

The City of Waco

Proposed Ordinance Changes to Coin-Operated and Amusement Redemption Machines

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OVERVIEW

- Legal Landscape
- Impact on Police Operations
- Economic and Social Impact
- Proposed Ordinance Amendments
- Timeline



“eight-liners are...
unconstitutional”



Background

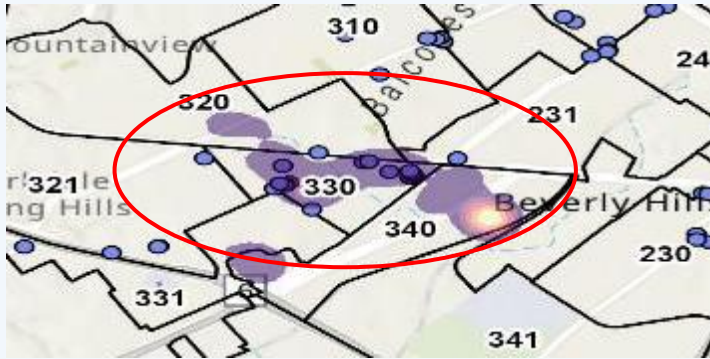
- Since 1845, the Texas Constitution has continuously prohibited gambling
- “Fuzzy Animal Exception”
- Eight-Liner Machines

Fort Worth

- 2014 – City passed ordinance regulating eight-liners; Industry sued Fort Worth
- 2024 – Texas Courts determined that eight-liners are **unconstitutional gambling devices**
- 2024 – Fort Worth passed new ordinance, banning amusement redemption machines



Impact on Police Operations



- Crime Concentration
- Increased calls for service (5x) and offenses (20x)
- Covert investigations
- Patrol response and directed enforcement
- Gang investigations





Economic and Social Impact

- No Tax Revenue
- Massive Economic Loss
- Funds Crime
- Harms Local Economy

Game Rooms in Waco by Poverty Level



Black dots represent game rooms in Waco from 2020-2025; data provided by Waco Police Department. Darker shades of green represent higher poverty levels; data from 2023 American Community Survey. Geographic boundaries are census tracts.



Proposed Ordinance Amendments

- Update definitions
- Prohibit amusement redemption machines to comply with judicial ruling
- Repeal occupations tax for coin operated machines

Timeline

October 2025 – Offer ordinance for approval, with an effective date of January 1, 2026



October 28, 2025 – Plan Commission to address Zoning definitions (ordinance amending Chapter 28 to follow)



Sep-Dec 2025 – Public Outreach (send letter to known operators, share information with neighborhood associations)



RECAP

- Eight-liners (amusement redemption machines) are unconstitutional gambling devices
- Eight-liners lead to increased crime, with negative economic and social impact
- Amend ordinance to prohibit amusement redemption machines to align with judicial decision



Questions?