

City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/reduceplastics

Notes from Single-use Plastics Reduction Work Group Meeting #1

Meeting date: July 18, 2018

Mayor Staff: Amy Rathfelder (Mayor's staff project lead)

BPS Staff: Pete Chism-Winfield - BPS Program Coordinator (BPS project lead)
Bruce Walker - BPS, Solid Waste and Recycling Manager
Christine Llobregat - BPS, Communications

Work Group: Charlie Plybon - Surfrider
Yulia Arakelyan - ADA Advocate
Pat Lydon - Legacy Health
Hillary Barbour, Tim Orlean and Katie Whitecar - Burgerville
Jim Hall - Independent Restaurant Concepts
Chris Hein - Old Spaghetti Factory
Judy Craine - Holman's Bar and Grill

Advisors: Nickole Cheron - City of Portland, ADA Title II Manager
Jeff Martin - Multnomah County Health
Pam Neal - Prosper Portland

Meeting Agenda

9:30am - Ground rules, group process, expected work group accomplishments. 10 mins.

9:40 - Mayor to welcome group. 5 mins.

9:45 - Presentation: background information (litter impacts, composting and recycling systems), proposed policy options based on other cities programs (materials, phases, scope). 20 mins.

10:05 - Gather feedback, brainstorm with group. 40 mins.

10:45 - Next steps and ideas moving forward to set up the next meeting. 15 mins.

11am - Adjourn.

Welcome from Mayor Ted Wheeler

Plastic straws are one of the most common items that are found littered on U.S. coastlines. We find them discarded on our streets and our parks and we see them floating through our waterways. We can't recycle them; plastic straws are a single-use item that is not accepted in Portland's mixed recycling system.

On June 20th, our City Council passed a resolution charging the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability to work with our office to develop policy that will address the issues that single-use plastics like straws pose. The reduction of single-use, non-recyclable plastics will improve and protect land and water quality. That work has been started with a strong stakeholder group made up of representatives from Portland's business community as well as individuals in health and ADA advocacy roles to ensure we are crafting an inclusive and equitable policy that acknowledges each organizational and individual need.

Presentation by Pete Chism-Winfield, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability

Timeline:

- Resolution May / June
- Stakeholder Engagement July / Aug
- Ordinance Proposal Aug / Sept
- Ordinance Discussion and Vote Sept / Oct
- Notification and Outreach > Nov and beyond

Why > Other City policies > Most effective and realistic policy options = by request, ban, fees, other

Notes from group discussion

- Workgroup understands that stirrers and condiment picks are included.
- Workgroup agrees that Incentives could / should be added as a policy option.
- Aside from straws, should other single-use plastics be considered?

Amy: Mayor wants a broader policy beyond straws.

Charlie: Consider using single-use but not the word "plastic" Reduction needs to be part of the strategy. How to cut back on takeout containers? Change consumer strategies.

Pat: Problem statement> Microplastics become part of the food chain...how can this policy solve for that problem?

Charlie: Goal statement > We should focus on what we can do to reduce plastics in the waste stream and the environment.

Pete: What if we offered different policy options for different materials?

Nicole: About the word "ban": There is stigma attached... let's think beyond the ban so as not to ostracize people.

Amy: City has talked about using the term "phase-out"

Nickole: If policy encourages everyone to reduce use of SUDS where they can, that's an inclusive policy.

Chris: Gives consumer education example about water @ restaurants. Water wasted at restaurants was because customers were given water even if they didn't want. Once the question was asked, wasted water went down dramatically.

Jim: As a business person my position is always "What does the customer want?" This policy will be driven more effectively by the customer telling the business what they want.

Amy: Straw campaign has large educational component.

Yulia: Part of the education component is that straws ARE needed by certain people, and is the only way that some people can drink. By request seems to be the policy. What about reusable straws?

Yulia: It depends on the person... some people can't use metal or glass because they need to bite down on the straw.

Pat: Bendability of straw is important. Research ingredients about substitute straws... they also may be hazards.

Charlie: we need to think about who the appropriate messenger is... fee policy generates blowback to the business; bans have a more clearcut sponsor / origin.

Nickole: Ban would leave City open for an ADA lawsuit. "Phase-out" is a good term.

Pete: Described nuance between front of counter vs back of counter straw stock in Seattle.

Burgerville: From the incentive perspective, we have explored giving customers reusable straws.

Multco: Education > Ec Dev > Need clearinghouse for alternative products.

Charlie: Starting with straws is a gateway to other behaviors. 17 mfrs of straws ...Aardvark is best eco-friendly manufacturer. Kleen Kanteen w/ bendable silicon tip is also popular.

Adjourn due to time: 2nd meeting needed.

Questions for BPS follow-up

1. How will we know what community conversations are happening about proposal?
2. What is scope? What is exempt from other cities, specifically schools?
3. How will we measure success? How will we know that any specific policy impacts will be effective?

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