



# Height Calculation Methodology

**Methodology applies to: Structures located outside of the Montecito and Summerland Planning Areas.**

Except for structures located within the Coastal Zone on property zoned with the VC View Corridor Overlay, the height of a structure (not including fences and walls) is determined by the vertical distance between the **existing grade** and the uppermost point of the structure directly above that grade. If the structure is located within the Coastal Zone on property zoned with the VC View Corridor Overlay, then the height of the structure (not including fences and walls) is determined by the vertical distance between the **average finished grade** and uppermost point of the structure directly above that grade.

The height of the structure shall not exceed the applicable **height limit** (see Diagram 1 below) except for certain limited **exceptions** discussed below.

**In addition** to the height limit applicable to a structure as described above, a structure subject to the Ridgeline and Hillside Development Guidelines shall not exceed a maximum height of 32 feet as measured from the highest part of the structure, excluding chimneys, vents and noncommercial antennas, to the lowest point of the structure where an exterior wall intersects the **finished grade** or the **existing grade**, whichever is lower (see Diagram 2 below).

1. In the case where the lowest point of the structure is cantilevered over the ground surface, then the calculated maximum height shall include the vertical distance below the lowest point of the structure to the finished grade or the existing grade, whichever is lower.
2. This 32 foot limit may be increased by no more than three feet where the highest part of the structure is part of a roof element that exhibits a pitch of four in 12 (rise to run) or greater.

## EXCEPTIONS

1. Chimneys, church spires, elevator, mechanical and stair housings, flag poles, noncommercial antennas, towers, vents, and similar structures which are not used for human activity may be up to 50 feet in height in all zones subject to compliance with the F Airport Approach Overlay and the VC View Corridor Overlay. **The use of towers or similar structures to provide higher ceiling heights for habitable space shall be deemed a use intended for human activity.**
2. Portions of a structure may exceed the applicable height limit by no more than three feet where the roof exhibits a pitch of four in 12 (rise to run) or greater.

3. Architectural elements (portions of a building that exceeds the height limit and extends beyond the roof of the building) with an aggregate area less than or equal to 10 percent of the roof area or 400 square feet, whichever is less, may exceed the height limit by no more than eight feet when approved by the BAR.
4. Special exemptions for oil/gas equipment (see Article II, Section 35-127.1.a).

## DEFINITIONS

**Existing Grade:** The existing condition of the ground elevation of the surface of a building site at the time of permit application, including Board of Architectural Review applications, that represents either (1) the natural grade prior to the placement of any fill on the site or the excavation or removal of earth from the site, or (2) the manufactured grade following the completion of an approved grading operation including grading approved in conjunction with the subdivision of the site.

**Finished Grade:** The height of the manufactured grade of that portion of the lot covered by the structure following the completion of an approved grading operation.

**Finished Grade, Average:** The average height of the manufactured grade of that portion of the lot covered by the structure following the completion of an approved grading operation.

**Height Limit:** The maximum allowed height of a structure as established by an imaginary surface located at the allowed number of feet above and parallel to the existing grade.

**Diagram 1**

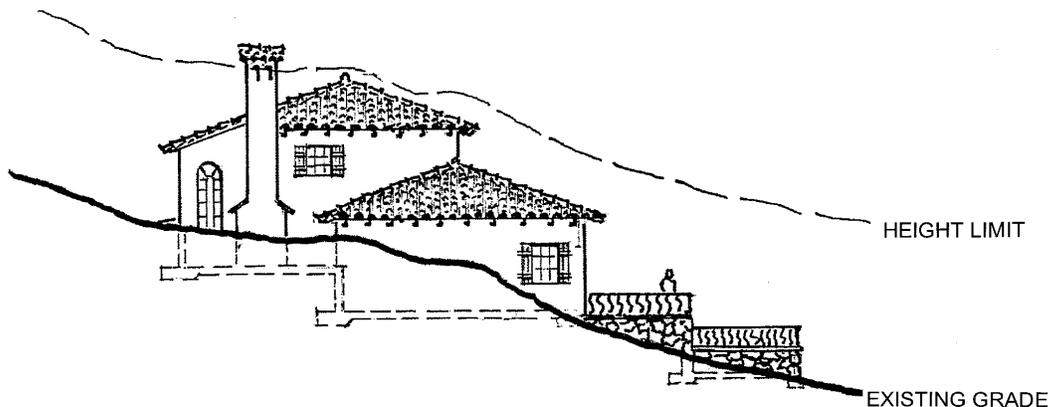


Diagram 2

