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**Council Meeting Date:** April 9, 2012

**Agenda Item:** 9(b)

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**CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM**  
CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON

<b>AGENDA TITLE:</b>	Single Use Plastic Bag Regulations Discussion
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	City Manager's Office
<b>PRESENTED BY:</b>	John Norris, CMO Management Analyst
<b>ACTION:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion

**PROBLEM/ISSUE STATEMENT:**

Earlier this year, Councilmembers Roberts and Salomon expressed their interest in having staff research how other communities regulate single use plastic bags provided by retailers to their customers. In conducting this research, it became clear to staff that there is a lot of information available about the regulation of single use plastic bags, including why regulations are often enacted. Thus, before engaging in additional research about how single use plastic bags should be regulated and how enacting regulations might impact Shoreline, staff felt that it would be helpful to get clear direction from the full Council to continue to work on this policy issue.

In addition to this policy discussion however, this report does provide a matrix of legislative models of how other communities have regulated single use plastic bags. If Council is interested in having staff continue to research this issue, staff would come back to the Council in the near future to discuss a work plan of how to move this item forward.

**RESOURCE/FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

The resource and financial impacts of regulating single use plastic bags are unknown at this time. It is possible that there may be an impact on retail sales in Shoreline if the City decides to regulate single use plastic bags. However, what, if any, impacts, and the magnitude of the impacts would need to be more fully reviewed.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff is looking for direction from the full Council regarding whether the Council is interested in having staff continue to research this policy issue. This report provides background information about single use plastic bags, and also provides a few regulatory models that other cities have adopted regarding bag use in their communities.

Approved by:           City Manager *JU*   City Attorney \_\_\_\_\_

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Earlier this year, Councilmembers Roberts and Salomon expressed their interest in having staff research how other communities regulate single use plastic bags provided by retailers to their customers. Recently, the cities of Edmonds (2009), Bellingham (2011), Seattle (2011) and Mukilteo (2011) began regulating single use plastic bags. Many other cities around the country also regulate single use plastic bags, with San Francisco being the first city in the nation (2007) to put regulations into effect (these regulations were recently updated.) Portland, OR also regulates single use plastic bags, as does Los Angeles County, Washington, DC, Aspen, CO, and Austin, TX, among many others. As well, regulations exist in local jurisdictions in many other countries around the world, including communities in Canada, Denmark, England, Mexico, Australia, Ireland, South Africa, Spain, Thailand and the Philippines.

Although all of these jurisdictions and governments have taken action to regulate plastic bag use, in conducting this research, it became clear to staff that there is a lot of information available about the regulation of single use plastic bags, including why regulations are often enacted. Some have argued for instance that only regulating single use plastic bags (and not also paper bags) does not provide the environmental benefit that it may seem to provide. As well, others have argued that focusing on single use plastic bags may miss the point of what we should be prioritizing with regard to our personal choices that affect the environment. As City Planner and Shoreline Green Team Co-Chair Miranda Reddinger states, “people spend a lot of time debating whether paper or plastic bags are worse for the environment, when the biggest environmental impact comes from driving your car to the grocery store.”

This staff report will therefore try to provide some background on the reasons why some communities have regulated plastic bags. This should hopefully allow the Council to have a discussion about whether moving forward with a plastic (and potentially paper) bag regulatory policy is right for Shoreline. It will be helpful to staff to get clear direction from the full Council that staff should continue to work on this policy issue.

In addition to this policy discussion, this report does provide a matrix of legislative models of how other communities have regulated single use plastic bags. If Council is interested in having staff continue to research this issue, staff would come back to the Council in the near future to discuss a work plan of how to move this item forward.





## **BACKGROUND:**

### **Single Use Plastic Bags: A Primer**

So what are plastic bags? Single use plastic bags are typically made from either low-density polyethylene (LDPE) or more commonly from high-density polyethylene (HDPE). Both of these types of polyethylene are made from natural gas and petroleum. LDPE and HDPE are also widely used for manufacturing all sorts of plastic products people consume every day, from bottles and containers, to parts of computer hardware/consumer electronics, to plastic piping. LDPE and HDPE can be identified in consumer products by their “resin code”, which identifies their polymer type. The table

below identifies the resin codes for LDPE and HDPE, and also identifies some common uses these plastics are typically found in:

### **LDPE and HDPE Resin Codes**

<b>Resin Code</b>	<b>Image</b>	<b>Alternate image</b>	<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Polymer name</b>	<b>Various Uses</b>
2			HDPE	High-density polyethylene	Bottles, grocery bags, milk jugs, recycling bins, agricultural pipe, base cups, car stops, playground equipment, and plastic lumber
4		 LDPE	LDPE	Low-density polyethylene	Plastic bags, 6 pack rings, various containers, dispensing bottles, wash bottles, tubing, and various molded laboratory equipment

According to the Society of the Plastics Industry (SPI), the plastics industry trade association, plastic bag use began in the late fifties with the invention of small plastic sandwich baggies on a roll. This was followed by plastic dry cleaning bags and plastic produce bags on a roll in grocery stores. Retailers followed suit in the mid-1970's, where large retailers such as Sears, J.C. Penny, and Allied Federated department stores incorporated plastic merchandise bags into their operations. Plastic grocery bags were introduced to U.S. supermarkets in 1977 as an alternative to paper bags, and the now ubiquitous plastic grocery bags that are used today, which are often called t-shirt bags, followed in the early 1980's. According to SPI, by 1996, four of five grocery bags were plastic, which is the ratio that exists today. Most of these grocery bags are made from HDPE.

The switch from retail paper bags to plastic bags was borne out of a less expensive per-bag cost for plastic bags, along with the strength and convenience that light weight "film" polyethylene provides. Although it does not appear that there is much hard research to support an accurate accounting of global plastic bag use, some environmental groups estimate that between 500 billion and 1 trillion plastic bags are used each year worldwide. Nationally, the United States International Trade Commission reported that the number of "polyethylene retail carrier bags" used annually in the United States was 102 billion. From a household perspective, a study commissioned by Environment Australia compared the annual household use of 520 plastic bags (10 per week) to reusable bags. Using this rough household figure of 520 single use plastic bags consumed each year by Shoreline's 21,150 households, it is estimated that Shoreline residents use almost 11 million single use plastic bags annually.

### **The Problem with Plastic Bags**

As can be seen from a quick internet search, the information regarding why plastic bags are harmful to our environment is voluminous. Although it may be challenging to decipher true fact from over-exaggeration or hyperbole, there is no shortage of reasons, facts, statistics, and stories regarding single use plastic bags. The following information

highlights some common themes that emerged when staff researched how single use plastic bags can negatively affect the environment. As is stated in the trailer for the documentary film, *Bag It*:

*Let's face it, there's a dirty little secret here, even if we won't admit it. Just because plastic is disposable, doesn't mean that it goes away. After all, where is 'away'? There is no away.*

### Non-renewable Resource

- Single use plastic bags are made from polyethylene, a byproduct of petroleum and natural gas, which are non-renewable fossil fuels.
- Manufacturing single use plastic bags produces carbon dioxide, which causes global warming.

### Waste Stream

- The vast majority of single use plastic bags produced end up in the world's waste stream, either in landfills or as litter.
- It is unknown how long it takes polyethylene to degrade and decompose. Polyethylene doesn't biodegrade; it photodegrades when it is exposed to ultraviolet light. Some scientists guess that it may take up to 500 years for a single use plastic bag to photodegrade, but given that plastic bags have only been around for 50 or so years, it is really unknown how long it would take.
- Single Use plastic bags aren't recycled that often. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, their 2005 data showed that less than 5% of all single-use checkout (grocery) plastic bags are actually recycled.

### Cost

- The cost of a single use plastic bag is roughly \$0.03 to \$0.05, which is buried in the purchase price of groceries or consumer goods.
- There is also the clean up cost for plastic bag pollution: a City of San Francisco study found that the cost of cleanup amounts to \$0.17 per bag. That translates to the average household paying about \$88 per year on plastic bag waste.

### Recycling Concerns

- Single use plastic bags are problematic for local recycling facilities, as they jam recycling machinery.
- Given this issue, Shoreline's solid waste hauler, CleanScapes, explains to residents that all plastic bags must either be reused or brought to recycling bins at local grocery stores. Although the City could provide direction to CleanScapes to accept plastic bags, staff has continued to communicate to citizens that they should recycle single use plastic bags at their local store.
- In Portland, OR, Far West Fibers, which handles a significant amount of the recycling from the Portland metropolitan region, estimates that 25% to 30% of their total labor costs result from shutting down the recycling machinery and

manually removing jammed plastic bags and film from the machinery. Far West



Fibers has indicated that this process is the primary contributing cause of job-related injuries.

*Single Use Plastic Bags jammed in recycling processing machinery.*

### Habitat and Wildlife Endangerment

- It is estimated that single use plastic bags will potentially last hundreds of years in the ocean and never fully break down. On a global level, plastic pollution kills wildlife that mistakes it for food or becomes entangled.
- The nonprofit conservation organization, 5 Gyres, describes plastic in the world's oceans in the following way:  
*In the ocean, some of types of plastic sink, while LDPE, HDPE, Polypropylene, and foamed plastics float on the ocean's surface. Sunlight and wave action cause these floating plastics to fragment, breaking into increasingly smaller particles, but never completely disappearing — at least on any documented time scale. This plastic pollution is becoming a hazard for marine wildlife, and ultimately for us.*
- According to a study sponsored by the Columbia University Earth Engineering Center, the total amount of plastics in the world's oceans is estimated at 36,000 tons (this is all plastics, not just single use plastic bags.) Although this only accounts for around one tenth of one percent of the plastic produced in the United States in 2009, the ecological impacts of this plastic include over a million of sea-birds and 100,000 marine mammals killed by either plastic ingestions or entanglement.

### **Shoreline Sustainability Strategy**

In addition to these more globally recognized reasons why plastic bag regulations may make sense in Shoreline, these regulations also align well with the City's 2008 Sustainability Strategy. While the strategy does not specifically identify the regulation of single use plastic bags as a strategy recommendation, it does provide some broad

policy direction that this regulation is congruent with City's understanding of sustainability.

The introduction to the Sustainability Strategy has ten guiding principles. Although all of these principles could indirectly relate to the regulation of single use plastic bags, four principles seem to stand out in relation to the perceived intent of regulating single use plastic bags:

1. Lead by example and learn from others,
2. Community education, participation and responsibility are key elements,
3. Proactively manage and protect ecosystems, and
4. Improve and expand waste reduction and resource conservation programs.

As well, the Strategy also describes five focus areas that emerged from the guiding principles. Two of these focus areas also relate to the regulation of single use plastic bags:

1. Waste Reduction and Resource Conservation, and
2. Ecosystem Management and Stewardship.

For instance, the opening of the Waste Reduction and Resource Conservation focus area section in the Strategy states:

*The simplest and most cost-effective way to conserve resources – both water and material resources – is to simply not use them. However, in the real world, resources must be consumed, and inevitably, waste is generated in every process from the simple act of eating a meal to building a home. The Sustainability Strategy focuses on efficient resource use and appropriate means of dealing with waste.*

Thus, there seems to be broad policy direction from the Sustainability Strategy that limiting or regulating inefficient material resources is a goal of our community. Staff would argue that single use plastic bags fall into this category of resource.

### **In Defense of the Plastic Bag**

In researching why some people and organizations may be opposed to regulating plastics bags, or at the very least feel that it may be misdirected, staff quickly realized that much of the information defending plastic bag use came directly from the plastics industry. Furthermore, much of the information that staff reviewed seemed to be communicated in reaction to many of the regulations that have taken effect over the last five to ten years. The defenses of plastic bag use seem to be able to be broken down into a couple of broad categories:

- Plastic bags are not as bad as you think – environmentalists have over-inflated their negative impact
- Plastic bags are not worse for the environment than paper bags
- Plastic bags provide a lot of benefit, and therefore should not be prohibited, regulated or taxed, but rather reused or recycled

*Attachment A* to this staff report provides an example of some of the statements in defense of plastic bag use. This list of “plastic bag myths” comes from American Plastic Manufacturing, a firm located in Seattle that makes plastic bags. Clearly, this firm has a vested interest in dissuading consumers from believing that plastic bags cannot be managed in a way that reduces their harm to the environment. Staff is not stating that this information is rooted in science or even necessarily reliable; this information was not fact-checked. Staff is also not suggesting that this information is inaccurate or misleading. It is being provided to Council at face value to highlight an example of information from the “other side of the debate”, even if this is coming from a self-interested perspective.

So what are some of the more compelling reasons that consumers may want to continue to use plastic bags? First and foremost, single use plastic bags are very utilitarian, they are light weight, easy to transport, and fairly durable, and they are waterproof and hygienic for foodstuffs and groceries. As well, as is noted on the list of plastic bag myths, “single use” plastic bags are often used more than one time. According to Edmonds City Council President Strom Peterson, who helped lead the effort to regulate single use plastic bags in Edmonds, the main concern that the Edmonds Council received from residents is that residents liked to reuse plastic grocery bags to pick up after their dog or cat or to use as a trash liner. Although this of course does not resolve the issue of the reused plastic bags ending up in the waste stream, it does provide a free, convenient bag for a secondary use. Many plastic bag regulations address this however by not prohibiting for-sale plastic garbage can or pet waste bags, just free, single use bags. Thus, consumers are forced to purchase bags for these types of uses, as opposed to getting them for free.

Defenders of plastic bags also argue that recycling greatly reduces the environmental impacts of plastic bags. Although plastic bag recycling rates have been historically low, according to an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) report in 2010, polyethylene bag, sack and wrap recycling was up that year from 12% to 15%. While this shows some progress in the recycling of plastic bags, it is clear that the vast majority of bags are not recycled, ending up in a land fill or as litter. As noted earlier, recycling plastic bags also remains complicated given that they can be a problem for recycling plant machinery.

Finally, there is also an underlying argument that single use plastic bags should not be singled out for regulation, when paper bags are also environmentally damaging, and depending on how this damage is assessed, potentially more damaging than plastic. Although many local government regulations also regulate (often tax) single use paper bags, there does seem to be much more regulation on plastic bags. According to a life-cycle study conducted by the United Kingdom’s Environmental Agency in 2006, HDPE single use plastic bags are superior to paper because their environmental footprint regarding global warming, especially in relation to the production of the bags, was smaller than that of paper bags (this study can be found at the following website: <http://publications.environment-agency.gov.uk/PDF/SCHO0711BUAN-E-E.pdf>.)

At the very least, the issue of 'paper vs. plastic' is complicated, given all of the life-cycle inputs and outputs that is involved in the life of a paper or plastic bag. A good article from the website Tree Hugger, titled *Paper or Plastic? Everything you Need to Know* (<http://www.treehugger.com/culture/paper-bags-or-plastic-bags-everything-you-need-to-know.html>), provides an explanation of these life-cycle costs and the following conclusion about the 'paper vs. plastic' debate:

*Both paper and plastic bags require lots and lots of resources and energy, and proper recycling requires due diligence from both consumer and municipal waste collector or private recycling company, so there are a lot of variables that can lead to low recycling rates. Ultimately, neither paper nor plastic bags are the best choice; we think choosing reusable canvas bags instead is the way to go.*

Thus, from a regulatory standpoint, defenders of plastic bags often argue 'that if you regulate us, you should also regulate them.'

In addition to this position regarding paper bags, some may also take the position that the focus of the environmental community and local regulators should be on other more important environmental issues, such as the reduction of green house gas emissions or the preservation of natural lands, not on paper or plastic bags. As well, others may argue that focusing on carry-out plastic bags in grocery stores misses the point, when the amount of plastic contained in food packaging has a much larger impact on the waste stream. Although these are legitimate questions to ponder, any prioritization of ways in which to impact an issue must be squared with the resources required to achieve success. Regulating single use bags may be "low hanging fruit" in regards to the amount of environmental benefit the action achieves, but it is clearly a result that is achievable if a community is supportive of the underlying policy.

### **Regulatory Models**

As noted initially, Councilmembers Roberts and Salomon were interested in how other communities regulate single use plastic bags provided by retailers. *Attachment B* to this staff report provides a matrix of a few local and national examples of various check-out bag regulations. Given that most of these cities' ordinances also provide regulations for paper bags, the matrix highlights these regulations as well.

As can be seen on the matrix, a major variation of the Washington DC model is the use of a 'bag tax', instead of a 'bag ban'. Bag taxes are economic regulatory models aimed at changing consumer behavior through user fees. However, consumers are still provided the choice to consume plastic bags. One of the most well known bag tax models was introduced in Ireland, where the government instituted a roughly \$0.20 Euro plastic bag tax in 2002. Within weeks, there was a 94% drop in plastic bag use. Denmark also has bag tax, although it is not levied on consumers, but rather on Danish retailers. As well, the City of Seattle imposed a \$0.20 bag tax on Seattle residents in 2008, but a referendum on the tax was defeated at the ballot the following fall, with 53% of residents voting against it.



The other regulations in the matrix all prohibit single use plastic bags outright. In addition to this, some regulations also impose a fee on the use of allowable paper bags. This helps retailers offset the higher cost of some consumers substituting away from plastic bags to more paper bag use, and also helps to regulate consumer behavior through user fees. Given that paper bags are not the ideal environmental solution to get your groceries from the store to your home, this “double edged” approach prohibits plastic bags and tries to steer consumers away from paper bag use and toward the use of reusable bags.

### **Statewide Legislation**

Another approach is to advocate for a statewide ban on plastic bags, making the playing field level for all communities and making it simpler for retailers. No state has approved a ban on plastic bags; however, more and more communities across the nation are. We could make this a legislative priority and work with our state delegation, environmental groups, and other cities to make Washington the first state to ban plastic bags.

### **NEXT STEPS:**

If Council is interested in having staff continue to research this issue, staff would come back to the Council in the future to discuss a work plan of how to move this item forward. Likely next steps included in the work plan would be:

- Additional research on the impacts of plastic bag regulation
- Additional research on the costs and benefits of various regulatory models
- Potential environmental review (SEPA checklist)
- Discussion of single use plastic bag regulations with commercial stakeholders (Northwest Grocery Association, Washington Restaurant Association, individual retailers in Shoreline, Shoreline Chamber of Commerce, etc.)
- Input gathering from Shoreline residents about single use plastic bag regulations
- Drafting of a proposed ordinance
- Drafting of implementation, communication and enforcement plan
- Council discussion and adoption

This is a preliminary list of work plan tasks, and it is very likely that there would be additional tasks that would need to be accomplished to bring regulations to fruition in Shoreline. Thus, part of this work plan discussion would also be prioritizing this regulatory project with other Council goals and staff responsibilities. However, staff is confident that this item could be programmed into the staffs work program in 2012 and into 2013.

### **RESOURCE/FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

The resource and financial impacts of regulating single use plastic bags are unknown at this time. It is possible that there may be an impact on retail sales in Shoreline if the City decides to regulate single use plastic bags. However, what, if any, impacts, and the magnitude of the impacts would need to be more fully reviewed if this policy issue continues to be reviewed.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff is looking for direction from the full Council however regarding whether the Council is interested in having staff continue to research this policy issue. This report provides background information about single use plastic bags, and also provides a few regulatory models that other cities have adopted regarding bag use in their communities.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

A: American Plastics Manufacturing – Plastic Bag Myths

B: Check-out Bag Regulatory Model Matrix

# Attachment A



## Plastic Bag Myths

<http://www.apmbags.com/bagmyths>

### Oil Consumption

**MYTH:** According to many websites and environmental groups, plastic bag manufacturing uses a large percentage of the crude oil that is consumed in the US. Some suggest that eliminating plastic bags would reduce our dependence on oil.

**TRUTH:** American plastic bags are made from natural gas, NOT oil. In the U.S., 85 percent of the raw material used to make plastic bags is produced from natural gas.

Banning or taxing plastic bags will do nothing to curb oil consumption.

### Single Use

**MYTH:** Most proposed bag bans and taxes use statistics based on an assumption that plastic bags are only used once.

**TRUTH:** Studies have shown that 80-90% of the population reuse plastic grocery bags at least once. As trash bin liners, for picking up after pets, as lunch sacks, holding wet laundry, etc. Plastic bags are also very easy to recycle, and most grocery stores provide bag recycling bins.

### Ireland's Bag Tax

**MYTH:** Ireland's 2002 tax on plastic grocery bags reduced plastic bag use by 90%.

**TRUTH:** This is partially true, but doesn't tell the whole story. Use of plastic *grocery checkout bags* declined, but sales of packaged plastic bags went up by about 400%, resulting in a net gain in plastic bags going to landfills. This shows that most people were reusing their plastic grocery bags for tasks where plastic bags are the best solution - trash can liners, picking up after the dog, wet garbage, etc.

### San Francisco Bag Ban

**MYTH:** In 2008, San Francisco banned plastic bags, which resulted in a huge drop in bag use, and an increase in reusable bags.

**TRUTH:** Yes, since plastic bags were banned, stores stopped using them. But there was not a huge shift towards reusable bags. Instead, there was a huge increase in paper bag consumption. According to all studies, paper bags are responsible for many times the pollution and oil consumption than plastic bags. Paper is heavier, and not as durable, as plastic and requires far more resources to create, and creates much more air and water pollution. In addition to this, the San Fran Ban also practically eliminated bag recycling programs in the city, and after one year, plastic bag litter (the main reason for the ban) had actually increased.

## Recycling

**MYTH:** Recycling plastic bags is extremely costly and difficult.

**TRUTH:** Recycling programs are growing all the time, and plastic recycling is actually a very simple, cost effective and energy efficient process. The main products currently made from recycled grocery bags is composite lumber, and new bags.

## Marine Wildlife Tangled in Bags

**MYTH:** "Over 100 thousand marine animals die from becoming tangled in discarded plastic bags each year."

**TRUTH:** The report that this myth was based on (a Canadian study from 1987) didn't mention plastic bags at all. In 2002 the Australian Government commissioned a study on plastic bags, and the authors misquoted the 1987 study. What the original study found was that between 1981 and 1984 over 100 thousand marine mammals and birds were killed by being caught in discarded fishing nets and lines.

Furthermore, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has stated that it is unable to find studies to support many of the statements that assert plastic bags cause harm to marine wildlife and that many quotes about plastic marine debris are false, unproven or exaggerated.

## Litter

**MYTH:** Plastic bags are a major source of litter, and banning or taxing bags will reduce litter.

**TRUTH:** Plastic bags make up less than one percent of all litter. Cigarette butts, fast food packaging, and food wrappers are much larger contributors. Banning one item that becomes litter does nothing to change the mindset of those that discard trash improperly. Many of the bags that end up as litter blow off of garbage trucks or out of landfills. Landfill operators and garbage haulers should be held accountable for items that escape containment. Since plastic bags are responsible for less than 1% of all litter, banning or taxing them will have no impact. The solution to litter is public education, recycling programs, and proper disposal.

## Landfills

**MYTH:** Landfills are overflowing with plastic bags.

**TRUTH:** Plastic bags are easily recycled, but even if they do end up in a landfill, they take up a small fraction of one percent of landfill space. The average person uses about 326 plastic grocery bags per year, which by weight is about the same as a phone book or two. By comparison, the average person generates nearly one ton (2000 pounds) of garbage each year. The major contributor to landfills is paper, wood and construction debris. Banning or taxing plastic bags would mean that more paper bags would get used, resulting in more waste going to the landfill.

## Paper Bags are Better

**MYTH:** Many people believe that paper bags are a better environmental choice than plastic.

**TRUTH:** Paper bags, even recycled ones, require many times more energy to produce than plastic. Paper production and recycling also produces far more air and water pollution than plastic. And because paper bags weigh nearly 10 times that of plastic bags, they require 10 times the fuel to transport.

Paper bags can also be easily contaminated with oils, grease, and food waste that can contaminate entire batches of recycling. Plastic bags can be cleaned prior to recycling to eliminate contaminants.

# Attachment B

## Check-out Bag Regulatory Model Matrix

City	Prohibits Plastic Bags?	Where	Paper Bag Fee/Low-Income Discount?	Paper Bag Regulations	Exemptions?	Enforcement Mechanism?
Bellingham, WA	Yes	All retailers, no restaurants	\$0.05 - kept by retailer/Yes	40% post-consumer recycled content	Yes	Yes
Edmonds, WA	Yes	All retailers, no restaurants	No	no old growth fiber, 100% recyclable, and 40% post-consumer recycled content	Yes	Yes
Mukilteo, WA	Yes	All retailers, no restaurants	No	no old growth fiber, 100% recyclable, and 20% post-consumer recycled content	Yes	Yes
Portland, OR	Yes	Grocery stores and pharmacies	No	40% post-consumer recycled content	Yes	Yes
San Francisco, CA	Yes	All retailers, including restaurants	\$0.10 - kept by retailer	no old growth fiber, 100% recyclable, and 40% post-consumer recycled content	Yes	Yes
Seattle, WA	Yes	All retailers, no restaurants	\$0.05 - kept by retailer/Yes	40% post-consumer recycled content	Yes	Yes
Washington, DC	No (\$0.05 fee for plastic bag)	All food and liquor retailers, including restaurants	\$0.05 - retailer keeps 1-2 cents, remaining 3-4 cents goes to the Anacostia River Protection Fund	All paper and plastic bags must be 100% recyclable	Yes	Yes