



Proposed Carryout Bag Regulations

Carryout Bags

Austin City Council Resolutions

➤ April 19, 2007

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

➤ April 10, 2008

- Based on stakeholder group advice, adopted plan for 50% reduction and established voluntary program.

➤ June 24, 2010

- Directed staff to determine the cost to Austin taxpayers of processing plastics bags

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Austin City Council Resolution

➤ August 4, 2011

- Directed 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**

Carryout Bags

Ordinance Public Discussion

- Stakeholder Discussions – Sept/Oct/Nov
- SWAC - Public Comments – 10/5/11
- Public Forum – 10/24/11
- SWAC - Public Comments – 11/9/11
- SWAC - Draft Ord. Discussion – 12/14/11
- SWAC – Recommendation – 1/11/12
- Environmental Board presentation 1/18/12
- City Council Discussion – 1/26/12

Carryout Bags

Bags Prohibited

➤ Retail Single-Use Carryout bags

- Plastic & Paper Single-Use Bags
- Retailers within city limits

Bags Permitted

➤ Reusable Carryout bags

- Consumer Choice: Cloth, Plastic, and Paper checkout options
- Required recycled content, minimum thickness, with handles.
- Plastic: minimum 4.0 mil and 50% recycled content
- Paper: minimum 65 lb weight and 100% recycled content
- Certified by Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) or Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)

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Implementation Timeline

- **Phase 1: One Year Education Period**
 - Jan 1, 2012 – Dec 31, 2012
 - Public Education Campaign
- **Phase 2: Three Year Transition Period**
 - Jan 1, 2013 – Dec 31, 2015
 - Single Use Carryout Bags only upon request
 - \$0.25 surcharge per single-use bag
- **Phase 3: Full Implementation**
 - Jan 1, 2016
 - No distribution or sale of Retail Single-Use Carryout bags

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➤ Temporary Surcharge

- During three year transition period only
- Not charged to customers using Lone Star Card
- Retailer keeps 10% for administration
- City use the funds to promote use of reusable carryout bags

➤ Administrative Variance

- Director may grant variance based on undue hardship
- Variance must be minimum departure from regulations

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Exemptions

- **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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Other Elements

- **Retailer Signage Requirements**
- **Bags printed message: “Reusable and Recyclable”**
- **Prohibits single-use carryout bags at City facilities, at events on City property, and at city-sponsored events**

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Questions?