

**NOTICE OF PREPARATION
OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
COUNTY OF SAN MATEO SINGLE USE BAG BAN ORDINANCE**

DATE: April 6, 2012

TO: State Clearinghouse, Responsible Agencies, Organizations and Interested Parties

LEAD AGENCY: County of San Mateo

The County of San Mateo intends to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for a proposed Single Use Bag Ban Ordinance. In accordance with Section 15082 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the County of San Mateo has prepared this Notice of Preparation to provide Responsible Agencies and other interested parties with information describing the proposal and its potential environmental effects. The County has prepared the attached Project Description. The environmental factors that the County has determined would potentially be affected by the project include:

- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hydrology/Water Quality
- Utilities and Service Systems

PROJECT SPONSOR: County of San Mateo Health System
Environmental Health Services
2000 Alameda de las Pulgas, Suite 100
San Mateo, CA 94403
Contact: Dean D. Peterson, Director
(650) 372-6200

PROJECT LOCATIONS: The Single Use Bag Ban Ordinance would apply to any commercial establishment that sells perishable or nonperishable goods, including, but not limited to, clothing, food, and personal items directly to the customer; and is located within or doing business within the geographical limits of unincorporated San Mateo County and within the following participating municipalities:

San Mateo County

- Belmont
- Brisbane
- Burlingame
- Colma
- Daly City
- East Palo Alto
- Foster City
- Half Moon Bay
- Menlo Park

- Millbrae
- Pacifica
- Portola Valley
- Redwood City
- San Bruno
- San Carlos
- San Mateo
- South San Francisco
- Woodside

Santa Clara County

- Milpitas
- Cupertino
- Los Gatos
- Los Altos
- Campbell
- Mountain View

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed Single Use Bag Ban Ordinance (Proposed Ordinance) would regulate the use of paper and plastic single use carryout bags within the participating municipalities. Participating municipalities include the County of San Mateo and 24 cities in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties (see list above under "Project Locations"). The Proposed Ordinance would apply to all retail establishments located within the limits of the participating municipalities, including those selling clothing, food, and personal items directly to the customer. It would not apply to restaurants. The ordinance would (1) prohibit the free distribution of single use

carryout paper and plastic bags and (2) require retail establishments to charge customers for recycled paper bags and reusable bags at the point of sale. The minimum charge would be ten cents (\$0.10) until December 31, 2014 and twenty-five cents (\$0.25) on or after January 1, 2015.

The intent of the ordinance is to reduce the environmental impacts related to the use of single use carryout bags, and to promote a shift toward the use of reusable bags. It is anticipated that by prohibiting single use plastic carryout bags and requiring a mandatory charge for each paper bag distributed by retailers, the Proposed Ordinance would provide a disincentive to customers to request paper bags when shopping at regulated stores and promote a shift to the use of reusable bags by retail customers, while reducing the number of single use plastic and paper bags within the participating municipalities.

Single use plastic carryout bags are defined as bags made from petroleum or bio-based plastic¹ that are less than 2.25 millimeters thick. The Proposed Ordinance would prohibit retailers from distributing both petroleum and bio-based single use carryout plastic bags at the point of sale. The Proposed Ordinance would not prohibit the distribution of plastic “product bags”, as defined, which includes bags without handles provided to a customer (1) to transport prepared food, produce, bulk food or meat from a department within a store to the point of sale; (2) to hold prescription medication dispensed from a pharmacy; or (3) to segregate food or merchandise that could damage or contaminate other food or merchandise when placed together in a reusable bag or recycled paper bag. The ordinance would not apply to restaurants and other food service providers, allowing them to provide plastic bags to customers for prepared take-out food intended for consumption off of the food provider’s premises.

As noted above, the Proposed Ordinance would require regulated retailers to impose a mandatory charge for each paper carryout bag provided. Retail establishments would be required to keep complete an accurate record (including documents of the purchase and sale of any recycled paper bag or reusable bag) for a minimum period of three years from the date of purchase and sale. The record must be available for inspection during regular business hours by any County employee authorized to enforce this part at no cost to the County. The charge would be retained by the affected stores to compensate the stores for increased costs related to compliance with the ordinance, actual costs associated with providing recyclable paper carryout bags or reusable bags, and costs associated with a store’s educational materials or education campaign encouraging the use of reusable bags.

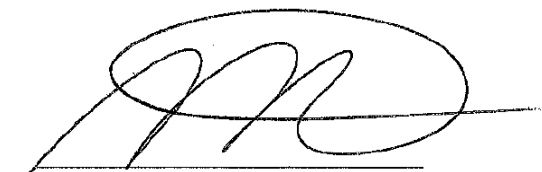
REVIEW PERIOD: As specified by the State CEQA Guidelines, the Notice of Preparation will be circulated for a 30-day review period. The Lead Agency welcomes agency and public input during this period regarding the scope and content of environmental information that must be included in the Draft EIR. **Responses to this Notice of Preparation may be submitted, in writing, by 5:30 p.m. on May 6, 2012, to:**

Camille M. Leung, Planner
Planning and Building Department
455 County Center, Second Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063
cleung@smcgov.org
(650) 363-1826

¹ Bags made with at least 90% starch from renewable resources such as corn, potato, tapioca, or wheat, or from polyesters, manufactured from hydrocarbons, or starch–polyester blends.

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS: Scoping meetings will be held during the comment period to take comments related to the scope of the environmental issues to be analyzed within the Draft EIR. The dates, times, and locations of the scoping meeting are listed below.

April 18, 2012 6:00 P.M.	Half Moon Bay	Ted Adcock Community/Senior Center Sun Room 535 Kelly Avenue Half Moon Bay, CA
April 19, 2012 5:30 P.M.	San Mateo	San Mateo Public Library Oak Room 55 West Third Ave San Mateo, CA
April 25, 2012 6:00 P.M.	Mountain View	City Council Chambers 500 Castro Street Mountain View, CA
April 26, 2012 6:00 P.M.	South San Francisco	Municipal Services Building 33 Arroyo Drive South San Francisco, CA
May 2, 2012 6:00 P.M.	Campbell	Campbell Library 77 Harrison Avenue Campbell, CA
May 3, 2012 2:00 P.M.	Milpitas	Barbara Lee Senior Center 40 North Milpitas Blvd, Rm 140 Milpitas, CA
May 3, 2012 6:00 P.M.	Redwood City	Redwood City Library 1044 Middlefield Rd Redwood City, CA



 Dean D. Peterson, PE, REHS
 Director, Environmental Health Services
 County of San Mateo Health System

3/30/12

 Date