

Nonprofits upset over new curbside recycling program

Brandon Jones, KVUE 10:39 PM, CST February 07, 2017



(Photo: Screenshot - Simple Recycling)

AUSTIN - Several nonprofits are asking city council members to reconsider a curbside recycling program, saying it's hurting their business.

Some say [Simple Recycling \(http://simplerecycling.com/\)](http://simplerecycling.com/)'s concept supports the city's goal of achieving zero waste by 2040. The Ohio-based company began collecting from single-family homes in Austin after signing a three-year deal with city officials. The added competition has [Goodwill](https://www.goodwillcentraltexas.org/)

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"A company that's coming in from out of town who is a for-profit and taking those donations does cause a problem for us being able to serve the people who need it most in our community," said Traci Berry, Senior VP of Community Engagement.

Simple Recycling's Founder and President Adam Winfield stated it exists to provide a barrier and an option for people who would otherwise throw their clothing in the trash to give them a second life in reuse and recycling.

"The City of Austin did a waste characterization study and found an average of 6.6 million pounds of clothing entering into the trash cans of Austin residents every year," Winfield said.

Simple Recycling works by selling 10-20 percent of used clothing to for-profit thrift stores. The rest that's not in good enough condition for sale in the United States, are exported to other countries or broken down for sale of raw materials:

- 45 percent exported as secondhand clothing;
- 30 percent recycled and converted into items such as wiping rags;
- 20 percent recycled in fiber for things like home insulation; and
- 5 percent ends up as waste.

Council members were set to vote last week on whether to cancel Simple Recycling's contract, but the decision has been postponed for the next six months. Council felt more time is needed to see the true impact Simple Recycling is having on the nonprofits. Once the data is collected council members will vote on whether to continue the contract.

The city council could take action sooner if needed.

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