



Single-Use Retail Carry-out Bag Ordinance

Draft 3

Single-Use Retail Carry-out Bags



Single-Use Retail Carry-out Bags

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

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Austin City Council Resolution

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

Single-Use Retail Carry-out Bags

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**; Non-recyclable, non-compostable take-out containers; and Single-use beverage containers.

Single-Use Retail Carry-out Bags

Process

- City Council Resolution – 8/4/11
- Stakeholder Discussions – Sept-Jan
- SpeakUpAustin.org forum – Oct - Feb
- SWAC - Public Comments – 10/5/11
- Public Forum – 10/24/11
- SWAC - Public Comments – 11/9/11
- SWAC - Draft Discussion – 12/14/11

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Process

- Stakeholder Discussions – Continuing
- SWAC – Draft Discussion – 1/11/12
- Environmental Board – 1/18/12
- Community Forum – 1/30/12
- SWAC – Final Discussion – 2/8/12
- City Council Briefing – 2/9/12
- City Council Discussion – 3/1/12

Single-Use Retail Carry-out Bags

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

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Reusable Bags Options

- Reusable Carry-out Bags – 3 choices
 - Cloth, washable fabric, or other durable materials
 - Recyclable paper with minimum weight and handle
 - Recyclable plastic with minimum thickness

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 Bags⁹

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Hardship Variance

- Customers with **Lone Star Card** exempt from fees
- Retailers may petition for **Hardship Variance**

Other Elements

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

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Other Elements

- 10 cent Bag Fee or \$1.00 per Transaction Fee
 - 50% of Fees kept by Retailers, 50% to City Restrictive Use Fund
 - Fee Revenue must be utilized for retailer transition costs, public education and bag distribution

Exemptions / “carve-outs”

- Ordinance requires majority of exempted bags to be recyclable
- Reusable bag definitions
 - Recyclable Paper and Recyclable Plastic
 - Requires Handles on Reusable Bags
- Expanded bag recycling opportunities
 - City commitment to expand collection options



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SpeakUpAustin.org