



# CONSIDERATION OF FOODWARE AND LITTER REDUCTION ORDINANCE

Climate Action  
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# BACKGROUND

- 2011 study of Bay Area street litter in areas impacting runoff into San Francisco Bay found that 67% of all the 12,000 litter items counted were single-use food or beverage packaging.
- 2017 Russian River Watershed analysis of trash in the Russian River revealed that of the total litter items collected (2,578) over sixty percent (60%) were single-use plastics of some variety (plastic wrappers, plastic bags, Styrofoam food packaging, lids/straws, etc.).
- In 2019, Santa Rosa Stormwater & Creeks cleanup programs removed 1,031 cubic yards of trash deposited into our storm drain system or active channels of our creeks

# BACKGROUND

- The practice of freely giving out single-use plastic service ware encourages customers and food vendors to pay little attention to the quantity of disposable packaging products they consume and the associated environmental impacts.
- City Council adopted Santa Rosa Zero Waste Master Plan in January 2020 and a Food Ware Ordinance was one of the Plan's central strategy recommendations.

# MODEL ORDINANCE

- Zero Waste Sonoma had developed a model ordinance for member jurisdictions to consider for adopted titled *Ordinance to Prohibit Use and Sale of Disposable Food Service Ware and Other Products Containing Polystyrene Foam*.

## The model Ordinance addresses five areas:

1. Prohibits polystyrene foam food ware distributed by food and beverage providers
2. Prohibits polystyrene foam food ware and specified polystyrene foam products sold by retail stores
3. Requires food/beverage providers and special events to use compostable or recyclable disposable food service ware
4. Requires food/beverage providers to provide single-use straws, lids, cutlery and to-go condiment packages only upon request
5. Encourages use of reusables

# SUPPLEMENTARY POLICY MEASURES

## FOLLOW UP

- Certain jurisdictions have instituted aggressive single-use food ware measures (i.e. Berkeley, San Francisco, etc.)
- Climate Action Subcommittee was interested in pursuing an aggressive approach and requested staff come back with more information
- “Compostable” plastics are not accepted by our local compost facilities (Ukiah, Napa, Richmond)
- Jurisdictions that have passed these ordinances found to potentially be “greenwashing” and not being completely authentic with their communities

# ANALYSIS

- Moving to fully compostable food ware in Santa Rosa not feasible because the facilities that process our compost do not accept synthetic materials like Polylactic Acid (PLA) or Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) Substances.
- PLA and PFAS act as a grease/liquid proofing agent for food containers. Allow bowls, cups, containers, etc. to hold hot, wet or greasy foods without falling apart.
- PLA are made from fermented plant starch (usually corn)
- PFAS are a family of thousands of chemicals used in a wide array of consumer goods

# ANALYSIS

- PLA's and PFAS products are screened out of the composting process at the facilities Santa Rosa delivers organic materials
- These products do not breakdown/decompose in the regular commercial composting cycle (45-60 days)
- Compost containing any synthetic materials (i.e. PLA or PFAS) can no longer be marketed and sold as “organic” compost which significantly reduces the resale value

# POLICY SUGGESTIONS MOVING FORWARD

- Move forward with the model Zero Waste Sonoma Ordinance with a few suggested policy additions:
  1. Food vendors that allow self-bussing at dine-in food service facilities must provide three-bin color-coded receptacles (blue, green, gray/black) for customers to separate their recycling, organics and landfill waste. Clear and visible signage must be posted above and/or on each receptacle
  2. Food vendors offering onsite dining may only use reusable (durable/washable) food ware to service customers eating on the premises

# POLICY SUGGESTIONS MOVING FORWARD

- Proposed effective date of January 1, 2022 which would provide adequate time for food service providers to adapt to the regulations and provide staff ample time to communicate with impacted businesses
- Continue to monitor the marketplace for new compostable food ware options and potential supplements to the reusable food ware component

# QUESTIONS?