



Council Meeting: November 16, 2010

SUBJECT: Banning Single-Use Plastic Carryout Bags (Study Issue) and Approval of Budget Modification No. 18

REPORT IN BRIEF

An estimated 69 million single-use plastic carryout bags are used by Sunnyvale residents each year, part of 19 billion bags used statewide. Many bags are given to customers, at no charge, when they are purchasing groceries and other retail items. When littered or discarded, these bags have undesirable impacts on water quality, stormwater, wildlife, aesthetics, solid waste and recycling, and natural resource depletion within and beyond the city limits of Sunnyvale.

In light of these impacts, a City ban on plastic bags was first proposed as a 2009 study issue by Councilmembers Lee, Swegles and Howe. The study issue fell “below the line” for study in 2009, but above the line for 2010.

As staff researched the issue and scoped out what an ordinance might look like, it kept an eye on developments in other jurisdictions and at the state level. Earlier this year it appeared that the state would preempt local action with a state level ban on single-use plastic bags when Assemblymember Brownley introduced AB 1998 in the recently concluded session of the legislature. This bill, supported by the California Grocers Association and Governor Schwarzenegger, would have instituted a state-wide ban on single-use plastic bags. The bill included a broad state preemption that would have greatly limited the potential for local action and would have rendered the study issue largely moot. The November 16, 2010 date for Council consideration was selected, in part, so that any legislative action could be factored into the Council’s deliberations.

Although AB 1998 passed the Assembly, it was defeated in the Senate on the last day of the session. Staff thus resumed work on the study issue and initiated the public outreach process described later in this report. Attachment D presents comments received from the public in two community meetings, by way of letters and emails and as compiled by an on-line survey.

After considering the various issues described in this report, staff is recommending that Council:

- Direct staff to prepare a Single-Use Carryout Bag ordinance that:
 - bans the distribution of all single-use carryout bags, regardless of composition
 - applies the ban to:
 - Supermarkets with gross sales in excess of \$2 million per year and Pharmacies with more than 10,000 square feet of retail floor space
 - Other Large Retailers with more than 10,000 square feet of retail floor space
 - Other Food and Beverage Stores, which includes neighborhood grocers, liquor stores, convenience stores and gasoline stations that sell snacks and beverages
 - allows an exception to the ban if retailers package customer purchases in Green Paper Bags (bags containing at least 40% recycled paper content), so long as the retailer charges the customer a separately displayed cost-recovery fee of at least fifteen cents per bag, with 100% of the fee to be retained by the retailer
 - takes effect on the second Wednesday of a month no less than six months following second reading of the ordinance

A key issue in considering a City bag ban is compliance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). CEQA requires the city to consider the potential environmental impacts of every discretionary action it takes (not including certain actions that are “categorically exempted”). Opponents of plastic bag bans have frequently used CEQA’s requirements to challenge, in court, the actions of cities and counties that pass ordinances that place controls on plastic bags. With this in mind, staff is recommending that Council, if it decides to proceed with development of a bag ordinance, identify which single-use carryout bag controls it wishes to include in the ordinance and approve Budget Modification No. 18 to fund a Special Project in the amount of \$100,000 to pay for preparation of an Initial Study, Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and/or other documents needed to assure City compliance with CEQA.

BACKGROUND

In June, 2008, the Santa Clara County Cities Association asked its members to encourage their jurisdictions to develop and implement local ordinances that would reduce the number of plastic bags used to hold customer purchases from retail stores. Councilmember Lee brought this issue back to Council at its meeting of June 24, 2008, at which time Councilmembers Lee, Swegles and Howe requested a study issue.

In February 2009, the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board included several “trash” requirements in the City’s new Stormwater Permit. The City is required to:

- Identify and annually clean five trash “hot-spots” where storm water empties into local streams and channel
- Develop and implement a long-term trash reduction plan to reduce trash loads entering waterways from the municipal storm sewers by 40% in 2014, 70% by 2017 and 100% by 2022, as compared to 2009 levels
- Retrofit 164 acres (30%) of its retail/wholesale land area with Board-approved “full capture” devices that prevent litter from entering the storm drain collection system.

State law (AB 2449, which became law in 2006) requires supermarkets and large pharmacies to meet a number of bag-related requirements. Stores are required to:

- Provide a visible, easily accessible, clearly marked collection bin for plastic bag recycling
- Recycle the plastic bags collected in the bins
- Maintain and provide to local jurisdictions on request, records describing the collection, transport and recycling of the bags collected
- Make reusable bags available for purchase by customers

AB 2449 bars cities from imposing a plastic carryout bag fee or a recycling requirement on a store that is in compliance with this law.

In April 2009 and again in February 2010, the Santa Clara County Recycling and Waste Reduction Commission (R&WRC) recommended that the 16 Santa Clara County jurisdictions:

- Establish a ban on plastic bags and a fee on paper bags at all retailers, excluding restaurants and fast food establishments
- Exempt non-profit reuse stores (e.g. Goodwill Industries and The Salvation Army) from the ban and the fee for one year if they have a reusable bag credit program

Assemblymember Brownley introduced AB 1998 in the recently concluded session of the California Legislature. This bill, supported by the California Grocers Association, would have instituted a state-wide ban on single-use plastic bags. The bill passed the Assembly, but was defeated in the Senate on the last day of the session.

EXISTING POLICY

Council Policy 3.2.4 - Zero Waste

1. Reduce the amount of Sunnyvale waste being disposed
2. Encourage residents, businesses and agencies to reuse, reduce, and recycle materials judiciously

Surface Runoff Sub-element

Policy 3.4.1 - Protect Beneficial Uses of Creeks and South San Francisco Bay

DISCUSSION

Californians use and discard 19 billion plastic bags per year, according to industry figures. Based on its share of statewide population, Sunnyvale's share totals 69 million plastic bags, or 497 per resident per year.

The use of single-use plastic carryout bags imposes environmental, public health, and societal burdens. Despite recycling and voluntary solutions to control pollution from plastic bags in California, relatively few plastic carryout bags are recycled and the rest either take up valuable landfill space or are discarded in the environment.

Plastic bags have historically suffered from low recycling rates. Even when properly disposed of, plastic bags are often blown from receptacles, vehicles and disposal sites and become litter. Because plastic bags are so lightweight and aerodynamic, they are quickly transported into waterways.

Plastic bags are not amenable to being recycled as part of curbside recycling programs. Their physical characteristics lead to bags clogging and jamming machinery. Bags recovered in this way are often so contaminated with moisture and non-plastic contaminants that they are not accepted by end-users who recycle plastics into new products.

Paper bags made from virgin materials are not sustainable one-for-one substitutes for plastic carryout bags because the production of virgin material bags contributes to deforestation, natural resource depletion, greenhouse gas emissions, and additional waterborne wastes.

Paper carryout bags are 100-percent recyclable and are recycled at much higher rates than plastic bags.¹ Those that are made from post-consumer recycled fiber have fewer negative impacts than virgin fiber paper bags.

¹ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. November 2008. "Table 21: Recovery of Products in Municipal Solid Waste, 1960 to 2007." *Municipal Solid Waste in the United States: 2007 Facts and Figures*.

Measures to reduce single-use bags have been implemented or discussed elsewhere in California and around the nation. In the region, examples include:

- Palo Alto— On September 18, 2009, Palo Alto implemented an ordinance banning the use of single-use plastic carryout bags at the seven large groceries in that city. Stores are allowed to give out paper bags. Palo Alto's use of a Mitigated Negative Declaration to address the potential environmental impacts of the ban was challenged in court by an attorney representing the plastic bag manufacturers. The city and the industry reached an out of court settlement that allowed the ban to take effect as scheduled, with agreement by Palo Alto that it would prepare an EIR if it expanded the ban to other types of retailers.
- San Jose— On September 22, 2009, City of San Jose declared its intent to ban all single-use carryout bags except "Green" paper bags made of recycled paper, which would be available for a fee that would approximate the cost of the bag to the retailer and would be retained by the retailer. The ban would apply to all retailers except restaurants and non profit/social service organizations and would take effect in 2011. In July, 2010, San Jose issued a Draft EIR on the proposed ordinance. The Final EIR is scheduled to be considered by the San Jose Planning Commission on November 17, 2010.
- San Francisco—A ban on single-use plastic bags at supermarkets and chain pharmacies was approved in 2007. Paper bags, compostable plastic bags and reusable bags are allowed to be given out.
- Oakland—The city approved an ordinance banning plastic bags in 2008. However, plastic bag industry representatives challenged the city's determination that this action was exempt from CEQA and a judge ordered the city to rescind the ordinance.
- Santa Clara County—On April 13, 2010, the Board of Supervisors directed staff to prepare an ordinance that bans single-use plastic bags at all 52 retail outlets in the county unincorporated area (excluding restaurants, non-profit and social organizations). Retailers would be allowed to sell, for 15 cents, a single-use paper bag, but only if the bag had 100% recycled content. The County has proposed to use a Negative Declaration (which states that the action could not cause a significant environmental impact) to satisfy CEQA requirements.
- Los Angeles County—On October 28, 2010, the county issued a Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) on a proposed ordinance to ban single-use carryout bags and require a 10 cent fee on recyclable paper bags. The ordinance would affect an estimated 5,084 stores in the county unincorporated area. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors is scheduled to hold a public hearing on the FEIR on November 16, 2010.

A summary of other examples of bag ordinances is shown in Attachment C.

If Council wishes to place controls on single-use bags², staff recommends that it begin by answering these questions:

- Which type(s) of bags (plastic, paper) should be controlled, and how?
- What control measure(s) (ban, fee, or a combination) should be used to address the issue of single-use bags?
- Which businesses should be made subject to the control measure(s)?
- What should be the timeline for implementation?

Options for addressing each question are discussed below.

Which types of bags (paper vs. plastic) should be controlled?

When viewed primarily as a **water quality/stormwater/wildlife** issue, single-use bag concerns are focused squarely on plastic bags. Thus, one option is to place controls solely on plastic bags. This has been the approach taken by San Francisco and Palo Alto, where distribution of plastic bags has been banned.

However, experience with this approach, most notably in San Francisco, has found that, due to their concerns about market pressures, retailers continue to hand out single use bags, substituting paper bags for plastic. Affected retailers state that paper bags cost more for them to purchase and that paper bags take up more storage space than plastic bags. A consequence of San Francisco's plastic bag ban has been an increase in use of paper bags.

In terms of water quality/stormwater/wildlife, substituting paper for plastic bags is a positive change, because paper bags do not cause the same types of problems in these areas as does plastic bags.

Both plastic and paper bags create **aesthetic** issues when they are littered or in other ways enter the environment. It is arguable that both are equally objectionable, although plastic bags are often transported further and to higher, more prominent locations than paper bags.

From a **solid waste and recycling** perspective, a plastics-to-paper shift is an improvement. Once discarded and mixed with other materials, plastic bags are very difficult to recycle. Plastic bag recycling markets are very intolerant of moisture and other non-plastic contaminants. Thus, the moisture and contaminants that bags are exposed to when mixed with recyclables or garbage

² In the context of this discussion, "single-use bags" refers to bags, regardless of material type, that are designed to be used only once to carry retail purchases out of a business. Ordinance definitions would exclude bags used by customers to carry out prescriptions and greeting cards, and produce and meat counter bags that are then placed into larger carryout bags.

make them unacceptable to many plastics recycling markets. Plastic bags are recycled at low levels and new bags rarely contain recycled content. They are detrimental to recycling and solid waste handling machinery, as they wind around shafts, jam machinery and plug screening holes in sorting equipment.

Paper bags are easily sold for recycling at prices that cover the cost of collection and processing. Recycling markets for this “Kraft” kind of paper are much more tolerant than are plastics markets of the extra moisture and other contaminants that the bags pick up when they are mixed with recyclables or garbage. Paper bags are compatible with recycling and garbage processing equipment. The City itself collects paper bags as part of its residential and commercial recycling programs and generates revenue by recycling them along with paper bags sorted from the garbage received at the SMaRT Station®.

Arguments surround the relative impacts on **natural resource depletion** of plastic vs. paper bags. Plastic bags are made primarily from natural gas, a finite energy resource. Paper bags are made from wood fiber derived from trees and/or recycled paper. Water and energy are consumed to manufacture paper bags. A paper bag weighs more and takes up more space in shipping and storage than a plastic bag, so more energy is consumed in transporting it.

The natural resource impacts of plastic vs. paper bag use vary primarily based on the percentage of both types that are recycled because of the natural resource and energy conservation that results from recycling as compared to producing bags from virgin resources. In a system where no bags were recycled, plastic might be the preferred material. In the same system with all bags being recycled, paper might be the preferred material. Since, in the real world, very few post-consumer plastic bags are recycled, this means that this question depends on the percentage of paper bags recycled.

A better solution than either plastic or paper is the use of durable, reusable bags, assuming the durable bags are reused enough times to amortize the inputs of materials and energy used to manufacture and transport the bag to its point of sale.³

As Council selects the conceptual elements of an ordinance, staff recommends that it include elements designed to reduce the overall use of single-use carryout bags, regardless of their material type and the environmental impacts of alternatives to plastic bags. For example, if use of paper bags is allowed, staff recommends requiring a fee per paper bag that minimizes their use.

³ A 2004 study prepared for the French retail chain Carrefour found that the breakeven point for energy came on the third use of a reusable plastic bag as compared to a single-use plastic bag.

What control measure (ban, fee, or a combination) should be used to address the issue of single-use bags?

California law currently bars cities from imposing a plastic carryout bag **fee** upon a store that is in compliance with AB 2449. City surveys conducted in 2007 and 2009 found that many Sunnyvale stores were complying with all but the record-keeping requirements of the law. However, no stores provided the required records when that information was requested by City staff. Further, while the owners and managers of many of the smaller, independent supermarkets state their desire to comply with the bag recycling requirement, they say they have difficulty finding markets that will accept the plastic bags. In summary, all 21 stores may be considered not in compliance with AB 2449.

A **ban** of one or both bag types sends a clear signal to consumers that the City has a public policy preference regarding single-use bags.

The experience of San Francisco shows that banning just one type of bag (plastic, in that instance) only partially reduces overall bag use. Retailers feel competitive pressure to satisfy some customers' demand for a "free" takeout bag and give out paper bags. Many San Francisco retailers complain that a paper bag costs more than a plastic bag (although paper holds more groceries than plastic) and that the plastic bag ban has increased their bag costs.

Feedback from grocers at the state level indicates that they would generally prefer a material-neutral ordinance, i.e. a ban or fee that applies equally to plastic and paper bags, rather than a plastic bag ban by itself. A ban is simpler than a fee and less costly to implement, as it does not require reprogramming cash registers and accounting for fee revenues and expenditures.

Charging a **fee** sends a more nuanced signal to consumers and provides them with choices—bring a bag, do without a bag, or pay a fee. Fees also make the point to consumers that the bags currently given out by stores at no charge are not actually "free." Jurisdictions that have imposed fees on bag use have seen sharp drops in the number of bags taken out of stores. The reduction in bag use is proportional to the cost of the fee.

The effectiveness of a fee can be eroded by inflation and the passage of time, as consumers who perceive store-provided bags as a "convenience" become more willing to pay a small fee. After Ireland's Plastic Bag Levy was put in place in 2002 at a rate of €15 cents (\$0.21) per bag, plastic bag use decreased 94%. Plastic bags had been 5.00% of litter and dropped to 0.32% of litter.⁴ But, after several years, bag use increased, so the Irish government increased the fee to €22 cents (\$0.31) in July 2007 at which time plastic bag use decreased again.

⁴ Per letter dated January 20, 2009 from Ronan Mulhall, Irish Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government

A national survey conducted in 2003 found that 91% of those surveyed believed the levy was a good idea.

In California, fee revenues collected by a jurisdiction must be spent on a public purpose related to the fee. In this case, bag fee revenues could arguably be spent on removal of litter from waterways, roadways, etc., maintenance of storm drains, distribution of reusable bags and other work with a nexus to bags. Because a fee would greatly reduce bag use, little fee revenue would be generated.

The City may charge a fee on paper bags.⁵ State law limits City authority to place fees on plastic bags on stores that are in compliance with AB 2449's requirements. The fact that none of the stores in Sunnyvale appear to be in compliance with AB 2449's record-keeping requirements would seem to give the City the ability to impose a plastic bag fee. However, the stores could simply start to comply and thus block the City's fee authority under AB 2449.

Collecting a fee that is remitted to the City creates administrative and auditing expenses both for retailers as they collect and remit the fee and the City as it receives the fee revenue. San Jose's proposed bag ordinance would not result in fee revenues flowing to the city. Rather, it would allow retailers to retain any fees under a provision that allows use of a "Green" paper bag if the customer is charged a fee set at an amount that reimburses the retailer its cost.

Staff recommends a ban on distribution of all single-use carryout bags that allows use of "Green" paper carryout bags that are recyclable and defined as having a minimum of 40% recycled content. Use of these bags would require the retailer to collect and retain a fee that recovers the cost of a Green paper bag.

Which businesses should be made subject to controls?

Staff has defined three groups of stores that Council can combine in various ways to identify which stores would be subject to bag controls. Examples of stores covered by each of the groupings are shown in Attachment B. Staff estimates the total number of stores at 110-120.

Large Supermarkets and Pharmacies >10,000 Square Feet

Currently 21 stores, this category is defined by AB 2449 as supermarkets with gross sales in excess of \$2 million per year and pharmacies with more than 10,000 square feet.

⁵ Proposition 26, which addresses approval requirements for state and local fees, was on the November 2, 2010 ballot, with final results unknown at the time this RTC was drafted.

Other Large Retailers (>10,000 Square Feet)

Other Large Retailers are those with more than 10,000 square feet of retail sales space other than Large Supermarkets and Pharmacies. Staff estimates that there are 25 to 35 stores that are Other Large Retailers.

Other Food and Beverage Stores

This grouping includes Convenience Stores⁶ and retailers with off sale liquor licenses. It comprises about 70 stores and includes neighborhood grocers, liquor stores, convenience stores and gasoline stations that sell snacks and beverages.

Staff recommends that the ordinance apply to all three categories listed above.

Implementation time line

Regardless of whether a ban or fee is selected by Council, implementation would be made smoother by a transition period prior to implementation. This would allow for stores to, for example:

- use up already-purchased stocks of bags soon to be banned
- source and purchase “Green” paper bags
- learn about ordinance requirements and train employees
- reprogram cash registers and put new accounting line items in place (e.g. if a bag fee is imposed or allowed)

During the transition period the City would provide the public with information on the changes introduced by the ordinance and the reasons for those changes. The City could also work with stores to distribute reusable bags and promote their use.

Staff recommends that the implementation date avoid monthly and annual shopping peaks, and be no sooner than six months after adoption of an ordinance.

California Environmental Quality Act

A city’s obligations under CEQA have played a key role in the consideration and adoption of bag ordinances around California. Opponents to bag ordinances (most notably the American Chemistry Council and its allies) have challenged various CEQA processes and documents used for bag ordinances. And in court, CEQA’s standard for a “fair argument” in opposition to an action is so low a barrier that courts have, in many cases, invalidated bag ordinances that were not evaluated by a full Environmental Impact Report.

⁶ Defined as a chain food store or foodmart primarily engaged in selling a limited line of goods that generally includes milk, bread, soda, and snacks.

Staff recommends that, if Council wishes to move ahead with a plastic bag ban, it:

1. Outline key points to be included in an ordinance, e.g.:
 - Control Measure--ban, fee, or combination
 - Which businesses would be subject to the ordinance
 - Implementation Timeline
 - Other issues, if any
2. Establish a Special Project with a budget of \$100,000, the estimated cost of a full EIR, with funding to be split between the Wastewater Fund and Solid Waste Fund

Staff would prepare ordinance language, perform an Initial Study and return to Council with the appropriate CEQA document for adoption of the ordinance.

FISCAL IMPACT

Staff estimates the cost of a full EIR at \$100,000. Whether or not the ordinance will require an EIR, Mitigated Negative Declaration or Negative Declaration will depend on the findings of the CEQA Initial Study and any updates to case law between now and the date that Council considers ordinance adoption. Actual costs could thus range from \$40,000 (Negative Declaration) to \$100,000 (EIR).

There is no funding planned for this effort in the current budget, therefore a Budget Modification is required. Staff is recommending that, due to the impact that plastic bags have on the City's solid waste and wastewater utilities that funding come from both enterprise funds.

Staff has completed several wastewater and solid waste projects under budget and has proposed to return those funds to reserve through the project carryover process currently underway. As a result, staff recommends approval of Budget Modification No. 18 to appropriate \$50,000 from the Wastewater Capital and Infrastructure Reserve and \$50,000 from the Solid Waste Fund Rate Stabilization Reserve to fund a new project to complete the needed CEQA work. The funds to be returned through the carryover process are sufficient to complete this project with no impact to planned wastewater or solid waste utility rates.

Budget Modification No. 18
Fiscal Year 2010/2011

	Current	Increase (Decrease)	Revised
Wastewater Management Fund			
Reserves:			
Wastewater Capital and Infrastructure Reserve	\$179,828	(\$50,000)	\$129,828
Solid Waste Management Fund			
Reserves			
20 Year Resource Allocation Plan Reserve	\$502,273	(\$50,000)	\$452,273
Expenditures			
New Project – CEQA for Single Use Bag Ordinance	\$0	\$100,000	\$100,000

In addition to the fiscal impact from the environmental work needed to implement an ordinance, banning single-use bags will likely produce some savings to City operations. However, in the short term, these will likely be too small to measure accurately. These impacts will include:

- Reduced litter cleanup in street medians, parks and other City property and waterways (or more thorough cleanup of non-bag litter).
- Reduced collection and disposal of garbage
- Reduced downtime and maintenance effort at the SMaRT Station

The City's Stormwater Permit requires that permittees implement "best management practices" control measures for litter and trash such as trash reduction ordinances (e.g., bans on single use bags and single use compressed plastic foam food containers) Approving such ordinances will assist the City in complying with the City's stormwater permit trash reduction load requirements.

Reports to Council do not normally address private sector fiscal impacts, but due to the nature of the recommended action the following broad analysis is provided.

Retailers

- Retailers covered by the ban may see reduced operating costs and increased revenues. This is because retailers may no longer be purchasing single-use carryout bags and giving them away to customers. If Council requires them to collect and keep a paper bag fee, retailers

may gain a new revenue source as they recover the cost of those bags from the paper bag fee.

- Retailers who sell bulk quantities of plastic bags may see increased sales revenues as customers who formerly used “free” bags for secondary purposes (e.g. liners for small trash cans) begin to purchase bags for those purposes.
- Retailers who sell reusable bags may see increased revenues.
- Retailers may see a cost to retrain employees.

Customers

- Customers who use reusable bags or do without a bag should pay no carryout bag-related costs at checkout.
- To the extent that eliminating the cost of single-use bags lowers prices for goods, customers may save money on purchases.
- Customers who choose to purchase bulk quantities of bags for secondary purposes (e.g. disposal of pet waste) that they previously handled with “free” carryout bags may bear the cost of those purchases.
- Customers who obtain reusable bags may bear the cost of those bags.
- Customers who pay a Green paper bag fee to get a bag for their purchases may bear the cost of those purchases.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall, at the Sunnyvale Senior Center, Community Center and Department of Public Safety; and by making the agenda and report available at the Sunnyvale Public Library, the Office of the City Clerk and on the City's Web site.

Special outreach was conducted due to the amount and intensity of interest in this issue on the part of residents and businesses.

Two public outreach meetings were conducted. A print advertisement, web site information, a press release and notices to interested persons were used to promote these meetings. Those receiving the notices by either email or USPS mail included:

- Sunnyvale Chamber of Commerce
- Sunnyvale Downtown Association
- All retailers listed in Attachment B
- American Chemistry Council
- California Grocers Association
- California Restaurant Association
- Sunnyvale Neighborhood Associations
- Sunnyvale Cool Cities

- Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program
- Sierra Club
- Save the Bay
- Californians Against Waste
- Sunnyvale Commercial Recycling business email list (approximately 200 businesses)
- Bay Counties Waste Services

An Internet-based survey was used to collect and summarize input from the community.

Feedback from the public is summarized in Attachment D.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

- Direct staff to prepare a Single-Use Carryout Bag ordinance that:
 - bans the distribution of all single-use carryout bags
 - applies the ban to:
 - Large Supermarkets and Pharmacies >10,000 square feet
 - Other Large Retailers
 - Other Food and Beverage Stores
 - allows an exception to the ban if retailers package customer purchases in Green Paper Bags (bags containing at least 40% recycled paper content), so long as the retailer charges the customer a separately displayed cost-recovery fee of at least fifteen cents per bag, with 100% of the fee to be retained by the retailer
 - takes effect on the second Wednesday of a month no less than six months following second reading of the ordinance

Alternative 2

Take a different set of actions regarding single-use bags, as determined by Council

Alternative 3

Approve Budget Modification No. 18 to establish a Special Project “CEQA for Single-Use Bag Ordinance” in the amount of \$100,000, with funding to be split between the Wastewater Fund and the Solid Waste Fund.

Alternative 4

Take no action

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends Alternative Nos. 1 and 3.

Adoption of the recommended ordinance will help to protect the beneficial uses of local waterways and the San Francisco Bay, assist the City in complying with stormwater permit requirements and support the goals of the City's Zero Waste Policy.

Reviewed by:

Marvin Rose, Director, Public Works
Prepared by: Mark Bowers, Solid Waste Program Manager

Reviewed by:

Grace Leung
Acting Director of Finance

Approved by:

Gary M. Luebbers
City Manager

Attachments

- A. Study Issue Paper
- B. Examples of Store Categories
- C. Other Examples of Bag Ordinances
- D. Summary of Feedback from Public

Proposed 2010 Council Study Issue

DPW09-09 Banning the Use of Plastic Grocery Bags Throughout the City

Lead Department Public Works
Element or Sub-element Solid Waste Sub-element, Storm Water Runoff Sub-element
New or Previous Previous
Status Pending **History** 1 year ago Below the line 2 years ago None

1. What are the key elements of the issue? What precipitated it?

In June, 2008, the Santa Clara County Cities Association asked its members to encourage their jurisdictions to develop and implement local ordinances that would reduce the number of plastic bags used to hold customer purchases from retail stores. Councilmember Lee brought this issue back to Council at its meeting of June 24, 2008, at which time three Councilmembers (Lee, Swegles and Howe) requested a study issue on the topic.

This study would sort through the large number of options and issues in order to provide Council with optional ways to minimize plastic bag use. The goal would be to produce an enforceable, practical ordinance and/or other courses of action that would minimize use and disposal of single-use bags and avoid, to the extent possible, unintended consequences.

2. How does this relate to the General Plan or existing City Policy?

Zero Waste Policy
 (see Section 8)

Solid Waste Sub-element Policy 3.2B.1. Reduce generation of solid waste by providing source reduction programs and promoting source reduction behavior.

Surface Runoff Sub-element Policy A.3. Ensure that Best Management Practices are implemented to reduce the discharge of pollutants in storm water to the maximum extent practicable.

LAP 3.0 (1) Support incentives to limit all types of pollution at their source.

3. Origin of issue

Council Member(s) Lee, Swegles, Howe
General Plan
City Staff
Public
Board or Commission none

4. Multiple Year Project? No Planned Completion Year 2010

5. Expected participation involved in the study issue process?

Does Council need to approve a work plan? No
Does this issue require review by a Board/Commission? No
If so, which?
Is a Council Study Session anticipated? No

What is the public participation process?

A meeting or meetings, with prior notice to the public and to interested parties that include the Sunnyvale Chamber of Commerce, California Grocers Association, American Chemistry Council, Save the Bay, Acterra, Californians Against Waste, and Sunnyvale Cool Cities.

6. Cost of Study

Operating Budget Program covering costs

323 Solid Waste Mgmt, 344 Wastewater Trtmnt

Project Budget covering costs

Budget modification \$ amount needed for study

Explain below what the additional funding will be used for

7. Potential fiscal impact to implement recommendations in the Study approved by Council

Capital expenditure range

None

Operating expenditure range

\$500 - \$50K

New revenues/savings range

\$500 - \$50K

Explain impact briefly

Depending on the content of the ordinance adopted, staff time may be required to enforce the ordinance, respond to public complaints about non-compliant stores, etc. If a portion of any fees for bag use was retained by the City, this revenue could be used to offset City operating costs.

8. Staff Recommendation

Staff Recommendation For Study

If 'For Study' or 'Against Study', explain

A ban, fee or combination of the two that reduced the use of single-use bags would further the purposes of the Zero Waste Policy adopted by Council in December 2008, by:

- Protecting the environment and conserving natural resources that would otherwise be used to produce, transport, dispose and recycle single-use bags
- Helping to prevent pollutants from entering the air, land, and water
- Creating a more efficient economy
- Preserving the environment for future generations

9. Estimated consultant hours for completion of the study issue

Managers	Role	Manager	Hours			
	Lead	Bowers, Mark	Mgr CY1:	150	Mgr CY2:	0
			Staff CY1:	200	Staff CY2:	0
	Support	Gervin, Lorrie	Mgr CY1:	60	Mgr CY2:	0
			Staff CY1:	20	Staff CY2:	0
	Interdep	Boco, Robert	Mgr CY1:	60	Mgr CY2:	0
			Staff CY1:	0	Staff CY2:	0
	Interdep	Verceles, Connie	Mgr CY1:	20	Mgr CY2:	0
			Staff CY1:	0	Staff CY2:	0

Total Hours CY1: 510

Total Hours CY2: 0

Note: If staff's recommendation is 'For Study' or 'Against Study', the Director should note the relative importance of this Study to other major projects that the Department is currently working on or that are soon to begin, and the impact on existing services/priorities.

Reviewed by

Maurice A. Rose

Department Director

10/13/09

Date

Approved by

[Signature]

City Manager

10/14/09

Date

Addendum

A. Board / Commission Recommendation

Issue Created Too Late for B/C Ranking

Board or Commission	Rank	Rank	Rank
		1 year ago	2 years ago
Arts Commission			
Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee			
Board of Building Code Appeals			
Board of Library Trustees			
Child Care Advisory Board			
Heritage Preservation Commission			
Housing and Human Services Commission			
Parks and Recreation Commission			
Personnel Board			
Planning Commission			

Board or Commission ranking comments

B. Council

Council Rank (no rank yet)
Start Date (blank)
Work Plan Review Date (blank)
Study Session Date (blank)
RTC Date (blank)
Actual Complete Date (blank)
Staff Contact

Examples of Store CategoriesLarge Supermarkets and Pharmacies >10,000 square feet

Safeway (4)	Sprouts
Lucky	Smart & Final
CVS(3)	Costco (does not provide bags)
Walgreens (3)	Trader Joes
Rite Aid	Super Sunnyvale
Target	New Wing Yuan Market
Hankook Supermarket	Bharat Bazar

Other Large Retailers (>10,000 square feet used for retail sales)

Best Buy	Macy's
Fry's Electronics	Orchard Supply Hardware
Home Depot	Sports Authority
Lowe's	Sports Basement
Big Five Sporting Goods	PetSmart
Michael's Arts & Crafts	Ross Dress for Less
Office Depot	Summerwinds Nursery
Petco	

Food and Beverage Stores

Arco AM-PM	Western Pacific Oriental Grocery
Chavez Supermarket	Wolfe India Bazaar
Coconut Hill Indian Grocery	Save a Lot Liquors
Coles Market	Guadalajara Market
Country Farm Produce	Al's Liquors
New Wing Yuan Market	Liquor and Food Mart
Gala Mart	Sun Liquors
Grewalz Liquor & Groceries (2)	Fremont Gas & Mini Market
Grewalz Market	Convenience Store
Henderson Market	Fair Oaks Chevron
Heng Yang	Fiesta Liquors
India Cash & Carry	Lake Vista Liquors
Karoon International Food Market	Mary Market & Liquor
Kumud Groceries	Prestige Wines & Liquors
Madras Groceries	Goruba Fair Oaks 76
New Bangla Bazaar	All Star Liquor
New India Bazar (2)	Liquor and Food Mart
New India Market	Liquor Tobacco & More
Namaste Plaza	Hoppy's Food Mart
Nilgiris-A	Brandon Wines
Pai-Fu	Cig Xpress & Liquor 2
Quick Stop Market	Wolfe Liquors
Quincy Liquor & Grocery	Shirin Market
Save & Go Market	L&K Liquors
7-Eleven (7)	Chevron (Mary/El Camino)
Sunnymount Produce	Union 76 (Bernardo/El Camino)
Super Pan Meat Market and Bakery	BevMo
Super Quick Mart	Voyager Liquors

Other Examples of Bag Ordinances

- Malibu—In 2008 a city ordinance banning plastic carryout bags at all retailers took effect.
- Seattle, Washington—The city council approved an ordinance in July 2008 requiring a 20 cent fee for single-use bags at convenience, drug and grocer stores, to be effective January 2009. Depending on their size, retailers would keep part or all of the fee. Remaining fee revenues would support city waste prevention and recycling programs and offset a rate increase associated with new garbage contracts.
In August 2009, voters defeated the ordinance in a referendum by a 53% to 47% margin and the fee did not take effect. The American Chemistry Council spent nearly \$1.4 million to overturn the bag fee.
- Fairfax—The city first proposed in 2007 an ordinance banning plastic bags. But after plastics industry representatives threatened to sue, city leaders negotiated with retailers a voluntary ban on use of plastic bags. Then, an anti-bag ballot measure, which did not require an environmental review, passed with 79 percent of the vote in the November 2008 election. The measure bans plastic bags at restaurants and retail stores.
- Manhattan Beach—In July 2008, the city council approved an ordinance banning plastic bags. However, plastic bag industry representatives challenged the negative declaration and on January 27, 2010, a state appeals court ruled that the city will have to prepare a full Environmental Impact Report (EIR) rather than the Negative Declaration that it had relied on when adopting the ordinance. Manhattan Beach is appealing the decision to the California Supreme Court and the case is expected to be heard during 2011.
- Washington DC—A five cent user fee on single-use plastic and paper bags taken out of stores that sell food and/or alcohol was put in place on January 1, 2010. Retailers retain 1-2 cents of the new fee. City revenues from the fee are earmarked for cleanup of the Anacostia River after a city survey found that 47% of the trash in its tributaries and 21% of the trash in the Anacostia itself is plastic bags. After three months, fee revenues indicated an 87% reduction in bag use.¹
- American Samoa
- Counties of Maui and Kauai, Hawaii
- Westport, Connecticut
- Edmonds, Washington
- Brownsville, Texas
- Hooper Bay, Alaska
- Bethel, Alaska
- Hyde, Dare and Currituck Counties, North Carolina (a single ordinance)

¹ “DC bag tax collects \$150,000 in January for river cleanup,” Washington Post, March 30, 2010

Summary of Feedback from Public

Plastic Single-Use Carryout Bag Ban Public Meetings 10/21/10 Summary

Two meetings were conducted on October 21, 2010, one at 10 a.m. in the Community Center Neighborhood Room, the second at the SMaRT Station® at 7 p.m. Excluding staff, meeting attendance totaled 22.

One or two American Chemistry Council representatives attended the morning meeting. At least two Sunnyvale businesses were represented at the morning meeting—a small grocery store (listed in the “other food and beverage store” category in Attachment B) and a costume rental shop. A different representative of the grocery store also attended the evening meeting. Two participants in the morning meeting also attended the evening meeting.

Staff in attendance included Sustainability Coordinator, Dustin Clark, and Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) Environmental Outreach Coordinator Jackie Besoyan in the morning and Kristy McCumby (also WPCP staff) in the evening. The WPCP staff members briefly addressed questions related to water quality issues.

Attendance at each meeting (excluding staff):

10 a.m.: 16

7 p.m.: 6

10 a.m. Meeting Summary of Comments, Questions

Support for ban by store category:

- Large groceries/pharmacies (AB 2449 covered retailers/21 total): 11
- Include other large retailers (34 more stores): 11
- Include all the above, plus all other food/beverage/convenience stores (70+): 14
- Complete ban, all stores: 13
 - One participant felt that if use of plastic take-out bags was to be banned, that the ban should apply to all plastic bags (including bags for produce, meat, greeting cards and prescriptions) and that all businesses in the City should be included, i.e. home businesses, restaurants, etc.
 - One participant asked whether a ban on single-use plastic carryout bags would extend to large film bags used to cover clothes that had been dry cleaned, costumes being rented, etc.

If Council approves a ban, what should it look like?

- Include ban on paper bags, too: 4
- Allow paper bags but place a fee on them: 10

Questions included:

- What would the impact, financial or otherwise, be on customers who would buy plastic bags (for household trash cans, pet waste, etc.) instead of reusing plastic grocery bags for those purposes?
- Would there be financial assistance for people who can't afford reusable bags?
- What would the impact of financial assistance be on the City?

Comments included:

- Sunnyvale Community Services uses paper grocery bags to package and distribute food to its clients. In the past, the source had been used grocery bags donated by residents. Because groceries replaced paper with plastic, SCS now has to purchase paper bags for this use.
- Businesses may offer sponsorships to buy reusable bags for the needy and/or charitable programs
- Don't want to pass cost on to customer
- Business bears brunt of customer behavior after the bag leaves the store
- Exemptions should be allowed for garment bags/greeting card bags
- Ban should apply to ALL bags

How many attendees took the online survey at Recycling.inSunnyvale.com? 15 (out of 91 total survey responses at the time of the meeting)

General reasons for some sort of ban:

- People can be taught to change behavior and will adapt to bringing their own bag
- Consider the environment and future generations/leave a clean planet
- Plastic bags are contributing to the buildup of plastic in the North Pacific Ocean Gyre
- Costs to clean up are hidden because no one pays directly
- Environmental impact of single-use bag production, transportation and use
- Paper bags have impact, too, so place a fee on them

Reasons to ban plastic bags for ALL retailers:

- Not a quality of life issue
- Plastic bags end up in bike lanes and are a safety issue for bicyclists
- Litter in streets and the surrounding environment
- KISS principle (keep it simple stupid)
- Easier enforcement

Reasons to not ban plastic bags:

- Utility of plastic bags (they are strong, inexpensive, light weight)
- Plastic bags take up less space in landfill than paper bags
- Represents a tax that is passed on to the customer
- Low-income people are the most impacted
- Recycle the plastic bags, don't ban them
- Educate consumers instead

If ban adopted, time needed to implement:

- Allow 4-6 months to allow inventory to be used up
- Comments:
 - Allow enough time
 - How long does it take to order reusable bags? Factor that in.
 - City provide list of reusable bag vendors
 - Use compostable bags
 - Emphasize how the environment is impacted

7 p.m. Meeting Summary

The 7 p.m. meeting began with a tour of the Station. The actual meeting commenced at 7:45. Six people attended, aside from City staff. One attendee represented a small grocery store located in Sunnyvale.

How many support a ban? 6

Allow paper bags but only with a fee? 6

- Need to allow some disposable bags (tourists, people who forget)

What would be the fee amount and how would it be implemented?

- Require minimum recycled content of bags
- Start with a small fee, \$.05, and increase incrementally over time to prevent hardship
- OK to start with larger fee for more incentive to change behavior

Should the ban include a requirement to sell reusable bags, like AB 2449?

- No consensus, some agreed, some didn't

To which stores should the ban apply?

- Large groceries/pharmacies (AB 2449 covered retailers/21 total): 6
- Include other large retailers (34 more stores): 6
- Include all the above, plus all other food/beverage/convenience stores (65-70+): 6
- Complete ban, all stores: much discussion, no conclusions

If ban adopted, time to implement:

- Allow time for reusable bags to be ordered
- Representative of small local grocery store stated that bags are ordered weekly due to the large volumes required. She stated that most inventories are used quickly and that 1-2 months should be sufficient lead time.
- Avoid implementing on any dates when shopping is at a peak, i.e., first of month, seasonal/holidays/Thanksgiving, Christmas

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ATTACHMENT D

Why is the City of Sunnyvale wasting time on the mundane topic of plastic bags? There are many important things that should be studied such as:

Controlling gangs and graffiti
Stop giving handouts to illegal aliens
Finish the town center
Stop apartment owners from renting to multiple families in each unit

and I could go on and on.....

—
Forgive me replying to SunnyvaleCafe on a political issue, but I believe I have a free speech right to reply to any post on the forum that allowed the original post.

The "single-use" bags that some want to ban are just a small percentage of the plastic bags that we have no choice to take home as this is the way that produce, frozen food, and many other products are sold. Under the present system most stores already accept plastic bags of all types for recycling into artificial wood.

I suggest that all of you should look at how many products you bring home in plastic bags, not including the "single-use" store bags.

Once this ban is in place, I fear that most stores will stop accepting plastic bags for recycling and therefore even if we want to recycle we will have no way to do it.

Many of us, save money by using the store bags to line small garbage cans, rather than buying extra bags for this purpose. Again, this ban will simply increase costs without having any significant impact on the amount of plastic going into landfills.

Most multi-use bags are made from polypropylene which crumbles in the sun light after a few months leaving a mess which can not be recycled. I have returned several of these bags to the stores that I got them from as defective. When I get them from trade shows, I have no choice but to throw them in the general garbage once the sun causes them to crumble.

Charging a fee for bags of any type simply increases the cost of buying in Sunnyvale and makes it more likely that we will spend our money in other communities that do not do such stupid things. This is one more way to reduce current sales tax revenue to the city.

There is one good thing if this ban passes, some what like the 55-MPH speed limit that Jimmy Carter passed over the objections of the majority. This will make it much easier to throw the supporters out of office in the next election, at the same time electing new people, who will repeal this ineffective political stunt.

—
Perhaps more to the point, bans on plastic grocery bags are ineffectual in stemming the use of plastic bags.

Individual bags still need to be used to isolate meat from other purchases.

Countries, states, and localities which have banned "single-use" plastic bags have seen the sales

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of trash bag liners increase 50-80% immediately afterward.

Just to add insult to injury, those reusable shopping bags are typically non-recyclable and made in China as the process is labor-intensive. The disposable bags are mostly manufactured domestically, and hundreds of jobs in California will be lost in the event of a ban.

—
We need to start somewhere. The reduction in single use plastic bags will be greater than the increase the sales of trash bag liners.

Don't make the "perfect" solution the enemy of a necessary start.

—
Somehow it seems the debate on both sides of the plastic bag "gate" debate has missed the mark.

I'm struggling with a better answer, so let me explain. It seems as a species, we could be setting ourselves up for some big Darwin Award on ourselves. Interestingly regulation stick is not the best answer and does not often work for the end goal as really desired, but invites cheating and non support from within. Sometimes the rules get so convoluted and pushing the boundaries, that absurd result happens, no real fault, but for example one I saw years ago, it become illegal to dump sea water down the drain because it exceed certain metals limits in waste water. It can be maddening for all.

It is clear that materials that are not part of the food chain, need to be kept out of the environment, and conversely our food supply. Its not the suffocation the worst long term issue. All plastic breaks down into smaller units which get ingested and become part of the fish we eat. (its not just garbage bags) Some others can describe the chemistry, bit In effect fish, crabs, etc from the ocean we eat, are increasing being made of the exotic compounds from escaped plastic. Unfortunately there is not way out for the ocean for these compounds. see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Pacific_Garbage_Patch

We were so upset with the melamine in baby formula in China http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2008_Chinese_milk_scandal. Parallels here?,

There is a great book, a copy is in the library last I checked, Cradle to Cradle, by William McDonough. (and lots on youtube) Interestingly he go though all sort of materials, first carpet, which used to be wool and natural plant dyes, now is largely hazardous waste and not really safe for your baby to crawl on, and bite as babies do. As an architech, the had a client with a child care center, they tried to find a non toxic carpet, They could not, as a result they worked a carpet mill in Switzerland, and cooperatively developed a line of non toxic carpet. Unexpectedly, the mill which used to have an hazardous waste problem, had none, their waste was good weed mat and the waste water, was cleaner than the incoming water, so they closed the loop, and they no longer had any outside water usage or expense, not any need for environmental regulation. The point is the process was put back into materials that was compatible with the natural cycle.

Often, a complete transition helps the bottom line of the company more than remaining in the broken process. Ford Motor company realized this years ago, and rather than use toxic roofing

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that would need runoff ponds and water treatment, large amounts of their assembly plants went to living green roofs and they saved money in the bottom line. That process is expanding in the cars themselves.

Its the same with shoes, that 50 years ago, you just threw those old all natural leather shoes out and they rotted harmlessly, actually enriching the soil. Today, virtually all shoes are made of toxic materials and inferior toxic tanning process, now largely done in China. The shoe process also has become broken and there is no truth in labeling as to toxic materials, no MSDS for consumer stuff.

Its that way with current plastic garbage bags, and frankly plastic packaging. We need to think why do we like plastic and plastic bags.

Well they do not leak so quickly, are very compact and light, and strong for their weight. Plastic bubble make a great anti shoplifting and point of purchase advertising, but eats lots of valuable costly aisle space. Is RFID's better for shoplifting? For leaking, so does wax paper bags we used to use 50 years ago. Is over packing really cost effective use of expensive real-estate? Good thing this is completely compost able and if it gets in the water, its truly broken into sugars, proteins and other items basic to life itself.

Ourselves, we are using more often natural cloth bags, and for now some plastic bags, till something become routinely available better to line our trash cans. There we are now tending to keep a half gallon icecream tub for the wet things, and a separate paper lined full size trash bag for the larger things.

Should the city ban just plastic garbage bags?. Seems the solution as William McDonough advocated is not than using a stick regulation approach, but more of the carrot and fix the process, The trick is to understand the need and the process. Have good effective substitutes available, and one a scale to be effective. Perhaps the city should work together for a regional common approach, one a scale where it will do some good for the bay, and eliminate all plastics that float into the bay.. Perhaps on that level some of the big box stores might come to the table as its a large enough of a market, to think collectively how to better do the process, one that does not poison the water as it breaks down. Its protecting the bay, reducing needless waste and the need for waste.

I worry that using good will capital in irritating regulation without substantial bay area improvement, could be counterproductive in the few years span.

Its a complex problem, requiring many across all aspects to understand the issues.

—
I am REALLY disappointed that the city has only provided a survey for those of us who cannot come to City Council meetings yet feel passionately about this subject. We need to be able to send e-mails in lieu of showing up to the meeting.... Not just fill out a survey that restricts us to only addressing the questions the survey deems important....I HATE the idea to ban plastic bags....They provide a very valuable service, and banning them will frustrate people who forget their bags...Many stores already have quite successful BYOB programs that reward us in some way when we take our own bags. Also, many [if not all] stores sell recycled bags....How many

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times can these be reused? Many for sure, but I wonder if there'll really be less plastic we'll have to deal with at the dump when all these re-use bags break....They use MANY times more plastic than the ones in question.

—

10/21/2010

To the City of Sunnyvale:

Save The Plastic Bag Coalition ("STPB") hereby demands that the City of Sunnyvale comply with CEQA prior to adopting an ordinance banning plastic bags.

Banning plastic bags will result in an increased number of paper bags, which are significantly worse for the environment than plastic bags.

Banning plastic bags will also result in an increased number of reusable bags, which may be significantly worse for the environment than plastic bags depending on how many times they are used.

As the proposed ordinance may have significant negative impacts on the environment, an EIR must be prepared.

STPB will file formal objections with exhibits if it appears that the city intends to vote on a proposed ordinance.

Pursuant to Public Resources Code §21167(f), I hereby request that all notices regarding the project be sent to me by e-mail at savetheplasticbag@earthlink.net or to the address below.

All rights are reserved.

Please confirm receipt of this e-mail. Thank you.

Regards,

Stephen L. Joseph, Counsel
SAVE THE PLASTIC BAG COALITION
350 Bay Street, Suite 100-328
San Francisco, CA 94133
Phone: (415) 577-6660
Fax: (415) 869-5380
Website: www.savetheplasticbag.com

—

Dear Sirs,

Regarding the proposal to ban plastic bags at grocery stores. Does this apply to home newspaper delivery, even in rainy weather? Have you considered that many people reuse the bags: ie. for garbage, storage, pick up doggie poop, etc. If the surrounding communities don't have such a ban,

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there is a potential business loss. I would drive that extra two lights to Santa Clara or to Cupertino to shop at the same chain store, that doesn't have these restrictions. What about the health issues of re-useable cloth bags? Are the stores going to have warning signs, regarding not to pack meat, produce, and dairy products all in the same bag, to prevent cross - contamination of such products? What is the recommended timing and procedure for cleaning the cloth bags? Will this be posted by the individual stores? I recommend making no changes to the current policy regarding plastic grocery bags.

Constant Contact Survey Results Overview

Survey Name: Plastic Bags Survey
Responses to 11/8/2010 6:16:36 PM

1. Please indicate your affiliation

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Sunnyvale resident	134	91.7%
Sunnyvale business	4	2.7%
Resident or business located outside of Sunnyvale	8	5.4%
No Responses	0	0.0%
Total	146	100%

2. Do you think the City should enact an ordinance that bans single-use plastic bags?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	85	58.2%
No	61	41.7%
No Responses	0	0.0%
Total	146	100%
81 Comment(s)		

3. If you answered "No" to Question #2 (should the City ban plastic bags), what do you think the City should do regarding single-use plastic bags?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Take no action	31	21.2%
Take some kind of action other than a ban	22	15.0%
Other	11	7.5%
No Responses	82	56.1%
Total	146	100%
35 Comment(s)		

4. If Sunnyvale City Council adopts a ban on single-use plastic bags, at which type(s) of stores should the ban be applied (check one or more options)?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Supermarkets and Pharmacies (approximately 21 stores)	43	36.1%
Other Larger Retailers (approximately 35 stores)	37	31.0%
Other Food and Beverage Stores (approximately 64 stores)	37	31.0%
All retailers who provide single-use plastic bags	95	79.8%
Total	119	100%

5. Whether or not you support a ban on single-use plastic bags, if a ban went into place do you think the City should allow stores to provide recycled content bags*?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes, allow stores to provide paper bags	93	63.6%
No, don't allow stores to provide paper bags (in other words, ban all single-	34	23.2%
Other	17	11.6%
No Responses	2	1.3%
Total	146	100%

47 Comment(s)

6. Whether or not you support a ban on single-use plastic bags, if a ban went into place do you think the City should require stores to charge for the paper bags (the store would keep the fee)?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes, the store should be required to charge at least five cents per bag	32	21.9%
Yes, the store should be required to charge at least as much as the bags	41	28.0%
No, the store should not be required to charge for the bags	58	39.7%
Other	13	8.9%
No Responses	2	1.3%
Total	146	100%

7. Should the City require stores to make reusable bags available for sale to customers?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes, require stores to sell reusable bags	59	40.4%
No, don't require stores to sell reusable bags	85	58.2%
No Responses	2	1.3%
Total	146	100%

8. If the Council decides to ban single-use plastic bags, how much time should stores be given to prepare for the change?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
One year	42	28.7%
Nine months	9	6.1%
Six months	51	34.9%
Three months	26	17.8%
No time - the ban should take effect immediately upon passage of the	9	6.1%
No Responses	9	6.1%
Total	146	100%

9. In which ways do you get Sunnyvale-specific information (please rank them by use, 1 being "never use this method", 5 being "use this method all the time")?

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

	1	2	3	4	5
Reading the local Sunnyvale Sun newspaper	26 19%	24 18%	25 18%	25 18%	37 27%
Reading the San Jose Mercury News	47 35%	19 14%	20 15%	16 12%	34 25%
Reading news stories on the Internet (Please note in the comments section which news	44 34%	18 14%	26 20%	16 12%	25 19%
Reading the Recycling Newsletter, ReNews	18 13%	17 13%	24 18%	34 25%	42 31%
Reading the City's Quarterly Report	18 13%	21 16%	24 18%	29 21%	43 32%
Visiting the City's Recycling website	43 33%	45 34%	19 14%	16 12%	9 7%
Getting Tweets from the City's Recycling Program	113 88%	6 5%	4 3%	2 2%	4 3%
Hearing it from a friend or neighbor	29 21%	29 21%	27 20%	20 15%	31 23%
55 Comment(s)					

Constant Contact Survey Results Comments

Survey Name: Plastic Bags Survey
Comments to 11/8/2010 6:16:36 PM

2. Do you think the City should enact an ordinance that bans single-use plastic bags? - Comments

Answer

- I see plastic bags as one of main cause of trash around my neighborhood, and am especially sad to see them caught in trees. For me its the lack of bio-degradable of these plastics that make me extremely angry for our planet and future generations.
- Cloth bags and reusable plastic bags are inexpensive and easy to use. My wife and I have been using these for years with NO quality of life issues. The environmental costs of single use plastic bags are huge with very little benefit to anyone except those who make them. Paper bags aren't much better because of the shipping weight issues and messiness of manufacturing. Reusable bags are the only way to go!
- Sunnyvale residents are very responsible with recycling and re-use. I either recycle my plastic bags or use them as trash liners. I also make an effort to bring reusable bags when I shop. However, there are times when I need to run to the market without being prepared -- or I need to bring home milk or meat that could leak juices into my car unless I use a plastic bag. Stores are already doing a lot to encourage reusable bags and people are changing their behavior without the city mandating it.
- I use the plastic bags I get from retail stores as trash can liners. Without these "free" plastic bags, I would just buy plastic bags anyway.
- Not only ban the single use plastic bags, but also ban the very cheap bags (usually a \$1) sold by places such as Walmart, Safeway, and other big stores which are of poor quality and break down if washed, left in a car, or after several uses.
- Wait for statewide action. The piecemeal approach is not the answer.
- This is a silly and useless gesture. Far more energy and resources are being used on talking about this than are used by years worth of the bags, which can be easily recycled.
- I think this ordinance is a step in the right direction. Especially with more environmentally friendly options out there, single-use plastic bags aren't really needed or preferred by our household. Plastic bags are a litter problem, can be harmful to wildlife, and clog our creeks.
- A ban on plastic bags is long overdue. Californians use 19 billion bags per year, the majority of which end up in landfills (where they don't break down), as litter, or adding to the great Pacific Garbage dump, threatening marine and bird life. Let's not waste further energy resources manufacturing plastic that ends up as trash!□
Please, please, ban all single use bags.
- Too many bags just get thrown away and impact the environment. We need to get everyone to do their bit to protect the environment and reduce waste. It bugs me when people get big items bagged when that item is already over packaged and the bag serves no purpose and is probably thrown away when the buyer gets home.
- It's easy enough to just carry around canvas bags to use instead. I have about 5 and they work great!
- They are easily recycled unlike the multi use bags that crumb from sunlight and are not recyclable.□
Many products are already in plastic bags and banning the single-use bags will probably end the recycling of plastic bags, resulting in more bags going into landfills.
- I shifted to the habit of using re-usable bags a while ago. It has is trivial to make such a switch with no inconvenience.
- I'm a huge environmentalist but am not in favor of an outright ban because paper bags (any disposable bags) are just as bad if not worse. I want smaller gov't when possible and make as much of it as self funded (sustainable) as possible.
- Definitely. Most people are well aware of the pollution that plastic bags cause BUT because they are so readily available, still continue to use them.
- It's so easy to bring my cloth bags along to the stores. Plastic bags are dreadful for the environment. Thanks for proposing this ordinance.

- NO WAY!!!!
I LOVE plastic bags and reuse them at least once at home before I recycle them. It's a HUGE pain when you forget your personal bags and I do not want to be forced to buy more when I forget them. Also, alternative bags use genetically modified corn which I believe is WAY worse....
We have the right to use our own bags happily, but do not force laws on all SV shoppers because a few people want to force us their ways on the rest of us!
- I am both a resident as well as a business owner.
I think the City is becoming far too involved in the every-day lives of its residents, that it should focus on safety and schools and the running of local government and not involve itself in causes.
- Yes. The time is now.
- - might be detrimental to Sunnyvale economy: people would shop in Mtn Vw, Cupertino or Santa Clara
- might lead to huge numbers of reusable bags in landfill or ocean
- would lead to more purchase of plastic trash bags (most families use their single-use bags for trash
- Top priority should be BANNING STYROFOAM
- I keep a supply of canvas bags in my car and in my bike bags. It's easy once you get in the habit. If I somehow got stuck without a bag, I'd be more than happy to pay a few cents for one. We need to reduce and reuse what we have.
- Absolutely not! This will result in chaos in our stores, lost business, and an additional burden on families and all shoppers in general.
- We are a certified Green Company. HOWEVER, we are AGAINST the ban because of the alternative - CHINESE BAGS. When the State proposed plastic bags - Chinese made bags from polypropylene have popped up all over in every major food chain, and shopping center. Who oversaw this alternative - is it really SAFE. Considerations: 1. Fuel used to get these bags to the US 2. Not using USA products 3. How are these made in China? Unfair labor?? 4. Reusable but are they truly recycle-able?
- And don't tell me it promotes the use paper instead - lots of stores are voluntarily banning plastic and it forces people to think ahead and bring their own bags. It also has the benefit of bringing store costs down, which can be passed on to the consumer. What a waste of petrochemicals to produce stuff that ends up in the bay via our trash.
- We could all do the environment a big favor here and save a significant amount of money by adjusting our daily habits in a very small way.
- People can adapt quickly once they get used to not having plastic bags. We lived and shopped without them for a the 1st half of the 20th century and we can get by without them just fine in the future.
- Plastic should be allowed only if explicitly asked-for by the customer, since for some (older people, people on bicycles, etc) paper is not equally good.
For most of us, paper worked for decades and bio-degrades nicely.
Trader Joe's provides paper with handles, and I suspect all grocery stores will soon adopt that.
THANKS FOR HOLDING THIS SURVEY!
- They should be banned and optionally impose a paper bag fee to encourage canvas bag use.
- There is no reason they should be "free" (and of course they are not). I use my own cloth bags. It is common in Europe. It is better for the environment. Some people are just spoiled and want to make no effort for improvement, no matter the consequences of inaction.
The sooner that people can get out of the habit of using plastic bags, the better. Already people have begun using reusable shopping bags, but it's time to make this the norm, not the exception. A plastic bag ban is long overdue for our city!
- It takes awhile to develop the habit, but it can be done!! Include drug stores and retail stores.
- Reducing waste, especially petroleum-based products that in many cases become waste, especially in light of the state legislature's inability to gain passage of AB 1998, is vitally important, especially in a city such as Sunnyvale. All cities in California need to take part in this, and we should be at the leading edge of this initiative.

- It will be important to educate all Sunnyvale shoppers in the alternatives to single-use bags. This is a significant culture shift for some people.
- I would vote "yes" for this question if a "tax" on plastic bags -- paid directly by the customer -- was not possible.
- They aren't single use. People use them over and over and take them to proper recycling places. Thing that should not be carelessly placed in paper are housed safely in plastic.
- It's stupid! We have more difficult city problems than wasting time on this item.
- Yes, it is time for Sunnyvale to join the other cities and countries with bag bans. The amount of non biodegradable plastic garbage that we have is a problem that needs to be addressed through simple measures like other countries have done. If we care about our future we need to change our wasteful ways.
- Bags are used for many things -- dog poop -- and taken back for re-use at the retail stores
- I think we would help the litter problem and also be less wasteful.
- It will reduce waste. It is very easy to bring sturdy bags that you can reuse to the store.
- I always ask for paper bags when I go to the grocery store.
- We make use of the bags we get from the stores. They are not "single-use" for us. Reusable bags become dirty and cause health issues.
- I think this is too extreme and will never pass
- We made the shift to reusable bags a while ago. It was hard at first, but now is easy and it makes me sad every time I see a plastic bag in the gutter or watching someone wad up a huge stack of them and stuff them in the trash. Bags are a burden on our cleanup efforts and landfills. There is no good reason to not take a step forward on this issue.
- I use reusable bags as much as possible, but sometimes there is a place for single-use plastic bags.
- I use those plastic bags in many other ways after coming back from the grocery store. These are not single-use bags! Without these, I will have to spend money to buy new plastic bags.
- We use paper bags everyday. We use them at trash bags, diaper bags, storage bags, etc.
- I think that the ban should include all single use bags. Just getting rid of plastic does not prevent the issue. Encouraging recycling is good too. Paper bags are just as problematic.
The problem is the people at the stores. I have had trouble getting cashiers to bag into my own bags instead of the plastic ones.
- I do not think that "single-use" plastic bags should be banned. I recycle the plastic bags that I receive at the grocery (and other stores). I use them to line my kitchen garbage pail. I have seen other residents use such bags when walking their dogs.
In addition, I think that government (local as well as state and federal) has become too intrusive into our lives. One example is the toilet requirement. It is supposed to save water yet the ones in airports flush constantly and waste water.
- I think it's too overbearing to completely outlaw their usage. I know that sometimes it makes sense (for places like Target) to have a large bag of many items, instead of numerous paper bags (first alternative if people don't bring their own, **OR** enough of their own bags). ALSO, plastic bags are the BEST solution for certain items (possibly messy/leaky items, that would leak through paper, or ruin someone's personal bags). There are also questions about bacteria in personal shopping bags.
- Plastic bags I get from Safeway are very useful as trash bags for small trash receptacles. I also use them as lunch bags for work.
- Other cities have done this, we should too!
- Empty single-use plastic bags can be an environmental problem, but they also have a use. I reuse them multiple times and use them for my kitchen and bathroom garbage. If you want to reduce the excess bags, you should create a cost to the consumer. The consumer will only change their behavior if it affects their wallet. A required fee for the single use bags with the option for people to use their own cloth bags, gives the consumer the choice and will cut down on the unused empty fly-away bags.
- Maybe instead charge an extra fee for plastic bags.

- It pushes the problem elsewhere, including to multi-use bags that degrade and must be thrown away, and to trashcan liners, as shoppers won't have single-use bags to use instead.
- I use my plastic bags for trash bags and for lining small garbage pails in my bathrooms.
- I use "single-use" plastic bags as my kitchen garbage bags. Since most of our household garbage goes into the recycling bin, the little bit of garbage that is left for our kitchen garbage is tossed using grocery store plastic bags. I love being able to re-use the bags in this way and have not bought any kitchen garbage bags in over ten years.
- Where is the peoples' freedom of choice? Is the police now going to govern every single company that uses plastic bags? This is RIDICULOUS! We need LESS government controls, not more! Let us make up our own minds on paper or plastic or reuseable bags!
- I reuse these bags as trash can liners. Can anyone prove that this is significant source of roadside trash in Sunnyvale?
- it's to hard using cloth bags when you have arthritis, the bags would be just to heavy.
- We reuse every single plastic bag we get from stores.
- They are convenient. Safeway has a recycle bin for these if one doesn't reuse them. We use them in our small trash bins at home. If we didn't have them we would have to purchase rolls of small trash bags. Though I have received for free and purchased the reuse bags, I always forget to take them to the stores. Also, I heard recently something that made me think again of using them...food can leak within them and folks don't always think of cleaning them.
- Plastic bags (e.g. from the supermarket) are never single use. I (re)use them to pick up dog poo when I walk the dogs, line garbage cans, wrap up things for storage, etc. If you ban them, all you will do is force me to buy other plastic bags - a substitute - not a reduction.
- I reuse all plastic bags (unless they have holes in them, which is rare). I use them as garbage bags at home and in the car, to carry other things (like balls and toys to the park), and ironically, to transfer recyclables to school. If I didn't receive these bags from the store, then I would likely buy garbage bags. This would not solve the problem of reducing plastic waste, it would just change the source of the bag.
- I actively reuse these bags. While I use reusable bags at the grocery, target etc. sometimes I'm in a place where I don't have a bag and would need one. In addition, sometimes I'd rather keep my meat separate from my produce and do not want to potentially contaminate my reusable bag and thus prefer for health reasons to bag the meat separately.
- Let's let technology, not a law drive this recycling issue. Single use bags are more convenient.
- But businesses that now use them should encourage use of reusable bags.
- We have enough rules and regulations that are not enforced and now to have yet another. I use plastic bags and recycle them as well as paper bags. The plastic bags are very compressible and several can be wadded into a pocket and reused at the store. The move against plastic vs paper is based on political hot air - please find research that says paper uses less energy. Also what will the plastic be replaced by?
- I do not want to reuse bags from a cross contamination perspective. Meat and veggies should not end up in bags with my bread. I also will waste gas (carrying junk in my car) and water (washing bags). I also use the bags-- dog poop and waste can liners-- I will have to buy these without recycling.
- It would be quite helpful and reduce the plastic bags that we see flying around on the streets and in the gutter.
- You can't just ban without alternatives. So it depends on what alternatives are provided
Alternatives need to be provided for people who come from out-of-town for example (people who are traveling are not likely to pack grocery bags)
- If you ban plastic bags what are we suppose to do with the used kitty Litter?
- To keep things clean and not smell I put the kitty litter in one plastic bag and then put into another to take it to the garbage if you have a better idea please let us know.
- I think there should be an incentive for customers not to request single-use plastic bags, but they should be available.
- Whatever we can do to help our environment the better.

- This is a simple change that can have powerful results, and it's long overdue.
- Charge a 25 cent fee for each plastic or paper bag in all supermarkets and grocery stores
- It is the RIGHT THING TO DO. The plastic industry is trying to line their pockets. I have used reusable bags for 20 years and have had NO problems. I use cloth bags and have never gotten mold, disease, or bacteria from them. Our environment is more important than the perceived inconvenience people fear. Smoking used to be accepted. Now, it is proven to be a hazard. Using plastic bags is also a hazard and banning them sooner rather than later makes sense. People will get used to the change and move on.
- Definitely! The problem with these bags as a huge source of pollution both on land and in our waterways and oceans is well documented. Reuseable bags have been available at very low cost in nearly all but small mom & pop stores for years now. I use them for shopping as well as for carrying/moving other items around. They are sturdy Paper/plastic bags tear easily and your items end up on the floor. Most stores give a nickel discount for each bag used. Only problem is very few people are using them
- This bag ordinance is not necessary.
- Comments already submitted.

3. If you answered "No" to Question #2 (should the City ban plastic bags), what do you think the City should do regarding single-use plastic bags? - Other responses

Answer

- Make consumers pay for bags
- Have a bag fee instead
- Take no action or reward BYOB
- Other options
- Recycle bags in our recycle bins
- Charge the customer \$.25 a bag
- More trash clean up efforts.
- Require recycling at any store that dispenses them
- Education
- See Comments below
- See answer to #2

3. If you answered "No" to Question #2 (should the City ban plastic bags), what do you think the City should do regarding single-use plastic bags?

Answer

- Actively encourage reusable bags and make it a point of pride to do so by selling good quality reusable "Sunnyvale Recycles" bags (at cost) at places such as the community center, fairs, Hands on the Arts, farmer's markets, etc. Hold a contest at local schools to design a colorful logo for the bag. Also provide the means to recycle these bags from home. Perhaps people could be asked to bundle them inside one sack to create a large ball of plastic bags for easy separation in the recycling plant.
- Ask retailers to use biodegradable/compostable plastic bags. I put single-use bags that I don't need to reuse in my home recycle bin. If the city is not recycling these bags, then it should be.
- The less specific laws/ordinances the better. We need to limit Government regulation on small issues. Give people the opportunity to make thoughtful choices.
- If there is any way to make it easier for people to recycle the bags, that could be done.
- Why screw up a recycling program that works for those who chose to use it?
- A bag fee for all disposable bags would be better than a ban -- use the money gained to provide reusable bags to people as well as educate people. Paper bags may be worse than plastic in terms of total environmental impact.
- I'm so tired of miserable "greenies" who want to force their values on everyone....I don't want to see people forget their bags and be forced to buy new ones.... Also MY answer to #4 in NONE!!!! What's the big deal... Encourage reuse and recycle, but stop forcing this on everyone!

- I think the City should stop making rules and laws that harm local business and make it more difficult and/or expensive to do business here than elsewhere. I cannot answer #4 or #8 If answers appear there, they were not put there by me.
- All stores should charge (tax or price) for all single-use bags to discourage them
 - however, Supermarkets could possibly experiment with "pick-up/drop-off" borrowing of reusable bags as a community service (like some places do with bicycles on campus
- I'd take no action. Government has burdened us with enough regulation and time-sapping inconvenience. If they must, put a 1/2 tax on each bag (rounded up), and help fund ocean cleanup or some such thing.
- How about supporting businesses in Sunnyvale, Santa Clara County and CA that could make alternative products that would bring employment through the manufacture of alternatives...it's a great opportunity to businesses locally to supply alternatives.
- Retailers should be required to charge 10 cents per bag.
- The CITY should not concentrate on governing individuals - They should be supportive of City residents
-
- Make them available, but for a fee, maybe 0.03 a bag, at the check-out so those who wanted them for some reason could get them.
- Encourage reuse and recycle and/or use bags that are biodegradable
- In a densely populated urban area, a program in one city will not have much impact. A ban would cause us to shop elsewhere because we use the plastic bags around the house to collect household trash and for disposing of pet litter.
- Encourage people to recycle the bags.
- Either take no action, OR place an additional tax on plastic bags. Thus, they can be available if people want them, but the different retail outlets can pass the cost to their customers (if they want). Make the cost .5 center per bag.
- Charge per bag at the store.
- As stated above, a fee for single-use plastic bags. Or take no action at all.
- A sudden ban might be too hard on businesses. It's better to start gradually to change habits and reassure our businesses. Charge people for bags (e.g. 25 cents), but also encourage offering "Sunnyvale" reusable bags for sale (e.g. \$1). That rewards people for bringing their own bags yet gives people a motivation to buy a reusable bag and change their habits. In a few years, assess the outcome of the policy and consider a ban if the results have been favorable.
- Why not just restrict all plastic bags to be made of recyclable material. I think Trader Joe's bags are recyclable.
- Leave the citizens of Sunnyvale ALONE! We don't need more regulations! IF Sunnyvale keeps pushing these type of laws, people are going to leave!
- I'd have to spend more on garbage bags. The schools I give my bags to would have to spend more on bags.
- Come up with a easy way to recycle plastic bags.
- It will be very inconvenient if stores don't provide plastic bags.
- Require business to charge consumers for using plastic bags. Charge enough to strongly discourage people from using them.
- Promote alternatives.
- It sounds 'green', but I doubt there will be any significant reduction.
- have more businesses move to paper; reduce the plastic used at fast food restaurants etc
- 1)Encourage the recycle of materials with financial rewards - eg 5cents reclaim.
- 2)Encourage a Kaizen approach to our community - ie leave it a little better than you found it.
- 3)Address pedestrian walkways so personal shopping wheelies can be better used.
- 4)Make for a more business friendly environment by being more pro business than anti business anti plastic approach.
- too much regulation

- - Allow paper bags
- Charge for plastic bags
- Require bio-degradable bags
- In some cases (e.g. meat, frozen foods) plastic is necessary to prevent leakage.
- Size of purchase also makes a difference. Consumers are unlikely to have their own large cloth (or similar) bags for very large purchases (e.g. from Target)
- Charge a 25 cent fee on all paper and plastic bags in grocery stores
- Comments already submitted.

5. Whether or not you support a ban on single-use plastic bags, if a ban went into place do you think the City should allow stores to provide recycled content bags*? - Other responses

Answer

- allow paper bags but must charge for these
- Yes, but charge significant cost for them.
- The city should not have the power to do this!
- see comment
- Yes, but recycled or compostable plastic would be better than paper
- Charge fee
- Provide them for a high fee
- For when people have no reusable bag of their own, then yes, and only then
- Make an exception for messy food takeout to use waxed paper bags
- either way
- Give people options, don't take them away.
- plastic is just fine, in my opinion
- Time to move
- Have stores charge for paper bags or multiuse bags
- only biodegradable bags
- allow them to provide paper bags, but make them CHARGE for them
- only temporarily

5. Whether or not you support a ban on single-use plastic bags, if a ban went into place do you think the City should allow stores to provide recycled content bags*? - Comments

Answer

- If the paper bags are made from 100% recycled material they should be allowed as a first step towards moving closer to a ban on all single-use bags.
- If the full cost is borne by the consumer. Those who do the right thing and bring their own bags should not have to pay for those who do not.
- I'd love it if there were bags available, but not free bags. For when you forget, but with a \$ so that I am reminded not to forget in the future
- Paper bags should be allowed but at a stiff fee around 30 cents per bag. The city could collect most of this fee as a tax with some kept by retailers to pay for the bags.
- I use the paper bags to collect my paper recycling at home, and the bag gets recycled, too.
City Council wants residents to have to bring their own bags to retail stores? This feels very controlling of you and inconvenient and costly to me. I don't know when I go to into a store how many bags to bring. In some stores, a customer would need to carry the bags around as there are no carts or baskets.

- Bags should be provided, but a charge should be levied.
- Perhaps there could be a charge per paper bag too, such as 5 cents or something.
-
- We need to have a different mindset and all start using reusable bags. A ban of all single use bags will help encourage that change.
- Sometimes a person can forget to bring their canvas bags.
- Because this total ban approach will be easier to use to throw its supporters out of office and to get it repealed.
- It would be ok to allow (recycled content) paper bags, but the city should impose a significant tax on them (for ex, \$0.25 per bag) for the purposes of 1) defer use of such bags, and 2) if they are used, the city is able to collect revenue which can be used to help fund other recycling or green programs.
- No. I feel strongly that plastic bags should be banned completely. There are many other options to plastic bags including paper and reusable bags.
- Recycled paper bags could be used while people are in transition to remembering always to bring cloth bags. My European friends tell me in Europe they grew up always bringing their own bags to the stores. We can learn!
- This is a TERRIBLE idea.... A small number of people - some of whom are not even residents are making the time to go to the meetings and force their agenda on the rest of us who are trying to keep working and pay our bills! DO NOT CONSIDER THIS LEGISLATION!
- I would like to know by what authority the City believes it has the right to allow or disallow any sort of bags in private businesses, or to require them to charge for the privilege of carrying their goods out the door. Will you please publicize this information?
- Provide bags at a cost
- CAVEAT: Charge a small fee for any single-use bag the store provides. The fee will help recoup the bag manufacturing and ecological costs. Ballpark, maybe 5 cents per bag?
- Stores should still be allowed to offer recycled plastic bags, but they should have to charge \$.25 for them. The money should be used to educate the public and provide free reusable bags for people on WIC, etc.
- Single-use paper bags are reasonable.
- Canvas bags should be the only option but if this is too drastic there should at least be a fee for paper bags.
- Sometimes I forget to bring my own bags. In that case, or for people who refuse to use reusable bags, the store can provide them for a high price that would discourage doing this on a regular basis.
- But launch a big campaign to get people off paper bags. Tell stores to put signs above their entrances to remind people about bringing their own bags. The Farmers' Market does not provide bags or charges for them and the activity has not dropped off.
- I remember the stores that used to charge for single-use paper bags. I have also seen some small independent stores that provide no bags, but welcome donations of used paper bags for people who did not bring their own bags. I support a system where businesses have more options, and fewer requirements. Let's give the businesses choices, while encouraging a culture shift of providing our own bags.
- Otherwise, customers would just switch over to paper bags. The correct customer behavior is to bring reusable bags or pay extra for the privilege to use single-use bags.
- The quickest way to get people to get people to learn a new habit is to make it inconvenient one time to not have a bag. That's how I learned in a visit to Germany. The store should provide an option to buy a reusable bag. Single use paper bags are also problematic from an environmental point of view.
- Any bags I personally don't use - - - I recycle
- I think that people should bring their own bag with them, they are very affordable.
- I use those bags to put trash in--under the kitchen sink.
- The recycling process is a new production that also creates GHG emissions.

- Works for Costco, and if it can fly there and they can still do so well, it is obvious that people just need to plan better. Potentially the sole exception should be allowing small bags for fresh meat and produce.
- If there is a ban I think it should be across the board.
- Come on! We all have a million bags hangin around in our lives... including our purses! What IF we dont have a bag... all selted items for purchace go in to a cart, come out for pay for them, and they can go back into your car the way the way they went into the cart... costco does it.. why can't every other store do it?
- If the ban goes into effect, we may do our shopping in Mountain View.
- The City should not inhibit customers from buying multiple items from stores (OR force them to buy/bring bags which are often too small for certain items). Paper or plastic should be an option.
- I think paper bags for now would be OK, with a future transition to bringing your own bags.
- they should provide bags that can be purchased.
- Doesn't the city of Sunnyvale have better things to worry about besides plastic bags?
- Paper degrades even if not disposed of properly. The plastic bags do not degrade (at least not in a resonable time.) The plastic bags can be founs in gutters, on tree limbs, etc., for years if not manually removed.
- But, again, encourage use of reusable bags.
- Seriously - I will vote with my feet.
- Have stores charge for multi use bags (say \$0.99)
- You should be aware that people use the paper bags after they have been used for shopping bags. For example, we use them for garbage bags, collecting recycled paper and shredding. If paper bags are not available we will most likely have to use purchased plastic bags to replace them
- Jeez...do we want these companies to do business in Sunnyvale? Don't make it impossible. They can't be responsible for City Council "legislating" customer behaviors.
- Paper bags can and should be reused as well!
- When the ban is first being rolled out, retailers could be allowed to provide recycled content bags for a period of time (TBD). A reasonable fee should be charged for the bags.
Reuseable bags are now available in nearly all stores.They have been for a long time already, but participation is minimal□
Community service ads, & info in stores & schools explaining the full scale of the problem with single use bags and the effect they have on our environment should be a big part of the process!
- I am in favor of 100% recycled content bags
- This would force me to shop in Santa Clara or Cupertino.

6. Whether or not you support a ban on single-use plastic bags, if a ban went into place do you think the City should require stores to charge for the paper bags (the store would keep the fee)? - Other responses

Answer

- Full cost or \$ 0.25 cents which ever is greater
- 30 cents per bag with most being a city tax
- It would depend on the individual store policy.
- Charge the people who vote for this!
- see above comment
- not sure, see what other cities do
- charge equiv. to recycling cost
- \$1 per bag
- Stores include the cost of bags in their costs.
- if a charge, it should be very small and regulated

- Let the store decide based on their costs
- whatever is least intrusive to the merchant
- Not require, but allow a charge for bags

9. In which ways do you get Sunnyvale-specific information (please rank them by use, 1 being "never use this method", 5 being "use this method all the time")? - Comments

Answer

- I live at the Mountain View-Sunnyvale border so I go to Sunnyvale often for shopping, etc.
- I'll sign up for tweets, as soon as I figure out what they are.
- topix.com
- The main source of additional Sunnyvale info is from our very active Neighborhood Association Yahoo! Group Birdland.
- Sunnyvale sun online and Mercury news online plus emails from colleagues. I was notified of this survey through the Sunnyvale Cool Yahoo group
- I heard about this from my neighborhood association on-line group.
- yahoo.com
- Google news
- I often get articles from Sunnyvale Cool Cities or our neighborhood association group. (Both via email)
- neighborhood website
- Yahoo News
- Website I typically read for news is Yahoo news-> local news for Sunnyvale
- Our Braly Corners Neighborhood Assn President forwards Sunnyvale messages to the neighborhood.
- The Sun newspaper is only delivered to S. SV...This is discriminatory.□
If you want people to shop SV do not enact this law - It stinks!
- I have never seen a Sunnyvale-specific news story on recycling on the internet news.□
I read Yahoo & Google, but get most of my news from the radio because I can listen & work at the same time & have little time to sit & read anything.
- Sunnyvale Library website
- Yahoo news□
KTVU.com
- I'm a bit incredulous at the questions and general tone of this survey: "which type(s) of stores", "do you think the City should allow stores to provide....", "do you think the City should require stores to charge for the paper bags", "Should the City require stores..."etc. The council really wants to control the commerce and informed decision-making of its citizens. If this passes the council without a citizen vote, I would absolutely be energized to work to the defeat of each "yes" member.
- This survey seems very one sided....it looks like Sunnyvale is going to ban plastic bags where we like it or not. Surveys are usually broader based. I hope that you look at a lot more options - especially those that support small businesses to grow new technologies for the benefit of the City and State - even with "bags"
- The Sun Newspaper is not delivered to our neighborhood and difficult to impossible to locate. Online is not current. It must be some news vehicle that goes to ALL Sunnyvale residents.
- news.yahoo.com
- I read the Merc online frequently, followed by the ReNews.
- The Sunnyvale Sun does not come to our neighborhood or we would read it.

- Yahoo and Google local, Sunnyvale Sun. SJMN, SF Chronicle
- yahoo group
- SNAIL website
- Occasionally Jim Griffith's facebook posts plus San Jose Business Journal also city website
- The Sunnyvale Sun is NOT distributed - and when I come across one - - - it has NO pertinent information
- I would love to read the Sunnyvale Sun newspaper but I can't find it to read.
- The Mercury News carries very little Sunnyvale-specific news. The Sun is not widely available.
- www.mercurynews.com, Also, following certain twitter accounts, (sunnyvale city accounts, sunnyvalesite, mercnews).
- SVBC
- Google news, Topix.com
- I will be very disappointed if plastic bags usage is allowed to continue! It is really not hard to bring your own cloth bags once you get used to it. I have been doing that for over 10 years now, and it is a habit at this point. I just keep them in my car.
- Most info from neighborhood association emails
- Re: getting info from reading on the internet and by that I mean my yahoo "local" page is set so that it pops up with info pertaining to where I live (i.e. Sunnyvale)
- I have my locality set to "Sunnyvale" on news.google.com.
I subscribe to various Yahoo groups, including SunnyvaleCafe, SunnyvalePolitics, SCC_CAFE, and PonderosaParkNeighbors.
- I subscribe to the Panama Park Neighbor Association - Yahoo Group. That's how I heard about this issue.
- MercuryNews and Sunnyvale Sun online, and various Sunnyvale Twitter accounts.
- Panama neighborhood association listserve
- Neighborhood Group web sites
- Mercury News Online
- Sun newspaper is useless to me. I think we should stop it if we could save some money from not doing it.
- We also have a neighborhood association and we share information via the yahoo group
- Neighborhood group sites
- Neighborhood email group is a source.
- Neighborhood message chat service which notified of this web site. panama_park_neighbor_assoc on yahoo groups. Also I google sunnyvale.gov which takes me to the address I can never remember.
- Please spend time on the budget not something like this. I really get mad when our police and fire are overpaid, but we worry about plastic bags.
- San Fran Chronicle.
- Get a lot of news from the Chamber
- KTVU Channel 2, San Jose Mercury News, KRON 4, Fox News, CNN News, Google News
- I also watch some of the council meetings. That is a telling way to get impressions of how our elected officials function with each other and with the citizens and how much politics plays into their decisions.
- Yahoo.com
- AOL news
- If Sunnyvale bans bags, Santa Clara, Mountain View and Cupertino are nearby for shopping.
- Delivery people throw the Sunnyvale Sun newspaper all over my front lawn and it's nuisance rubbish. I always throw it away. The City should address that and leave the bags alone.