



## Takoma Park City Council Meeting – March 13, 2019 Agenda Item 1

### **Public Hearing**

Public Hearing on Proposed Ordinance Prohibiting the Commercial Use of Plastic Beverage Straws and Stirrers

### **Recommended Council Action**

Hear comments.

### **Context with Key Issues**

Plastic beverage straws and stirrers, including so called “compostable” products made of biologically based polymers, contribute to litter in the local environment and contribute to the nonbiodegradable waste accumulating in landfills and oceans. Straws and stirrers made of paper, wood, and other biodegradable materials and reusable products provide environmentally friendly alternatives to disposable plastic products. The proposed Ordinance generally prohibits retail establishments from providing customers with plastic straws and stirrers for use with dine-in and carry out beverages. However, some individuals require flexible plastic straws to allow them to consume beverages because of physical conditions. Therefore, the proposed Ordinance allows for the provision of flexible plastic straws upon request and requires that retail establishments maintain a stock of flexible plastic straws for that purpose.

The proposed Ordinance also prohibits the provision of plastic straws and stirrers at City sponsored events and in City facilities. It encourages other institutions in the City to switch to reusable or biodegradable products.

Notice of the public hearing was provided in the Takoma Park Newsletter and on the City website.

### **Council Priority**

Environmentally sustainable community.

### **Environmental Impact of Action**

Reduction of waste and litter.

### **Fiscal Impact of Action**

The Neighborhood Services Team enforces the City’s environmental codes and encourages compliance through education.

### **Racial Equity Considerations**

All residents of the City will enjoy the environmental benefits of reducing waste. All businesses that sell beverages will be impacted since they must train their staffs to comply, and purchase non-plastic straw products if their customers expect them. This may have a disproportionate effect on

smaller businesses that have closer cost margins, many of which may be owned by people of color.

**Attachments and Links**

- Proposed Ordinance (as revised at the February 27 work session)

1 Version: February 28, 2019

2  
3 Introduced by:

4  
5 First Reading:  
6 Second Reading:  
7 Effective Date:  
8

9 **CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND**  
10 **ORDINANCE 2019-XX**

11  
12 **AMENDING THE *TAKOMA PARK CODE*, TITLE 8, BUSINESS, TO BAN THE**  
13 **COMMERCIAL USE OF PLASTIC BEVERAGE STRAWS AND PLASTIC STIRRERS**  
14

15 WHEREAS, the City Council established an environmentally sustainable community as one of its  
16 2018 priorities for the City; and

17  
18 WHEREAS, many US cities and the state of California have taken legal action to ban or restrict  
19 plastic beverage straws and plastic drink stirrers through ordinances that have taken or will take  
20 effect after a prescribed period; including Seattle (the largest city where a ban is already in effect)  
21 and Edmonds, WA; Alameda, Carmel, San Luis Obispo, Malibu, Manhattan Beach, Oakland,  
22 Richmond and Berkeley, CA; Miami and Fort Myers, FL; Washington, DC; Garrett Park, MD and  
23 many more that are considering such legislation; and similar actions that are occurring in other  
24 countries; and

25  
26 WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes that plastic beverage straws and stirrers (including certain  
27 so-called “compostable” plastic beverage straws and stirrers) will continue to contribute to litter in  
28 our local parks and waterways and have an adverse impact on the Sligo Creek, Long Branch and  
29 Chesapeake Bay environment, and recognizes that paper straws provide an environmentally friendly  
30 alternative for almost all straw uses; and

31  
32 WHEREAS, some local restaurants have voluntarily adopted a paper straw policy and have been  
33 aided in this by local resident volunteers, with important contributions by Piney Branch Elementary  
34 School students; and

35  
36 WHEREAS, the City Council wishes to have restaurants and other retail establishments in the City  
37 that provide straws to customers aided with the transition to non-plastic straws.

38  
39 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TAKOMA**  
40 **PARK, MARYLAND:**

41  
42 **SECTION 1.** Title 8, Business, of the *Takoma Park Code* shall be amended to include the following:

43  
44 **CHAPTER 8.52**

45  
46 **PLASTIC BEVERAGE STRAWS AND STIRRERS**

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48 **8.52.010 Definitions.**  
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50 As used in this chapter:

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52 “Non-plastic material” means paper, sugar cane, bamboo, rubber, metal, or other material deemed as  
53 non-plastic by the City Manager.

54

55 “Plastic beverage straw” means a tube made predominantly of plastic derived from either petroleum  
56 or a biologically based polymer, such as corn or other plant sources, for transferring a beverage from  
57 its container to the mouth of the drinker. “Plastic beverage straw” includes compostable and  
58 biodegradable petroleum and biologically based polymer straws, but does not include straws that are  
59 made from non-plastic materials.

60

61 “Plastic stirrer” means a device that is used to mix beverages, intended for only one-time  
62 use, and made predominantly of plastic derived from either petroleum or a biologically based  
63 polymer, such as corn or other plant sources. “Plastic stirrer” includes compostable and  
64 biodegradable petroleum and biologically based polymer stirrers, but does not include stirrers that are  
65 made from non-plastic materials.

66

67 “Retail establishment” means any establishment engaged in the retail sale of goods. Retail  
68 establishment includes any supermarket, convenience store, shop, service station, restaurant (eat-in  
69 and take-out), drinking establishment, farmers’ market vendor, food truck, and any other sales outlet  
70 where a customer can buy goods.

71

72 “City-sponsored event” means any event organized or sponsored by the City of Takoma Park or any  
73 department of the City of Takoma Park.

74

75 “Other institutions” means hospitals, schools, daycare centers, churches, etc.

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77 **8.52.020 Plastic beverage straw and stirrer use prohibited at point of sale.**

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79 A. Except as provided in subsection D of this section, retail establishments shall not sell or provide  
80 plastic beverage straws or stirrers to customers for use with dine-in or carry out beverages.

81

82 B. Except as provided in subsection D of this section, the City, vendors at City-sponsored events and  
83 persons utilizing City facilities for private events shall not provide plastic beverage straws or stirrers  
84 to customers, patrons, or participants on City property or at City-sponsored events.

85

86 C. Retail establishments and other institutions are encouraged to provide straws made of non-plastic  
87 materials only on request.

88

89 D. Retail establishments, other institutions, the City, vendors at City sponsored events and persons  
90 using City facilities for private events that provide non-plastic straws shall maintain a reasonable  
91 stock of flexible, disposable plastic beverage straws for customers, patrons or participants for whom  
92 straws made of non-plastic materials are unsuitable and who request plastic beverage straws.

93

94 **8.52.040 Administration and enforcement.**

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96 A. The City Manager shall provide notice of the restrictions of this chapter and educational materials  
97 regarding compliance to retail establishments at least 180 days before it becomes effective.

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99 B. Violation of this chapter constitutes a class D municipal infraction.  
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101 C. Distribution of one or more plastic beverage straws or stirrers to a customer in connection with a  
102 single transaction is a single violation, except when providing a flexible, disposable plastic beverage  
103 straw upon request by someone who asks for a plastic beverage straw because of need.  
104

105 D. A penalty shall not be imposed on an individual retail establishment more than once within a 7-  
106 day period.  
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108 E. The City Manager may adopt regulations to implement and enforce this chapter.  
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110 **SECTION 2.** This Ordinance will be effective XXXX 2019.  
111

112 ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND, THIS XXTH  
113 DAY OF XXXXXX 2019, BY ROLL-CALL VOTE AS FOLLOWS:  
114

115 AYE:

116 NAY:

117 ABSENT:

118 ABSTAIN:  
119

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