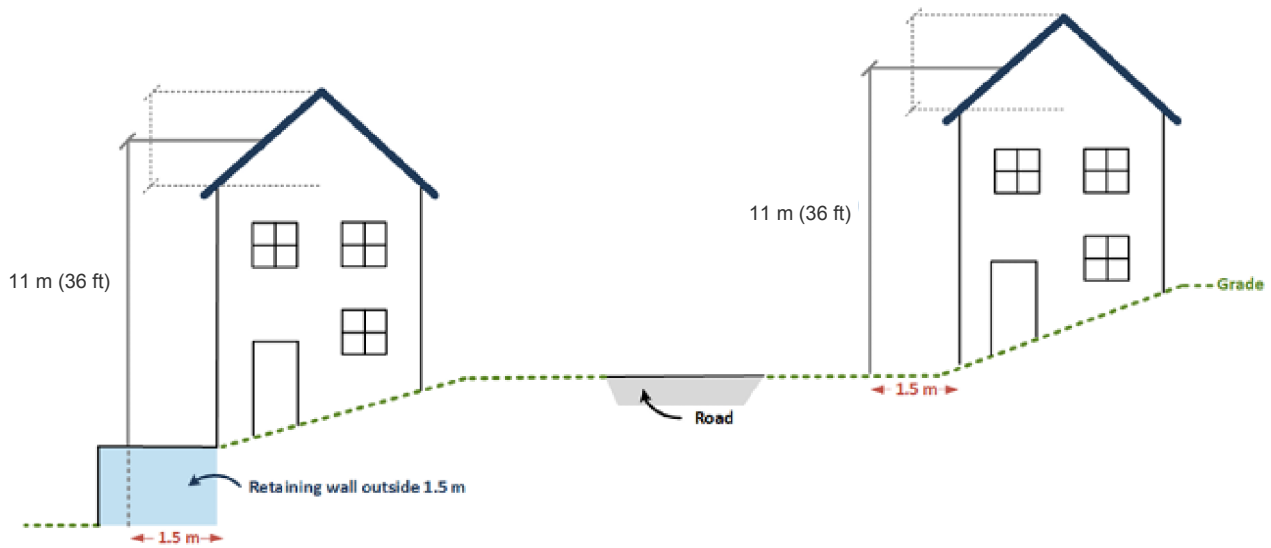


Figure 5: Single Detached Dwellings in Compliance with Zoning Bylaw