

ZONING AND GRADE

This document provides information on:

- how grade is measured for the purposes of meeting the requirements of the Zoning Bylaw;
- how it impacts building height including unique challenges for infill development; and,
- the effects of artificially altering grade.

For detailed information on Residential Property Lot Grading, please refer to the [Residential Property Lot Grading Guidelines](#).

What is Grade

Grade level is defined in the Zoning Bylaw as the average level of the finished surface of the ground adjacent to the exterior walls of the building or structure.

Lot Grading Plans

Lots are graded according to engineered Lot Grading Plans, which identify the lot grading style and design elevations for when the lot grading is completed. It is essential to establish and maintain the design elevations along shared rear and side property lines. This ensures that lot grading is consistent with the lot grading plans, otherwise flooding may occur.

Lots developed prior to 1975 do not have lot grading plans but do have back lanes which are designed to drain to the street or storm sewer catch basins. Lots in these areas are sloped to drain to the street and/or back lane. It is the homeowner's responsibility to ensure their property is graded appropriately.

Lot Grading Plans Search

Grade and Building Height

To determine the overall building height, two elevations are used:

- one exterior to the building
- one at the roof line.

The exterior elevation refers to the *finished grade*, or elevation adjacent to the building, while the roof line measurement is determined by the type of roof.

For a flat roof, the measurement would be the highest point of the roof.

For a gable, hip, or gambrel roof, this measurement would be to the mean height between the eaves and the ridge of the roof.

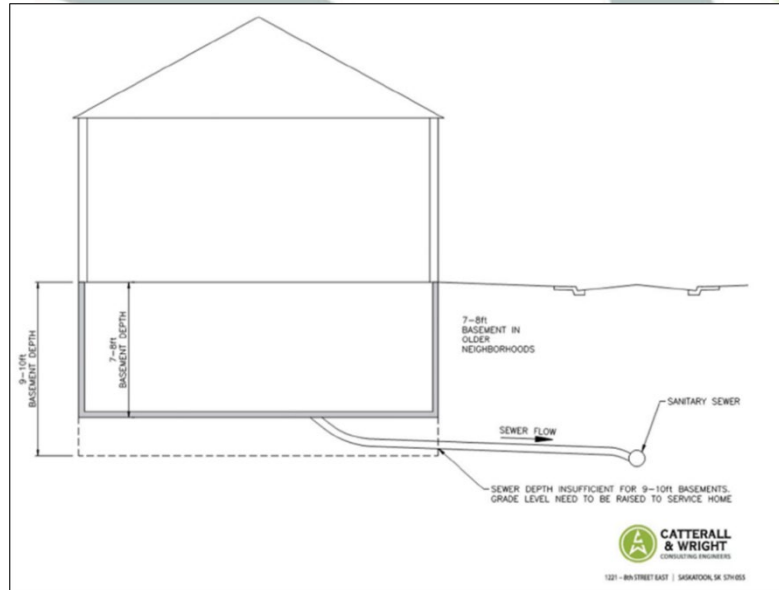
In the case of one-unit dwellings, two-unit dwellings and semi-detached dwellings with a walk out basement, grade level is the average elevation of the finished surface of the ground adjacent to the building, front line.

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Infill Development

The maximum allowable building height in established neighbourhoods is 8.5m. The following are common challenges of infill developments:

- **Older Neighbourhoods had Minimal Design Requirements.** Infill generally occurs in older neighbourhoods. Many of these older neighbourhoods did not require lot drainage plans when they were developed. Because of this there are often extremely flat slopes and often drainage issues in these neighbourhoods.
- **Older Style Homes/Different Building Standards.** The homes within older neighbourhoods were built with different standards such as lower ceiling heights (8ft), minimal basement heights and low pitch roofs. Common architectural standards in the current residential market include increased ceiling heights (9-10ft), deeper basements (9ft) and higher pitch roofs. All of these architectural changes have created a taller house.
- **Sewer Service Depths.** Older neighbourhoods can often have shallow sewer depths. As basements were not constructed as deep nor were the sanitary sewers that service these houses.



Artificial Grade

Grading not only affects how sites drain, it also effect the design of your building and grade needs to be considered at the initial design phase of your project. Artificial increases in grade should be minimized unless it can be determined that it is required.

Slopes between the building and property line be controlled by a maximum slope of 30% unless one or more of the following reasons requires that grade may need to be raised further:

- Service challenges.
- Extreme grade changes along the property (as shown on City of Saskatoon site grading plans).
- Geotechnical considerations such as high-water table.
- Constraints of modular housing construction.

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