



Environmental Services Department
215 North Mason
PO Box 580
Fort Collins, CO 80522
970.221.6600
970.224.6177 Fax

fcgov.com/environmentalservices

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Weitkunat and City Councilmembers
FROM: Susie Gordon, Sr. Environmental Planner
THRU: Darin Atteberry, City Manager
Jeff Mihelich, Deputy City Manager
Bruce Hendee, Chief Sustainability Officer
Lucinda Smith, Environmental Services Director
DATE: May 12, 2014
SUBJECT: Read Before: May 13 Work Session Item #3- Disposable Shopping Bags

The following information is provided by staff in preparation for Council's discussion about a proposed ordinance that would require grocers to charge a minimum cost (5 or 10 cents) per disposable plastic or paper bag at the checkout stand. In this proposal, all revenue would be retained by merchants; a specified portion (to be determined) would be used by the grocery stores to post signage about disposable bag issues and other educational materials, provide low-cost/free durable bags to customers, and enhance their on-site plastic bag recycling programs.

At the Council Leadership Team meeting, additional information was requested regarding the use of revenue collected from disposable bags by the merchants, and past outreach to merchants.

Options for Use of Revenue by Merchants

1. provide educational information to customers, such as signage, about the ordinance and about charges for disposable bags;
2. train staff in the implementation and administration of the charges for bags;
3. improve or alter infrastructure to allow for the implementation, collection, and administration of the bag charge;
4. account for and report information to the City about bag usage;
5. subsidize the cost of providing inexpensive reusable bags to customers;
6. promote recycling of plastic bags and improve infrastructure to increase plastic bag recycling.

Outreach to Grocery Industry Representatives

1. Letters via both electronic and postal service were sent to representatives of the grocery stores in Fort Collins on March 14 to inform them that we were revisiting the possibility of adopting a local ordinance to limit use of disposable bags.
2. A press release, which included information about the Open House, was issued on March 10 and was forwarded electronically to the list of representatives on March 24.
3. Individual phone calls were made in late March by an intern to each of the contact people but resulted in only one call-back (from a representative of Albertson's)
4. An electronic invitation was sent on March 27 for the Open House that was held April 3.
5. Final calls were made to grocery representatives on May 12.

Please let us know if we can provide further information.