



CITY OF CORONADO

CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

September 17, 2024

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REVIEW OF SINGLE-USE PLASTIC REGULATIONS

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive the report on single-use plastic regulations and provide direction as appropriate.

BACKGROUND:

At the April 16, 2024, City Council meeting, the Council approved a Policy #2 request, directing staff to present the following three components for discussion on a future agenda:

1. Analysis of the City of Coronado's existing policies and ordinances regarding the use of single use plastic products by and in the City of Coronado.
2. Review of similar policies in other cities, primarily focusing on San Diego coastal cities.
3. Information on any pending state legislation that may impose requirements on the City of Coronado related to prohibition of single use plastics.

ANALYSIS:

Currently, the City of Coronado has no specific ordinances or policies regulating single-use plastics. Although California has enacted state-wide regulations on single-use plastics, several local jurisdictions have implemented more restrictive policies tailored to their specific needs. Staff reviewed ordinances from regional coastal cities to catalogue the types of single-use plastic regulations in effect.

Regional Single-Use Plastic Prohibition Regulations

Policies addressing polystyrene and single-use plastics vary, but commonly include the following elements:

1. Single-Use Plastic Bags: Prohibits or mandates a charge for single-use plastic bags, and/or prohibits their distribution at city events.
2. Polystyrene Products: Prohibits the distribution of polystyrene foam containers in food service, packaging materials, coolers, and toys.
3. Plastic Utensils: Prohibits the distribution of plastic utensils to customers, encourages or requires distribution of biodegradable or compostable alternatives only upon request, and/or prohibits plastic utensils at City facilities and city events.
4. Other Plastic Items: Extends bans to encompass additional plastic items such as straws, stirrers, food packaging, and balloons.
5. Plastic Water Bottles: Prohibits or limits city spending on single-use water bottles and their distribution on City facilities and/or at city events.

Coastal cities in San Diego County have adopted varying levels of single-use plastic restrictions, with the chart below summarizing local ordinances and policies (excluding state-mandated regulations).

Single Use Plastic Restrictions in coastal San Diego County					
	Plastic Bags	Polystyrene Foam (EPS)	Plastic Utensils	Other Plastic Items	Single Use Bottles
Carlsbad	2024	2023	2022	2023	2022
Chula Vista	None	None	None	None	None
Coronado	None	None	None	None	None
Del Mar	2016	2018	2018	2019	None
Encinitas	2014	2020	2020	2020	2020
Imperial Beach	2019	2019	2019	2019	None
National City	None	None	None	None	None
Oceanside	2025	2024	None	None	None
San Diego	2016	2023	2023	2023	None
Solana Beach	2012	2020	2020	2020	2022

Beyond San Diego County, several jurisdictions have enacted more restrictive ordinances on single-use plastics policies, including policies specific to city property and events. For example, Palo Alto mandates that any bags used in grocery stores and farmers markets for produce, meat, or bulk foods must meet American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standards for compostability, ahead of the statewide law set to take effect in 2025 requiring the same. San Francisco requires reusable alternatives to single-use plastics at city events and city property, while Berkeley requires event organizers provide accessible water filling stations and set a charge of \$0.25 for disposable cups at food establishments. In the Lake Tahoe region, Truckee and South Lake Tahoe have banned the sale of plastic water bottles under one gallon, except in emergencies.

Existing and Pending State Legislation

California has implemented statewide legislation aimed at reducing single-use plastics, already in effect throughout the state, including Coronado. Existing legislation (PRC 42281, effective 2016) regulates the distribution and composition of plastic grocery bags, requiring they contain at least 40% postconsumer recycled materials, be recyclable, and be reusable. New legislation (PRC 42357), effective on January 1, 2025, will require pre-checkout grocery bags, such as plastic produce, meat, and bulk item bags, be replaced with recyclable paper or ASTM certified compostable alternatives.

PRC 42271, known as the “Skip the Stuff” law (effective June 1, 2022) mandates that food facilities only provide plastic straws, single-use food ware accessories, and standard condiments upon customer request. PRC 42372, effective January 1, 2023, prohibits hotels with over 50 rooms from providing small plastic bottles for personal care products like shampoo, conditioner, and lotion.

Several pending legislation in California aim to address plastic pollution further, and these would apply to Coronado if signed into law. SB 1053, enrolled on September 4, 2024 for the Governor’s signature, would prohibit the distribution of carry-out bags at checkout, effective January 1, 2026. AB 1590, introduced in February 2023, would ban major coastal resorts from providing single-use coffee pods, straws, plastic bags, and polystyrene foam products.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None.

ALTERNATIVE:

The City Council may direct staff to continue to monitor pending state legislation (e.g., SB 1053, AB 1590), conduct additional research, prepare and return with ordinances of interest, or take no action at this time.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT:

This activity is not considered a project as defined by CEQA and is therefore exempt from environmental review.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

No notice required.

ATTACHMENTS:

None.

Submitted By: Community Development Department / Jasmine Bridges