



## Planning for “Curbside” Garbage and Recycling Collection Access for New Development of Single-family through Four-plex lots

As an applicant for a land division, you should be aware of garbage collection access issues when planning your site. With a few exceptions, garbage, recyclables and yard debris must be set out for collection at “**curbside**”, which is typically next to a public street. This memo is provided by the Office of Sustainable Development to identify the regulations governing refuse and recycling pickup for single family dwellings through four-plexes. (Single-family includes all row houses on individual lots.)

For homes located at a distance from a public street, such as on a flag lot, a “Tract A” or other long driveway, or on a private street, some residents may be surprised to find they have to take their garbage, recyclables and yard debris all the way to the public street for collection.

With a few exceptions, garbage, recyclables and yard debris must be set out for collection at “**curbside**”, which is usually the edge of a **public street**. “**Curbside**” is defined as within three feet of the edge of the curb or, if there’s no curb, the traveled roadway. For flag lots, **curbside** is the point where the driveway or private street intersects the public street. These are the exceptions:

1. A household on a private street qualifies for **curbside** pickup on the private street only if it meets all of the following:
  - a) The private street must be paved to a width of at least 12 feet, exclusive of any areas where parking is permitted.
  - b) The street shall be constructed with a minimum of three inches of asphalt over an eight-inch crushed base aggregate.
  - c) If the private street is dead-end, it must have a 60-foot diameter turnaround or a ‘hammerhead’ or other feature which provides adequate turnaround space for standard collection vehicles.
  - d) The private street must have 14 feet of vertical clearance.
  - e) Access to the private street may not be limited by a gate;
  - f) The private street must be named and the residence must have its address on that named street.
2. A household may subscribe for noncurb pickup for garbage only, by paying an extra \$3 per month (\$4 for distances of more than 75’ from curbside). This option covers only garbage pickup; recyclables and yard debris must still be placed at a curbside location.
3. A household may qualify for **noncurb** pickup of garbage, recyclables and yard debris at no extra charge if **no one** in the household is physically able to take the materials to **curbside**. A doctor’s verification may be required.

Property developers may wish to discuss access for a particular development with the garbage collection franchisee for that area. Call the Office of Sustainable Development at (503) 823-7202 for the name of that company, or email your question to [wasteinfo@ci.portland.or.us](mailto:wasteinfo@ci.portland.or.us). Turn this sheet over for background information on the city’s specifications.

## **Planning for “Curbside” Garbage and Recycling Collection Access for Land Divisions creating Single-family through Four-plex lots -- Side 2**

Portland’s garbage and recycling collection system is regulated to provide “curbside” collection as a city-wide standard at single-family through four-plex dwellings. These garbage and recycling collection services are provided by over 40 private hauling companies which operate in specific territories under franchises granted by the Portland City Council. The City’s Office of Sustainable Development (OSD) oversees this franchise system.

The rates paid by customers are set by City Council after public hearings, with a goal of providing access to an equal range of services for all customers, while accounting for the 30+ franchisees’ varying costs of collection in different situations. One cost factor is the size and maneuverability of collection vehicles. In scheduling trucks to service a neighborhood, it is most efficient -- and least costly -- to use larger trucks. This can create access problems on narrow streets where there is inadequate width and/or turnaround space. Reducing the size of trucks generally adds to costs because more trucks and drivers are needed to cover the same number of houses. In a neighborhood where there are some narrow streets, it is very costly to bring in a smaller truck just for the narrow streets, and it is even more costly to use the smaller truck for the entire area.

In setting rates paid by customers to their haulers, the Office of Sustainable Development and City Council give incentives to households to reduce their waste. Another goal of the rate-setting process is to make it a user-pay system, where customers whose service needs are more costly are asked to pay those increased costs. For example, on most of the west side, every household pays an extra “terrain charge” of about \$2.75/month. This charge pays for higher labor and vehicle costs that are associated with the predominance of several factors: hilly terrain, longer distances between houses, street patterns that discourage through traffic, and the use of special collection vehicles.

Where infill developments involve private streets and lots that cannot be served in a normal pattern with standard collection vehicles, customers may be required to make what seems an unwelcome choice. Their options would be, on one hand, paying an extra \$3 or \$4 per month for the convenience of “curbside” collection, and perhaps indemnifying the garbage franchisee against liability for damage to the private street/curb, and on the other hand, taking their recyclables and garbage some distance to a public street for pickup.

For more information on these issues, call the Office of Sustainable Development garbage and recycling “Curbside Hotline” at (503) 823-7202, or send an email message to [wasteinfo@ci.portland.or.us](mailto:wasteinfo@ci.portland.or.us)

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