



MEMORANDUM

P.O. Box 4100 ♦ FRISCO, COLORADO 80443

TO: MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL
FROM: HILARY SUEOKA, ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM COORDINATOR
RE: PAY-AS-YOU-THROW AND UNIVERSAL RECYCLING ORDINANCE
DATE: DECEMBER 14, 2021

Summary and Background: Summit County's communitywide goal is to increase landfill diversion to 40% by 2035, a goal set in 2015 by the Zero Waste Task Force (ZWTF). The ZWTF is a local stakeholder group that advises the Summit County Resource Allocation Park (SCRAP) and High Country Conservation Center (HC3) staff. The Task Force is comprised of local government elected officials and staff, waste haulers, large and small businesses and community members.

Since the Strong Future ballot measure passed in 2018, new programs have included opening the Silverthorne recycling center, creating a public marketing and outreach campaign, adding glass recycling stations throughout the community, offering free food scrap drop off for residents and providing free mattress recycling. Despite these new programs, our diversion rate remains approximately 20%. While we expect the newly created programs to increase recycling slightly in coming years, Pay as You Throw (PAYT) and Universal Recycling Ordinances (URO) dramatically increase recycling in communities. The Zero Waste Task Force identified PAYT as a community priority to increase local diversion. HC3 applied for and received a grant in 2021 from the state of Colorado to pursue PAYT and URO in Summit County.

The goal is to develop consistent recycling ordinances (PAYT and URO) across all local government jurisdictions, as well as create an implementation plan. The ordinances and plan will be created by engaging local stakeholders to ensure the plan is tailored for our mountain community. HC3 hired LBA Associates to lead the stakeholder process. Jen Schenk from HC3 will be presenting at the December 14 work session.

Analysis: PAYT is a utility model used for waste – the more waste that is generated, the more a person pays for service. It can be compared to your energy or water bill, the more you use, the more you pay. This provides an economic incentive to waste less and recycle more. Currently, residents pay a flat rate for trash services with an additional fee for recycling, so there is no price signal to reduce waste. A PAYT policy would require that each hauler offer three different trash bin sizes to residents, and that all residents receive a recycling bin as part of their service. Residents who choose smaller trash bins will pay less than those who choose larger trash bins. Because all residents will receive the recycling bin at no additional cost, the policy provides an incentive to recycle more.

On the commercial side, businesses and multi-family properties generally pay based on volume and frequency of pick up, so PAYT is inherently built into commercial service and not needed as a policy. In order to increase diversion rates for commercial entities, universal recycling mandates become the primary strategy. Many Summit County residents and visitors lack access to recycling, and some businesses are currently not recycling. Universal recycling policies generally require that all businesses and multi-family properties have recycling collection service. These strategies as well as Task Force recommendations will be outlined at the work session.

Due to Council's forward thinking changes to the Unified Development Code in 2020, equal space for trash and recycling in new dumpster enclosures is already required. This will ease the barrier of inadequate space to URO adoption in newer properties, or those who have chosen to comply with code retroactively. Furthermore, the option to reduce number of existing parking spaces to retrofit with the new dumpster enclosure requirements is a unique incentive that may additionally aid the transition to URO.

While the aim is to implement the policies uniformly across the county, Frisco may have unique challenges that could be addressed in this process including a requirement or incentive for wildlife resistant bins.

Financial Impact: There is no financial impact from this Work Session item at this time.

Alignment with Strategic Plan: One of the Council's Environmental Stewardship Goals is to implement the Climate Action Plan, which lists PAYT (aka as "Save-As-You-Recycle") as a Waste Strategy. URO aligns with Council's environmental stewardship goals to increase waste diversion at businesses.

Environmental Sustainability: Approval of these policies would advance environmental sustainability community-wide and align with the Town's Community Plan Guiding Principle 6: Sustainable Environment and more specifically, 6.1A Support implementation of the Climate Action Plan and 100% renewable energy initiatives.

Staff Recommendation: HC3 will provide Council with an overview of the proposed program recommendations and to solicit Council's feedback. HC3 will review the proposed implementation timeline and highlight some of the barriers and potential solutions identified by the Task Force. A proposed budget for implementation as well as a refined education and outreach plan will be presented at a later work session. Staff and the project team would like Council's input on the direction of the policy proposal. There is no additional action requested by Council at this time.

Approved By:

Tony O'Rourke, Town Manager
Leslie Edwards, Finance Director
Don Reimer, Community Development Director

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – HC3 Presentation