

Measuring Building Height

How is Building Height Measured?

Building height is measured from the average of the natural grade at the highest and lowest exterior corners of a structure - See [Section 17.16.090 of the Louisville Municipal Code](#) for more information.

How Do I Determine “Natural Grade”?

“Natural Grade” is the elevation of a lot undisturbed by development, including the addition of fill, berms, retaining walls, or landscaping. If a lot has already been developed and is being redeveloped or undergoing a building addition, “Natural Grade” is the existing grade before redevelopment and the addition of fill, berms, retaining walls or landscaping. If a property is part of a development with an approved over-lot grading plan, natural grade will be determined using the approved over-lot grading plan. Over-lot grading plans are typically found in final subdivision plat, final planned unit development, or general development plan documents.

What is the Maximum Height that I Can Build to?

Many properties are part of a Planned Unit Development (PUDs) or General Development Plan (GDP) with building height limits. These can be found through the City’s [Land Use and Planning GIS Map](#).

If a property does not have a PUD/GDP, it will be subject to the height limits listed for the underlying zoning district in [Section 17.12.040](#). If the property is in an Industrial or Commercial zone or is located in Downtown/Old Town, it may also be subject to the height requirements in the relevant [design standards and guidelines document](#).

Please contact the Planning Division at 303-335-4592 or Planning@louisvilleco.gov if you have questions regarding height regulations or if you need assistance obtaining any of the documents mentioned above.

Requirements for Building and Planning Permit Submittals:

When submitting a permit, all applications must contain the following information (see example on following page):

- Site Plan - see diagram example:**
Include 1-foot contours showing natural grade, the elevation datum used (e.g. NAVD88 or NGVD29), elevation labels at the highest and lowest exterior corners of the structure, and an average grade calculation based on the highest and lowest grade
- Elevations - see diagram example:**
Include labels of the lowest and highest exterior corners of the structure, a label indicating the average grade contour, and a height measurement from the average grade to the highest roof ridge

Note: A “wet stamped” height certification letter from a surveyor may be required at the project’s framing inspection if the structure is within 3 feet of the maximum allowed height.

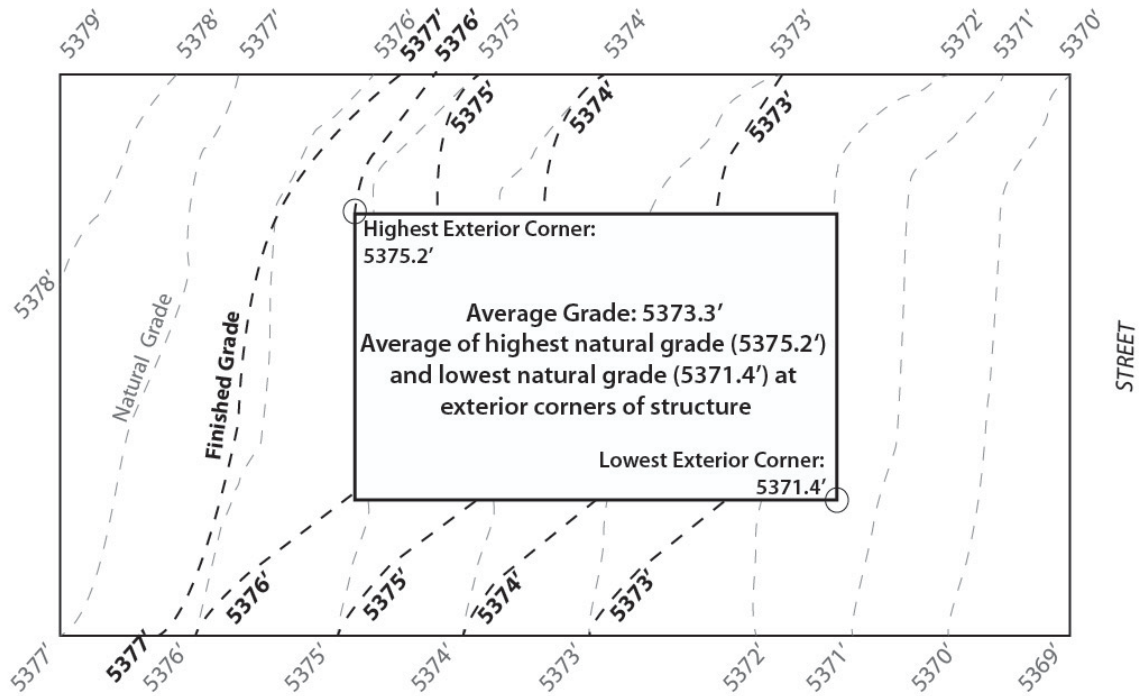
Features Excluded from Height Calculations

Chimneys, tanks, church spires, belfries, monuments, fire and hose towers, flagpoles, commercial radio and television towers, masts, aerials, cooling towers, elevator shafts, and ranch/farm accessory uses are not subject to building height limitations per [Sec.17.16.090\(C\) of the Louisville Municipal Code](#).

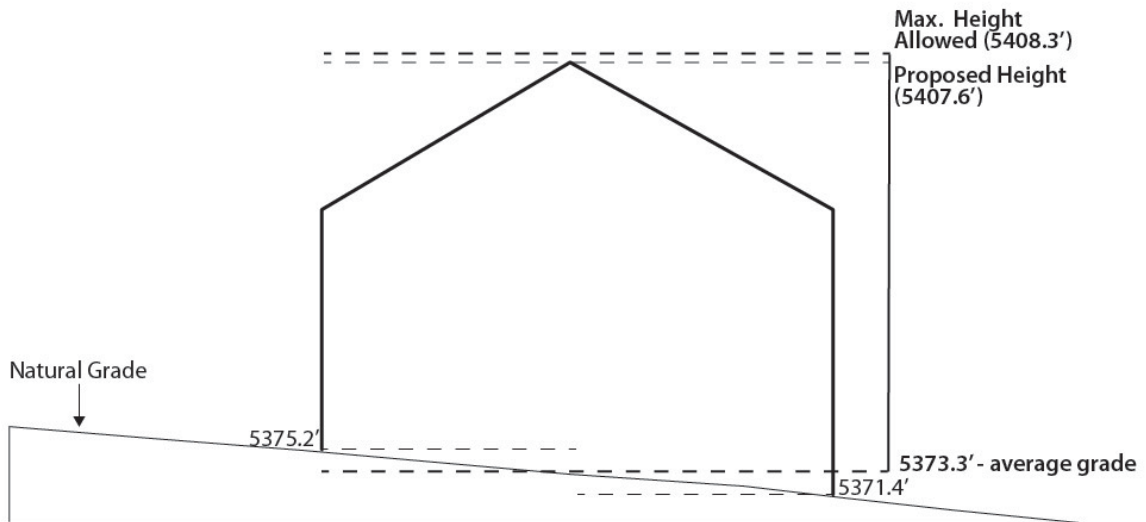
Definitions for building height and natural grade can be found in the [Louisville Municipal Code, Chapter 17.08](#)

For additional information on building height requirements please contact the City of Louisville Department of Planning and Building Safety at 303-335-4592 or planning@louisvilleco.gov

Example Site Plan:



Example Elevation:



Note: The above drawings do not encompass every scenario and are intended for example use only. Additional information may be requested from staff to verify conformance with relevant codes and regulations.

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