

# Plastic Bag Reduction Ordinance



**RULES AND ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**SEPTEMBER 11, 2013**

# Background



- 500 million bags distributed annually in San Diego
- Approximately 3% recycled
- Plastic bag litter major problem in canyons, waterways, streets, ocean and landfill
- Reusable bags use less energy, reduce greenhouse emissions and solid waste generation compared to plastic bags
- Environmental Services Department spends approximately \$160,000 cleaning up plastic bag litter (largely at the Miramar Landfill)

# Other Ordinances



- **Worldwide, nationwide and statewide – many bans in place**
- **CA State bills**
  - AB 1998 (2010)
  - SB 405 (2013)
- **80 CA municipalities have ordinances (including City and Counties of Los Angeles, San Jose, San Francisco, Solana Beach, Long Beach, Alameda County (including 14 cities))**

# Key Elements of Other Ordinances



- **Most CA ordinances**
  - Ban plastic bags
  - Require stores to charge \$0.10 per paper bag
  - Are phased in over six months to one year
  - Define paper and reusable bags (recycled content, appropriate labeling, etc.)

# Key Elements of Other Ordinances



- **Stores commonly covered**
  - All retail excluding restaurants (over 35 municipalities including Solana Beach)
  - Large supermarkets, drug stores and convenience stores (SB405, Los Angeles)
  - All retail including restaurants (Fairfax, Malibu, Santa Cruz Co., Palo Alto)

# Key Elements of Other Ordinances



- **Common exemptions**
  - Restaurants (SB405, Los Angeles)
  - Non-profits (SB405, Los Angeles, Sunnyvale)
  - Farmer's markets (SB405, Los Angeles)
  - "Product bags" including produce, meat, bulk food, pharmacy bags, newspaper, etc. (SB 405, Los Angeles)
  - Recipients of WIC and Supplemental Food Programs (SB405, Los Angeles)

# Key Elements of Other Ordinances



- **Common requirements on bag pricing**
  - No cost specified but mandates stores charge something (SB 405)
  - \$0.10/per paper bag (Solana Beach, Long Beach, Los Angeles)
  - Mandate charge for reusable bags

# Key Elements of Other Ordinances



- **Phasing**
  - To allow stores time to adjust
  - To use up existing plastic bag inventories
  - To evaluate and update ordinance
    - ✦ add smaller stores later
    - ✦ increase bag fee

# ESD Recommended Ordinance



- **Stores subject to ordinance**
  - Retail stores with annual sales of \$2 million selling food and non-food goods, and a line of dry grocery, canned goods, or nonfood items and some perishable items
  - Stores with at least 10,000 square feet of retail space with a pharmacy
  - Drug stores, pharmacies, supermarkets, grocery stores, convenience food stores, foodmarts, or other entities selling a limited line of goods that includes milk, bread, soda, and snack foods

# ESD Recommended Ordinance

(continued)



- Mandate charge of \$0.10 per paper bag and at least \$0.10 per reusable bag provided
- Exempt restaurants, non-profits, WIC and Supplemental Food Program recipients, produce/product bags
- Stores keep records, no reporting, complaint-based enforcement
- Focus on education/outreach and reusable bag distribution

# Next Steps



- **Stakeholder process**
- **Draft ordinance**
- **City Attorney review/CEQA review**
- **Report back to committee**