

CHAPTER 158

MAILBOXES

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158.01 PURPOSE. The City’s right-of-way is held by the City primarily for the purpose of pedestrian and vehicular passage and for the City’s provision of essential public safety services, including police, fire and emergency medical response services, and public health services, including sanitary sewer, water and storm drainage. Further, the purpose is to eliminate parking problems on streets and improve the ability of the City to remove snow from streets. This chapter provides standards for mailboxes in order to maintain the safety and the visual character of the City’s rights-of-way.

158.02 DEFINITIONS. For use in this chapter, the following terms are defined

1. “Breakaway support” means a supporting post which shall be no larger than a four-inch by four-inch wood post or a metal post with a strength no greater than a two-inch diameter schedule 40 steel pipe and which is buried no more than 24 inches deep. Such a support post shall not be set in concrete unless specifically designed as a breakaway support system as defined in *A Guide for Erecting Mailboxes on Highways* published by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, current edition (AASHTO).
2. “Clear zone” means an unobstructed flat area adjacent to the traveled portion of a roadway that is used for the recovery of errant vehicles, as defined by AASHTO.
3. “Cluster-style mailbox” means a style whereby mailboxes, meeting the specifications of the United States Postal Service (USPS) with the inscription plainly legible “U.S. MAIL” and “APPROVED BY THE POSTMASTER GENERAL,” are assembled and grouped together on a single area of land so that they are regarded as one unit. Cluster-style mailboxes must be manufactured cluster-style mailboxes approved by both the City and the USPS.
4. “Curbside mailbox” means a mailbox consisting of a lightweight sheet metal or plastic box meeting the specifications of the United States Postal Service (USPS) with the inscription plainly legible “U.S. MAIL” and “APPROVED BY THE POSTMASTER GENERAL,” which is erected at the edge of a roadway or curbside of a street and is mounted on a breakaway support post, and is intended or used for the collection of mail and is to be served by a mail carrier from a vehicle.
5. “Custom-built cluster mailbox” means a multiple number (two or more) of mailboxes erected at the edge of a roadway or curbside of a street being constructed of materials that do not meet the definition of a “cluster-style mailbox” and has no “breakaway support.”

6. “Custom-built individual mailbox” means a mailbox erected at the edge of a roadway or curbside of a street constructed using materials that do not meet the definition of a “curbside mailbox” and “breakaway support.”

158.03 CLUSTER-STYLE MAILBOX REQUIRED IN NEW DEVELOPMENTS.

1. Residential Developments. All new residential developments platted or in the site plan stage after the enactment of the regulations contained in this chapter which are situated on any cul-de-sac, street, avenue, or other roadway that is maintained or approved by the City and receive curbside delivery of mail shall have cluster-style mailboxes. Any housing development constructed and already receiving mail service before the regulations in this chapter are enacted is not required to have cluster-style mailboxes.

2. Commercial Developments. All new commercial developments platted or in the site plan stage after the enactment of the regulations contained in this chapter and which wish to receive delivery of mail shall make provisions for the delivery of their mail within the development and off the public streets or rights-of-way where possible. Where there is more than one commercial establishment, cluster-style mailboxes will be required. Approval is required by the U.S. Post Office as well as the Planning and Zoning Commission.

158.04 CLUSTER-STYLE MAILBOX REQUIREMENTS. Cluster-style mailboxes serving housing developments situated on any public street or roadway shall be located between the sidewalk and curb, outside of the three-foot clear zone. Cluster-style mailboxes shall have a four-foot concrete access from the public street, unless the mailbox is in reasonable proximity to an ADA ramp and the public sidewalk. The location of the cluster-style mailboxes shall not exceed 600 feet from the property line of those residents served by that cluster-style mailbox. Cluster-style boxes shall typically be located on property lines on the same side of the street where parking is allowed. The location of the cluster style mailbox shall be sited and become part of the requirements of Chapter 170, Subdivision Regulations. Further, prior to submission of the preliminary plat, approval of the USPS must be obtained and attached with the plat. In the case where the final plat is approved with a performance bond, that bond shall cover the mailboxes and the installation shall occur prior to any occupancy permit being issued for a home in the plat. The cost of installation, including but not limited to box units and concrete pad, shall be borne by the developer, and subsequent maintenance shall be carried out by the USPS.

158.05 VISIBILITY; OBSTRUCTION. All cluster-style mailboxes must be erected:

1. Away from the intersection of any street and, in no case closer than 100 feet measured from the center of the intersection in order to prevent obstruction of free and clear vision; and
2. Away from any location where, by reason of the position of, shape or color, it may interfere with, obstruct the view of or be confused with any authorized traffic sign, signal or device.

158.06 DRIVEWAY OR STREET ACCESS LIMITATIONS. No driveway or street access shall be constructed within five feet of the cluster-style mailboxes.

158.07 CURBSIDE MAILBOX REQUIREMENTS. While curbside mailboxes may be installed in developments constructed and already receiving mail service before the adoption of this chapter, the mailbox owner must comply with the following installation requirements:

1. The bottom of the mailbox shall be 41 inches to 45 inches from the road surface. On streets without curbs, the bottom of the mailbox shall be 48 inches from the edge of pavement, as defined by USPS installation requirements.
2. Lateral placement of the face of the mailbox shall be six inches minimum from the back of the curb, as defined by USPS installation requirements.
3. The mailbox support post shall be of a “breakaway support” design, as defined by AASHTO.
4. The post-to-box attachment shall be of sufficient strength to prevent the box from separating from the post if a vehicle strikes the post.
5. Property owner shall be responsible for the maintenance of the curbside mailbox.

158.08 CUSTOM-BUILT INDIVIDUAL MAILBOX REQUIREMENTS. A custom-built individual mailbox may not be installed in developments constructed and already receiving mail service before the adoption of this chapter. If a custom-built individual mailbox is existing at the time of the enactment of the ordinance codified in this chapter, the custom-built mailbox will be grandfathered, and allowed to stay. However, should the mailbox sustain 50 percent damage, the custom-built mailbox may not be replaced. A custom-built mailbox must conform to the following requirements and rules:

1. Property owner shall be responsible for the maintenance of the custom-built mailbox.
2. If the mailbox is damaged beyond use by the City, a standard curbside mailbox and breakaway post as defined in this chapter will be provided or the property owner can be reimbursed up to a maximum replacement amount set by Council.

158.09 CUSTOM-BUILT CLUSTER-STYLE MAILBOX REQUIREMENTS. A custom-built cluster mailbox may not be installed unless specifically approved by Council on a Site Plan in accordance with Chapter 157 of this Code of Ordinances. A custom-built cluster-style mailbox must conform to the following requirements and the rules:

1. Homeowner’s Association owner shall be responsible for the maintenance of the custom-built mailbox.
2. The City shall not be responsible for any damage to custom-built cluster mailboxes.

158.10 RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROPERTY OWNER. Any type of mailbox located in the City right-of-way is subject to damage or destruction, at any time, as a result of the City or a person with a utility easement entering upon the City right-of-way to construct, repair or maintain the utilities located in the City right-of-way or as a result of the City engaging in activities to maintain the public street or right-of-way, such as snow removal, pavement repair or street cleaning. If a curbside or cluster-style mailbox located in the City right-of-way is damaged during such activities, the City or the utility that damaged the mailbox shall replace said mailbox if it has been approved for installation by the USPS with the proper markings inscribed “U.S. MAIL” and “APPROVED BY THE POSTMASTER GENERAL.” Property owner may choose to be reimbursed in full or have the City reinstall a new mailbox meeting stated requirements. If the property owner chooses to purchase an approved mailbox and be reimbursed, the City will install the mailbox at the property owner’s request.

158.11 SNOW REMOVAL. It is the responsibility of the adjoining property owner or occupant to clear the snow and accumulations from the sidewalk and pad around the cluster-style mailboxes within 24 hours after the snow has ceased to fall.

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