



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – March 20, 2019 Agenda Item 3

Voting Session

First Reading Ordinance Prohibiting the Commercial Use of Plastic Beverage Straws and Stirrers

Recommended Council Action

Vote on ordinance at first reading.

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 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.

A minor wording change was made to the proposed language of Chapter 8.52.020 – line D of the Code for clarity.

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

- First Reading Ordinance

1 Version: February 28, 2019

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3 Introduced by:

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First Reading:

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Second Reading:

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Effective Date:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND:

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

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CHAPTER 8.52

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PLASTIC BEVERAGE STRAWS AND STIRRERS

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

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

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89 D. If retail establishments, other institutions, the City, vendors at City sponsored events or persons
90 using City facilities for private events provide non-plastic straws, they 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.

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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.
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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.
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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:
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115 AYE:

116 NAY:

117 ABSENT:

118 ABSTAIN:
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