



CITY OF KIRKLAND
Department of Public Works
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MEMORANDUM

To: Kurt Triplett, City Manager

From: Tracy Durnell, Environmental Education and Outreach Specialist
Jenna Higgins, Recycling Programs Coordinator
John MacGillivray, Solid Waste Programs Lead
Kathy Brown, Public Works Director

Date: January 22, 2015

Subject: Plastic Bag Reduction Policy Communication Plan

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council receive a presentation of the education and outreach plan for the proposed plastic bag reduction ordinance and provide comments and direction to staff.

BACKGROUND

At the October 7, 2014 City Council study session, staff presented several plastic bag reduction policy options for the City Council's consideration. After discussion, the City Council expressed a majority preference for an ordinance similar in construction to the cities of Seattle and Issaquah that restricts the use of most single-use plastic shopping bags and may require retailers to charge a minimum fee for large paper bags to encourage the use of reusable bags. The City Council also expressed an interest in receiving a staff presentation on a proposed education and outreach plan to communicate a plastic bag reduction policy to residents and businesses.

In the City Council's January 20, 2015 Study Session, Council provided direction to staff on specific elements and policies to be included in the draft plastic bag reduction ordinance.

Plastic Bag Reduction Policy Development History

At the March 19, 2013 City Council meeting, subsequent to moving through the Public Works, Parks, and Human Services Council Committee (March 12, 2013), staff received direction to use Solid Waste resources to draft a staff report intended to evaluate the potential of implementing a single-use plastic bag reduction policy in Kirkland. Staff provided updates on the status of the report on June 25, 2013 to the Public Works, Parks, and Human Services Committee and on July 8, 2013 to the Community Planning, Housing, and Economic Development Committee. In September 2013, staff published the [final report](#) on the City website and distributed copies to the City Council and appropriate City staff. On October 22, 2013 the final staff report was presented to the Public Works, Parks, and Human Services Committee where no action was taken.

The report used a framework called the "Sustainability Model" that evaluates a range of options for regulating plastic and paper bag use. As part of the study, staff presented three case studies from other cities and a consultant conducted two surveys, one for Kirkland residents and one for Kirkland businesses, regarding their practices and attitudes toward plastic and paper bag use and regulation. The survey results are contained in the addendum to the report beginning on page 30.

On June 4, 2014, the Public Works, Parks, and Human Services Committee received a staff presentation on the variety of policy options available to manage single-use plastic bags. Members of the committee expressed potential interest in Option 2: Public Education and Outreach Campaign and Option 4: Ban Plastic Bags/Require Fee for Paper Bags but the decision on a formal Committee recommendation was deferred pending a second staff presentation at the Committee's July 2 meeting on the lifecycles of various types of shopping bags and more discussion. Subsequent to the informational presentation, the Committee did not reach a consensus on a recommended plastic bag management policy and recommended that the issue be discussed by the full City Council at a future study session, which occurred on October 7, 2014 and again on January 20, 2015.

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH PLAN DETAILS

In anticipation of City Council adoption of a plastic bag reduction ordinance in February or March of 2015, staff is preparing a robust education and outreach plan. The outreach plan includes approaches and methods to reach a range of audiences, including businesses, single family and multifamily residents, and visitors. The two primary goals of the outreach plan will be to explain why the City decided to reduce plastic bag use and how the reduction ordinance will be implemented. Periodic updates on the outreach materials will be provided to the Council over the course of the outreach plan implementation.

Business Outreach Plan

The proposed communications plan timeline for businesses is shown in *Attachment 1*. The 170 businesses affected by the ordinance will receive three direct mail notices. The Outreach Plan assumes an ordinance would be adopted in March of 2015, with an effective date of March 1, 2016. This schedule could be shifted, depending on the actual ordinance approval date. Initial outreach to businesses will be done through an informational packet, including details on the ordinance and FAQs, mailed to all affected businesses in April 2015. Reminder postcards will be sent in June 2015, and additional compliance reminder postcards will be sent in February 2016.

Besides direct mailing, businesses will be reached through:

- A dedicated City informational webpage
- A letter to trade groups
- Outreach to the Chamber of Commerce and Kirkland Downtown Association
- Site visits by Solid Waste staff to major retailers
- A Solid Waste business newsletter article
- Free in-store signage and posters
- Billing inserts
- Postcards at City Hall business license desk

Residential Outreach Plan

The proposed communications plan timeline for residents is shown in *Attachment 2*. Solid Waste staff will employ a variety of resources to ensure equitable outreach to all single family and multifamily residents. If an ordinance is adopted, a news release following the ordinance adoption will provide initial notification, followed by continued information on a dedicated City informational webpage and posts on social media. Single family residents will be reminded of the ordinance through a billing insert and multifamily residents will receive a mailed postcard. Staff will create a Currently Kirkland TV spot and provide information to run on KGOV. At least 7,500 reusable bags with informational tags will be distributed to residents at no cost. The bags will be distributed at popular Kirkland events, such as the Kirkland Wednesday and Juanita Friday Markets. A coupon voucher for the reusable bags will also be distributed in the Kirkland Reporter.

Additional residential education resources will include:

- Informational tables, staffed by City employees, at local events, including Kirkland Wednesday Market, Kirkland Uncorked, Summerfest, and the Friday Market at Juanita Beach
- Posters on Big Belly public trash and recycling containers throughout the Central Business District
- Posters at City Hall, Community Centers, and Kirkland and Kingsgate libraries
- Kirkland Reporter advertisements
- Articles in City newsletter, semi-annual recycling newsletters, and monthly Green E-newsletter
- Neighborhood association emails

PROJECT BUDGET

Table 1 details the researched estimated Outreach Plan budget. Outreach items in the proposed budget include the following:

- Distribution of 7,500 reusable bags with attached informational tags
- Mailings to reach single family and multifamily residents
- Informational letters and reminder postcards for businesses
- 12 hours per week in added staff time to support outreach efforts, including the design of print and web materials, visits to affected businesses, and staffing informational tables at Kirkland events.

The original budget estimate in the staff report was \$51,600. However, through further research, creativity, and by utilizing existing education and outreach channels such as low-cost billing inserts and a variety of newsletters, the budget has been reduced by about \$11,000. The majority of this project's costs will be one-time purchases during the outreach period before and shortly after the ordinance goes into effect. Ongoing expenses beyond 2015 may include the

purchase of more reusable bags and will be taken from the contingency budget in lieu of a separate budget allocation for 2016. Funding for this project is proposed to come from the Solid Waste cash reserve and no Solid Waste rate adjustment is being requested to implement this project.

Table 1: Plastic Bag Ban Implementation Budget	
Description	Researched Estimate
Education and Outreach Staff Hours	
<i>12 hours per week (on average)</i>	\$15,000.00
Reusable Bags + Tags	
<i>7,500 bags with informational tags to be distributed to residents</i>	\$9,000.00
Printed Materials	
<i>SF billing inserts, informational & compliance reminder postcards for businesses, postcards for MF residents, letters to retailers, posters</i>	\$5,859.35
Postage	
<i>Postage costs for postcards and letters</i>	\$4,176.81
Advertising	
<i>Two ads in the Kirkland Reporter</i>	\$1,549.20
Contingency	
<i>Extra bags, shipping costs, etc.</i>	\$5,000.00
Total	\$40,585.36

NEXT STEPS

City Council Meeting (To be Determined) – Adoption of final ordinance and approval of project budget and outreach plan.

PLASTIC BAG REDUCTION POLICY BUSINESS OUTREACH SCHEDULE



