

# SMC 23.54.040 Update for Solid Waste Storage and Access

Seattle Public Utilities Solid Waste Division  
Seattle Dept of Construction & Inspections



# Reasons to Update 23.54.040

- SMC 23.54.040 is outdated. The section has had no substantive update in more than 15 years; does not reflect current zoning or density.
- Many sections fail to match solid waste collection contractor safety and equipment requirements
- An update will substantially reduce confusion about code application for zoning reviewers, developers, and architects/designers
- Codifying existing SPU and Contractor requirements will make design options more clear

# Land Use Code Updates for SW Storage & Access

Update	Benefits and Impacts
<p>Include <b>industrial-zoned</b> properties in Table A 23.54.040 for storage and access</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make code requirements clear and consistent across zones</li> <li>• SPU already reviews</li> </ul>
<p>Require commercial buildings <i>with major expansions or improvements</i> (&gt;5,000ft<sup>2</sup>) to comply with storage and access requirements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure adequate solid waste storage and efficient collection.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Example: Polson Building dumpsters <b>stored</b> in front of Citizen M façade</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Correct the single-family/TH storage requirement to <b>2.5' x 6'</b> from the undersized 2'x 6' to ensure the required recycle cart can be stored on site in compliance with Solid Waste code 21.36.080</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing 2.5' is designer practice in Seattle</li> <li>• Prevent buyer complaints to developers when carts don't fit</li> <li>• The residential recycle cart is one size (29" wide x 34" deep) to accommodate efficient every-other-week collection</li> </ul>

# Land Use Code Updates for SW Storage & Access

Update	Benefits and Impacts
<p>Clarify that <b>just one storage area is required</b>; commercial and multifamily uses <b>may share a single solid waste storage room</b></p> <p>Clarify that mixed-use buildings <b>may share containers for garbage</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows developers to <b>provide a single storage room</b> for both commercial and multifamily containers</li> <li>• Consistent with longtime code interpretation</li> <li>• Reduces space required for storage</li> </ul>
<p><b>Provide Definitions</b>  <i>staging area; collection location; storage area; solid waste container types: carts, dumpsters, roll-off, front-load, etc.; solid waste providers</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides clarity for developers and SDCI reviewers.</li> <li>• Consistent with longtime code interpretation and industry standards</li> </ul>
<p><b>Clarify slope maximums</b> for dumpster staging and service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level/2% for dumpsters with compacted materials or larger than 2CY</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety</li> <li>• Existing code is extremely unclear for developers, SDCI</li> <li>• Developers already implement</li> </ul>



# Land Use Code Updates for SW Storage & Access

Update	Benefits and Impacts
Clarify that <i>staging locations</i> for dumpsters and carts be detailed on site plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide clarity for developers and zoning reviewers</li> <li>• Ensure solid waste containers are serviceable</li> <li>• Coordinated staging on ROW (when feasible) reduces monthly service costs for ownership</li> <li>• Consistent with longstanding practice</li> </ul>
6' wide path for dumpster movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2yd dumpsters are 44" (3' 10") deep</li> <li>• Contractor requirement &amp; longstanding best practice</li> <li>• Type 1 Modifications possible if building maintenance can stage containers on ROW, i.e: 5' wide door vs. 6' possible</li> </ul>
State overhead clearances required to service <b>optional</b> roll-off containers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14' OH clear for <b>low-profile</b> compactors on 4' dock</li> <li>• 16' OH clear for <b>standard height</b> compactors on 4' dock</li> <li>• 18' OH clear for compactors stored on the floor of the loading area (no dock)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce design changes</li> <li>• Provide clear service requirements for developers electing to have trucks service on-site</li> </ul> <p><i>Seeking ideas for incentives when on-site solid waste collection is selected by applicant</i></p>

# Land Use Code Updates for SW Storage & Access

Update	Benefits and Impacts
<p>Clarify the implementation of Type 1 decisions to specify that affordable housing, SEDU, congregate, and other site-specific conditions can be considered for modifications to storage room size</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specifies development types for which Type 1 decisions may be granted</li> </ul>
<p>Correct the dimension for truck access to 12' width (trucks are 10.1' wide w/ mirrors)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contractor requirement for trucks               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>4515 Brooklyn – Core building – inaccessible staging location in narrow alley</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ensures efficient and cost-effective service; improves safety for building staff and drivers</li> <li>• Longtime practice and developer implementation/no actual change for developments</li> </ul>
<p>Clarify <b>that 14' clearance is required to service 2yd and smaller rear-loaded</b> dumpsters at collection location</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing physical requirement for collection trucks</li> <li>• Applicants already implement</li> <li>• <b>Applies to any rear-load service, but almost exclusively to service completed <u>outside the building</u></b> (few to zero buildings choose on-site service of rear-loaded dumpsters)</li> </ul>

# Land Use Code Updates for SW Storage & Access

Update	Benefits and Impacts
<p><b>Define <i>direct access</i> per industry and Seattle standard:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clarify that drivers <i>reposition</i> 3 and 4 cubic yard containers (do not push)</li><li>• Clarify that drivers do no touch or move any container with <b>compacted</b> materials</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contractor safety requirement</li><li>• Longtime developer implementation</li><li>• Existing code is vague and confusing to applicants and SDCI zoning reviewers</li></ul>

# Land Use Code Updates for SW Storage & Access

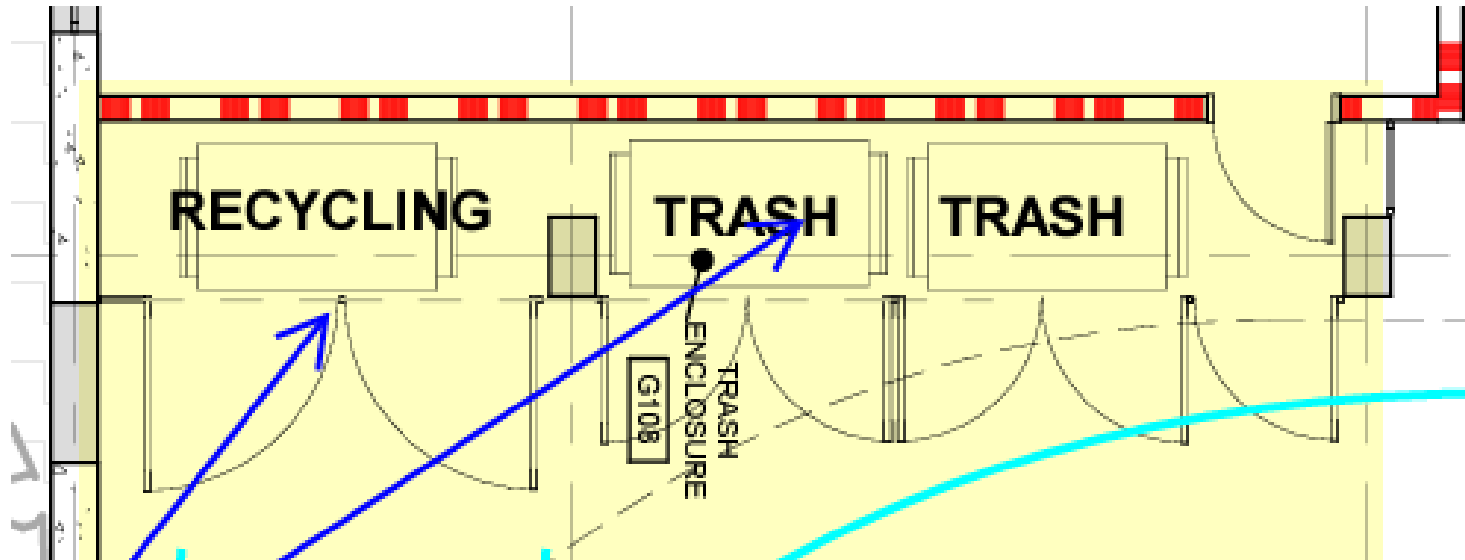
Update	Benefits and Impacts
<p><b>Proactively prepare for required housing density</b> from Comp Plan and <u>State Law HB 1110</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Include NR (neighborhood residential) zone</b> in 23.54.040 for storage and access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Prevent ROW conflicts</b> for owners and city depts: trees + curb cuts + sidewalks + bikes + water meters</li> <li>• <b>Reduce storage requirements</b> and provide flexibility for developers through planning for Hybrid</li> <li>• All other housing zones are already included in 23.54.040</li> <li>• Ensure owners can comply with SMC Solid Waste <a href="#">21.36.080</a> to separate waste streams and store all waste generated on-site</li> <li>• Ensure carts can be collected from ROW if no alley</li> </ul>



# Land Use Code Updates for SW Storage & Access

Update	Benefits and Impacts
<p><b>Establish minimum 8’ dimensions for commercial storage rooms</b> in alignment with existing multifamily dimensions (Current 7’ minimum)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enables 2yd and smaller containers to be serviced <i>directly from storage areas</i> (prevents staging in ROW/in front of businesses, if desired)</li> <li>• Helpful for infill locations lacking alley access</li> <li>• 21ft<sup>2</sup> increase for small commercial (15001-50,000ft<sup>2</sup>). <i>Type 1 Modifications still accepted.</i></li> </ul>
<p>Increase min horizontal dimension to 14’ from 12’ for 16+ dwelling units</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Optional design enables</b> 2yd and smaller containers to be serviced <i>directly from storage areas</i> (prevents staging in ROW/in front of businesses)</li> <li>• No increase in overall storage room size</li> </ul>

# Example: Type 1 modification to proposed 8' x 8' min dimension



# Estimated Timeline

**October/November:**

**Developer input**

**November/December:**

**Consider revisions based on input**

**December/January:**

**Prepare ordinance for legislative process**

**January or February:**

**Transmission to council**

*Committee: Parks, Public Utilities & Technology*