



CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION AGENDA
Work Session - Bring Your Own Bag Ordinance

This meeting will be held in-person and virtual.

**25 Crescent Road
Greenbelt, MD 20770**

OR

Virtual Participation

Zoom Webinar Attendees:

Please submit your request in writing via email to questions@greenbeltmd.gov

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82195007505?pwd=dW9tcWszejRXNXZkOU1MSEYxUIhJZz09>

Dial-in: 301 715 8592

Webinar ID: 821 9500 7505

Passcode: 134932

**Wednesday, March 8, 2023
7:30 PM**

I. Work Session Packet

1. Work Session - Bring Your Own Bag Ordinance
Suggested Action:

Agenda

- Introductions
- Council Discussion
- Questions and Answers
- Other Items

[Green ACES BYOB Recommendation 2023-01.pdf](#)

2. **Meetings**

[meetings.pdf](#)

[Stakeholder Schedule.pdf](#)

City Council Work Session Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: March 8, 2023

Submitted by: Shaniya Lashley-Mullen

Submitting Department: Administration

Item Type: Work Session Item

Agenda Section: Work Session Packet

Subject:

Work Session - Bring Your Own Bag Ordinance

Suggested Action:

Agenda

- Introductions
- Council Discussion
- Questions and Answers
- Other Items

Attachments:

[Green ACES BYOB Recommendation 2023-01.pdf](#)

Green ACES



Greenbelt Advisory Committee on Environmental Sustainability

GREENBELT ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

Date: February 9, 2023

Recommendation # 2023-01

SUBJECT: Bring Your Own Bag Ordinance

BACKGROUND: The objective of this ordinance is to reduce plastic pollution and single-use waste, and increase the use of reusable* carryout bags or having no carryout bag.

This ordinance is necessary because plastic bags are a significant source of litter, pollute our waterways, and threaten human health and wildlife. Greenbelt residents use an estimated 9 million plastic carryout bags annually. At grocery stores in Greenbelt that provide complimentary plastic bags, 74% of shoppers take them, and at the Greenbelt Target, 84% take them. These bags have about a 15-minute “working life,” but persist in the environment beyond our lifetimes. • Littered plastic bags end up in waterways, the Chesapeake Bay, and the ocean, where they degrade into microplastics, absorbing toxic chemicals. • Scientists estimate that humans are ingesting as much as a credit card’s worth of plastic weekly. The health effects of plastic particles, additives, and toxins are concerning. • Plastic shopping bags and microplastics are ingested by marine life, injuring and killing fish, seabirds, and marine mammals. On land, plastic bag litter is a lethal threat to livestock and wildlife.

RECOMMENDATION: Green ACES recommends that the City of Greenbelt adopt an ordinance containing the following elements:

This ordinance bans single-use plastic film carryout bags and requires retailers to charge at least 10-15¹ cents for paper carryout bags. The charge for paper bags reduces the demand for them and is an incentive to bring your own bag.

This ordinance covers all Greenbelt establishments selling goods in Greenbelt, including grocery stores, restaurants, department stores, and small businesses.

This ordinance covers only single-use plastic film bags given at the point of purchase sale. It does not include a plastic or paper bag used to package or contain bulk items such as fruit, vegetables, nuts, grains, candy, or small hardware items; fresh meat or seafood; flowers, potted plants, or other damp items; unwrapped prepared foods or bakery goods; dry-cleaned clothes; or a plastic bag used to take live fish, insects, mollusks, or crustaceans away from the retail establishment.

Plastic carryout bags that are compostable are covered under this ordinance and are not allowed as carryout bags. Compostable plastic bags require a commercial composting operation that generates high enough temperatures for the bags to decompose. These will not decompose in typical backyard compost bins. Most customers would simply discard these bags in the trash where they will end up in the landfill or as litter in the environment.

Retailers may not provide thicker plastic film carryout bags, even though they may be used more than once. The goal is to reduce plastic usage not encourage more plastic usage. In some jurisdictions with plastic bag bans, retailers provided free thicker plastic bags to customers, labeling them as "reusable." Usually these thicker plastic bags are used only once, increasing plastic pollution.

Retailers may provide paper carryout bags, but must charge at least 10-15¹ cents per paper bag. Without a charge on paper bags, plastic film carryout bag bans result in massive uptake of paper bags and only modest increases in reusable bag use. For example, following the plastic bag ban in Laurel, the share of grocery shoppers using paper bags rose from less than 1% to 68%, while the share using reusable bags rose from 5% to only 14% and no bag from 7% to 14%. In some jurisdictions, governments have allowed a lower charge, such as 5 cents per paper bag, but it was found that this did not provide enough of an incentive for most customers to bring their own reusable bag or not use a bag.

The entire paper bag charge is kept by the retail establishment. A minimum 10-15¹ cent charge is also to ensure that the retailer does not lose money on the provision of paper bags. There are no exceptions and vendors may not give a discount or exception, nor promise/promote a discount or exception to the customer either directly or indirectly.

A retail establishment shall indicate on the consumer transaction receipt the number of paper carryout bags provided by the store and the total amount of money charged.

There will be a transition period between when the ordinance is approved and when it goes into effect, probably a 6-month period, to allow businesses to exhaust their current supply of plastic film bags and to educate their customers on the new ordinance.

There will be a penalty if a retailer does not comply. A retail establishment that violates this ordinance is subject to a civil penalty not exceeding \$500.

Providing one or more plastic film carryout bags at a single point of sale would be considered a single violation.

The failure to charge the appropriate amount of money required under this ordinance for the provision of one or more paper carryout bags at a single point of sale would be a single violation.

A penalty may not be imposed unless a retail establishment is first issued a written notice of violation. Each day that the retail establishment commits a violation constitutes a separate offense.

Definitions:

*“Reusable carryout bag” means a bag with stitched handles that is specifically designed and manufactured for multiple reuse and is made of: (1) cloth or other washable fabric; or (2) a durable material suitable for multiple re-use that is not made of plastic film.”

¹Green ACES and the Green Team are undecided on whether we should recommend charging 10 cents per paper carryout bag, or recommend 15 cents. Most of the neighboring jurisdictions have enacted, or are considering, 10 cents per paper bag. We spoke to Dan Gillotte, manager of the Greenbelt CO-OP supermarket. He looked into costs and reported that paper bags cost 12 to 23 cents per paper bag in quantities that an independent merchant would buy. Plastic bags cost 3-5 cents per bag. We were originally going to recommend 10 cents, but decided after learning that paper bags cost 12-23 cents, to raise it to 15 cents. However, our Council liaison, Kristen Weaver, pointed out that since retailers are currently paying 3-5 cents per plastic bag, the actual cost increase per bag would be as low as 7-9 cents per bag. This caused some members to waver and to recommend 10 cents. Dan Gillotte is fine with 15 cents, he told us.

City Council Work Session Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: March 8, 2023

Submitted by: Shaniya Lashley-Mullen

Submitting Department: Administration

Item Type: MEETINGS

Agenda Section: Work Session Packet

Subject:

Meetings

Suggested Action:

Attachments:

[meetings.pdf](#)

[Stakeholder Schedule.pdf](#)

CITY OF GREENBELT, MARYLAND
25 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, MD 20770-1891



3/3/2023 11:32 AM

City Council Meetings & Work Sessions
March – April

Regular Meeting	Mon.	03/13	7:30 pm
Work Session – Greenbelt National Park Service	Wed.	03/15	7:30 pm
Work Session – Economic Development	Mon.	03/20	7:30 pm
Work Session – Council Referral – Board Reports (CRAB/ERB)	Wed.	03/22	7:30 pm
1 st Public Hearing – City Manager Residency Charter Amendment	Thurs.	03/23	7:30 pm
Regular Meeting	Mon.	03/27	7:30 pm
Budget Work Session – Overview, Revenues & General Government/Other Funds/ Non-Departmental & Fund Transfers/ Economic Development	Wed.	03/29	7:30 pm
2 nd Public Hearing – City Manager Residency Charter Amendment	Sat.	04/01	10:00am
Budget Work Session – Misc. – Grants & Contributions/Social Services	Mon.	04/03	7:30 pm
Work Session – TBD	Wed.	04/05	7:30 pm
No Meeting – Easter Monday	Mon.	04/10	
Regular Meeting	Tues.	04/11	7:30 pm
Work Session – NASA Goddard	Wed.	04/12	7:30 pm
Budget Work Session – Planning	Mon.	04/17	7:30 pm
Budget Work Session – Public Works/Capital Projects	Wed.	04/19	7:30 pm
Regular Meeting/1 st Public Hearing	Mon.	04/24	7:30 pm
Budget Work Session – Recreation/Museum	Wed.	04/26	7:30 pm
Four Cities Meeting (Greenbelt)	Thurs.	04/27	7:30 pm

This schedule is subject to change. For confirmation, call 301-474-8000. Regular and Special meetings and Work Sessions are open to the public. If special accommodations are required for any disabled person, please call 301-474-8000 or 301-474-3870 no later than 10 a.m. on the meeting day. Deaf individuals are advised to use Video Relay Services (VRS) at 711 or e-mail banderson@greenbeltmd.gov to reach the City Clerk. Unless otherwise noted, meetings will be held in the Council Chambers in the Municipal Building (MB) at 25 Crescent Road and virtually by Zoom. Zoom meeting information for public participation is posted on the City's website at www.greenbeltmd.gov on the meeting calendar.

Bonita Anderson, City Clerk

A NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

(301) 474-8000

fax (301) 441-8248
www.greenbeltmd.gov

MD RELAY 711

CITY OF GREENBELT, MARYLAND

25 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, MD 20770-1891



3/3/2023 11:32 AM

Ready to be scheduled:

Closed Session (*Cable Ordinance*)
Parke Crescent Apartment Complex
Virtual Meetings Accessibility for Blind and
Visually Impaired
Walk-way Light Fixture
Prince George's County Council
Space Study
Greenbelt Fire Department/Prince George's
County Fire Department
City Contracting Policy
Greenbelt East HOAs/COAs

For later scheduling:

Zoning Enforcement
Parkway Apartment Owners/GHI (*parking*)
Northway Fields Master Plan
City Manager Updates (Jan, Pre-budget; July &
Sept/Oct)
Meeting with County on Transportation Plan
Department of Permitting, Inspections &
Enforcement (DPIE)
Museum Plan
Bernard Penney (*Memorial Donation in honor of
Leonie Penney*)
Potential Bond Referendum/Capital Financing
Cemetery Plans
MARC Train Service/ MDOT
Arts & Entertainment District

Annual															
Advisory Group Chairs	7/22														
Franklin Park at Greenbelt Station Mgmt.	12/21	12/22													
Greenbelt Center HOAs	3/23														
Greenbelt East HOAs and COAs/Greenbelt East Advisory Coalition	4/22														
Greenbelt Homes, Inc.	8/22														
Greenbelt Station HOA/Verde Apts.	8/22														
School Board Member	9/21	2/23													
State Highway Administration	11/20	11/22													
Biennial															
Beltsville Ag. Research Center	8/18	11/22													
Beltway Plaza	9/22														
NASA/GSFC	3/22														
Greenbelt Business Alliance	10/22														
Greenbelt Park NPS	1/22														
Greenway Shopping Center	12/20	2/23													
Religious/Spiritual Organizations	6/22														
Twice a Year															
County Council Person and At Large Members															
Meetings as Needed															
Apartments	4/21														
Comcast/Verizon	3/21														
Greenbelt Office Parks															
Greenbelt Watershed Groups	10/19														
Hotels															
PEPCO/WSSC	2/22														
Prince George's Economic Development Corp.	11/21														
Prince George's Planning Board	10/19														
Roosevelt Center Owner	8/20														
University of Maryland	4/15														
WMATA/PGDPW&T (Semi-Annual)	5/22														
Newly Elected/Appointed Officials (Presentation of a Council Regular Meeting)															
County Executive															
School Board CEO															
State's Attorney	1/23														