THE INS AND OUTS OF BAG RECYCLING & BANS:

Colorado & Beyond- What policies are being implemented?

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SINGLE USE BAG POLICIES – WHY BEING CONSIDERED?

- How should you answer “paper or plastic”?
- Communities increasingly examining single use bag options.
- Rationales sometimes perception; sometimes data

SINGLE USE BAG POLICIES – WHY BEING CONSIDERED? Litter- Wildlife

Looks like a jelly fish

Baby’s in the bag

SINGLE USE BAG POLICIES – WHY BEING CONSIDERED? Affects on humans

Flooding in Bangladesh attributed to plastic bags clogging drains
SINGLE USE BAG POLICIES – DRIVERS- STAKEHOLDERS

Who has motivated consideration of policy?
- Citizen activists
- Individual retail stores
- Hunters / Fishers
- Governments (local, state, federal)
- Others working to “ban bans”

Activity?
- State level: west coast and others
- TX worked to ban bans
- Many cities across the US (more later)

SINGLE USE BAG POLICIES – BANS VS. FEES (VS NONE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ban</td>
<td>• Popular with “greens”</td>
<td>• Small tons</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Alternatives available</td>
<td>• Opposition / choice</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Said to reduce litter</td>
<td>• Low income?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Dramatic reduction in use; adapt quickly</td>
<td>• Industry opposition</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Simple administration</td>
<td>• Some businesses already dropping</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Addresses litter, wildlife, other rationales</td>
<td>• Concerns it drives shopping away</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fee</td>
<td>• Popular with “greens; alternatives avail.</td>
<td>• Small tons</td>
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<td>• Retains customer choice</td>
<td>• Public opposition to perceived “tax”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Significantly reduces use; adapt quickly</td>
<td>• Low income?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Said to reduce litter</td>
<td>• Industry opposition</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Relatively easy to implement</td>
<td>• Some businesses already dropping</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provides revenues to retailers to handle</td>
<td>• Concerns it drives shopping away</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Revenues for clean-ups</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Internalize externalities</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>Politically easier; “market”, convenience</td>
<td>“Greens” unhappy; associated</td>
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SINGLE USE BAG POLICIES – “PAPER VS. PLASTIC”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>Plastic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Recycling Rate (80%)</td>
<td>Low Recycling Rate (5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Years to break down- pellets</td>
<td>Decomposes</td>
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<tr>
<td>No GHG</td>
<td>Produces GHG</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clogs recycling center equipment and</td>
<td>Strong desire for recycled product- paper mills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used multiple times</td>
<td>Few usages</td>
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<tr>
<td>Works with wet materials</td>
<td>Breaks apart</td>
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<tr>
<td>Requires oil and energy</td>
<td>Requires trees and water</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

• Life cycle assessments (Franklin) recommend plastic slightly over paper – fewer airborne emissions & less energy (other argue multiuse outscore both)

SINGLE USE BAG POLICIES – CASE STUDIES

Washington DC
- Driver – politician, Anacostia River
- Strong reduction, adoption

Seattle
- Two tries; 20 cents on both failed
- 12/11 passed plastic ban / 5 cents on paper for 7/12 with 12/16 sunset to revisit
- Nearby Mukilteo, Edmonds, Bellingham plastic bans
SINGLE USE BAG POLICIES – CASE STUDIES

Colorado / Mountain communities
- Small / simpler / fewer retailers; ski / green
- Telluride plastic ban, 10 cent paper (“whereas” includes litter, clogged sewers, no local recycling)
- Aspen, Carbondale, Basalt; moved from education & voluntary; attempted jointly because proximity
- Plastic ban and 20 cent paper / 25% to retailer
- Some variations; Going to voters in some
- Boulder citizen / student activists (energized local non-profit; fee to programs & education; Nexus)

SFO - 1st large city with ban; 10c on paper; expanded ban from grocery / chain pharmacy to include restaurants, gift shops, hardware, boutique, other retail

CA
- San Jose – plastic bag, 10 cent paper, all retailers (1/12).
- Fee increases over time
- LA County – plastic bag ban

HI County ban

WA, OR, Canada, elsewhere; changing fast

SINGLE USE BAG POLICIES – WHAT DISTINGUISHES ADOPTERS?

Education
- High awareness of longer term impacts
- Local or other data

Rationales
- Not recycling; local wildlife / river / environment
- Litter; user pay
- No one lesson / message

Support
- Political and grass roots activist

Industry reaction
- Has differed among industry actors

Design / exemptions
- All over the map / “strategic” exemptions
- Administration
- Low income issue
SINGLE USE BAG POLICIES – SUMMARY / CONCLUSIONS

- Activity arises from substitutes, duty cycle, litter
  - Not from recycling / “tons”
  - Spreading; neighbors, multiple activists
  - Driving from local but some traction; some retailers
- Not “cookie cutter”
  - Designs, exemptions, treatment, revenues / prices
  - Local issue / decision-makers / policy

BACK TO THE QUESTION…

Paper or Plastic?

Getting to

“NEITHER”!

THANK YOU! QUESTIONS?

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ISSUE

- Town has:
  - 50% diversion goal,
  - Citizens that care about the outdoors
  - History of undertaking the “right” policy (at least if not onerous) (e.g. solar, etc.)
- Single-Use Plastic bags:
  - Top litter contributor, blow into trees, fences
  - Short 1-hour use but 1000 year life, less than 5% recycled
  - Negative effects on wildlife
  - 1500/yr/household; costs Superior businesses >$80K/yr
  - Have clear substitutes (canvas multi-use, or no bag)
**REQUEST**

- Request: Single Use Bag FEE -
  - Fee of 15 cents on single-use plastic bags at all Town Retailers and grocery stores
  - Specific exceptions (dry cleaner, pillow, doggie bags, ...)
    (list kept / updated by Manager)
  - Split fees with retailers (5 cents retail, 10 cents town)

- Why 15 cents? “Nexus” study says 20-25 cents
  - High enough for incentive, not too low for admin hassle

- Other locations:
  - DC, Telluride, Carbondale, Boulder, Seattle, others.
  - Reduced use 80% within 3 months / no push-back

**HOW**

- Mitigation approaches for Superior
  - Canvas bags last 2 years, wholesale <65 cents
  - Town (and possibly Chamber)
    - Logo / “positive” campaign
    - Hand out 1 / customer at Town hall (instead of holiday lights)
    - Have a “drive” encouraging residents to bring extras for distribution
    - Have Quarterly Chamber “drops” use canvas, with business sponsors
    - Work with businesses / warn to adjust bag purchases, UPCs, encourage stocking canvas, and suggest “A-frames” to remind shoppers in parking lot
  - Consider introduction March or July 2014

**PROS / CONS**

- Considered & rejected bans, paper bags

- Pros for plastic bag fee:
  - Reduces plastic bags in litter, animals, trees, environment
  - Reduces waste of resources
  - Reduces costs for retailers, provides revenues for retailers and related town programs
  - Responds to resident interest in / concern about the issue

- Cons for plastic bag fee:
  - Change for retailers / households

**RECOMMENDATION**

Pass an ordinance:
Placing a 15 cent fee on each single-use plastic bag at retailers and grocery stores within Superior Town Limits.
The fee shall be split, with 10 cents going to Town for related programs and costs, and 5 cents remitted to the retailer.
Explicit exceptions are to be listed in an annual memo by the Town Manager. The Town should use definitions (e.g. of “single use”, etc.) and exceptions consistent with those in Boulder and other communities.

Other / consider:
- Resident focus group for other outreach / slogan ideas
- Tracking / surveys of residents & businesses 6 months in
THANK YOU!!

Final Comments & Questions?

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