

CITY OF SEATTLE

ORDINANCE _____

COUNCIL BILL _____

..title

AN ORDINANCE relating to land use and zoning, amending Sections 23.49.025, 23.54.040, and 23.84A.036 of the Seattle Municipal Code (SMC), to update and clarify requirements for solid waste storage, staging areas, and access for residential, commercial, and industrial development; adding new requirements for Neighborhood Residential and industrial zones; and updating provisions for alternative arrangements to meet requirements.

..body

WHEREAS, the Seattle City Council adopted Ordinance 123495 in 2011 that established the existing development regulations for solid waste storage, access, and collection in SMC 23.54.040;

WHEREAS, as the City of Seattle’s population and housing stock continue to grow, amendments to SMC 23.54.040 and related subsections are required to meet the needs of increased residential, commercial, and industrial development citywide; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendments to SMC 23.54.040 are intended to clarify existing code to help streamline the permitting process, codify existing collection contractor and industry practices for solid waste access and collection that currently exist in practice but not in existing code, and establish new regulations to meet the solid waste storage, access, and collection needs as the City continues to grow;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Section 23.49.025 of the Seattle Municipal Code, last amended by Ordinance 127099, is amended as follows:

1 **23.49.025 Odor, noise, light/glare, and solid waste (~~recyclable materials~~) storage, (~~space~~)**
2 **access, and collection standards**

3 * * *

4 D. The standards of Section 23.54.040 for solid waste (~~and recyclable materials~~)
5 storage, (~~space~~) access, and collection shall be met.

6 Section 2. Section 23.54.040 of the Seattle Municipal Code, last amended by Ordinance
7 126157, is amended as follows:

8 **23.54.040 Solid waste (~~and recyclable materials~~) storage, (~~and~~) access, and collection**

9 A. General provisions. For the purposes of this Section, compostable materials, garbage,
10 recyclable materials, and solid waste are as defined in SMC Chapter 21.36. “Solid waste” refers
11 to compostable materials, garbage, and recyclable materials.

12 1. Except as otherwise provided in this Section 23.54.040, (~~subsection~~
13 23.54.040.I, in RSL, downtown, multifamily, master planned community, and commercial
14 zones), solid waste storage space (~~for solid waste and recyclable materials containers~~) shall be
15 provided as shown in Table A for 23.54.040 for:

16 a. all new principal structures(~~, and for~~) and detached accessory dwelling
17 units;

18 b. an addition of more than 5,000 gross square feet of non-residential use(s)
19 to an existing structure;

20 c. a change of use of more than 10,000 gross square feet of non-residential
21 use(s) in an existing structure;

22 d. existing structures to which two or more live-work units are added;

23 e. existing structures to which two or more dwelling units are added; (~~;~~)

1 f. existing structures to which four or more sleeping rooms are added.

2 ((1-)) 2. Residential ((uses proposed to be located on separate platted lots, for
3 which each dwelling unit will be billed separately for utilities,)) development shall provide one
4 solid waste storage ((area)) space with ((per dwelling unit that has)) minimum dimensions of
5 ((2)) 2.5 feet by 6 feet for each dwelling unit, unless they provide solid waste storage space
6 according to subsection 23.54.040.A.3.

7 ((2-)) 3. Residential development for which a home ownership association, or other
8 single entity, exists or will exist as a sole source for utility billing may meet the standards in
9 subsection 23.54.040.A.((+))2, or the ((requirement)) standards in Table A for 23.54.040.

10 4. Except as otherwise provided in this Section 23.54.040, ((Non)) non-residential
11 development shall meet the ((requirement)) standards in Table A for 23.54.040.

12 5. Solid waste storage space, solid waste staging areas, and solid waste collection
13 locations shall meet contractor safety standards promulgated by the Director of Seattle Public
14 Utilities.

15 6. Each solid waste storage space shall include containers for compostable
16 materials, garbage, and recyclable materials.

17 7. A solid waste storage space may also serve as a solid waste staging area and/or
18 solid waste collection location if the storage space meets the requirements for such area(s).

19 **Table A for 23.54.040:**
20 **Shared Solid Waste Storage Space ((for Solid Waste Containers))**

Residential development¹	Minimum area for shared storage space
2-8 dwelling units	84 square feet
9-15 dwelling units	150 square feet
16-25 dwelling units	225 square feet
26-50 dwelling units	375 square feet

51-100 dwelling units	375 square feet plus 4 square feet for each additional unit above 50
More than 100 dwelling units	575 square feet plus 4 square feet for each additional unit above 100, except as permitted in subsection 23.54.040.C

Notes:

¹For residential uses that are not readily described as a discrete number of dwelling units, such as congregate residences, the Director shall determine the amount of storage space required based on the number of sleeping rooms as a substitute for the number of dwelling units, at a rate of one dwelling unit for every 4 sleeping rooms.

Non-residential development (Based on gross floor area of all structures on the lot)	Minimum area for shared storage space
0—5,000 square feet	82 square feet
5,001—15,000 square feet	125 square feet
15,001—50,000 square feet	((175)) <u>196</u> square feet
50,001—100,000 square feet	225 square feet
100,001—200,000 square feet	275 square feet
200,001 plus square feet	500 square feet

~~((Mixed use development that contains both residential and nonresidential uses, shall meet the requirements of subsection 23.54.040.B.-))~~

1

2 B. Mixed use development that contains both residential and non-residential ~~((uses))~~ use

3 shall meet the minimum solid waste storage space area requirements shown in Table A for

4 23.54.040 for residential development~~((;-))~~ or as modified by subsection 23.54.040.C, plus 50

5 percent of the solid waste storage space requirement for non-residential development shown in

6 Table A for 23.54.040. In mixed use developments, solid waste storage space ~~((for garbage))~~

7 may be ~~((shared between residential and non-residential uses, but separate spaces for recycling~~

8 ~~shall be provided))~~ located together.

9 1. Residential and non-residential uses may share containers for garbage.

10 2. Residential and non-residential uses shall use separate containers for recycling

11 and compostable materials.

C. For development with more than 100 dwelling units, the required minimum area for residential solid waste storage space shown in Table A for 23.54.040 may be reduced by 15 percent, if the area provided as residential solid waste storage space has ((a)) minimum horizontal ((dimension)) dimensions (width and depth) of 20 feet.

D. ((The storage)) Solid waste storage space required by Table A for 23.54.040 shall meet the ((following)) requirements in Table B for 23.54.040:

~~((1. For developments with eight or fewer dwelling units, the minimum horizontal dimension (width and depth) for required storage space is 7 feet. For developments with nine dwelling units or more, the minimum horizontal dimension of required storage space is 12 feet;~~

Table B for 23.54.040:
Minimum Area Dimensions for Solid Waste Storage

<u>Residential development (dwelling units)¹</u>	<u>Minimum dimensions, width, depth</u>
<u>1-15 dwelling units</u>	<u>8 feet</u>
<u>16 dwelling units or more</u>	<u>14 feet</u>
<u>Notes:</u>	
<u>¹ For residential uses that are not readily described as a discrete number of dwelling units, such as congregate residences, the Director shall determine the amount of storage space required based on the number of sleeping rooms as a substitute for the number of dwelling units, at a rate of one dwelling unit for every 4 sleeping rooms.</u>	
<u>Non-residential development (Based on gross floor area of all principal structures on the lot)</u>	<u>Minimum dimensions, width, depth</u>
<u>1-15,000 gross square feet</u>	<u>8 feet</u>
<u>15,001 gross square feet or more</u>	<u>14 feet</u>
<u>Development with a mix of residential and non-residential uses</u>	
<u>Up to 15 dwelling units, or up to 15,000 square feet of non-residential uses, or both</u>	<u>8 feet</u>

<u>If more than 15 dwelling units, or more than 15,000 gross square feet of non-residential uses, or both</u>	<u>14 feet</u>
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~~((2.))~~ 1. The floor of the solid waste storage space shall be level and hard-surfaced, and the floor beneath garbage or recycling compactors shall be made of concrete; and

~~((3.))~~ 2. If located outdoors, the solid waste storage space shall be screened from public view and designed to minimize light and glare impacts.

E. The location of all solid waste storage spaces shall meet the following requirements:

1. The solid waste storage space shall be located on the lot of the structure it serves and, if located ~~((outdoors))~~ outside the principal structure, shall not be located between a street-facing facade of the structure and the street (development permitted for unit lot subdivision may designate a shared solid waste storage space within the parent lot of the unit lot subdivision);

2. The solid waste storage space shall not be located in ~~((any required))~~ driveways, parking aisles, or parking spaces;

3. The solid waste storage space shall not block or impede any fire exits, any public rights-of-way, or any pedestrian or vehicular access;

4. The solid waste storage space shall be located to minimize noise and odor impacts on building occupants and beyond the lot lines of the lot;

~~((5. The storage space shall meet the contractor safety standards promulgated by the Director of Seattle Public Utilities; and))~~

~~((6.))~~ 5. The solid waste storage space shall not be used for purposes other than solid waste ~~((and recyclable materials))~~ storage and access to or movement of solid waste containers.

1 F. Solid waste staging areas and solid waste collection locations shall meet the following
2 requirements:

3 1. Solid waste staging areas located within a planting strip may not conflict with
4 required landscaping, including but not limited to street trees, and other required public right-of-
5 way characteristics. Evaluation of consistency with this provision shall be in consultation with
6 the Director of Transportation.

7 2. The Director may allow staging of solid waste containers in the right of way in
8 consultation with the Director of Seattle Department of Transportation.

9 3. Solid waste staging areas and solid waste collection locations shall not be
10 within a bus stop or within the street right-of-way area abutting a vehicular lane designated as a
11 sole travel lane for a bus.

12 4. A minimum 14-foot overhead clearance shall be provided at the solid waste
13 collection location, except as otherwise specified in subsection 23.54.040.G.

14 5. Solid waste carts shall be staged within 8 feet of the solid waste collection
15 location unless an alternative staging location is approved by Seattle Public Utilities.

16 6. Solid waste staging and solid waste collection areas for dumpsters shall be
17 paved with asphalt or concrete.

18 ~~((F))~~ G. Access to containers for solid waste service providers and solid waste collection
19 vehicles ~~((to the storage space from the collection location))~~ shall meet the following
20 requirements:

21 1. For ~~((containers))~~ dumpsters 2 cubic yards or smaller:

22 a. ~~((Containers))~~ Dumpsters to be manually ~~((pulled))~~ transported for
23 collection by a solid waste service provider, shall be ~~((placed))~~ staged no more than 50 feet from

1 ~~((a curb cut or))~~ the solid waste collection location(;;), in a manner that provides access to each
2 container for service;

3 ~~((b. Collection location shall not be within a bus stop or within the right-~~
4 ~~of way area abutting a vehicular lane designated as a sole travel lane for a bus;))~~

5 b. The slope of the solid waste staging area and solid waste collection
6 locations for dumpsters shall not exceed a grade of six percent;

7 ~~c. ((Access ramps to the storage space and))~~ The slope of access paths
8 used to move dumpsters to the solid waste collection location shall not exceed a grade of six
9 percent; ((and))

10 d. An enclosed solid waste staging area for dumpsters shall have an access
11 door or opening that is at least 6 feet wide;

12 e. Paths and corridors through which dumpsters are transported shall be at
13 least 6 feet wide and shall be paved with asphalt or concrete; and

14 ~~((d.))~~ f. Any gates or access routes for ((trucks)) solid waste collection
15 vehicles shall be a minimum of ((40)) 12 feet wide.

16 2. For containers larger than 2 cubic yards, any container to be loaded for service
17 by the front of the solid waste collection vehicle, and all containers storing compacted ((refuse
18 containers)) materials:

19 a. Direct access to the containers shall be provided ~~((from the alley or~~
20 ~~street to the containers;))~~ at the solid waste collection location;

21 b. The slope of the solid waste collection location and solid waste staging
22 area shall not exceed two percent.

1 ~~((b-))~~ c. Any gates or access routes for ~~((trucks))~~ solid waste collection
2 vehicles shall be a minimum of ~~((40))~~ 12 feet wide;

3 d. Paths and corridors through which containers are transported shall be a
4 minimum of 6 feet wide and shall be paved with asphalt or concrete;

5 ~~((e. Collection location shall not be within a bus stop or within the street~~
6 ~~right-of-way area abutting a vehicular lane designated as a sole travel lane for a bus;))~~

7 e. In locations where a compactor will be placed, the solid waste storage
8 space shall accommodate a minimum two feet of clearance around all sides of the compactor(s);

9 f. ~~((d. If accessed directly by a collection vehicle, whether into a structure~~
10 ~~or otherwise, a 24-foot overhead clearance shall be provided.))~~ The solid waste collection
11 location for front-load dumpsters shall have a 24-foot overhead clearance; and

12 g. Solid waste collection locations shall be located such that solid waste
13 service providers do not need to reposition containers larger than four cubic yards or containers
14 that store compacted materials.

15 3. For roll-off dumpsters (uncompacted and compacted solid waste)

16 a. Gates or access routes for solid waste collection vehicles shall be a
17 minimum of 12 feet wide;

18 b. Minimum 14 feet of overhead clearance (floor to ceiling) for a low-
19 profile roll-off dumpster.

20 c. Minimum 16 feet of overhead clearance (floor to ceiling) for roll-off
21 dumpster of standard height.

22 d. Minimum 18 feet of overhead clearance (floor to ceiling) if the
23 container is not stored on a dock; and

1 e. Direct access to the dumpsters by solid waste collection vehicles shall
2 be provided at the solid waste collection location;

3 ~~((G. Access for occupants to the storage space from the collection location shall meet the~~
4 ~~following requirements:~~

5 1. ~~Direct access shall be provided from the alley or street to the containers;~~

6 2. ~~A pick-up location within 50 feet of a curb cut or collection location shall be~~
7 ~~designated that minimizes any blockage of pedestrian movement along a sidewalk or other right-~~
8 ~~of-way;~~

9 3. ~~If a planting strip is designated as a pick-up location, any required landscaping~~
10 ~~shall be designed to accommodate the solid waste and recyclable containers within this area.))~~

11 H. The solid waste ~~((and recyclable materials))~~ storage space, access, solid waste staging
12 area, and ((pick-up)) solid waste collection location specifications required in this Section
13 23.54.040, including the number, ~~((and sizes of containers,))~~ volume, and dimensions (width and
14 depth) of containers and the type of solid waste, shall be included on the plans submitted with the
15 permit application for any development subject to the requirements of this Section 23.54.040.

16 ~~((I. The Director, in consultation with the Director of Seattle Public Utilities, has the~~
17 ~~discretion to modify the requirements of this Section 23.54.040 as a Type I decision, if the~~
18 ~~applicant proposes alternative, workable measures that meet the intent of this Section 23.54.040~~
19 ~~and if either:~~

20 1. ~~The applicant can demonstrate difficulty in meeting any of the requirements of~~
21 ~~this Section 23.54.040; or~~

1 2. ~~The applicant proposes to construct or expand a structure, and the requirements~~
2 ~~of this Section 23.54.040 conflict with opportunities to increase residential densities and/or retain~~
3 ~~ground level retail uses.))~~

4 ~~((F))~~ I. Ramps to accommodate solid waste container access

5 1. A solid waste access ramp to the street ~~((to accommodate solid waste container~~
6 ~~access))~~ that is not more than 5 feet in width may be approved by the Director of Transportation
7 if:

- 8 a. Access to solid waste containers is not from an alley;
- 9 b. No on-site parking is provided;
- 10 c. The lot contains solid waste containers that are 1 cubic yard or larger;

11 and

12 d. There are no existing solid waste access ramps ~~((to accommodate solid~~
13 ~~waste container access))~~ or other curb cuts within 150 feet of the street lot line, as measured
14 parallel to the street lot line. For purposes of this subsection ~~((23.54.040.J.1.d))~~ 23.54.040.I.1.d,
15 curb ramps at crosswalks are not considered existing ramps for waste access.

16 2. The standards of subsections ~~((23.54.040.J.1.a))~~ 23.54.040.I.1.a through
17 ~~((23.54.040.J.1.d))~~ 23.54.040.I.1.d may be modified by the Director of Transportation where
18 unusual topography, inability to temporarily stage solid waste containers in a parking lane, or
19 other local conditions present significant challenges for accommodating solid waste container
20 access.

21 J. If requirements of Section 23.54.040 cannot be met, the Director, after consultation
22 with the Director of Seattle Public Utilities, may approve alternative arrangements for solid
23 waste services, storage, and collection. Such measures may be approved as a Type I decision for

1 any requirement of Section 23.54.040, except subsection 23.54.040.I. Alternative staging
2 requirements may be approved as a Type I decision by the Director after consultation with the
3 Director of Seattle Public Utilities and the Director of Transportation. Approval of alternative
4 arrangements is at the discretion of the Director and does not obligate the Director to grant relief
5 from any requirement or obligate the Director to provide any improvements within a right-of-
6 way. The Director shall consider the following factors:

7 1. Whether adequate areas exist on the lot or in the right-of-way for staging or
8 collecting solid waste containers.

9 2. Whether the solid waste requirements adequately accommodate the needs of a
10 particular development type, such as:

11 a. Affordable housing;

12 b. Small efficiency dwelling units;

13 c. Congregate housing; or

14 d. Development using compaction of solid waste.

15 3. Whether alternative solid waste arrangements would result in one or more
16 additional dwelling units being constructed.

17 4. The effect on the efficiency of collection services such as:

18 a. Minimizing the number of days for collection service;

19 b. Providing safe access to the solid waste collection area; or,

20 c. Providing an efficient route between the solid waste storage space and
21 the solid waste collection location.

22 Section 3. Section 23.84A.036 of the Seattle Municipal Code, last amended by Ordinance
23 126157, is amended as follows:

1 **23.84A.036 “S”**

2 * * *

3 “Solarium” means a room, porch, or other area, that is designed to admit sunlight, is part
4 of a larger structure, is enclosed substantially entirely by glass or another transparent material,
5 and is not primarily used for the cultivation or protection of plants.

6 “Solid waste collection location” means the location where solid waste is collected from
7 solid waste containers into a solid waste collection vehicle.

8 “Solid waste containers” include, but are not limited to, the following:

9 1. Carts are wheeled containers and available in sizes ranging from 10 gallons to
10 100 gallons.

11 2. Dumpsters, with or without wheels, are containers designed to allow
12 mechanical loading of solid waste onto solid waste collection vehicles, provided in volumes
13 ranging from 0.75 cubic yards to 8 cubic yards.

14 3. Roll-off dumpsters are containers for solid waste that require a winch system to
15 load onto the flatbed of a specialized solid waste collection vehicle. They may include
16 compacted or uncompacted materials.

17 4. Front-load dumpsters are containers loaded by mechanisms on the front of solid
18 waste collection vehicles to dump solid waste and require 24 feet of overhead clearance to
19 complete service.

20 5. Low-profile roll-off dumpsters are roll-off dumpsters with a height maximum
21 of 88 inches.

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Section 5. This ordinance shall take effect as provided by Seattle Municipal Code Sections 1.04.020 and 1.04.070.

Passed by the City Council the _____ day of _____, 2025,
and signed by me in open session in authentication of its passage this _____ day of _____, 2025.

President _____ of the City Council

Approved / returned unsigned / vetoed this ____ day of _____, 2025.

Bruce A. Harrell, Mayor

Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2025.

Scheereen Dedman, City Clerk

(Seal)

Attachments: