

**CITY OF COLLEGE PARK, MARYLAND
ACTION ITEM COVER REPORT**



AGENDA ITEM: 23-O-01

Prepared By: Suellen Ferguson, City Attorney, and
Robert Marsili, Director of Public Works

Meeting Date: 1/31/2023

Presented By: Suellen Ferguson, City Attorney, and
Robert Marsili, Director of Public Works

Proposed Consent: No

Originating Department: City Attorney, Department of Public Works

Action Requested: Introduction of an ordinance to amend Chapter 129 by adding “provisions which prohibit retail establishments from providing single-use plastic carryout bags to customers at the point of sale and by requiring that retail establishments charge a fee of at least \$.10 per bag for provision of paper carryout bag and reusable carryout bag

Strategic Plan Objective: Objective 3: Preserve and enrich our environment and natural beauty to attract people and sustain our City’s future Start typing here

Background/Justification:

The City is committed to a sustainable environment and active stewardship of our natural resources. The City’s long-term planning contributes to the well-being and prosperity of our community.

The Committee for a Better Environment presented the idea of a “Better Bag Bill” to the City Council on November 15, 2022, with additional discussion on January 10, 2023. The Council response was favorable. The Council asked for a follow-up discussion and wanted to know how the bill would affect small businesses in the City.

Small and independent businesses generally have embraced the Better Bag plan. The national retail chains located in College Park have forwarded the Better Bag plan to their respective headquarters. The big brand stores seemed to be receptive. The cost of plastic bags has affected the overhead of some retailers who would save money by not having to provide plastic bags under this bill. Some of our neighboring municipalities that are part of the College Park hyper-local economy are seeking our leadership on this Better Bag Ordinance.

The effective date of the amendments has been left open for the Mayor and Council to discuss. Staff recommends waiting approximately six months to allow time for the public education that is needed. An effective date of September 1 is suggested.

Fiscal Impact:

- Funding is proposed for reusable bags for city residents in the FY24 budget.
- Code Enforcement will be a critical component of a successful program.
- Communications will be asked to work with the CBE to create and publicize a public education plan which could include a mailing to all City businesses that would be impacted and to educate residents about the change.
- The City will invest in City-branded reusable bags to give away at City events.

Council Options:

1. Introduce Ordinance 23-O-01 which prohibits retail establishments from providing plastic carry out bags to customers at point of sale and requires retail establishments to charge at least \$.10 for each paper carryout bag and reusable carryout bag, and set a Public Hearing date.
2. Introduce Ordinance 23-O-01 with changes
3. Take no action at this time

Staff Recommendation:

#1

Recommended Motion:

I move to introduce Ordinance 23-O-01 prohibiting retailers from providing plastic carry out bags to customers at point of sale and requiring retail establishments to charge at least \$.10 for each paper carryout bag and reusable carryout bag provided to customers.

Attachments:

1. Ordinance 23-O-01