

Circular Plastic Initiatives: Progress Updates

Natalie Betts, Circular Economy Program Manager



Where We Are Today

- Curbside recycling for all rigid plastics
- Drop-off recycling for foam, film
- Litter abatement crews and street sweeping
- Universal Recycling Ordinance
- Austin Reuse Directory
- [Re]Verse Pitch Competition
- Trash in Creeks Study
- Signatory to New Plastics Economy Global Commitment & US Plastics Pact

New Plastics Economy Global Commitment



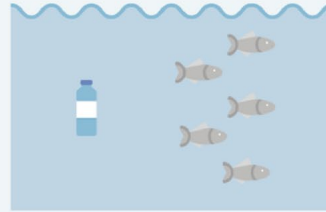
24-34 million metric tons of plastic waste enter aquatic ecosystems every year, with a significant majority coming from land-based sources

- [Science, 2020](#)



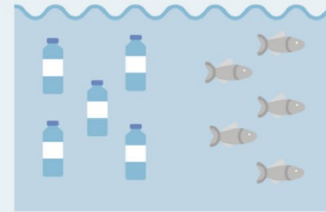
**THERE COULD BE
MORE PLASTIC THAN
FISH IN THE OCEAN**

2014



1:5

2050



>1:1

**PLASTICS' SHARE OF
OIL CONSUMPTION TO
RISE DRAMATICALLY**



6%



20%

**PLASTICS' SHARE OF
CARBON BUDGET TO
GROW EXPONENTIALLY***



1%



15%

*World Economic Forum, Ellen MacArthur Foundation and McKinsey & Company,
The New Plastics Economy — Rethinking the future of plastics (2016)

More plastic than fish

By 2025...

Committing to Do More

- Limit, restrict, or prohibit City purchases of problematic and unnecessary plastics
- Encourage business to adopt reuse models
- Research and development on circular plastic packaging.
- Measure the capture rate for plastics by 2022, and set a quantitative target for increasing this capture rate by 2025.

By 2025...

Committing to Do More

- Set a target for replacing virgin plastic materials with materials made from at least 30% post-consumer recycled content
- Joining the Government Recycling Demand Champions Program
- Add plastics pollution education to the City's current Generation Zero program for K-12 education
- Increase education about plastic film recycling drop-off options

US Plastics Pact



US Plastics Pact

- National level actions to reach New Plastics Economy vision
- ARR Role:
 - Founding Activator
 - Inaugural Advisory Council member
 - New Business Models Workstream co-lead
 - Reporting Workstream member
- Roadmap under development

Texas Plastics Summit



Texas Plastics Summit

- 2-hour virtual workshop on May 4th with 40+ stakeholders
- Co-hosted by ARR and State of Texas Alliance for Recycling
- Stakeholders included retailers, MRFs, reclaimers, manufacturers, non-profits, government, educational institutions
- Focus on identifying long and short-term collective actions to reduce plastic waste in Texas by 2025

Summit Takeaways

- Selection of ideas from group:
 - Youth-focused education campaign
 - Creating an action group/coalition on problematic plastic elimination
 - Collecting and accessibly sharing case studies, data, standardized messaging
 - Public awareness campaign collaboration on contamination and/or consumption habits

Beyond the Summit

- Currently surveying participants to prioritize next steps
- STAR Follow-Up Event in November 2021
- Implementation of priority items

Thank You!

