

PLANNING SERVICES STAFF REPORT

For Planning Commission Meeting of March 3, 2026

SUBJECT: Amendments to Unified Development Code (Chapter 55 of the Code of the City of Ann Arbor) related to Stormwater Review Responsibility and Solid Waste Terms

PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve amendments to Chapter 55, Unified Development Code, Section 5.22 related to stormwater management review to clarify the circumstances when review by the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner (WCWRC) is necessary as proposed in the attached ordinance.

PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve amendments to Chapter 55, Unified Development Code, Sections 5.18, 5.20, 5.29 and 5.37 related to solid waste terms for consistency and accuracy with recent amendments to Chapter 26 and the Solid Waste Regulations as proposed in the attached ordinance.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff recommend **approval** of a proposed amendment to Unified Development Code (UDC) Section 5.22 related to stormwater management review because they will provide requested clarity and improved understanding for when reviews must be done by the WCWRC.

Staff recommend **approval** of proposed amendments to Unified Development Code (UDC) Sections 5.18, 5.20, 5.29 and 5.37 related to solid waste terms because they will correctly and consistently align the UDC with Chapter 26 and the Solid Waste Regulations.

SUMMARY:

Staff present two amendments to the UDC together in this report.

First, an amendment to Section 5.22.1 Stormwater Management is proposed to clarify the current requirement when **stormwater management review** is delegated to the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner (WCWRC) by switching to an easier-to-understand list. Second, amendments are proposed to five sections throughout the chapter related to **solid waste terms** to be consistent with updated and new terms and definitions in Chapter 26 Solid Waste Management and the Solid Waste Regulations.

REPORT ON AMENDMENTS RELATED TO STORMWATER MANAGEMENT REVIEW:

Staff present amendments to Section 5.22.1.C to clarify review responsibility for stormwater management systems requested by the Public Services Area, Systems Planning unit.

Summary Review of Amendments to Stormwater Management Review		
Section	Current Text	Proposed Text
5.22.1.C	Review [by WCWRC] For sites within the jurisdiction of the WCWRC; or sites with existing or proposed stormwater management systems under multiple ownership or for multiple parcels, including but not limited to site condominiums; or residential developments containing greater than four dwelling units within two or more detached structures; or sites with stormwater management systems servicing more than one parcel.	The WCWRC shall review stormwater management systems for sites that have one or more of the following conditions: 1. Ownership by Washtenaw County 2. Existing or proposed infrastructure owned by the WCWRC. 3. Existing or proposed easements dedicated to the WCWRC. 4. Review is deferred to the WCWRC by the PSA Administrator.

Analysis:

- Section 5.22 Stormwater Management and Soil Erosion was revised by Ordinance 23-02 in 2022 to adjust review responsibility between the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner (WCWRC) and the City to match their geographical boundaries.
- Systems Planning staff, responsible for administration of Section 5.22 Stormwater Management and Soil Erosion Control, find the text explaining when review by WCWRC is required in Subsection 5.22.1, Paragraph C confusing for customers. Planning staff agree.
- The proposed amendment presents the circumstances when review of stormwater management systems is done by WCWRC in an easier-to-understand, straightforward list.

REPORT ON AMENDMENTS RELATED TO SOLID WASTE TERMS:

Staff present amendments to Section 5.18, 5.20, 5.29.1, 5.29.8, and 5.37.2 to consistently and correctly use the terms of Chapter 26 Solid Waste Management and the Solid Waste Regulations.

Chapter 26 now uses *solid waste* as the generic term for *refuse, rubbish, garbage, recyclables, and compostables*. *Solid waste container* is now used as the generic term for *curb cart and dumpster*.

Summary Review of Amendments to Solid Waste Terms		
Section	Current Text	Proposed Text
5.18.1.B.2.a	Solid waste containers	Curb carts
5.20.6	<p>Refuse/Recycling/Compost Container</p> <p>Containers, carts, and dumpsters for solid waste, recycling, or compost ...</p> <p>A. Screening Six feet high surrounding storage area</p> <p>B. Buffer 15-foot strip between ROW, park, or R zoning district, with trees every 15 feet</p> <p>C. Exception Containers or carts of single-family and two-family dwelling</p>	<p>Solid Waste Containers</p> <p>Solid waste container points of storage shall provide screening and buffering where adjacent and visible from right-of-way, private street, public park, or a lot in a residential zoning district.</p> <p>A. Screen Wall or Fence Six feet high</p> <p>B. Buffer Strip 15 feet wide with trees every 15 feet</p> <p>C. Exception Curb cart point of storage of single-family and two-family</p>
5.29.1.C	...placement of locations for dumpsters used for commercial recyclablesdumpster points of storage ...
5.29.8.D	Solid waste enclosures	Solid waste container points of storage and points of collection
5.29.8.H	Refuse containers and enclosures	Solid waste container points of storage and points of collection
5.37.2.O	Refuse facilities	Solid waste container points of storage or points of collection

Analysis:

- Revisions to the Solid Waste Regulations were approved by City Council on December 18, 2024 and January 5, 2026. Chapter 26 (Solid Waste) was also amended on January 5, 2026 by adoption of Ordinance 25-35. Changes include updating and adding new definitions and provisions for solid waste container storage and collection.

- The UDC uses most of the updated and new terms in Chapter 26 already, but they are sometimes applied inconsistently.
- Key terms used in both the UDC and Chapter 26 are listed and defined in the February 24, 2026 Staff Memo on Amendments Related to Solid Waste Terms (attached).
- Section 5.18 Special Dimensional and Site Layout Standards, **Paragraph 5.18.1.B.2.a** is amended to change *solid waste containers* to *curb carts*. This paragraph addresses structures that may be located anywhere on a lot – in other words, that may be in required setback areas – in residential zoning districts only. The change will specify that *curb carts* in residential zoning districts may be located anywhere on a lot, while *dumpsters* must meet setback standards for the zoning district in which they are located.
- Section 5.20 Landscaping, Screening and Buffering, **Subsection 5.20.6** is amended to specify screening and buffering is required for *solid waste container points of storage* when visible from streets, parks and residential zoning districts, with *curb carts* on parcels with single- and two-family dwellings still exempt. The changes will clarify that screening and buffering is required for *points of storage* only (not *points of collection*) and only when existing buildings do not already provide screening.
- **Section 5.29.1** Zoning Permits for fences and dumpsters is amended to change *the placement of locations for dumpsters* to *dumpster points of storage*, consistent with the terms in Chapter 26 and the Solid Waste Regulations.
- Section 5.29.8 Required Plan information, **Paragraph 5.29.8.D** Dimensional Plan Layout and **Paragraph 5.29.8.H** Landscape Plan are amended to change *solid waste enclosure and refuse containers and enclosures* to *solid waste container points of storage and points of collection*, consistent with the terms in Chapter 26 and the Solid Waste Regulations.
- Section 5.37.2.O, the definition of **Open Space** is amended to change *refuse facilities* to *solid waste container storage*.

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Attachment: Draft Ordinance (Stormwater Management Review)
Draft Ordinance (Solid Waste Terms) Tracked and Clean
February 24, 2026 Staff Memo (Stormwater Management Review)
February 24, 2026 Staff Memo (Solid Waste Terms)