

# Seattle City Council

Civil Rights, Utilities, Economic  
Development & Arts Committee  
Seattle Public Utilities

## Seattle Bag Ordinance Proposed Revisions

*September 23, 2016*

# Background

- 2011 ordinance banning single-use and biodegradable carryout bags
- Requires minimum charge of \$.05 for paper bags
- No charge for customers who are in food assistance programs
- Required paper bag charge sunsets December 31, 2016

# Proposed Revisions

- Removes sunset date for \$.05 minimum charge requirement for paper bags
  - Important to retailers to offset their costs for paper bags
  - Serves as signal to customers to use reusable bags and reduce use of “single-use” bags
- New requirements address contamination from plastic bags in compost

# Contamination

## Compost



## Recyclables



# Confusing terms, Look-alike Bags and Greenwashing

- What does the coloration of bags mean?
- What does “eco” “bio” and leaf and tree symbols mean?



- Greenwashing: degradable, decomposable, biodegradable, etc.

# Look-alike Bags in Cart

## September 15, 2016



# Proposed Revisions

- Non-compostable bags provided to customers must not be tinted green or brown
  - Such as produce bags
- Compostable bags provided to customers must be tinted green or brown and must be labeled compostable
- Bags provided to customers cannot be labeled biodegradable, degradable, decomposable or similar terms
- Establishes definition for compostable