



CITY OF CITRUS HEIGHTS

Updated October 11, 2022

The City is proposing a new ordinance to establish an abatement and enforcement program for abandoned and/or unauthorized use of shopping carts. This ordinance will be one tool in a robust and diverse toolbox implemented to advance blight removal and prevention in Citrus Heights and ensure a clean and safe environment for residents, businesses, and shoppers. Below are some of the program's highlights:

- Businesses are required to include signage on their property about the removal of shopping carts;
- Each shopping cart shall be identified with signage that includes information about the ownership of the cart and the violation of the law regarding the removal of carts from the premises;
- Removal of shopping carts from the store's premises without the owner's written approval is a violation and violators may be cited; and
- Businesses will be required to have a City approved Shopping Cart Plan in place by February 28, 2023. The plan shall include methods related to containment and retrieval of an abandoned or stolen shopping cart.

Frequently Asked Questions:

What shopping cart program does the City currently have?

The City's General Services Department picks up shopping carts abandoned carts from sidewalks and roadways. In addition, the City utilizes a Cart Retrieval Service for carts found abandoned on private property.

Why are we implementing a formal shopping cart program now?

While the City retrieves shopping carts as part of nuisance abatements, our commercial areas are overburdened with a high frequency of shopping cart litter. Shoppers living in close proximity routinely use carts to transport purchases and abandon them in high-visibility areas. Abandoned shopping carts pose a threat by obstructing pedestrian access, interfering with pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and emergency services. They also create visual blight in our commercial areas. Prevention measures are needed in addition to the City's shopping cart program to resolve this issue.

In addition, the program will support our business community in the protection of business assets by reducing the number of carts removed from their premises and any carts removed will be returned to the business.

How am I supposed to retrieve carts being used by transients or those that have hazardous materials?

This program is meant to create prevention measures for carts that shoppers do not return. *Please do not retrieve carts that could pose a health or safety threat.* The City's cart program will recover this type of cart. The City is also creating a robust toolbox advance blight prevention goals and mitigate homelessness issues and has the potential to minimize this type of incident, including:

- **Proactive Beautification Crew:** A two-person full time crew and fully stocked truck patrolling proactively maintaining public areas, including: abandoned transient carts and debris, homeless camp abatement, illegal dumps, trash/liter removal, graffiti and debris removal, illegal sign removal from poles and public spaces, and weed abatement.
- **Expanding Influence:** Many blight issues take place right outside city borders. We are partnering with other government agencies that have jurisdictional responsibilities for public areas within the City limits (Caltrans) or on the edge of the City where

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enforcement and cleanup challenges present problems for residents and businesses and establishing memorandums of agreement that would allow Citrus Heights greater clean up and enforcement ability.

- **Increased Accountability and Consequences:** Citrus Heights Police Department has implemented a Chronic Nuisance (repeat) Offender Program to prosecute chronic offenders of codes and ordinances for individuals and/or property. Also, severe cases will now have the potential to be referred for community prosecution.

What other local cities have similar ordinances?

While many jurisdictions in California have shopping cart ordinances, locally the County of Sacramento and the cities of Rancho Cordova and Elk Grove all have programs.

What is the timeline for implementation?

The proposed ordinance is anticipated to be reviewed by the City Council fall of 2022. If adopted, the ordinance will implement the following schedule:

- All businesses must submit and have an approved Shopping Cart retrieval Plan in place by February 28, 2023. Following the adoption of the ordinance, information will be available on website on the submittal and review process.

What happens when a cart is found off-property?

Owners of properly identified carts will be notified to retrieve the abandoned cart. Carts not retrieved within 3 days after notification are impounded. Unidentified carts are subject to immediate impoundment.

Do businesses have to pay a fee for recovering impounded shopping cart?

Any cart reclaimed by the cart owner within 3 business days following notification shall be released with no charge whatsoever. Any cart not reclaimed by the cart owner within 3 business days following notice shall be subject to any applicable fee imposed pursuant to Section 50-914.

What is an on-site cart containment program?

It is a system selected by the retail establishment that effectively contains the shopping carts preventing the carts from removal. Effective containment programs may include, disabling devices to prevent the movement of carts, on-site security to prevent removal of carts from business premises, or any other measure approved by the City.

Do I need to post signs or label my cart?

Businesses shall post their premises in a conspicuous location notifying cart users that removal of carts from the premises or parking area is prohibited without the written consent of the retail establishment. All carts at a retail establishment must have a permanently affixed sign that states the following:

- Identifies the owner of the cart and/or retailer
- Notifies the public of the procedure to authorize the removal of the cart from the owner's premises
- Notifies the public that the unauthorized removal of the cart from the owner's premises or unauthorized possession of the cart is a violation of State law
- Lists a valid telephone number or address for returning the cart to its owner.

Can I be exempt from having an on-site containment program?

Any person owning a retail establishment where more than 5 cars are available for customer use must implement and maintain an effective cart nuisance abatement program.

When is the proposed program implemented?

Enforcement of the proposed Shopping Cart program would begin in March 2023. Businesses subject to this ordinance must have their plan submitted and approved by February 28, 2023 in order to be in compliance.

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What happens to items left in abandoned carts?

Any items left in abandoned shopping carts are disposed of.