

Glendale Plastic Waste Stakeholder Engagement Results

Round 1 Survey/Stakeholder Engagement Report

Introduction

In December 2023, ReCREATE Waste Collaborative (ReCREATE) began stakeholder engagement to solicit feedback from the business community about potential policy details related to the Plastic Waste Reduction Ordinance and gather data to be analyzed for future outreach efforts.

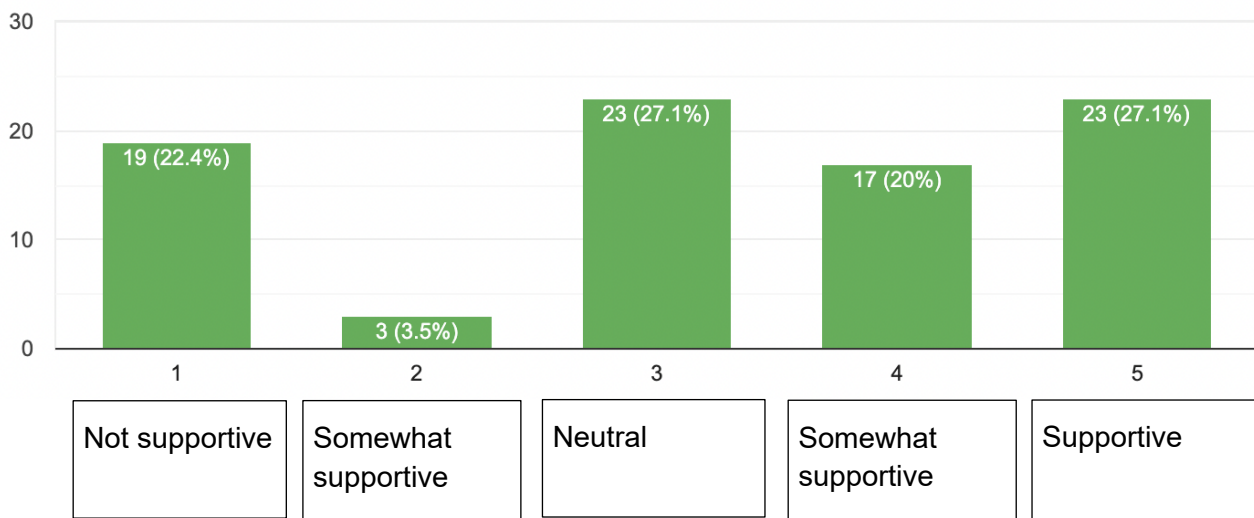
As part of this engagement, ReCREATE visited 139 businesses and conducted 89 surveys with business managers and owners, and additionally followed up the in-person visits with emails and phone calls. With 219 points of contact, Glendale businesses were educated on the specifics of the proposed ordinance and the details of the recently passed polystyrene ban. Each business was provided with an outreach packet that included a City of Glendale Purchasing Guide of ordinance-approved products and resources for financial and technical assistance.

The sections below provide a summary of stakeholder feedback received during the process.

SURVEY RESULTS

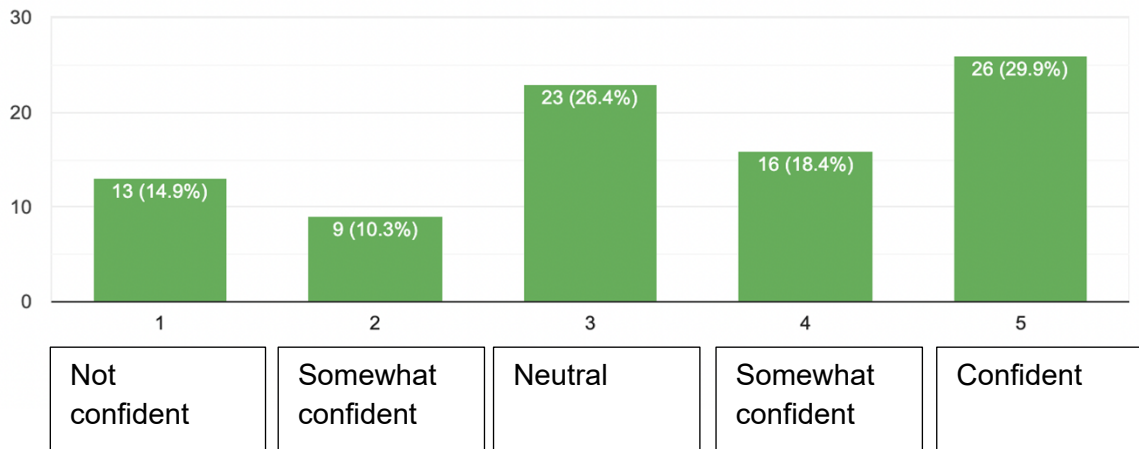
On a scale of 1-5, 1 being not supportive at all and 5 being very supportive, how supportive are you of the City of Glendale Plastic Waste Reduction policy?

85 responses



On a scale of 1-5, 1 being not confident at all and 5 being very confident, how confident are you in your ability to implement the policy details in your business?

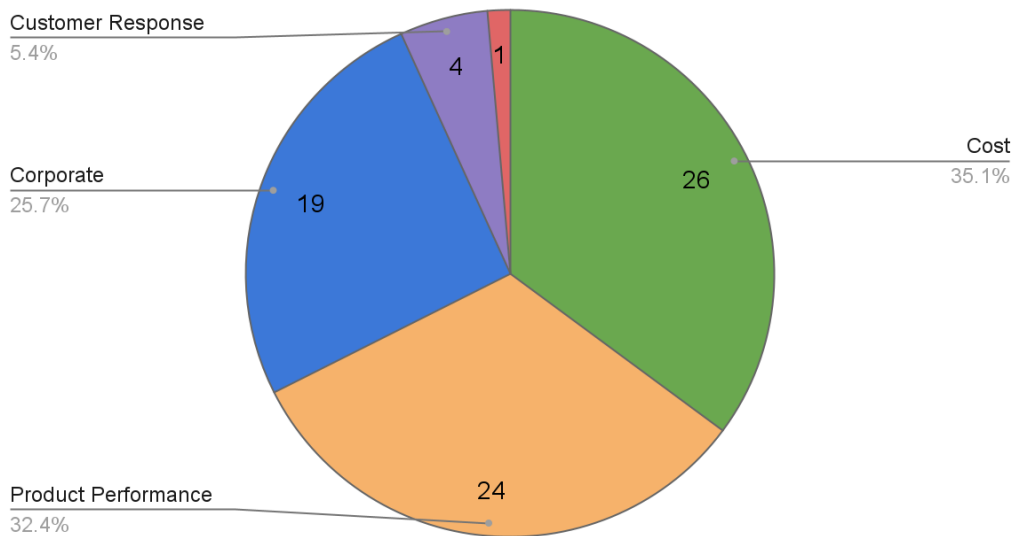
87 responses



Reasons for being NOT supportive

1. Cost **26**
2. Product performance **24**
3. Corporate structure **19**
4. Customer response **4**
5. Health concerns **1**

Reasons for NOT being supportive



COST OF IMPLEMENTATION

- Compostable takeoutware is more costly than plastics
- Adding a dishwasher or paying for an employee to wash dishes would be costly
- Currently operating on thin profit margins
- Though reusables save money over time, some dine-in restaurants have up to 80% of their business set up as delivery/to-go
- Monetary effects of Covid are still impacting the businesses

PRODUCT PERFORMANCE

- Compostables do not hold oils, liquids, or sauces well
- Compostables do not hold heat well
- Bread loaves need to be sold in plastic bags to not go stale
- Deli items and bulk items must be displayed in plastic so customers can see the items*
- Deli meats and cheeses have very few compostable options that perform well
- Beverages need plastic to hold liquid

*In communities with a dense population of immigrants, there can be a lack of English-reading clientele that cannot judge what a product is simply by a label. They will often open up containers that are not clear so they can see the food item inside. This leads to product spoilage.

CUSTOMER RESPONSE

- Compostable straws are universally disdained
- Customers will complain if their food or beverage is in a container that leaks or does not hold heat (especially for delivery)
- Many coffee shops offer reusables, but customers will want to take the rest home with them in a disposable- the cafe then has to wash a reusable *and* give a disposable for one drink
- Customers need to be educated on why the business is making the change

HEALTH CONCERNS

- Most businesses are unaware of AB 619
- They believe the health department will site them for using a customer's cup/container
- Employees need training on health and safety protocols around taking reusables

CORPORATE STRUCTURE

- Indicates chain restaurants that must make all product decisions on a corporate level

Reason(s) for being VERY supportive

1. Good for the planet*

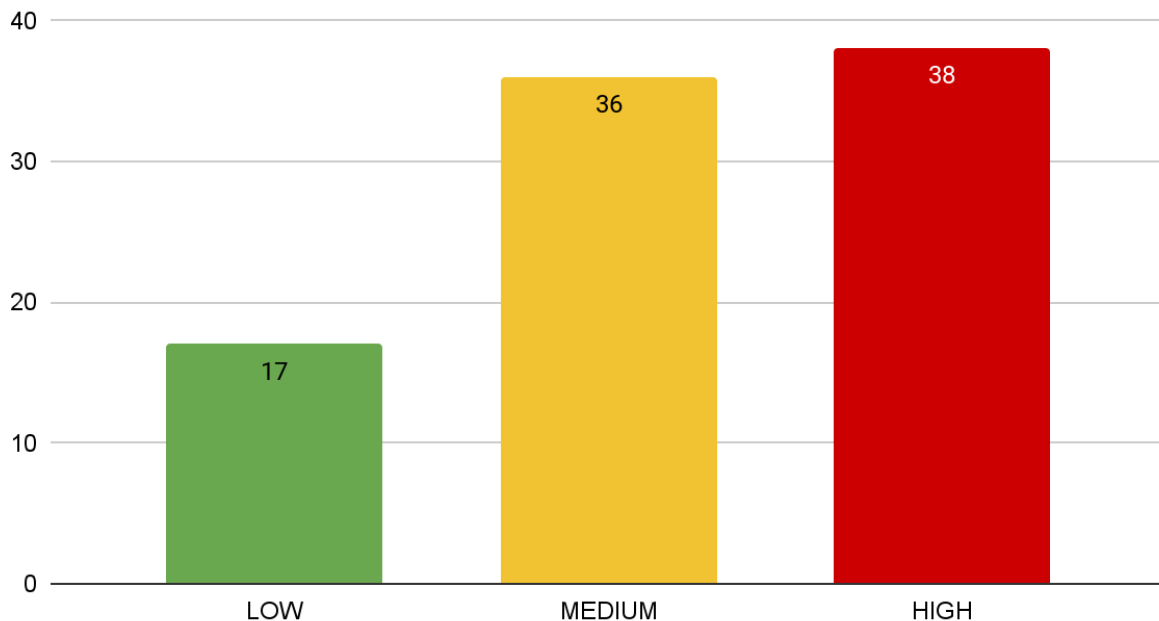
*this was the only reason given for ordinance support

POLICY THAT BUSINESSES COMMITTED TO

1. None **47**
2. Compostables **12**
3. Accept customer reusables **12**
4. Reusables **9**
5. Stopping use of polystyrene **6**

CURRENT PRIORITY RATING

Compliance Assistance Needed



1. **LOW** (level of assistance needed) **17**
2. **MEDIUM** (level of assistance needed) **36**
3. **HIGH** (level of assistance needed) **38**

LOW level of assistance means the establishment has already implemented most aspects of the ordinance (reusables or compostables).

MEDIUM level assistance is representative of the businesses that have either compostables or reusables, but not both.

HIGH level of assistance indicates that the establishment has no reusables or compostables and may still be using polystyrene.

RESTAURANTS STILL USING POLYSTYRENE/UNAWARE OF ORDINANCE

13 out of 89

DISHWASHERS

1. Have one **23**
2. Do not have one **13**
3. Unknown **53**

Please note, all of these restaurants visited do have some way to wash dishes (three sink system), even if it is by hand.

THREE-STREAM WASTE BINS

Out of 89 businesses, only 5 could be confirmed as having a three-stream waste system in front-of-house for compliance with AB 827.

OTHER OBSERVATIONS

- There was a minimal amount of pushback to the .25 cent cup fee, but the push back that we did receive was extremely strong.
- There is confusion or pushback on what is considered “single-use.”
- A good number of restaurants mentioned that their trash hauler co-mingles the three-stream pick up.
- There was some frustration that retail stores located in Glendale still offer polystyrene packaging for sale (Smart and Final etc).
- Would condiment packets be included in the ban?
- Businesses would like some clarity on how long they will have to use up stock they already have purchased.
- There is concern that if Glendale’s restrictions are more stringent than neighboring cities that customers will avoid Glendale restaurants.
- There was positive feedback given that business owners appreciate Glendale’s cap on 3rd-party delivery fees.
- It has become very clear that the majority of the food packaging concerns are due to the high rates or take-out and/or third-party deliveries.
- Resource guide was very helpful/popular with business owners

RECOMMENDATIONS

ROUND 2 SURVEY

(To be conducted after educational webinar and social media outreach.)

- Track how the numbers have changed
- Add this question (rank 1-4): What would you prefer the City of Glendale assist with:
 - Reusable Implementation Assistance
 - Dishwasher Installation Assistance
 - Sourcing of Ordinance-approved Products
 - Customer Education
- Confirm/educate three-stream waste system
- Confirm dishwasher/no dishwasher
- Confirm use of polystyrene
- Update businesses on where the ordinance stands

Provide businesses with an updated/enhanced resource guide.

- Include Info sheet to comply with AB 619 signed off by health department (San Francisco model)
- Update polystyrene flier to reflect that the ordinance has gone into effect

POLICY

- Doggy bags (AKA any food that a customer takes home after a meal) should immediately transition to compostable (no need to hold heat or have quality performance)
- Consider adjusting policy language to match similar nearby cities (Example: Burbank)

EDUCATION/OUTREACH

- Accepting customers reusables should be universally and immediately implemented
 - Educate businesses and customers on health and safety standards
 - Educate businesses and customers on AB 619
 - Will **save** the business money
- Providing microgrants for dishwashers or compostables purchasing (San Francisco model)
- Promotion of rebates from Sustainable Works
- Education on the definition of “reusables,” i.e: a plastic water bottle that you refill a few times or a to-go box that you clean and reuse one or two times is not a reusable product. (additional education opportunities)

Webinar/Social Media/Print Strategy

This section includes content recommendations for inclusion in upcoming webinar(s), social media and print campaigns based on feedback from businesses.

- Educate Stakeholders on Pollution
 - Highlight current state of plastic pollution
 - How this affects health, environment, economics, and tourism for City of Glendale
 - Focus on third-party delivery statics/Encourage dine-in eating
 - Describe details of proposed ordinance
 - Any changes that may have happened since first round of surveys
 - Educate businesses on resources available to them
 - Plastic Free Restaurants
 - ReThink Disposables
 - Purchasing Guide
 - Green Business
 - GreenScreen
 - Any additional resources Glendale determines will be available
 - Presence/outreach at community events
 - Q&A