

Community Dialogue on Shopping Bags

Community Meeting June 2014

Catherine Hurley

Sustainable Programs Coordinator



Agenda

- Presentation
 - Overview and Updates
- Questions on presentation
- Questionnaire and Discussion



City of
Evanston[™]

Past Discussions

April 25, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation to City Council on options for bag reduction efforts• Staff asked to gain community input
May 24, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Presentation and Discussion
June 13, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation to City Council on feedback• Environment Board for review and recommendation.
October 24, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation and Recommendation by Evanston Environment Board on \$0.05 tax per bag on disposable shopping bags• No action by City Council
May 19, 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City Council asks staff to seek community feedback on shopping bag issues and actions

Types of Bags: More than Just Paper or Plastic



Variety of uses and users: restaurant/carryout bags, grocery stores, drugstore, mall/department store shopping, drycleaners, farmers markets, etc.

“Who Pays and What Costs?”

- Costs to city, consumers, retailers, producers, and the environment
- Production (resource input), consumption, disposal/litter costs
- Additional concerns: price, waste, recyclability, reuse, health, etc.

Bag Initiatives in Action

- City Ordinances:

- Plastic bag bans or fees

Currently in over 130 cities and towns across the US

- Specific stores:

- Store credits (Whole Foods, Target)
- Reusable bags sold (almost all)
- Fee for bags (Ikea, Aldi)
- No plastic bags (Whole Foods, Costco)

- Grassroots/coalition efforts:

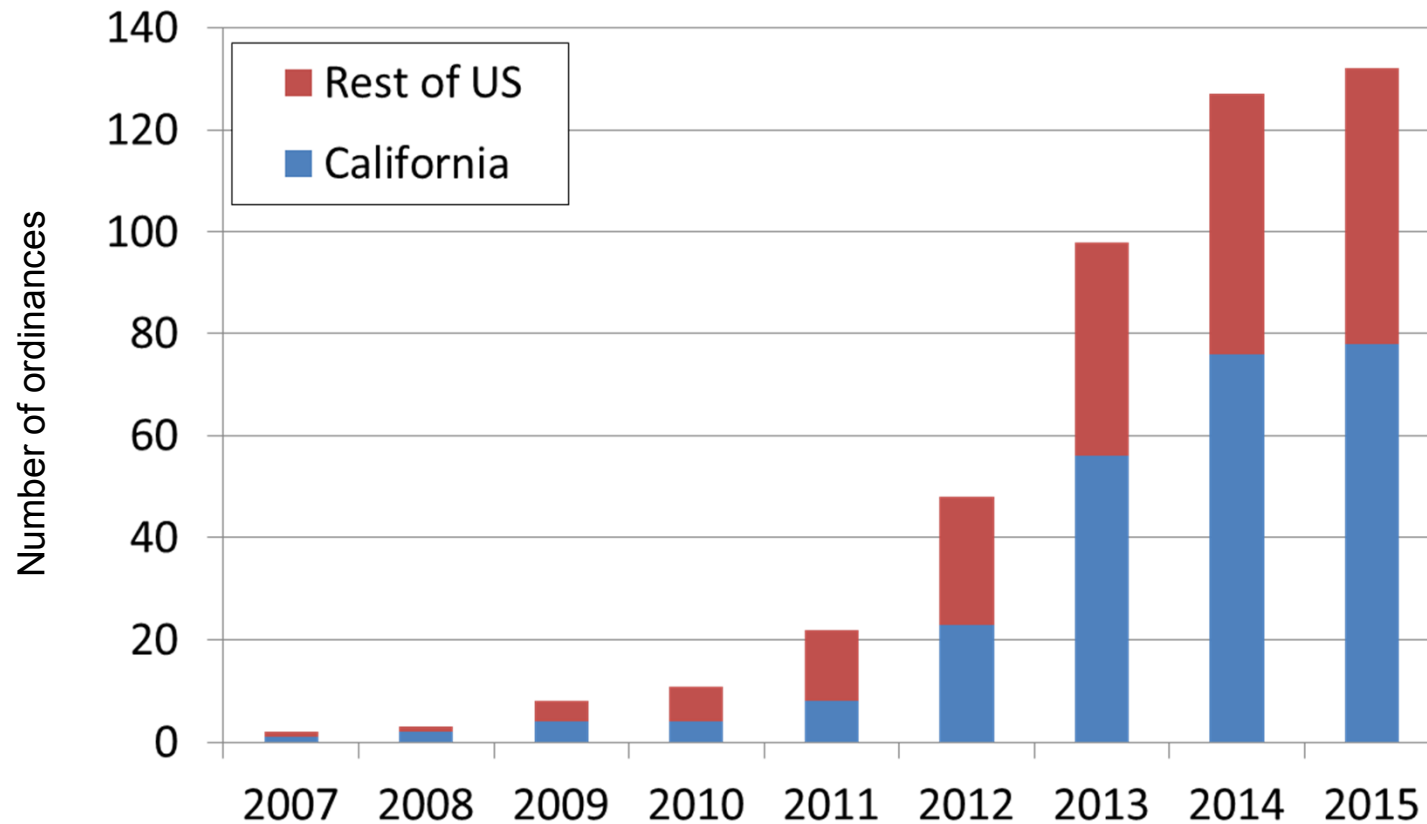
- NY City (NYC Bag It Coalition), Portland (Ban the Bag PDX)

- State level Policy:

- Unsuccessful state bans (California)
 - De facto state ban in Hawaii
- Recycling programs (IL, etc.)

Plastic Bags Regulations in the US

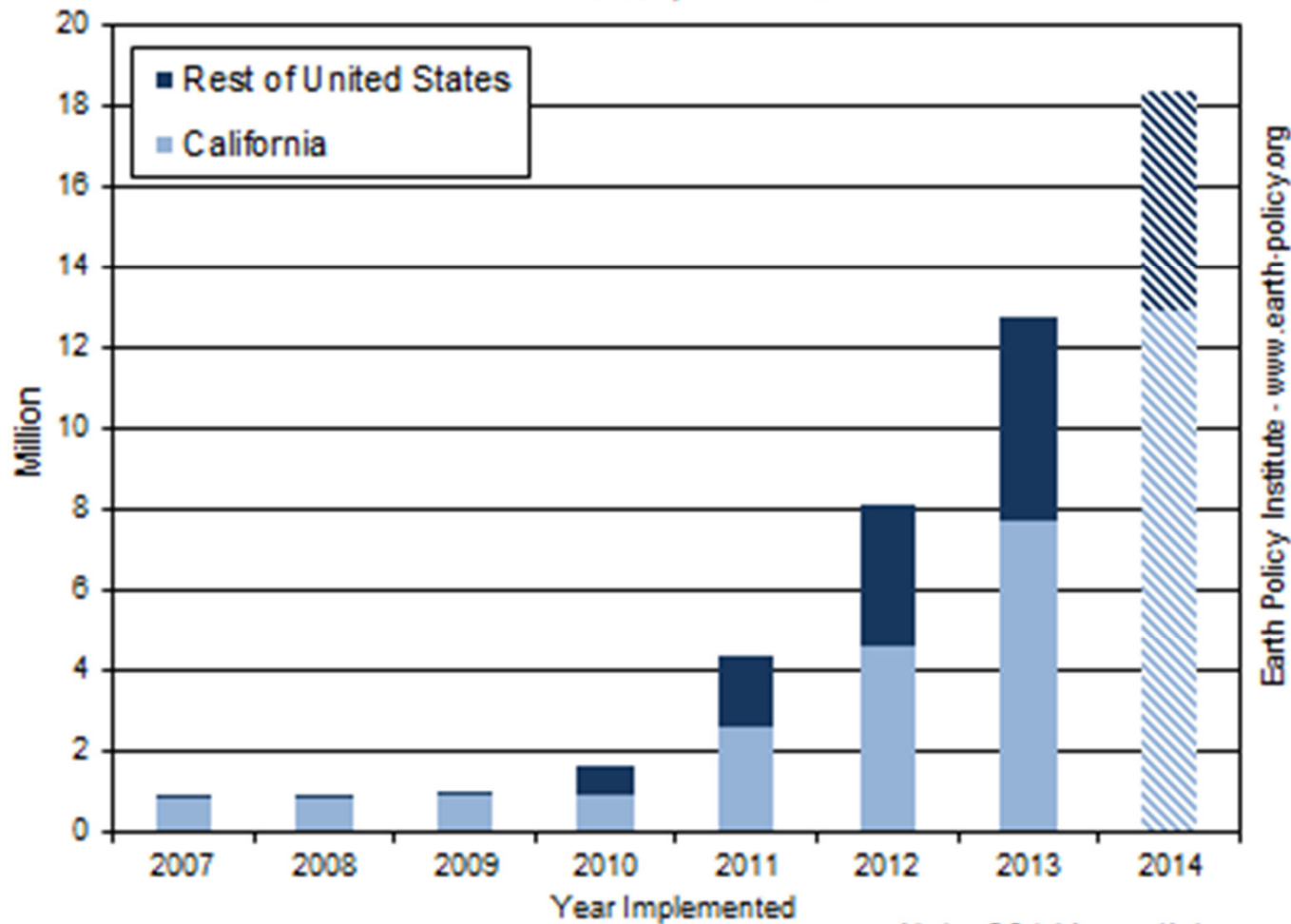
Number of Plastic Bag Bans and Charges in the United States, 2007-2015



Source: Earth Policy Institute, April 2014

Plastic Bags Regulations in the US

Population Under Plastic Bag Bans and Charges in the United States, 2007-2014



Earth Policy Institute - www.earth-policy.org

Source: EPI

Note: 2014 is partial year.

US Plastic Bags Regulations in the US

Over 130 cities and towns across the US now have bag policies:

RANK	CITY	Plastic Bag Regulations
1	New York City	Plastic bag regulations in process.
2	Los Angeles, CA	Passed plastic bag ban, June, 2013
3	Chicago, IL	Passed plastic bag ban, April, 2014
7	San Antonio, TX	Plastic bag regulations in process.
9	Dallas, TX	Five cents fee, plastic or paper, March, 2014
10	San Jose, CA	Passed plastic and paper bag ban, December, 2010
11	Austin, TX	Passed ban on plastic and paper bags, March, 2012
14	San Francisco, CA	Passed plastic bag ban, April, 2007
22	Seattle, WA	Passed plastic bag ban, December, 2011
24	Washington, D.C.	Five cents fee, plastic or paper, July, 2009
28	Portland, OR	Passed plastic bag ban, July, 2011
36	Long Beach, CA	Passed plastic bag ban, May, 2011

Global Plastic Bag Bans or Charges



What Are Plastic Bag Bans?

Plastic bag bans have been designed in various ways based on the unique contexts, considerations and priorities of each place

Considerations:

- Overall effectiveness in reducing plastic bag use
- Consumer behavior, awareness and incentives
- Overall effectiveness in limiting negative impacts of all single use bags
- The potential negative impacts of a bag ban on consumers, retailers
- Inequitable social and economic impacts

Variables:

Types of bags banned	Thin HDPE bags, thin and thicker, all plastic (even recycle/compost)
Inclusion and amount of fee	Paper single use bags: 10-25 cents in California, 5-30 cents globally
Types of reusable bags promoted	Cotton, thick plastic, non-woven polypropylene or polyethylene
Sizes and types of retail venues	From large retailers and supermarkets only, to all retail venues
Incentives to enforce ordinance	Fines and fees for non-compliance
Exemptions	Pharmacy bags and bags for meat and produce Customers on food assistance programs

Plastic Bags vs. Paper Bags

100 billion

← Overall yearly use →

10 billion

Cost per bag = \$.03



Made from ethylene, a byproduct of petroleum or natural gas.

Grocery bags:
4 out of 5 grocery bags in this country are plastic



Cost per bag = \$.10

Made from trees, often with recycled content

Fast and convenient
Can be reused as trash bags, etc.

← Consumer →

Holds more, harder to carry
Can put in curbside recycling

~1-5% becomes litter
Ecological damage
Average use of 12 minutes
“Single most ubiquitous item on Earth”

← Impacts →

More expensive
More energy and resource intensive to produce and recycle

~Less than 5% recycled
Recycled in special collection sites

← Recycling →

~50% recycled
Recycled in curbside pick-up

Reusable Bags

- Sold at almost all stores now
 - Walmart, Home Depot, etc.
- Multiple versions and styles available
 - Prices range depending on quality, material and durability, starting at \$1.00
- Can be prone to breakage after repeated use
 - Whole Foods offering \$0.99 bag with warrant
- Not convenient to carry around for other shopping
 - Collapsible multi-use bags
 - Designed to be stored in a purse or your pocket
- Should be washed to maintain cleanliness



Buy Smart! Check material, durability, washability, source and disposal.

Life Cycle Assessment

- Assess all environmental impacts throughout all stages of life
- Trade-offs and assumptions built into any LCA
- Doesn't necessarily take into account full social context and factors

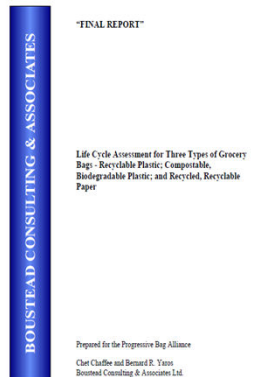
Looked at many different Life Cycle Assessments, including...

- U.K. Government Environment Agency Study, 2011
- ULS Update, 2008
- Boustead Associates, 2007
- Herrera Seattle Report, 2008
- Green Cities California Report, 2010

Evidence

Life Cycle Assessment of Supermarket Carrier Bags

Report: SC030148



Zero Waste South Australia

LCA of shopping bag alternatives

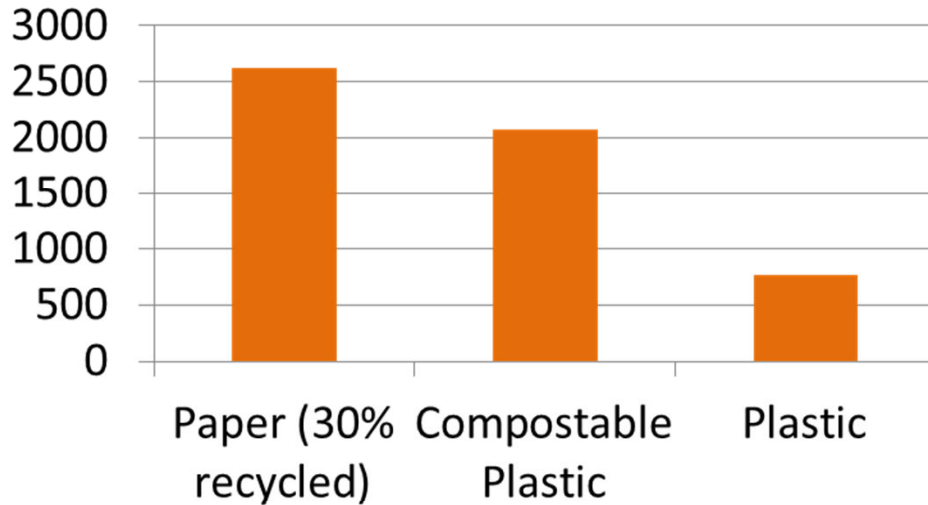


LCA Summary: Paper vs. Plastic

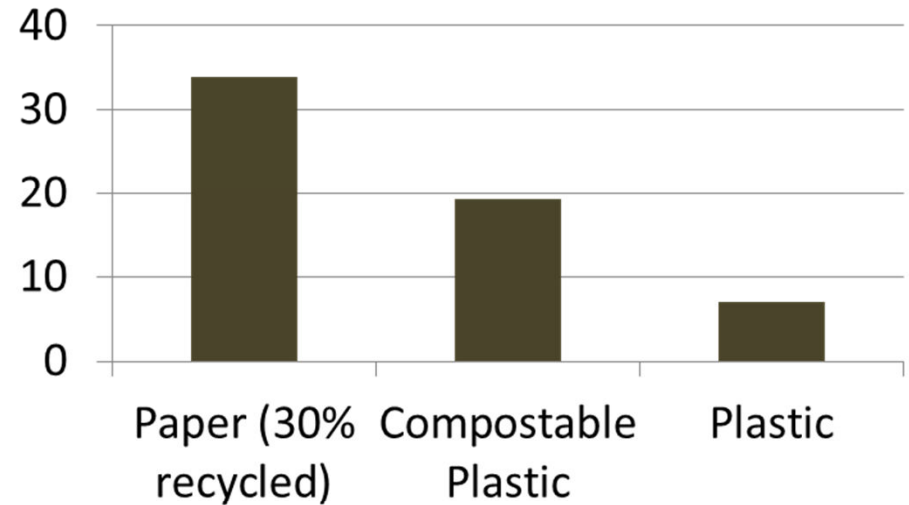
(Carrying Capacity Equivalent to 1000 Paper Bags)

Source: Boustead, 2007

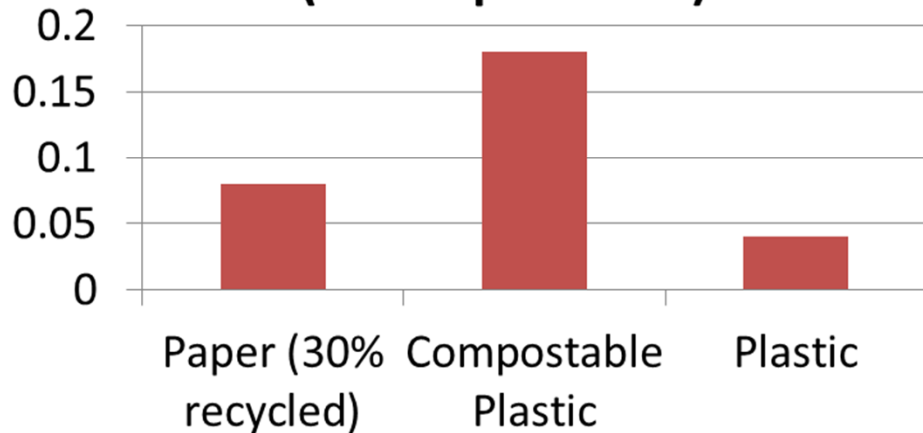
Energy Usage (MJ)



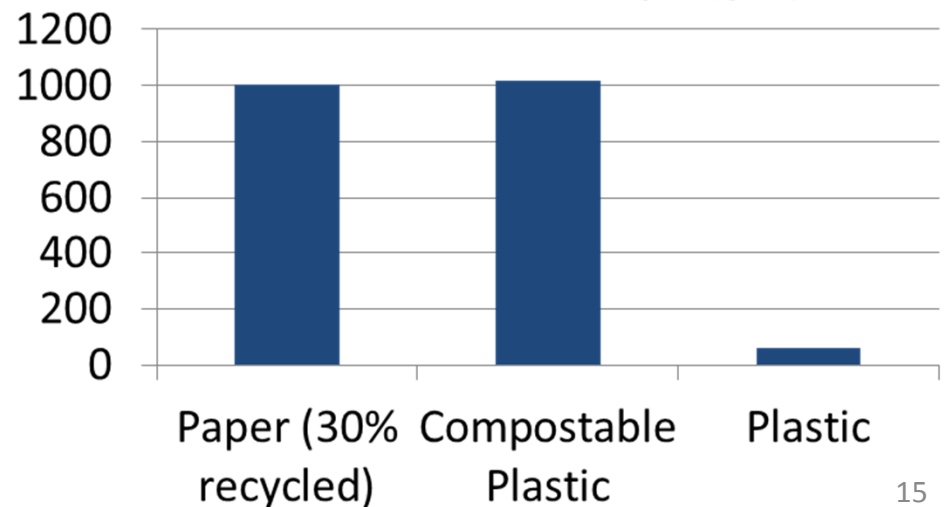
Municipal Solid Waste (kg)



Greenhouse Gas Emissions (CO2 Equiv. Tons)



Fresh Water Usage (gal)



Plastic Bags: Stats, Facts and Impacts

Recycling Problems:

- Hard to recycle
- Easily escape and carried by wind
- Often only down-cycled
- Separate recycling with separate bins:
 - Though mandated collection sites in California (2007) at all supermarket and large retail store, only collecting back 3% in 2009
- Break down into toxic smaller bits

Often referred to as “urban tumbleweeds,” plastic bags are icons of convenience culture, considered “the single most ubiquitous item on Earth” (Guinness Book of World Records, 2010)

Costs retailers more than \$4 billion dollars, which is passed on to consumers in hidden costs

Used on average for 12 minutes, though can have life expectancy of a thousand years.

Additional costs:

- Jam recycling
- Clog storm drains
- Quality of life/aesthetics
- Ecosystems and wildlife
- Marine/Oceans/Water: wildlife, marine life, water systems (coastal areas are first adopters). Plastic especially impacts oceans and wildlife: Of refuse in ocean, plastic bags came in second after cigarette butts. (Ocean Conservancy, 2008)

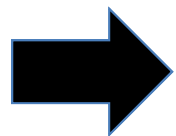
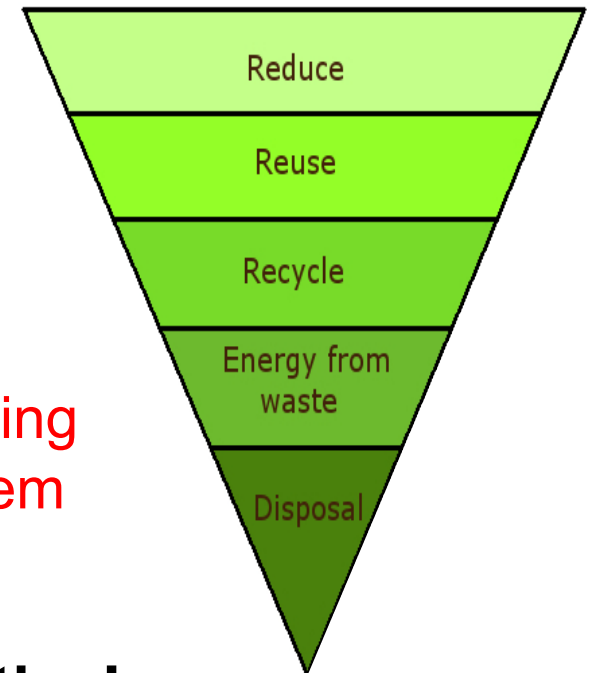
Life Cycle Analysis: Conclusion

All bags have costs and impacts

“The shift to one single use bag may improve one environmental outcome, but may be offset by another environmental impact.”

- Paper bags have a greater overall environmental impacts
- Plastic bags have significant localized impacts (litter, etc.)

“The issue is not paper or plastic, but rather finding ways to **reduce, reuse, and recycle** both of them – *in that order.*”

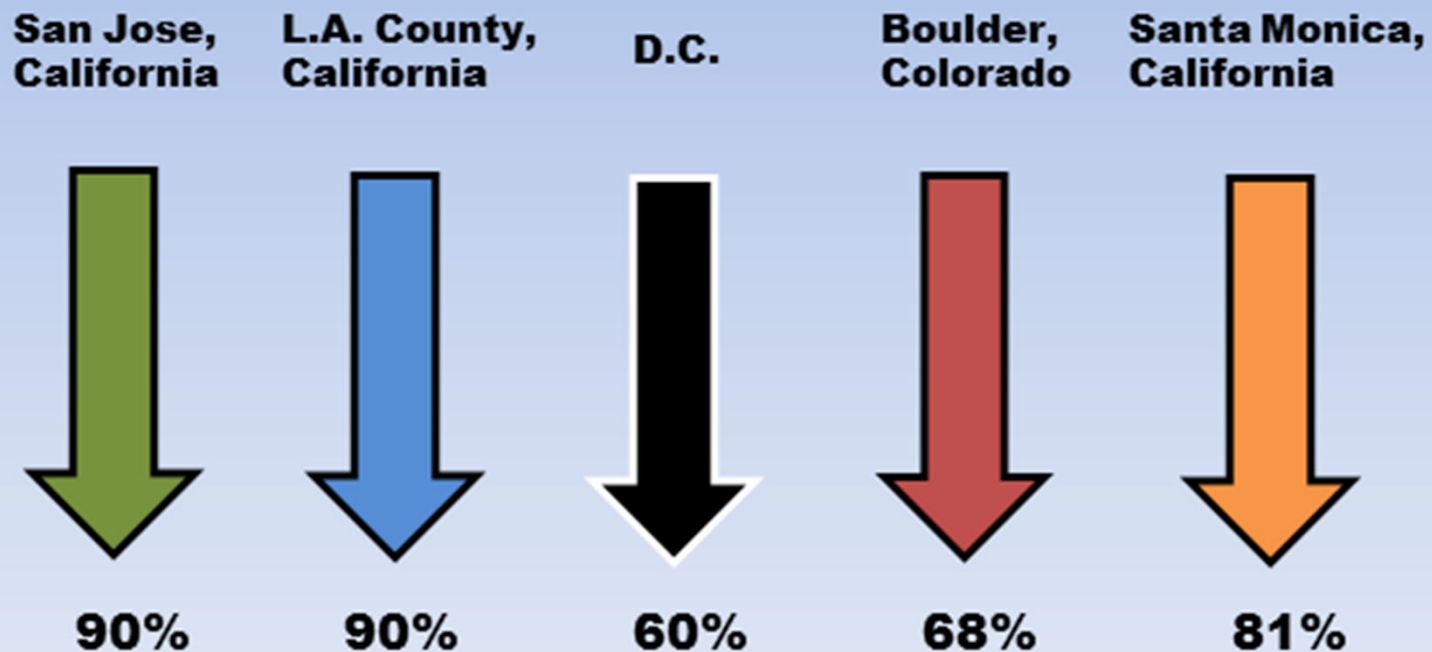


Reusable bags are the best alternative!

Though their exact benefits depend on number of reuses and material of bag

Impact of Bag Regulations

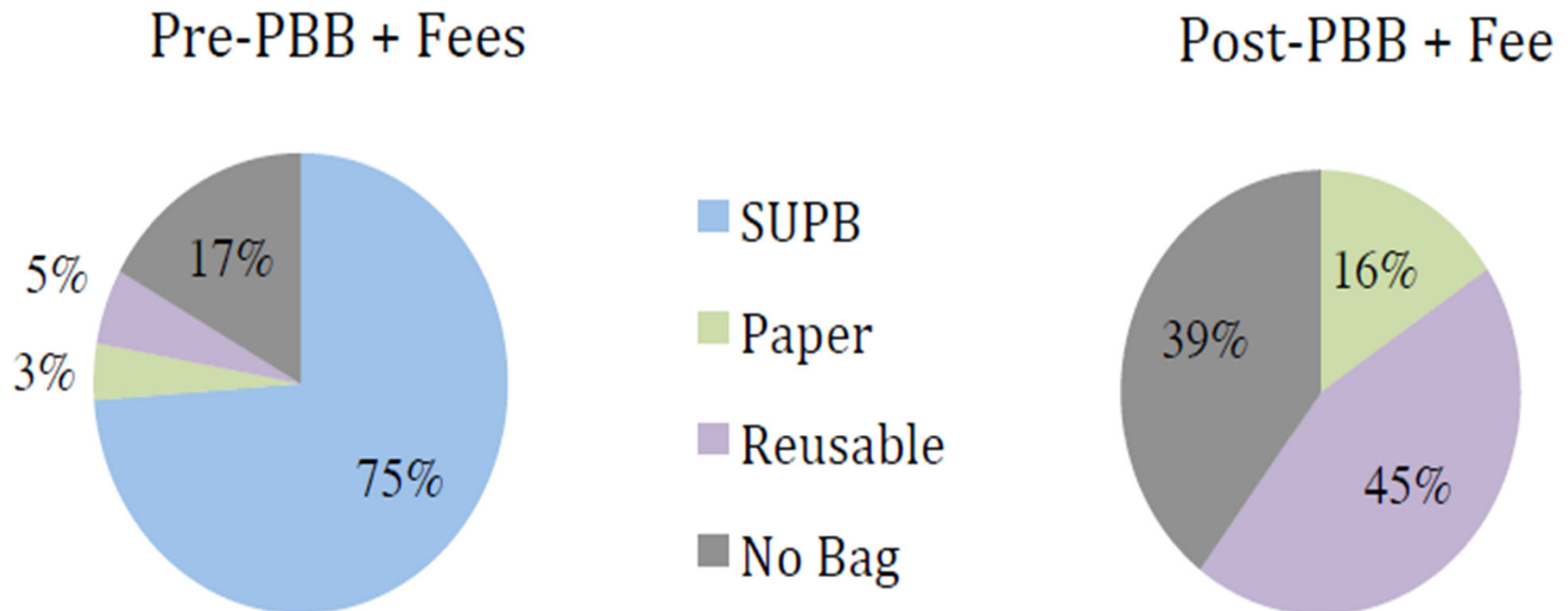
Reduction of Single-Use Plastic Bags by Jurisdiction since implementing plastic bag regulations



Source: <http://plasticbagbanreport.com/data-shows-plastic-bag-bans-work/>

Impacts:

Measured Percentage Changes in Bag-Use Profile (Observed in San Jose, Santa Monica and Los Angeles County)



- Studies have shown that **all** actions taken (education, bag bans, bag fees), have an impact on reducing bag use.
- The most reductions and benefits result from charging for all single-use bags, followed by banning plastic bags and then education.

Conclusion on Impacts:

“Local economies, including affected retailers and their customers, are not negatively impacted in the long-term”

- Higher costs due to increased use of paper bags or the initial purchase of reusable bags are mitigated as people transition to reduced overall use and reuse of bags.
- Additional savings through reduced litter and contamination costs.
(Equinox Center Plastic Bag Report, 2013)

Broader impact:

- Paves the way for additional waste reduction measures
- Alerts and engages residents in taking direct action
- Demonstrates city’s commitment to being a green leader
- Works to establish best practices in single-use bag reduction

*Data could be collected to measure effectiveness and guide future actions.

City of Chicago Ordinance

- Approved April 30, 2014 with a vote of 36-10
 - Bans plastic bags
 - Requires paper bags that are 100% recyclable, compostable and with at least 40% post consumer recycled content,.
- Applies to retail establishments meeting following requirements:
 - May sell perishable or non-perishable goods
 - Chain stores (three or more stores with same owner)
 - Franchise stores
 - Does **not** apply to dine-in or carry-out restaurants
- Phase 1 Implementation (Effective August 1, 2015)
 - 10,000 square feet and greater
- Phase 2 Implementation (Effective August 1, 2016)
 - Less than 10,000 square feet

City of Chicago Ordinance

Supporting Information

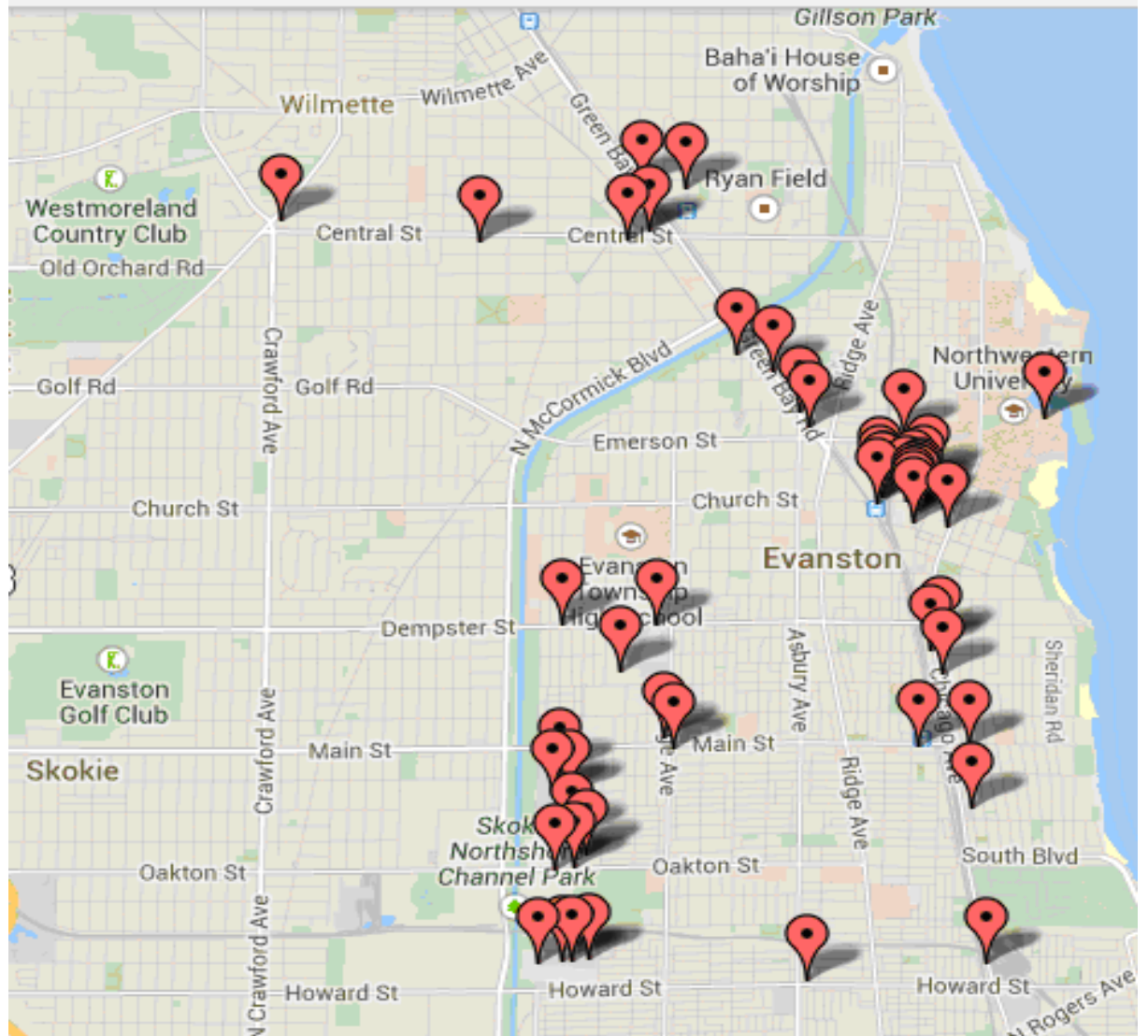
- 3.7 million plastic bags are used citywide daily,
 - The average Chicagoan uses 500 plastic bags a year, totally 3 billion a year.
- 3-5% of them become litter, getting stuck in drains and causing flooding, clogging landfills and jamming recycling machinery.
- Plastic bags have significant environmental impacts on local wildlife and ecosystems.
- Existing plastic bag recycling ordinance is not enough.
- Commitment to being one of America's cleanest cities.

Considerations for Evanston

- Livability: quality of bag/shopping experience, cleaner environment
 - Livability Plan, Climate Action Plan, Strategic Plan
- Equity
- Reduce waste
- Recycle (city program vs. store program)
- Reduce litter/city beautification
- Efficiency (cost, energy)
- Reduce emissions/environmental impacts
- Engage community

What would this look like in Evanston?

Store Type	Number of Stores	Average Size (Square Feet)
Arts & Crafts	2	8,535
Books	3	8,572
Clothing	10	15,561
Cosmetics	1	1,430
Electronics	3	19,318
Food	26	25,596
Home	1	157,000
Office	3	25,436
Pet	1	25,431
Grand Total	50	23,641



Evanston Shopping Bag Data

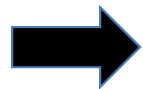
- Evanston stores already taking action on shopping bags
- Reusable bags for sale at most stores
- No bags provided
 - Sam's Club
- Bag provided at extra cost
 - Aldi: \$0.07 plastic and \$0.11 paper
- Bring Your Own Bag Incentives
 - Target - \$0.05 per bag
 - Whole Foods - \$0.10 per bag

Average Bag Usage by Store Type

Store Type	Plastic (bags/year)	Paper (bags/year)
Large Grocery	1,000,000	450,000
Drug Store and Other Large Retailers	500,000	
Specialty or Gift/Boutique	3,750	4,500

Summary and Take-away points

- ❖ All bags have impacts that can be addressed
 - Ultimately beneficial impacts depend on reduced use and increased reuse of bags
- ❖ There is a rapidly growing movement to address this through grassroots and city ordinances banning and/or taxing plastic and paper bags
 - Significant progress has been made in cities that have taken action
- ❖ There has been progress as both retailers and consumers are becoming more aware of these issues and looking for alternatives
- ❖ Evanston previously considered this at the very beginning of this movement, but did not take new action at that time



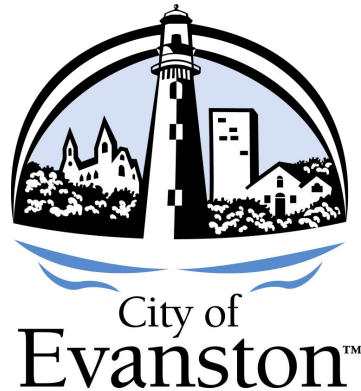
Evanston can do more

- Goal to be “The Green City”
- Climate Action Plan recommended investigating a tax or ban on plastic bags
- Keep up with our progressive ideals and peer cities

We need your input, feedback and support to make any program or policy appropriate and relevant for Evanston

Next Steps

- Gather Community Feedback
 - Fosters Senior Club
 - Public Meeting
 - Information Table at Levy Senior Center
 - E-mail comments to:
Sustainability@cityofevanston.org
- Present findings to City Council



Questions and Comments

Catherine Hurley

Sustainable Programs Coordinator

churley@cityofevanston.org

847-448-8069



Shopping Bag Questionnaire

Shopping Bag Questionnaire



The City of Evanston is interested in addressing concerns about the negative impacts of "single-use" shopping bags. We are looking for input and feedback from the community and we would appreciate your response. Please complete the survey below. Thank you!

How often do you use shopping bags? (Check one)

- Multiple times a day Daily Every Other Day 2-3 times per week Once a week A few times a month

What kinds of bags do you typically use for shopping? (Check one)

- Paper Plastic No bag Reusable grocery bag Other (ex=backpack) Reused plastic or paper bag

Do you own re-usable bags? (Circle) Yes / No

Which bag do you prefer (if cost is not an issue) and why?

- Paper _____
 Plastic _____
 Reusable bag _____
 Other (basket, etc.) _____

What do you usually do with bags after their initial use?

Paper

- Reuse as _____
 Recycle
 Trash
 Other _____

Plastic

- Reuse as _____
 Retailer recycling collection site
 Dispose in trash
 Other _____

Are you concerned with the environmental impact of single-use shopping bags?

- No, these issues are not significant for me.
 Yes, because of... (Check all that apply):
 Litter
 Hidden costs in purchasing
 Hidden costs in clean up (contamination, etc.)
 Environmental impact on wildlife and ecosystems
 Greenhouse gas emissions and resources used
 Not easily recycled
 Overused and wasted
 Other _____

Do you have concerns with reusable bags? (Check all that apply)

- Too expensive/have to pay for them
 Hard to remember to bring
 Don't want to carry around/ too bulky
 Limited function compared to plastic
 Don't like how they look
 Hygiene concerns with reuse
 Can't compete with free bags/other bags are just better
 Other _____

What do you think would most increase the use of reusable bags?

(Rank the following from 1-5, with #1 being the best incentive)

- Increased signage at stores
 Free reusable bags
 Ban plastic bags
 Educational outreach on impacts of bags
 Charge for single use bags (plastic and/or paper)
 Other _____

Additional questions, comments, or concerns:

Please Return To:

Fleetwood-Louisa
Community Center
1655 Foster St.
Evanston, IL 60201

To provide further input or to
learn more please contact:

Catherine Hurley
847-448-8069

sustainability@cityofevanston.org

Check out Evanston Green Buzz to keep up to date and find out how to get involved! <http://evanstongreenbuzz.org/>

References and Resources:

SLIDE 4: Bag Initiatives

- State legislation <http://www.ncsl.org/research/environment-and-natural-resources/plastic-bag-legislation.aspx>

SLIDE 5: What Are Plastic Bag Bans?

- Equinox Center Report <http://www.equinoxcenter.org/assets/files/Plastic%20Bag%20Ban%20Web%20Version%2010-22-13%20CK.pdf>

SLIDE 6: US Bag Ordinances (#)

- Earth Policy Institute
- National list: http://www.cawrecycles.org/issues/plastic_campaign/plastic_bags/national

SLIDE 7: US Bag Ordinances (Population)

- Earth Policy Institute

SLIDE 8: Top 10 bag bans in US

- <http://plasticbagbanreport.com/u-s-s-largest-cities-pass-plastic-bag-bans/>

SLIDE 9: Global

- Global bans (map): http://www.earth-policy.org/plan_b_updates/2014/update123

SLIDE 12: Paper vs. Plastic

- source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/graphic/2007/10/03/GR2007100301385.html?referrer=emailink>

SLIDE 15, 16, 17: Life Cycle Assessments:

- Boustead LCA, 2007 <http://heartland.org/sites/default/files/threetypeofgrocerybags.pdf>
- Green Cities California Master Environmental Assessment, 2010 http://greencitiescalifornia.org/assets/pages/single-use-bags_MEA-Ex-Summary.pdf

SLIDE 18-20: Impacts

- Equinox report

SLIDE 23-25: Evanston Data

- Northwestern Student Research, Howard Packaging Statistics