



Shawn Machado
Assistant City Manager

MEMORANDUM

TO: Thomas A. Golden, Jr., City Manager 

FROM: Shawn Machado, Assistant City Manager

CC: Doreen Burgess & Conor Baldwin

DATE: 2/18/2026

SUBJECT: C. McDonough – 2/17/2026 - Request the City Mgr. work with the appropriate department to ensure property owners in mixed use and commercial areas are aware of ordinances regulating the storage of dumpsters, trash bins, and other items on city sidewalks; to take appropriate action to ensure compliance with these requirements.

City Council Motion Response

Motion:

C. McDonough – Req. the City Mgr. work with the appropriate department to ensure property owners in mixed-use and commercial areas are aware of ordinances regulating the storage of dumpsters, trash bins, and other items on city sidewalks; to take appropriate action to ensure compliance with these requirements.

Response:

The City of Lowell regulates the placement and maintenance of dumpsters under **City Ordinance §171-13 – Refuse Dumpsters**. This ordinance requires property owners and contractors to obtain permits, maintain dumpsters in compliance with Board of Health regulations, and ensure proper location, screening, and upkeep. Key provisions include:

- **Permit Requirement:** Property owners must obtain a permit from Development Services for each dumpster on their property.
- **Contractor Registration:** Dumpster contractors must register with Development Services and maintain liability insurance or a surety bond.
- **Maintenance Standards:** Dumpsters must comply with regulations regarding location, screening, size, hours of use, maintenance, and deodorization.
- **Enforcement:** Violations may result in fines of \$50 for the first offense and \$150 for subsequent offenses per day.



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The **Division of Development Services (DDS)** actively enforces these requirements. Recently, DDS issued **\$2,600 in fines** for violations related to a dumpster located in the Palmer Street alley, demonstrating the City's commitment to compliance.

Complaint Process:

Residents who observe issues such as early pickups (before 7:00 AM), odor or leaking materials, unsafe placement, infrequent pickups, or obstruction of sidewalks may report these concerns through the **City's 311 system**. Complaints are routed to Development Services for investigation and enforcement.

Next Steps:

- Development Services will conduct outreach to property owners and contractors in mixed-use and commercial areas to ensure awareness of these requirements.
- Information will be posted on the City website and shared through direct communication channels.
- The 311 reporting option will be highlighted for residents to ensure timely resolution of complaints.