





Single-Use Retail Carry-out Bag Ordinance Council Briefing – 2/9/12

Austin City Council Resolutions April 19, 2007

 Directs staff to evaluate and recommend strategies for limiting the use of plastic bags

June 24, 2010

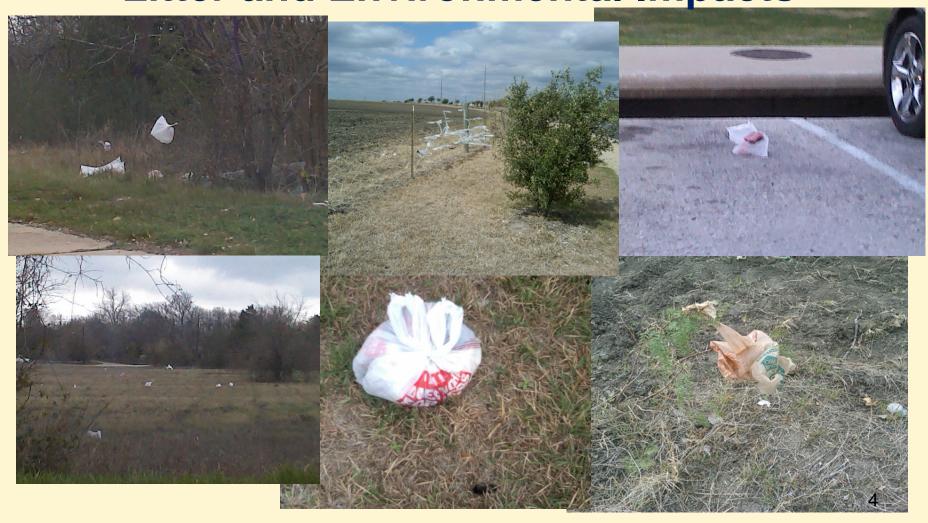
 Directs staff to determine the cost to Austin taxpayers of processing plastics bags

August 4, 2011

Directs staff to develop a city ordinance providing a "comprehensive phase-out of single-use plastic bags offered at retail checkouts"

 Requested by Council to expand the public discussion to include paper bags and market drivers such as fees

Litter and Environmental Impacts



Austin Zero Waste Policies

21.3 Single-Use Products and Packaging Ordinances

- The goal of this initiative is to reduce single-use and non-recyclable products and packaging.
- ➤ The City will consider developing ordinances with the goal of reducing or eliminating consumption and generation of the following products: Single-use bags...

3.5 Highest and Best Use Principles

- ➤ Highest and Best Use: Reduce, Reuse
- ➤ Mid-Level Best Use: Recycling and Composting
- ➤ Lowest Least Desirable: Landfilling and Incineration

Process

- City Council Resolution 8/4/11
- Stakeholder Discussions Sept-Jan
- SWAC Public Comments 10/5/11
- ➤ Public Forum 10/24/11
- SWAC Public Comments 11/9/11
- ➤ SWAC Draft #1 Discussion 12/14/11

Process

- Stakeholder Discussions Continuing
- ➤ SWAC Draft #2 Discussion 1/11/12
- ➤ Environmental Board 1/18/12
- ➤ Public Focus Group 1/30/12
- ➤ SWAC Draft #3 Discussion 2/8/12
- City Council Briefing 2/9/12
- City Council Public Hearing 3/1/12

Ordinance Purpose

Replaces Retail Carry-out Single-Use Bags with defined Reusable/Recyclable Bags

Exemptions (< 10% of all plastic bags)

- Dry Cleaner Bags and Yard Waste Bags
- Produce, Meat, and Frozen Foods Bags
- Door-hanger Bags and Newspaper Bags
- Prescription Drug Carry-Out Bags
- Beer, Wine and Spirits Carry-out Bags
- Restaurant Carry-out Bags

Permitted Reusable Bags

- ➤ Reusable Carry-out Bags 3 choices
 - Cloth, washable fabric, or other durable materials
 - Recyclable paper with min weight, certification & handle
 - Recyclable plastic, 4 mil thickness (durability) & handle

Implementation Timeline

- ▶ Phase 1: Education: March 1, 2012 February 28, 2013
- ▶ Phase 2: Transition: March 1, 2013 February 28, 2014
 - Transition away from Retail Checkout Single Use Bags
 - 10 cents per Single-Use Bag or \$1 per transaction
 - Retailers and Customers Transition to Reusable Bags
- > Phase 3: March 1, 2014 No Retail Checkout Single-Use Bags

Hardship Variance

- Customers with Lone Star Card exempt from temporary surcharge
- Retailers may petition for Hardship Variance

Other Elements

- Retailer Signage Requirements
- Customer Education at Point of Purchase
- Temporary Surcharge to fund Public Education
- City dedicated fund restricted use of revenues
- Prohibits carryout bags at all City facilities

Issues Raised

- Paper Bags
 - Option A: Current Draft Ordinance
 - Option B: Do not include Paper Bags in Ordinance
 - Option C: <u>Staff Recommendation</u>: Paper Bags defined by certification and handles: no weight requirement

Issues Raised

> Exemptions

- Citizen comments indicate too many exemptions
- Staff Recommendation: Remove Exemption for "Beer, Wine and Spirits Carry-out Bags"
- Future: staff to explore potential replacements to other exemptions (e.g. dry cleaner bags, newspaper bags)

> Temporary Surcharge

- Temporary Surcharge creates implementation challenges
- <u>Staff Recommendation</u>: Transition from Education Phase to Full Implementation without Surcharge Adjust dates

Issues Raised

> Metrics

- Lack of Access to Bag Distribution Count
- Recycling Accountability Issues
- Staff Recommendation: Proposed contract with UT to develop metrics, analyze data, and provide reports

Reuse / Recycling Options

- Purpose of Ordinance to Promote Reuse
- Litter Abatement vs. Litter Control
- Staff Recommendation: Develop Comprehensive Bag Recycling Program (only if single-use bags are phased out)

Recent Council Actions

Jan 26th Council Set Public Hearing Notice

Feb 9th Staff Briefing to Council

Next Steps

March 1st 4:00 pm Public Hearing to consider the proposed ordinance

* motion sheets for various options will be provided

