



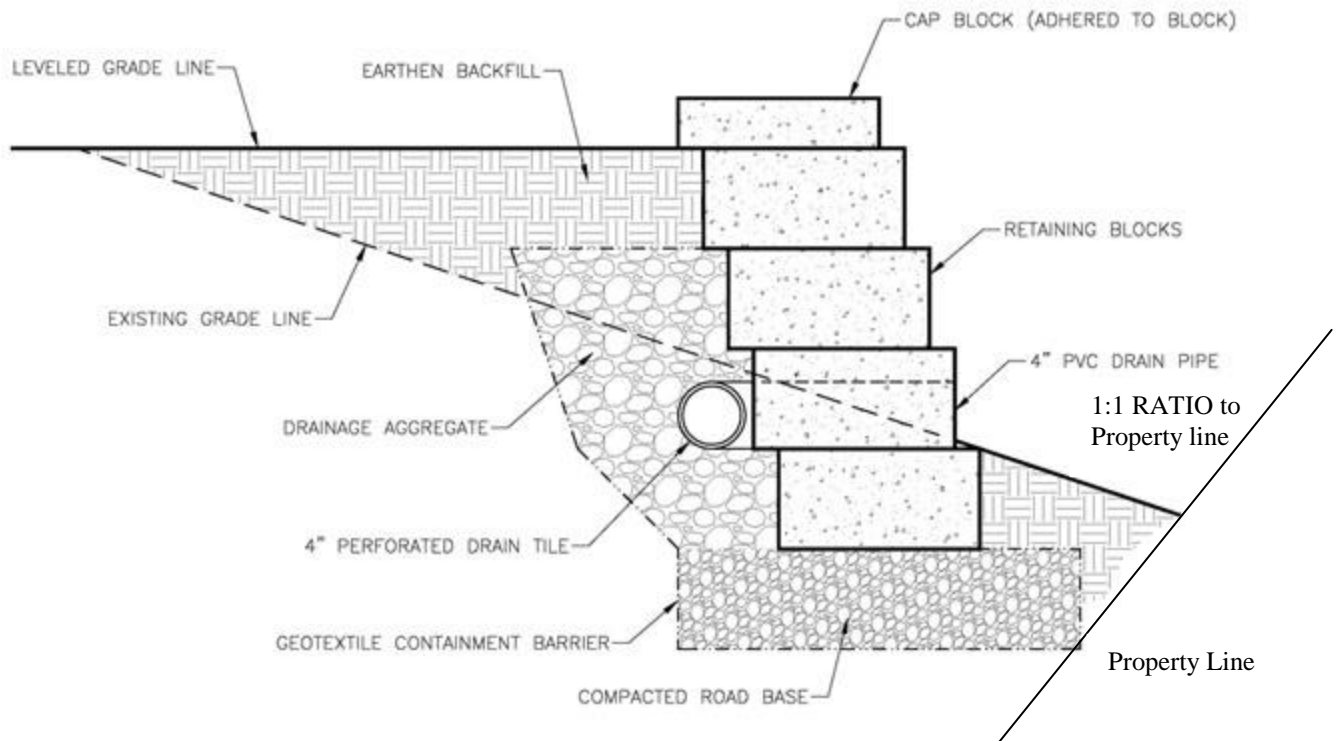
City of Urbandale
3600 86th Street
Urbandale, IA 50322-4057

Building Department (515) 278-3930
Fax No. (515) 278-3927



Retaining Wall Regulations

- **Building Permit Required:**
Retaining walls that retain in excess of 48 inches of unbalanced fill require a permit.
- Applications for building permits may be obtained from the Building Department.
- Retaining walls that retain in excess of 48 inches of unbalanced fill shall be structurally designed. Urbandale Ordinance 150.03 (31) (a).
- Retaining wall location shall be shown on a site plan.
- Guards shall be provided on retaining walls that are 30 inches or more above grade when; the retaining wall is considered part of a building structure, the retaining wall is in close proximity to a finished walking surface (loading dock, sidewalk, bike path, patio, or similar), or in any location on a commercial or multifamily project where the height and location of the retaining wall create an obvious fall hazard.” Urbandale Ordinance 150.03 (31) (a).



SECTION VIEW OF “EXAMPLE” RETAINING WALL

- **Support:**
Retaining walls that are not laterally supported at the top and that retain in excess of 48 inches of unbalanced fill, or retaining walls exceeding 24 inches in height that resist lateral loads in addition to soil, shall be designed in accordance with accepted engineering practice to ensure stability against overturning, sliding, excessive foundation pressure and water uplift. Retaining walls shall be designed for a safety factor of 1.5 against lateral sliding and overturning.
- **Setbacks:**
All retaining walls shall be set back from property lines by a minimum height to setback distance ratio of one-to-one. Urbandale Ordinance 150.03 (31) (a). (example: a (4) four foot tall wall shall be setback a minimum of 4' four feet from the property line.
- **Easements:**
Public Utility Easements, Storm Sewer Easements, Sanitary Sewer Easements, Drainage Easements, Surface Water Flowage Easements, and Pedestrian Easements prohibit encroachment by structures such as retaining walls.
- **Restrictive Covenants:**
The owner should check the restrictive covenants for their neighborhood to assure compliance with covenant regulations regarding fences. Restrictive covenant information may also be obtained at the County Recorder's office.
- **Need more Information?**
Contact the Zoning Department at the Community Development and Engineering offices, 3600 86th Street, or by telephone at (515) 278-3935.
- **Call Before You Dig:** Call "One Call" for utility locations before you begin digging, at 1-800-292-8989. Utility locations are typically completed within 48 hours of your request. Underground utility location prior to digging is required by state law. This service is free of charge.

Required Inspections

1. **Pins and Setbacks**
The property corner pins must be exposed to view and the locations for retaining walls marked. If the property corner pins cannot be found, it is the owner's responsibility to have a registered land surveyor or civil engineer establish these points.
2. **Setback Inspection**- Prior to placement of wall a setback inspection shall be conducted.
3. **Footing**- If applicable
4. **Wall**- If applicable
5. **Final Inspection**