



## Single Use Plastic in Santa Fe County



SUPP Working Group Impact Report Presentation  
September 12, 2023



# Resolution 2022-031

- ▶ Approved on May 10, 2022
- ▶ Directing the County Manager to establish a working group to analyze and make recommendations concerning an educational program and possible ordinance discouraging the use of single-use plastic and polystyrene products in the County
- ▶ Single Use Plastic and Polystyrene Working Group of five members formed August, 2022
- ▶ First meeting held in September, 2022
- ▶ Working group met monthly and twice a month, with a number of special meetings



# Working Group Tasks & Research

## FISCAL

- ▶ Fiscal impact to County government operations and to local businesses of an educational program and any proposed ban

## POLICY

- ▶ Effective applicable laws in other states and New Mexico cities (Joe's binder - include Colorado's, EPR in Colorado - address at statewide level, California). DRAFT to Comm Hughes and Hansen
- ▶ County's existing ordinances

## EDUCATION

- ▶ Potential for development of educational campaign in both English and Spanish to the community, County businesses and residents who would be affected by a single-use plastic and polystyrene product ban ordinance (Move to notes)



# Working Group Tasks & Research

## INCENTIVES

- ▶ Analysis of potential incentive program to incentivize businesses to sell reusable and paper bags, develop and use ecofriendly packaging.

## ENFORCEMENT

- ▶ Considerations: Current systems and which department should enforce any enacted ban and recommend enforcement mechanisms including fines and penalties

## ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- ▶ Identification of eco-friendly and plant based alternatives to SSP and polystyrene





# Outreach

- ▶ Survey emailed to 48 potentially affected retail operations within Santa Fe County to gauge their perspective
- ▶ Calls (#) Door to door contact (#)
- ▶ Received 5 responses to the survey, all noting it would affect their businesses positively or not affect their business at all
- ▶ Created a QR code survey for residents as part of the County's earth day activities which was available at Earth Day event and on County's social media platform
- ▶ QR code survey distributed in the monthly Sustainability Newsletter that goes out to 4,400 residents
- ▶ Received 6 responses, all in favor of banning single use plastics in the County

  
SANTA FE COUNTY

**HOW CAN SANTA FE COUNTY  
BREAK FREE FROM PLASTIC?**

**SCAN ME**



**WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!  
SCAN THE CODE TO TAKE A  
QUICK 2 MINUTE SURVEY**

Want to learn more?  
Attend one of the Single-Use Plastics &  
Polystyrene Working Group Meetings

[www.santafecounty.nm.gov/committees/suppwg](http://www.santafecounty.nm.gov/committees/suppwg)

The Single Use Plastic Bag is Well Beyond a Nuisance—It's Damaging to Equipment, Public Health, Wildlife, and the Environment.



# Single Use Plastic Impacts

- ▶ Half of all the plastics ever created were produced in the past 15 years
- ▶ Green House Gas emissions linked to plastic will reach 1.3 billion tons by 2030  
= 300 coal-fired power plants
- ▶ Each year in Santa Fe County (not including the City of Santa Fe) an estimated amount of the following is used:
  - 20 million single use plastic bags
  - 12,750 expanded polystyrene foam take out food containers
  - 36,500 plastic drinking straws
- Single-Use Plastic bags cost Santa Fe County (not including City of Santa Fe) approximately \$400,000 per year in recycling contamination/residual
- Food debris covered take out food containers cost Santa Fe County approximately \$67,000 per year in contamination/residual



# Are Single Use Plastic Bans Effective?

- ▶ California's ban on single-use plastic bags resulted in 70% reduction
- ▶ Town Recycling reports no problem with contamination of plastic bags in City of Santa Fe compared to their operations in Albuquerque
- ▶ Enforcement measures manageable for City of Santa Fe
- ▶ (Case Study from CO Dept. of Health, etc...)





# Frequently Asked Questions

Q: We don't have an ocean -Why ban plastic bags?

Q: Why not reuse instead--I reuse the bags often, sometimes over and over.

Q: Why not recycle all plastic? (move to notes) China Ban, false solution can't recycle plastic crisis, <10% recycled, too many formulas, plastics are the plan B for oil and gas industry, remember waste management hierarchy reduce TRUMPS, reuse and recycle - source reduction, pollution prevention, CHANGING BEHAVIOR According to USEPA municipal waste facts and figures and the NMED:Solid Waste Bureau's annual reporting requirements, approximately 244,000 tons of plastic are generated in NM each year (USEPA), of which 8,000 tons are recycled (NMED:SWB), which equals a 3.3% recycling rate for plastics in NM.

(Move to notes) Resolution 2007-13, Lead by Example in Sustainability Resolution with the County

Q: What about Extended Producer Responsibility or Product Stewardship like Colorado just passed? (move to notes) Statewide level, governor's office reached about this and talked with Heidi Sanborn of NCAS who passed the first ever packaging EPR in Colorado currently in rulemaking and she is the keynote speaker at our Sept conference



# Proposed Recommendations

## Standalone Ordinance Highlights

- 1) Ban on single-use plastic bags at the point of sale from retail establishments, including restaurants. Recycled-content paper bags available for a \$.10 fee at the point of sale**
- 2) The \$.10 fee is divided \$.09 to county and \$.01 stays with retailer so it is the same as City of Santa Fe (Anyone receiving food assistance is exempt from paying this fee at Point of Sale)**
- 3) Utensils such as take out packets of condiments, plastic forks, straws, etc only available upon request (Retail establishments are exempt from this requirement when providing drinks to persons with disabilities who need straws.)**
- 4) Ban on expanded polystyrene (EPS) food containers for take out or in-person dining.**
- 5) Ban on intentional helium balloon releases**
- 6) Enforcement/Education - First warning letter, fines, managed by County's code office, Sustainability department will do related education and outreach**



# Next Steps (Sustainability)

- ▶ Legal review of draft ordinance and staff recommendations
- ▶ BCC vote
- ▶ If approved for ordinance; title and publish effective date January 1, 2024
- ▶ Immediately upon approval, roll out educational programming (ideally two months prior to effective date)
- ▶ Department coordination and collaboration for enforcement
- ▶ One year follow up report



# Thank You for Working to Reduce Plastic in our Community!

Single Use Plastic and Polystyrene Working Group  
Sustainability Division, Community Development Department

