

Chapter 30

Retaining Walls

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Chapter 30

Retaining Walls

30.1 Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to give the designer an understanding of the procedure to develop retaining wall plans. This chapter should be used in conjunction with the ***Structures Design Guidelines (SDG)***, ***Structures Detailing Manual (SDM)*** and the applicable ***Instructions for Design Standards (IDS)***.

30.2 General

See ***Chapter 4*** of this volume for guidance on roadside barrier requirements and ***SDG, Chapter 6*** for retaining wall mounted traffic railing requirements. See ***Chapter 8*** of this volume for pedestrian and bicycle rail requirements.

Precast walls other than MSE walls should be considered as an alternate when sufficient room for soil reinforcement is not available.

Design Standards Index 6000 Series contains general notes and common details for retaining walls. See the applicable ***IDS*** for information on the use of these standards.

Using the site-specific geotechnical information, the Engineer of Record (EOR), in cooperation with the geotechnical engineer, will determine the appropriate wall type and its requirements. See the ***SDG, Section 3.12*** for the Permanent Retaining Wall Selection Process.

The following sections refer to the structures plans submittal procedure. For projects where there are no bridges, the roadway designer shall adjust the procedure as required for the roadway project.

30.3 Retaining Wall Plans Submittal Procedures

On projects with retaining wall types not listed on the QPL (C-I-P wall systems, permanent concrete and steel sheet pile walls, soldier pile walls, non-proprietary precast wall systems, complex wall systems, or project specific designs), the complete wall design and details are included in the plans by the EOR.

On projects with proprietary retaining wall systems listed on the QPL, the EOR provides the Wall Control Drawings and the appropriate wall systems Data Tables in the plans. The EOR selects which FDOT Wall Type (see the **SDG, Section 3.12**) is appropriate for the project and places this information in the notes associated with the Data Tables. The Contractor then selects the QPL listed retaining wall system to build based on the allowable wall types shown in the notes associated with the Data Tables and on the **Design Standards**. Proprietary retaining walls require shop drawings in accordance with **Chapter 28**.

Proprietary retaining wall design plans are not required in the contract plans for normal uncomplicated wall projects (see **Section 30.3.2**). If the proprietary walls are Two-phased, experimental, exceed 40 ft. in height, are subject to unusual geometric or topographic features, if spatial limitation require project specific details, or, by the geotechnical report, will be subjected to excessive settlement, or environmental conditions, they may be required to have fully detailed design plans in the contract set (see **Section 30.3.3**).

Prior to construction on projects utilizing proprietary wall systems, the contractor will submit, for approval by the engineer, shop drawings that are based on a QPL listed wall system that is shown in the plans. Site-specific details for the wall construction will be included in these shop drawings.

The success of these methods of producing and letting wall plans is highly dependent on complete, accurate and informative Control Plans. The importance of the Geotechnical Engineer's role in this scheme cannot be emphasized enough and is detailed in the **FDOT Soils and Foundation Handbook, Chapters 3, 8 and 9**.

The Geotechnical Engineer's wall type recommendation shall be presented in a report together with the results of field and laboratory testing and the reasoning for the recommendation. For Proprietary Walls, also include the following: external stability analyses, minimum soil reinforcement length vs. wall height for external stability,

recommended soil reinforcement type limitations if any (e.g. synthetic vs. steel), maximum bearing pressure for each wall height and soil reinforcement length for each different wall height (2 ft. increments)

The normal failure modes to be investigated are shown in ***SDG, Chapter 3***.

Procedures for developing retaining wall plans follow.

30.3.1 Non-Proprietary Retaining Walls

1. Bridge Development Report (BDR) / 30% Plans

The BDR shall discuss and justify the use/non-use of non-proprietary retaining walls. If the use of these retaining walls is applicable to the site and economically justified, it may be the only design required or it may be an alternate to a proprietary design. The 30% Plans submittal shall contain Wall Control Drawings as specified in the **SDM, Chapter 19**, cross sections, details and general notes. The plans shall denote location of drainage inlets, utilities, sign structures, lights and barrier joints. See the **SDM, Chapter 19** for more information.

2. 30% Plans:

The 30% Plans shall be submitted for approval and development of the plans continued towards the 90% Plans submittal.

3. 90% Plans:

The 90% Plans submittal shall be further developed to include, in addition to the information required for the 30% Plans, information listed in the **SDM, Chapter 19**.

30.3.2 Proprietary Wall Systems Where Full Design Details Are Not Required In Contract Plans

Preapproved Vendor Drawings for proprietary wall systems are listed on the QPL and are categorized in accordance with the applicable FDOT Wall Type(s). Utilize these drawings with the applicable standard(s) and Data Tables. Do not include the Vendor Drawings in the plans.

Use the following procedure in preparing plans for wall projects.

1. BDR/30% Plans

Discuss and justify the use of proprietary retaining walls and FDOT Wall Types (see **SDG, Section 3.12**) in the BDR. Provide documentation of all the site-specific geotechnical information and wall system considerations in the Retaining Wall Justification portion of the BDR. Include the Retaining Wall System Data Tables and Preliminary Wall Control Drawings with the information shown in **SDM, Chapter 19** for the Plan and Elevation Sheets.

2. 90% Plans

Include the completed Control Plans and Data Tables in the 90% Plans submittal.

30.3.3 Proprietary Wall Systems Where Full Design Details Are Required In Contract Plans

The following procedure for plans preparation should be followed if the walls are required to be fully detailed in the contract plans.

1. BDR/30% Plans

The BDR shall discuss and justify the use of proprietary retaining walls. The 30% Plans shall contain Wall Control Drawings. It will not be necessary for these Plans to contain pay items; however, they shall include, but not be limited to, the information listed in the ***SDM, Chapter 19***.

2. Control Plans/Invitation Package

The Control Plans shall be reviewed by the Department and, upon approval, sent to all the appropriate wall companies. The companies shall be provided with a set of control plans, roadway plans and foundation report. This action shall be accomplished as soon as possible but not later than the 60% Plans. A copy of the transmittals to the wall companies shall be sent to the DSDO or SDO as appropriate. The proprietary companies shall acknowledge receipt of the invitation package. If they choose to participate they shall provide design plans for the retaining walls and submit the plans for review as prescribed in the invitation letter.

3. 90% Plans

Upon receipt of the proprietary design plans, the designer shall review the design and incorporate the wall plans into the contract set. The plans from the wall companies, control plans and wall company standard drawings shall constitute the 90% Plans.

30.3.4 Critical Temporary Walls

A critical temporary wall is one that is necessary to maintain the safety of the traveling public, or structural integrity of nearby structures or utilities for the duration of the construction contract. Traffic lanes located either above or below a grade separation and within the limits shown in **SDM** Chapter 19, will require the design of a critical temporary wall. Discuss the use of, and selected type of, critical temporary walls in the BDR.

Typically, critical temporary walls are either proprietary MSE walls or steel sheet pile walls. However, concrete sheet piles, soldier pile walls and precast or cast-in-place concrete walls may also be used as critical temporary walls.

Critical temporary proprietary MSE walls shall comply with **Design Standards, Index 6030 (and the applicable IDS)** and require generic design details in the contract plans. The plans format shall be in accordance with **Sections 30.3.2** and **30.3.3**. Include control drawings and the completed Temporary Retaining Wall System Data Tables. The final design details shall be submitted in the shop drawings.

If critical temporary steel sheet pile walls are used, complete the associated Data Table and include it in the plans. See the [Structures Detailing Manual](#) for more information including critical temporary wall definitions.

If other types of critical temporary walls are used, prepare the necessary details and include them in the plans.

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