

City of Grand Rapids - Mailbox Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish uniformity and consistency in the application, installation, and maintenance of mailboxes and their supports on all roadways within the city limits of Grand Rapids.

It is the goal of the City of Grand Rapids to provide public right-of-way for the travelling public that is safe, efficient, and free of unnecessary hazards, while providing minimum inconvenience to property owners. Minnesota law declares certain mailbox installations to be a public nuisance, a road hazard, and a danger to the health and safety of the travelling public (Minnesota Rules Chapter 8818), and authorizes the road authority to remove and replace the nonconforming supports (Statute 169.072).

Regulations

The important features of an approved, conforming mailbox design for roadways include the following:

1. The post located a minimum of 3 feet from the edge of the road shoulder
2. The front of the mailbox located above the edge of the shoulder
3. The bottom of the box at the proper height (normally 41-inch minimum to 45-inch maximum)
4. An installation that will pivot or rotate in some fashion when a snowplow hits the mailbox

Policy

The City of Grand Rapids will replace all nonconforming mailbox supports as part of a reconstruction/resurfacing project. The City will continue to monitor existing mailbox supports and notify owners of their noncompliance and offer installation of approved supports for a fee.

Policy Criteria

Replacement of Mailbox Supports

The City will provide and install, at the City's expense, conforming mailbox supports within the limits of all city street reconstruction and resurfacing projects. The City is able to provide this service only on reconstruction/resurfacing projects since they are an eligible state aid expense and are therefore reimbursable.

Replacement of Unlawful Mailbox Supports and Installations

Any mailbox support deemed unlawful by the City, as defined by Minnesota Rules Chapter 8818, must be replaced. Once a support is deemed unlawful, the owner will be notified in writing that the owner must replace it within 60 days. As an incentive to use approved supports, the City provides the following options:

1. The owner may purchase the support from the City at the current rate, install it him- or herself, and remove the unlawful support.
2. At the request of the owner, the City will furnish and install an approved support and owner will be invoiced.

An unlawful support remaining after the expiration of the 60-day period will be removed and replaced by the City at the owner's expense.

Replacement of Damaged Mailbox Supports by the City of Grand Rapids

The City will replace lawful mailbox supports (up to \$175) damaged by City equipment during snowplowing operations or other maintenance activities provided the support was properly installed according to U.S. Postal and City standards. The City will not replace supports damaged by third parties.

Mailbox Support Requirements—Right-of-Way Permits

The City will require that all mailbox supports associated with the issuance of a right-of-way permit be constructed in accordance with the specifications for lawful supports. The property owner will pay for the cost of the supports. The City will furnish and install an approved support for the fee currently in effect. The owner may opt to purchase the support from the City at the current rate, and install it him or herself.

Miscellaneous Attachments to Mailbox Supports

Newspaper delivery boxes, advertisement delivery boxes, nameplates, address plates, etc., must not be installed underneath the mailbox, whether attached to the mailbox support or on a separate post. The area underneath the mailbox must remain free of obstructions in order to allow the unhindered passage of the snowplow wing blade. Obstacles interfering with the wing blade force the plow to swerve, often into the oncoming lane, creating an unsafe situation for motorists and plow operators.

Ownership of Mailbox Supports

Mailboxes and mailbox supports are the property of the mail route patron. The City does not issue written permits for the placement of mailboxes within the road right-of-way, nor does its easements provide for mailbox construction. All mailboxes placed within the road right-of-way are placed there at the owner's risk. Replacement or installation of mailbox supports by the City does not signify any change of ownership. The support remains the property of the owner, and it is the owner's responsibility to maintain to conformance standards.

Interruption of Mail Delivery

When the City must remove and replace a mailbox support, it must be done in such a manner as to cause no interruption of mail delivery, if at all possible.

Spacing of Mailbox Supports

In accordance with Minnesota Rules Chapter 8818, mailbox supports shall be spaced no closer than 30 inches.

Call Before You Dig (Gopher State One Call)

Forty-eight hours before installation of any new mailbox support, contact the Gopher State One Call for utility locates (1-800-252-1166).

Financial Considerations

The new mailbox supports that have been installed by the City become and remain the property of the owner upon completion of the installation. Maintenance of mailbox supports becomes the responsibility of the owner. Mailboxes are the owner's responsibility and must conform to U.S. Postal Service requirements.