



Sunnyvale

# Reducing Single-Use Plastics: Phase 2

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Study Session, 9/10/2024



# Agenda

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1 Background

2 Data Collection and Pilot

3 Staff Recommendations

4 Discussion

# Single-Use Plastics Background

- 17% of Commercial waste stream (by weight) is plastic, most is single-use
- >90% plastic isn't recyclable, creates litter/pollution
- 2022: Council approved Phase 1: foodware ordinance
- Council asked Staff to return with additional strategies



# Data Collection (Surveys) and Pilot

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- Business survey
- Pilot:
  - ◆ Mini-grants (\$300) for 19 participants
  - ◆ Reusables (14)
  - ◆ Compostables (5)
  - ◆ Reusables To-Go (1)



# Business Survey (Food/Bev Businesses)

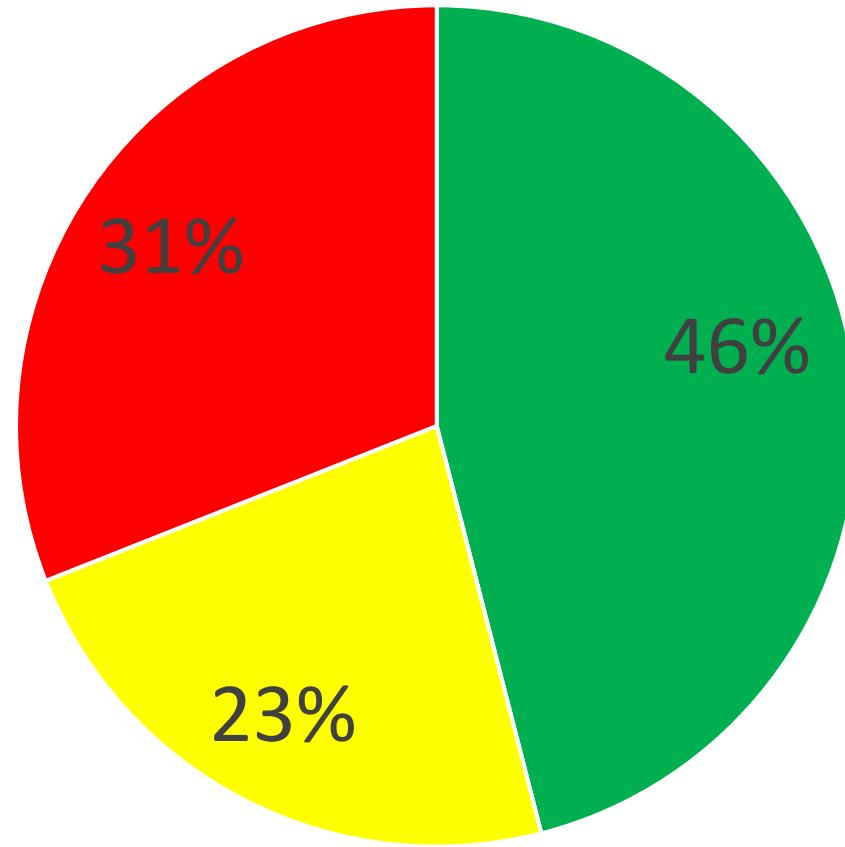
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- Survey – 87 responses, 19% sample size of total
- Most had seating capacity 26-50
- 2/3 offer both dine-in and to-go for customers
- 98% have mechanized or 3-sink dishwasher



# Foodware Usage for Dine-In Customers

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■ All Reusables

■ Reusable/Disposable mix

■ All Disposables

# Business Survey Results - Barriers and Benefits of Reusables

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## Barriers

- Half of responders listed these as top barriers:
  - ◆ Staffing for dishwashing
  - ◆ Space for dishwasher and reusables

## Benefits

- Two-thirds listed these as top benefits:
  - ◆ Better food presentation
  - ◆ Waste reduction
  - ◆ Cost savings



# Other Business Survey Takeaways

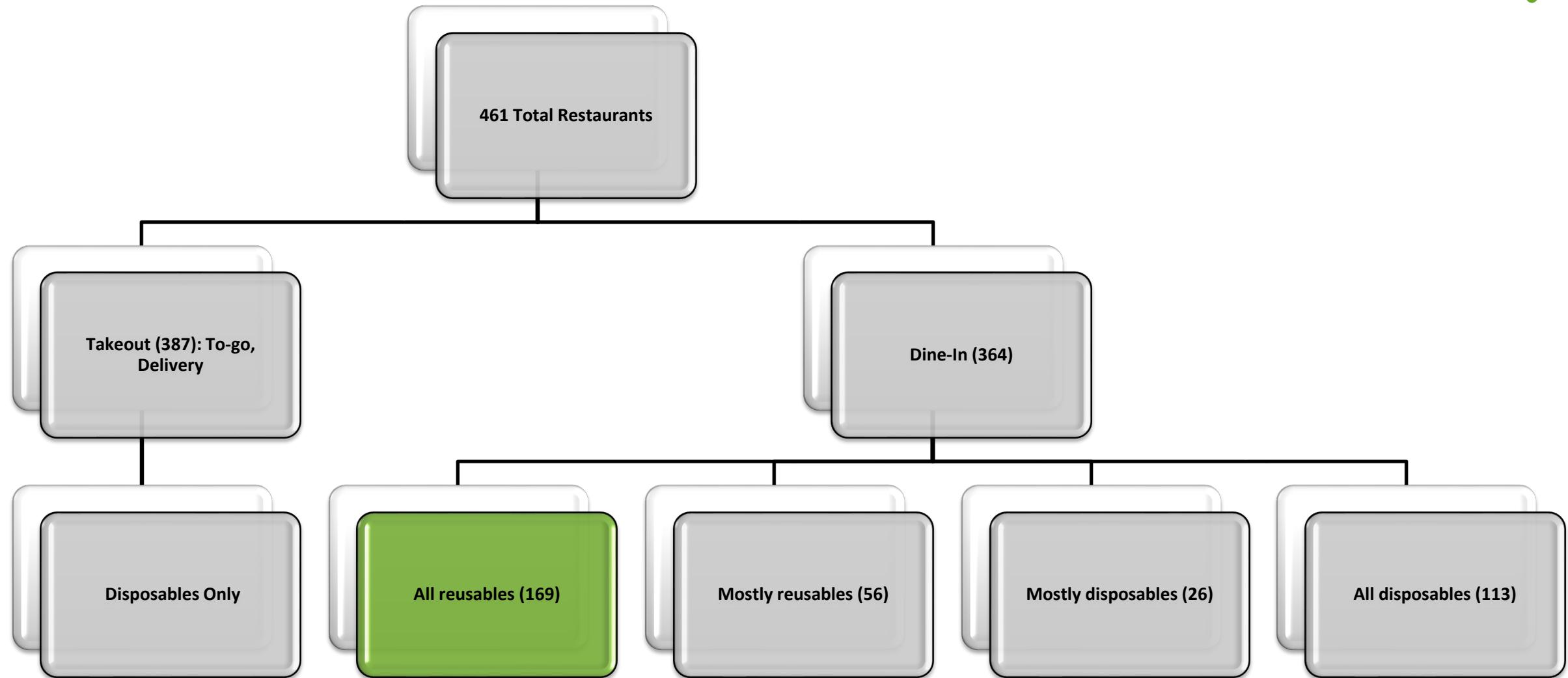
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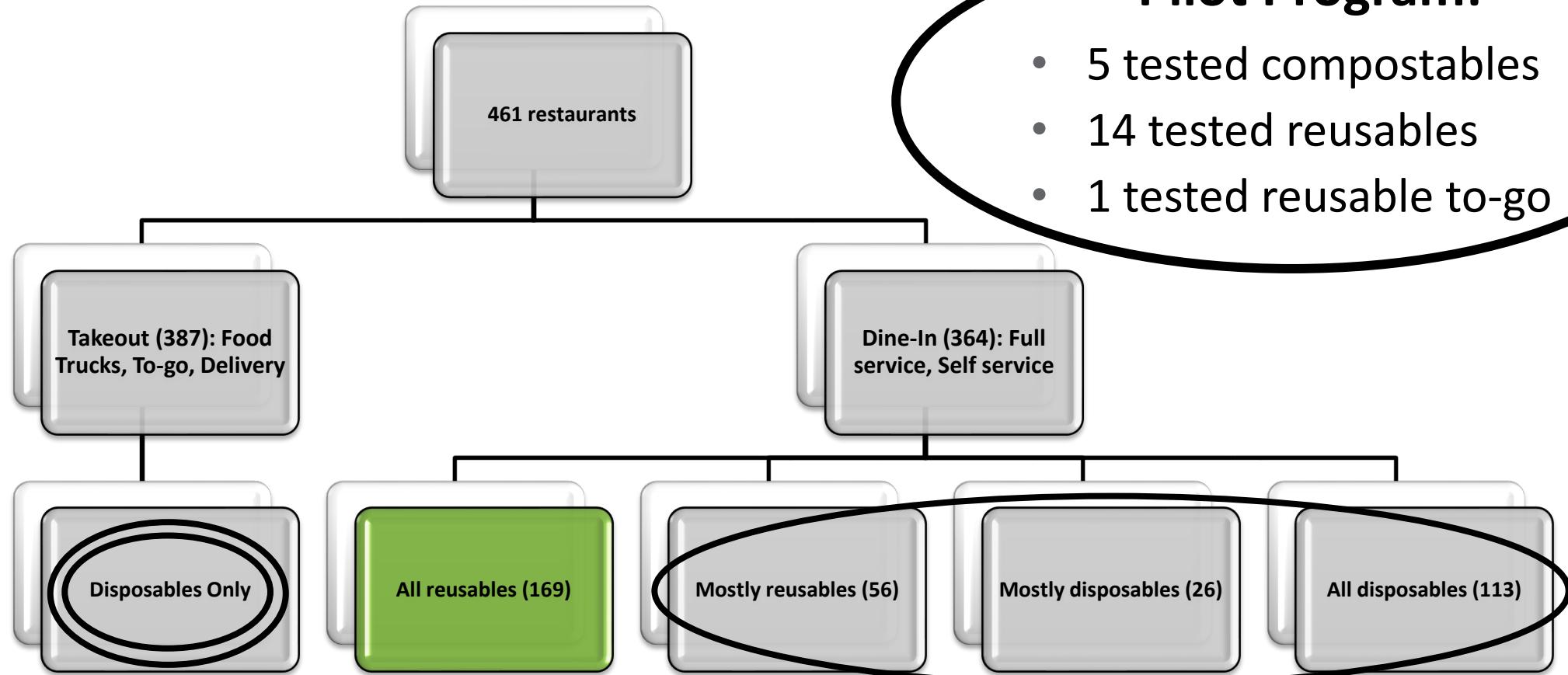
- What would help you switch to reusables?
  - ◆ Grant or rebate to purchase dishware
  - ◆ Local ordinance requiring it
- 75% "yes" or "maybe" to trying compostable foodware
- Fees for disposables (i.e. cup charges) and discounts for reusables were unpopular
- Roughly half open to customer BYO for cups, containers

# Overview of Sunnyvale Food/Bev Businesses

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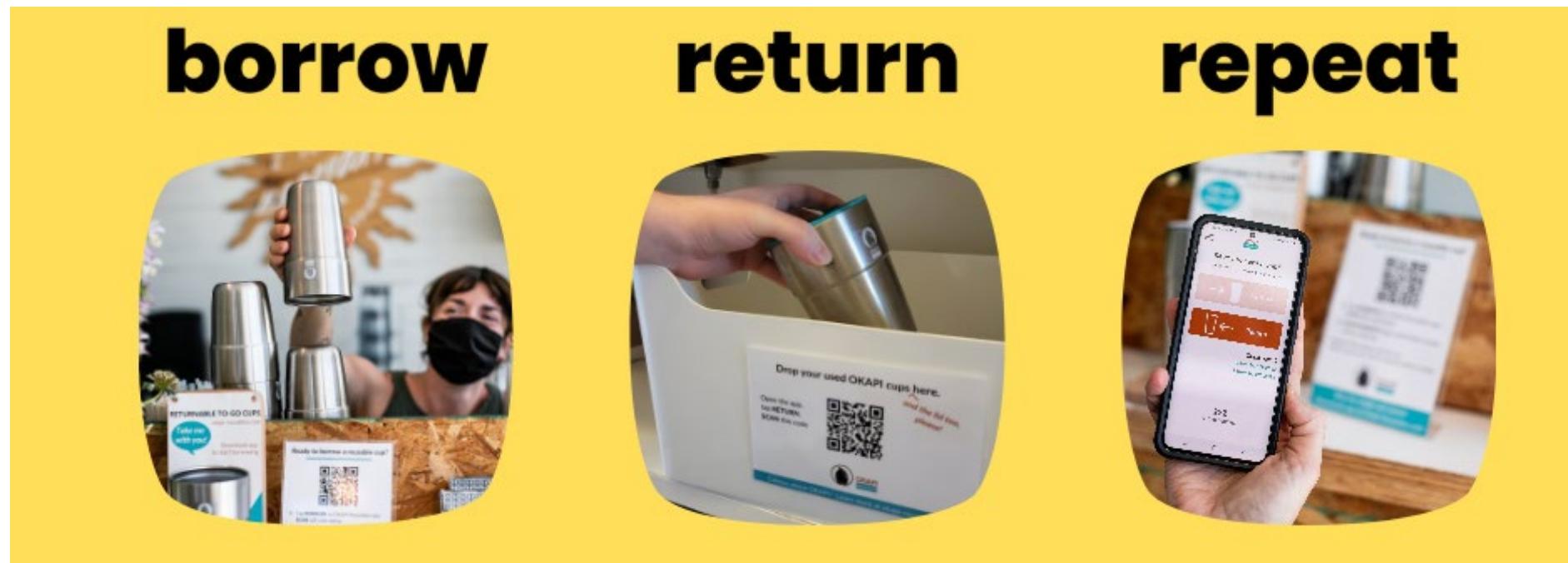
# Pilot Program Businesses



# Reusables To-Go (3rd Party Provider)

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- Reusable to-go cup borrowing program
- Worked with Okapi for pilot; secured one boba shop
- Potential to conduct more pilots



# Pilot Program Outcomes

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## Restaurants switching to reusables:

- Annual savings from not purchasing disposables: \$1,600 to \$18,000
- Reduction 590 – 1,650 lbs. garbage annually

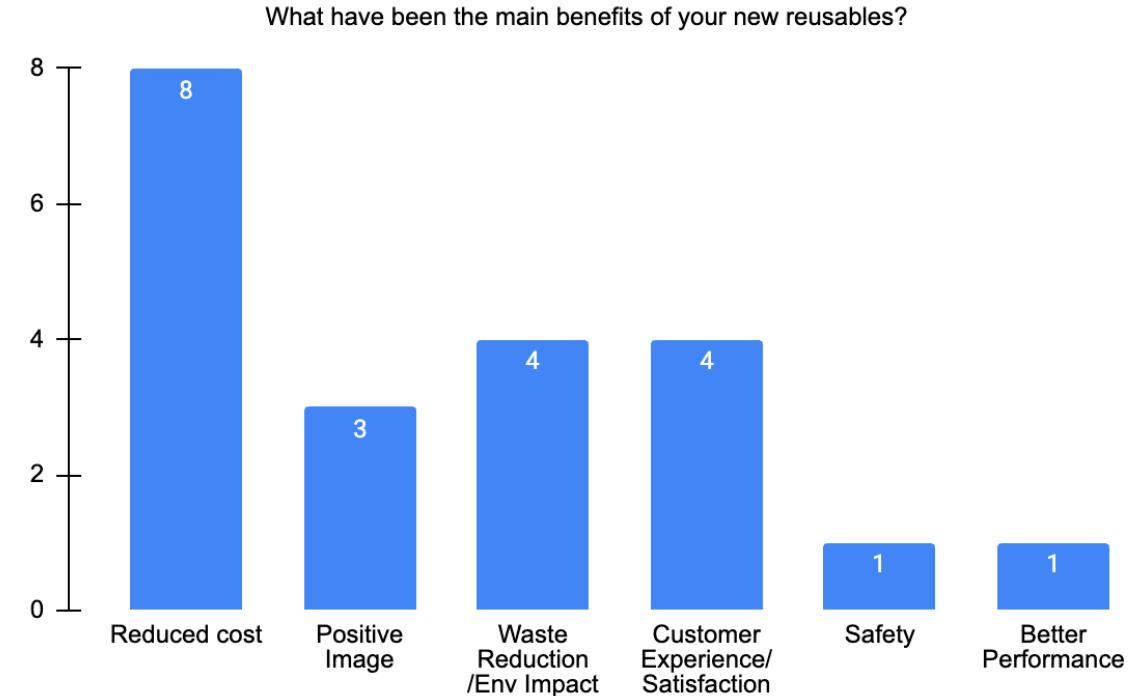
## Switching to compostables:

- No reduction in cost or garbage

# What we learned from the pilot

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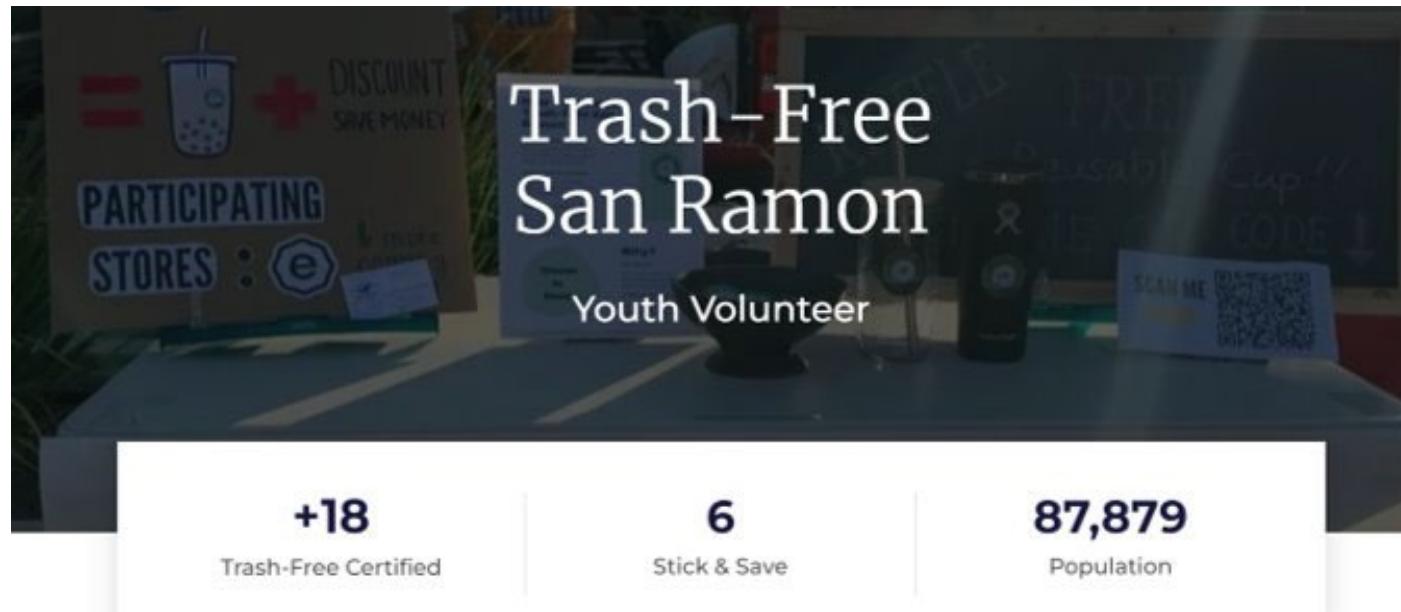
- 83% participants still using reusables
- 64% want to swap out more disposables
- 17% indicated increase in dishwashing, not a deterrent.
- Other challenges: plate breakage, customers throwing away dishware



# Lessons from other cities

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- Foodware ordinances in Berkeley, Cupertino, Santa Cruz
- Enforcement is a challenge; cities lack resources
- Charging for disposables isn't successful
- Education (for public & restaurant owners) is a priority



# Related Legislation / Initiatives

- AB 1276
- SB 54
- Regional Reuse campaigns



AB 1276

**In compliance with  
State law, you must ask  
for these items if you want  
them with your order:**

Utensils  
Chopsticks  
Condiment cups/packets  
Straws  
Stirrers  
Splash sticks  
Cocktail sticks



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# Staff Recommendations (3-year plan)

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1. Mini grants to restaurants to purchase reusables
2. Focused outreach to affect resident behavior change
3. City walks the walk
4. No compostables requirements for now
5. No ordinance for now

# Mini Grants

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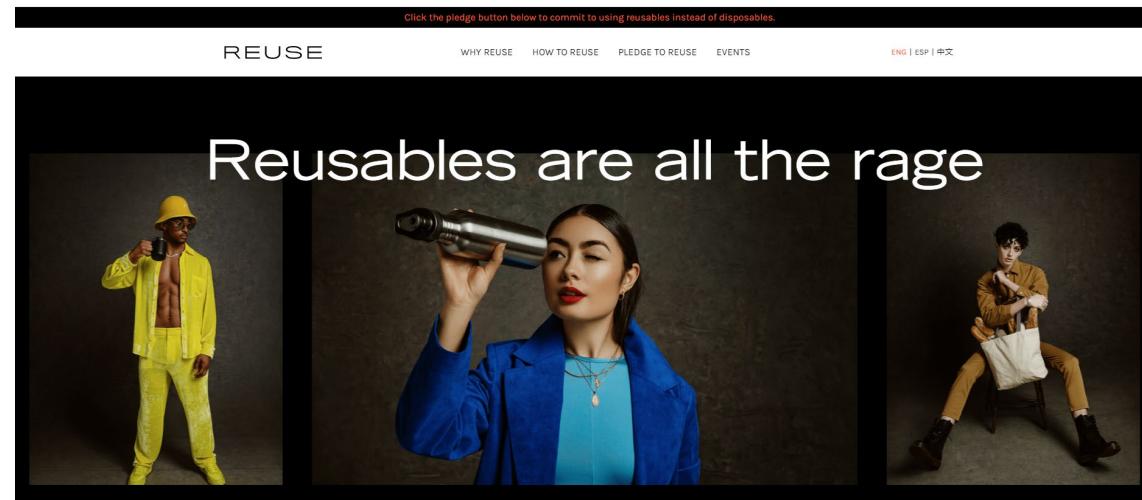
- Investment of \$300 (partial switch) to \$500 (full switch) per restaurant
- 195 restaurants within these categories



# Outreach campaign

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- In English, Spanish, simplified Chinese (from survey)
- Focus on “bring your own” cup/containers (giveaways)
- Messaging to reduce use of single use plastics



# Walk the Walk

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- Internal City Policy:
  - For City events, external caterers required to serve on reusables
  - Staff use reusables for internal gatherings
- Zero waste City-sponsored events (e.g. Earth Day Fair, EV Ride & Drive)



# Plan for Compostables

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- On hold until after SMaRT Station NextGen upgrades
- No reduction in cost or garbage



# No Ordinance

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- Revisit in 3 years
  - Cities with ordinances struggling to enforce
  - Restaurants need financial/technical support first



# Three Year Budget (FY 2025-2027)

Recommendation	Cost
Restaurant Mini-grants for reusables purchase	\$80,000
Consultant for mini-grant outreach	\$30,000
Consultant for Outreach Campaign	\$50,000
Reusable Giveaways	\$23,000
Dishware for City Departments	\$3,000
Reusables for catered/City-sponsored events	\$60,000
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$246,000</b>

Funds already available in Zero Waste Strategic Plan project budget

# Feedback from City Council

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- Staff recommendations
  1. Mini grants to restaurants to purchase reusables
  2. Focused outreach to affect resident behavior change
  3. City walks the walk
  4. No compostables requirements for now
  5. No ordinance for now
- Questions/Discussion



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Thank you!

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