



REGULAR MEETING – AD HOC SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE COMMITTEE AGENDA

**AUGUST 12, 2026, 6:00 PM
BY ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

To allow public access, anyone may access a meeting by telephone and/or Zoom, or a recording in the City of Norwalk YouTube channel. Specific instructions and links can be found at norwalkct.gov/meetings.



Members of the public may call in to participate. Callers will not be able to see the meeting participants. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, dial *9 on the phone and you will be called on by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda, and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually-explicit language, will be removed. Please find the information using the link above.



Members of the public who wish to provide "live comments" may also use the Zoom meeting platform. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, click the "raise your hand indicator" and you will be called by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda, and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually-explicit language, will be removed. Please find the information using the link above.



Members of the public who wish to provide public comment are encouraged to submit those via email in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be included into the record, they must be submitted by 12:00 p.m. the day of the meeting. Please email Jodi Trendler at JTrendler@norwalkct.gov with the subject line "Public Comment" to provide written public comment prior to the meeting.

- I. CALL TO ORDER**
- II. ROLL CALL**
- III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
- IV. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**
 - A. Regular Meeting: June 10, 2026**
- V. NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. Update: Norwalk 2050 Sustainability and Resilience Roadmap**
 - B. Recommendation Discussion: Skip the Stuff Possible Ordinance**
- VI. ADJOURNMENT**

**CITY OF NORWALK
AD HOC SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING JUNE 10, 2026
VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

ATTENDANCE: Johan Lopez (Chair), Richard Dellinger, Brian Bailey, Jesse Buccolo, Broderick Sawyer.

NON-VOTING: Jan Degenshein

STAFF: Jodi Trendler

OTHERS: Sam Cherubin

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Lopez called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

Roll call was conducted. Members present as noted in Attendance.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Sam Cherubin (Scenic Bisel Road) introduced himself and noted his work in sustainability and climate impacts on health. He had no comments on agenda items. Public Participation was closed.

IV. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

The minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 13, 2026, were presented. No corrections were noted.

****MR. DELLINGER MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 13, 2026, AS PRESENTED.**

****MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Task Force Update Jodi Trendler provided an update on the Sustainability Task Force. Reports from teams have been received and chapters for the Sustainability Plan Update are being finalized. The next Task Force meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 15, 2026 at 7:00 PM (virtual) and will be posted on the City's Agendas webpage. Next steps include discussion of action plans and community engagement workshops/surveys (including a mobility survey).

B. Energy Programs Updates Jodi Trendler provided updates on the Heat Smart weatherization program (93 interested callers, 34 assessments scheduled, 3 completed) and Solarize Norwalk (25+ appointments, 2 sales including one large ~25 kW system). A new "buy-all" option through Eversource for leasing roof space for solar (with payments offsetting electricity bills) is being explored for promotion, particularly at neighborhood/commercial scale. Funding support is available through Sustainable Connecticut. Outreach and marketing efforts are ongoing.

C. Sustainability and Resilience Plan Update Jodi Trendler reported on a meeting with the Mayor and her team. Final approval was received to proceed with the proposed framing/structure. The Mayor's office has extended Jodi Trendler's contract through December 2026. The plan will be renamed the "Norwalk 2050 Roadmap" (part plan, part vision document) and will continue to serve as a strategic/planning tool integrated into budgeting and operations. Recommendations are being reviewed with department heads, and draft chapters will be sent to the committee for feedback. Community workshops for input are planned.

D. ClearPath 2.0 GHG Platform Overview Jodi Trendler provided an overview and demonstration of the ClearPath greenhouse gas emissions tracking dashboard (ICLEI platform). The tool will be public-facing on the Mayor's dashboard and will track baseline emissions (2022 data), business-as-usual projections, targets (net zero by 2050), and progress on recommendations by sector (transportation, energy, industry, waste, natural resources). It allows visualization of the impact of specific actions (e.g., EV adoption, transit, building efficiency) and includes policy tracking. Data sources are verifiable/reputable, with quality control through documented origins. The platform supports annual reporting (e.g., to CDP) and public accountability.

E. Future Sustainability Planning Matrix Discussion Chair Johan Lopez led a discussion on the future structure and role of the Ad Hoc Sustainability and Resilience Committee (advisory mandate, potential options/matrix previously shared). The goal is to ensure continuity, effectiveness, and collaboration with the Sustainability Task Force and city departments. Input was sought on structural options, best practices from other communities, administrative/financial impacts, permanence of the committee, and integration with broader city planning (e.g., P&Z). Further collaboration with the Task Force and city staff was discussed as a next step.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

****MR. DELLINGER MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

****MOTION PASSED.**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Courtney Baldwin

Recording Secretary

Executive Summary

This briefing analyzes the national **Skip the Stuff** campaign and its relevance to the City. It examines municipalities that have adopted Skip the Stuff ordinances, the outcomes they have experienced, and how such ordinances align with and extend Norwalk's existing single-use bag, plastic, and Styrofoam regulations adopted in 2019. It also addresses enforcement challenges that have emerged under those existing ordinances and how a Skip the Stuff policy could be structured to strengthen compliance city-wide.

2	10+	40B	\$3.2M
States with statewide law	Municipalities adopted nationally	Plastic utensils discarded yearly (US)	Estimated restaurant savings (Postmates)

What Is Skip the Stuff?

Skip the Stuff is a national policy campaign coordinated by **Upstream Solutions** (formerly the National Reuse Network) that requires food service establishments to provide single-use accessories — utensils, napkins, straws, condiment packets, stirrers — only when a customer explicitly requests them. Rather than a ban, the model is a simple default change: *opt-in* instead of *automatic inclusion*.

Third-party delivery platforms (DoorDash, Uber Eats, GrubHub) are typically required to add an accessories menu at checkout so customers can actively select the items they need. Platforms, including Postmates, have already adopted this model voluntarily, reporting savings of 122 million packs of plastic cutlery and an estimated \$3.2 million in cost reductions for restaurants.

Adopted Jurisdictions — National Overview

Jurisdiction	Year	Level	Key provisions & notes
California (AB 1276)	2022	Statewide	Utensils, straws, condiments upon request; enforcement delegated to local health/environmental agencies
Washington State	2022	Statewide	Single-use accessories available on request only for all takeout and delivery orders

Denver, CO	2021	Municipal	Opt-in model integrated with third-party delivery platforms; among earliest large-city adopters
Washington, D.C.	2021	Municipal	Covers utensils, straws, napkins for dine-in and takeout; request-only default
Chicago, IL	2022	Municipal	Single-use foodware ordinance covering restaurants and third-party delivery apps city-wide
Jurisdiction	Year	Level	Key provisions & notes
New York City, NY	2023	Municipal	Signed Feb 2023 (Intro 559-A); 12-month warning period; fines of \$50–\$250 active since July 2024
Alhambra, CA	2021	Municipal	First in LA County; unanimous adoption; California Restaurant Association submitted letter of support
Los Angeles, CA	2021	Municipal	Extended existing straws-on-request ordinance to all disposable foodware accessories
Westfield, NJ	2024	Municipal	Unanimous adoption; pre-survey of 25 downtown restaurants showed strong business support
Hoboken, NJ	2024	Municipal	Effective Sept 1, 2024; part of Climate Action Plan / Zero-Waste Initiative
Montclair, NJ	2025	Municipal	Effective March 1, 2025; covers in-person, phone, and online orders; includes non-plastic items

Note: Connecticut lawmakers considered a statewide Skip the Stuff legislation (House Bill 5524, 2026) that would have banned polystyrene containers by July 1, 2028 and require foodware accessories upon request, but has been tabled as of 4/2026. Norwalk's early adoption would position the city as a leader ahead of any statewide mandate.

Norwalk's Existing Single-Use Plastic Ordinances

The Norwalk Common Council has unanimously passed three single-use plastics ordinances since 2019: the Carry-Out Bag Ordinance, effective July 8, 2019, and the Plastic Straws & Stirrers and Polystyrene Ordinances, both effective April 22, 2020. Together, these already place Norwalk ahead of many Connecticut municipalities on single-use plastics regulation. Understanding these existing frameworks is essential to evaluating how a Skip the Stuff ordinance would integrate, extend, and strengthen them.

Plastic Straws & Stirrers Ordinance Chapter 37, Article III — Adopted 9/24/2019 - Prohibits food/beverage establishments from providing single-use plastic or bioplastic straws unless requested by the consumer - Outright ban on all single-use plastic and bioplastic stirrers (no request option) - Disability accommodation: establishments must provide a plastic straw upon request to those with medical need - Applies to all food/beverage establishments including restaurants, bars, coffee shops, food trucks, delivery services, and caterers - Enforced by the Code Enforcement Officer; penalty up to \$250 per violation	Polystyrene (Styrofoam) Ordinance Chapter 37, Article II — Adopted 9/10/2019 - Prohibits retail establishments from serving or distributing prepared food in polystyrene containers (cups, bowls, plates, trays, clamshells) - Bans sale of polystyrene loose-fill packaging (packing peanuts) - Food packagers prohibited from packaging meat, eggs, bakery items in polystyrene - City contractors prohibited from using polystyrene in City facilities or on City-funded projects - Exemptions: pre-packaged/sealed food received from outside, raw meat from butcher cases, encased coolers/ice chests - Enforced by Code Enforcement Office; penalty up to \$250 per violation	Carry-Out Bag Ordinance Chapter 37, Article I — Adopted 1/8/2019 - Prohibits retail establishments from providing single-use plastic carry-out bags at checkout, other than reusable bags - Paper bags permitted only if recyclable with 40% recycled content and proper labeling; retailers must charge \$0.10 per paper bag - Exemptions: bulk/produce bags, newspaper bags, dry-cleaning bags, prescription bags, and bags for unwrapped prepared food - Applies broadly to retail establishments, including grocery, delivery services, restaurants, and food trucks - Enforced by Code Enforcement; first offense is a written warning, then \$150, then \$250 per violation
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Alignment: Skip the Stuff & Norwalk's Existing Ordinances

A Skip the Stuff ordinance is not a replacement for Norwalk's 2019 regulations — it is a complementary and reinforcing layer.

The table below maps the alignment across all four ordinances.

Dimension	Norwalk Straws Ord.	Norwalk Styrofoam Ord.	Norwalk Bag Ord.	Skip the Stuff (proposed)
Opt-in / request-only model	+ Straws on request	- Not applicable	- Not applicable	■ Extends to all utensils, napkins, condiments
Single-use plastic reduction	+ Straws & stirrers	+ Polystyrene containers	+ Plastic bags banned	■ Fills gap: utensils, napkins, condiment packets
Delivery platform coverage	+ Applies to delivery services	- Not addressed	+ Covers grocery delivery	■ Explicitly covers apps: DoorDash, Uber Eats, GrubHub
ADA / disability accommodation	+ Straws available on request	- Not addressed	- Not addressed	■ Must be explicitly included in ordinance language
Penalty structure	+ Up to \$250/violation	+ Up to \$250/violation	+ Warning, then \$150, \$250	■ Typically \$50–\$250/violation (NYC model)
Enforcement body	+ Code Enforcement Officer	+ Code Enforcement Officer	+ Code Enforcement Officer	■ Same — or consider shared Health Dept. role
Business cost savings	+ Reduced straw purchasing	+ Reduced container costs	+ Reduced bag costs	■ Reduces all accessory purchasing costs
Environmental alignment	+ Reduces plastic pollution	+ Reduces Styrofoam waste	+ Reduces bag & waterway litter	■ Reduces all single-use accessory waste

Enforcement Challenges: Lessons from Norwalk's Existing Ordinances

Norwalk's 2019 ordinances are structurally sound but face implementation gaps that are common across comparable municipalities. Understanding these challenges is critical to designing a Skip the Stuff ordinance that avoids repeating them.

Known challenges with the 2019 ordinances	How Skip the Stuff can address these gaps
* Complaint-driven enforcement model. The Code Enforcement Officer responds to complaints rather than proactively inspecting food establishments. This means violations may go undetected unless a patron or competitor reports them. * Lack of integration with Health Department inspections. Restaurant inspections are conducted by the Health Department, but Styrofoam and straw compliance is not formally part of the inspection checklist, creating a structural gap. * Bioplastic confusion. The ordinance bans bioplastic / compostable straws (corn-based) along with petroleum plastic, but many businesses substituted bioplastic straws believing they were compliant. No industrial composting is available in Norwalk, making compostable items functionally equivalent to trash. * Delivery platform gap. The straw ordinance covers delivery services in scope, but there is no mechanism to monitor third-party platforms (DoorDash, Uber Eats) that may pack accessories without restaurant knowledge. * No structured warning or education period. Unlike NYC's 12-month warning phase, Norwalk's ordinances went into effect with immediate penalty authority but no documented outreach to the estimated 400+ food service establishments in the city.	* Integrate compliance into Health inspections. A new ordinance should designate the Health Department as co-enforcer alongside Code Enforcement — mirroring NYC's multi-agency model — and add a standard accessory-compliance checklist to annual restaurant inspections. * Require platform-level opt-in display. Explicitly mandate that all third-party delivery apps operating in Norwalk display an accessory opt-in menu, shifting compliance responsibility to the platform and reducing reliance on individual restaurant monitoring. * Mandate a 6–12 month education period before fines. A formal warning phase with written notices to all food service license holders, multilingual materials, and a city-hosted FAQ gives businesses time to update systems before penalties apply. * Align definitions across ordinances. Consolidate definitions of 'single-use accessory' and 'covered establishment' across the 2019 ordinances and any new Skip the Stuff ordinance to eliminate compliance confusion and simplify enforcement. * Use the business license renewal cycle. Pair compliance acknowledgment with annual business license renewals so all food service establishments confirm awareness of all three ordinances simultaneously.

Pros, Cons & Council Considerations

Pros - Extends Norwalk's existing plastic-reduction framework at minimal additional cost - Strong business support nationally — reduces purchasing costs for disposables - Fills the accessory gap not covered by the 2019 ordinances (utensils, napkins, condiment packets) - Aligns with pending CT statewide legislation (HB 5524) - Delivery platform integration already built by DoorDash, Uber Eats, and GrubHub - 88% of global respondents favor curbing single-use plastics (Ipsos, 2022) - Estimated 40% reduction in accessory use when opt-in model is applied (skiptheplasticnorwalk.org)	Cons - Adds regulatory burden to restaurants already navigating Styrofoam and straw compliance - Enforcement infrastructure gaps from 2019 ordinances must be addressed simultaneously - Customers relying on accessibility accommodations need clear, easy pathways to request items - Small restaurants may face POS/workflow costs to implement ask-first protocols - Limited local impact data —ordinances in comparable NJ towns (Westfield, Montclair) are less than 2 years old - Risk of public confusion if ordinance definitions are not harmonized with 2019 language	Council action items - Define scope: takeout only, or also third-party delivery and catering? - Assign enforcement: Code Enforcement + Health Dept. co-enforcement recommended - Mandate 6–12 month warning period with formal business outreach before fines begin - Explicitly include AD accommodation language — mirrors Norwalk's existing straw disability provision - Commission a pre-adoption restaurant survey (as Westfield, NJ did) to build business coalition - Request Upstream Solutions 'model ordinance language as drafting baseline - Monitor Connecticut HB 5524 —local adoption now preempts state preemption and builds legislative record
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Recommended Enforcement Structure for Norwalk

Phase	Timeline	Action	Responsible party
1 — Adoption	Month 0	Pass ordinance; publish in all city languages; notify all food service license holders in writing	Common Council; City Clerk

2 — Education	Months 1–6	Distribute compliance guides; hold restaurant town halls; add compliance FAQ to city website and norwalkct.gov/1902	Code Enforcement; Health Dept.; City sustainability staff
3 — Warning	Months 7–12	Begin inspections with warning notices only; no fines; document non-compliance patterns; add to Health inspection checklist	Code Enforcement Officer; Health inspectors
4 — Enforcement	Month 13+	Issue fines (\$50–\$250/violation) for confirmed non-compliance; allow appeal process; escalate repeat violators	Code Enforcement Officer; designee
Phase	Timeline	Action	Responsible party
5 — Review	Year 2	Report compliance rates to Council; compare waste metrics to pre-adoption baseline; evaluate expanding ordinance scope	Recycling coordinator; Council

Bottom Line for Council

Norwalk is already a leader in Connecticut on single-use plastic regulation. The 2019 Carry-Out Bag, Styrofoam, and Straw ordinances establish the legal and institutional foundation for a Skip the Stuff ordinance, and critically, they reveal the enforcement gaps that a new ordinance must be designed to close.

A well-crafted Skip the Stuff ordinance, with a phased enforcement timeline, clear ADA protections, Health Department co-enforcement, and delivery platform coverage, would: (1) fill the accessory gap left by the 2019 ordinances; (2) address known compliance weaknesses; and (3) position Norwalk ahead of pending Connecticut statewide legislation.

Recommended next step: Direct staff to commission a pre-adoption survey of Norwalk food service establishments and request model ordinance language from Upstream Solutions (upstreamolutions.org/skipthestufftoolkit) for Council drafting review.

Sources & References

- Upstream Solutions — Skip the Stuff Toolkit: upstreamolutions.org/skipthestufftoolkit
- City of Norwalk, CT — Plastic Straw & Styrofoam Ordinances: norwalkct.gov/1902
- City of Norwalk, CT — Chapter 37, Article II (Polystyrene) & Article III (Straws): ecode360.com/34844752
- City of Norwalk, CT — Carry-Out Bag Ordinance, Chapter 37, Article I (Adopted 1/8/2019): norwalkct.gov/1793/Carryout-Bag-Ordinance and ecode360.com/34011729
- FoodPrint — 'Skip the Stuff Laws Aim to Get Rid of Takeout Trash' (Feb 2023): foodprint.org/blog/skip-the-stuff-laws
- Clean Water Action — Skip the Stuff Ordinances in New Jersey: cleanwater.org/skip-stuff-ordinances-new-jersey
- NYC Department of Sanitation — Skip the Stuff Act (Intro 559-A), signed Feb 2023; enforcement active July 2024
- Montclair Local — 'Skip the Stuff Ordinance Takes Effect March 1' (Dec 2024): montclairlocal.news
- Town of Westfield, NJ — Skip the Stuff Ordinance adopted June 26, 2024: westfieldnj.gov/2083
- Skip the Plastic Norwalk — skiptheplasticnorwalk.org
- Connecticut Public — 'CT Considers Styrofoam Ban and Limits for Single-Use Plastics' (March 2026): ctpublic.org
- Ipsos — 'Attitudes Towards Single-Use Plastics' (2022)