


City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 18, 2009

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF AN APPLICATION FOR THE USE OF STATE FUNDS THAT WERE APPROPRIATED TO THE CITY FOR PLASTIC BAG RECYCLING BY THE 2009 VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ISSUE: Consideration of an application for the use of State funds that were appropriated to the City for Plastic Bag Recycling by the 2009 Virginia General Assembly.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council authorize the City Manager to:

- (1) Submit an application for the use of \$10,000 in FY 2010 funding to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality for the implementation of a pilot plastic bag recycling and education program; and
- (2) Execute all necessary documents that may be required under this program.

DISCUSSION: Plastic Bag Recycling grant funds were included as an amendment to the State budget by the Virginia General Assembly in lieu of the enactment of legislation banning the use of disposable plastic bags. A proposal to ban such bags had been included in the City's legislative package at the request of Councilmember Lovain. The City must submit a scope of work, including strategies to increase plastic bag recycling, to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality in order to receive the funds. Projects proposed will need to involve the actual collection and recycling of plastic bags. In addition, measurement provisions must be included that will demonstrate the effectiveness of the program. Staff has discussed the following proposed scope of work with the funding agency and has been told that it is acceptable.

The scope of work includes the following major activities:

- Survey local retail stores to determine how many have a plastic bag collection program and determine a baseline for their plastic bag recycling.
- Partner with private retail stores to start plastic bag recycling programs.
- Create pilot plastic bag collection points in City buildings.
- Sponsor a plastic bag collection contest in schools.
- Partner with private retail stores to sponsor a media campaign which includes:
 - A Comcast commercial encouraging residents to “Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle Plastic Bags.”
 - A DASH Bus poster encouraging residents to “Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle Plastic Bags.”
 - A poster, to be placed in public buildings and private retail stores, encouraging residents to “Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle Plastic Bags.”
- Create and distribute a postcard to encourage and remind curbside solid waste customers that plastic bags are recyclable through the City’s curbside recycling program, as many City residents are unaware that the City’s curbside recycling program accepts plastic bags.
- Measure the increase in the number of plastic bags collected for recycling during the campaign from the activities listed above.

FISCAL IMPACT: All activities described in the Scope of Work will be fully funded by the \$10,000 grant. No City matching funds or additional City staff will be required for the project.

STAFF:

Emily Baker, Acting Director, T&ES

Doug McCobb, Deputy Director/Maintenance and Solid Waste, T&ES

Alton Weaver, Division Chief/Solid Waste, T&ES

Stacy Herring, Residential Recycling Coordinator, T&ES