City of Carmel
Initial Study / Environmental Checklist

1. Project title:

Single-Use Carryout Bag Ordinance

2. Lead agency/Project Sponsor name and address:

City of Carmel-by-the-Sea
P.O. Drawer G
Carmel-by-the-Sea, California 93921

3. Contact person/phone number:

Sean Conroy, Planning & Building Services Manager
(831) 620-2010
sconroy@ci.carmel.ca.us

4. Project location:

City-wide

5. General Plan designation:

All

6. Zoning:

All

7. Description of the project:

The City of Carmel-by-the-Sea is proposing to adopt an ordinance that will:

- Eliminate the use of Single-Use (primarily plastic) Carryout Bags by all retail establishments;
- Encourage the use of reusable bags; and
- Reduce the use of single-use recycled paper bags.

The ordinance prohibits any retail establishment that sells perishable or nonperishable goods including, but not limited to, clothing, food, and personal items directly to the customer, from providing a single-use carryout bag to a customer at the check stand, cash register, point of sale or other point of departure for the purpose of transporting food or merchandise out of the establishment. The ordinance allows a reusable bag and allows recycled bags with a charge.

The ordinance does allow for some exceptions for public eating establishments, non-profit charitable organizations, and for bags used to(1) transport produce, bulk food or meat from a product, bulk food or meat department within a store to the point of sale;

(2) to hold prescription medication dispensed from a pharmacy; or (3) to segregate food or merchandise that could damage or contaminate other food or merchandise when placed together in a bag. The ordinance also identifies penalties for noncompliance.

8. Surrounding land uses and setting:

The City of Carmel-by-the-Sea is located on the south end of the Monterey Peninsula, adjacent to Carmel Bay. The City is recognized as a unique small coastal community with a predominately residential village character and is approximately one-square mile in size. The City is bounded by the Pacific Ocean on the west and unincorporated Monterey County on the north, east and south. The City consists of three commercial districts and a multi-family district totaling approximately 46 acres. The commercial district contains a mix of retail, service commercial, restaurants, hotel/motel, and residential uses. The majority of the land in the City is zoned Single Family Residential and totals 345 acres. Single family dwellings are the dominant land use of properties on the periphery of the City with a small mix of multi-family, hotel/motel, and quasi-public uses. The Barnyard and Crossroads shopping centers are located to the southeast of the City limits on the east side of Highway 1.

9. Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.):

None.

10. Additional Background:

Communities throughout the state and across the country are recognizing the environmental impacts that single-use carryout bags, especially plastic bags, can have on the environment. Ordinances banning single-use bags are increasing. Single-use plastic bags are a substantial component of litter and solid waste in general. Because plastic takes a long time to break down or decompose (frequently estimated to be hundreds of years), plastic litter causes a cumulatively adverse impact on both the natural and manmade environments.

The City of Carmel has long been an advocate for environmental protection. The City's General Plan establishes a clear goal of protecting, conserving and enhancing its unique natural beauty and irreplaceable natural resources. A major City attraction is Carmel Beach and Carmel Bay, which is designated as an Area of Special Biological Significance (ASBS) by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). This is particularly relevant as plastic bags have been shown to have significant detrimental impacts on ocean wildlife and habitat.

Single-Use carryout bags, especially plastic bags, contribute to a persistent litter problem that is of growing concern for the health of waterways locally and worldwide. Marine debris (i.e., ocean pollution) has been shown to have dramatic impacts on wildlife and habitat, and most marine debris is comprised of plastic materials. An estimated 60 to 80 percent of all marine debris (and 90 percent of floating debris) is plastic. Land-based sources, such as stormwater runoff from urbanized areas, are the dominant contributor.

The 2009 *International Coastal Cleanup* (ICC) report, produced by the Ocean Conservancy, found that plastic bags were the second most common debris item collected worldwide during the annual one-day coastal cleanup event. Cigarettes and cigarette filters were the most common item littered; paper bags were the sixth most common debris item collected.

Several California cities have prepared and adopted CEQA documents related to ordinances banning single-use carryout bags including, but not limited to, the City of San Jose, the City of Manhattan Beach, the City of Monterey, the County of Santa Cruz, and the City of Sunnyvale. These documents have unanimously concluded that these ordinances will not have a significant impact on the environment.

While there are approximately 270 commercial businesses in the City, there are no large scale supermarkets or big box stores that are typically the largest providers of single-use carryout bags. Many of the retail businesses either have minimal or no single-use carryout bags such as the approximately 90 art galleries.

11. Environmental Factors Potentially Affected:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

☐ Aesthetics	☐ Agricultural Resources	☐ Air Quality
☐ Biological Resources	☐ Cultural Resources	☐ Geology / Soils
☐ Hazards & Hazardous Materials	☐ Hydrology / Water Quality	☐ Land Use / Planning
☐ Mineral Resources	☐ Noise	☐ Population
☐ Public Services	☐ Recreation	☐ Transportation / Traffic
☐ Utilities / Service Systems	☐ Mandatory Findings of Significance	

For the above referenced topics that are not checked off, there is no potential for significant environmental impact to occur from the proposed project and no further discussion in the Environmental Checklist is necessary. Based upon this analysis, many of the above topics on the checklist do not apply.

12. Determination: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation

[X] I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and this NEGATIVE DECLARATION has been prepared.

[ ] I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

[ ] I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

[ ] I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

[ ] I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Sean Conroy

_____

Printed Name For: Carmel-by-the-Sea

_____

Signature

_____

Date

Purpose of the Initial Study

The purpose of the Initial Study is to: (1) identify environmental impacts; (2) provide the lead agency with information to use as the basis for deciding whether to prepare an EIR or a Negative Declaration; (3) enable an applicant or lead agency to modify a project, mitigating adverse impacts before an EIR is required to be prepared; (4) facilitate environmental assessment early in the design of the project; (5) document the factual basis of the finding in a Negative Declaration that a project would not have a significant environmental effect; (6) eliminate needless EIRs; (7) determine whether a previously prepared EIR could be used for the project; and (8) assist in the preparation of an EIR, if required, by focusing the EIR on the effects determined to be significant, identifying the effects determined not to be significant, and explaining the reasons for determining that potentially significant effects would not be significant. Section 15063 of the CEQA Guidelines (Sections 15000–15387 of the CCR) identifies the following specific disclosure requirements for inclusion in an Initial Study:

1. A description of the project including the location of the project;
2. An identification of the environmental setting;
3. An identification of environmental effects by use of a checklist, matrix, or other method, provided that entries on a checklist or other form are briefly explained to indicate that there is some evidence to support the entries;
4. A discussion of ways to mitigate significant effects identified, if any;
5. An examination of whether the project is compatible with existing zoning, plans, and other applicable land use controls; and,
6. The name of the person or persons who prepared or participated in the initial study.

Environmental Checklist

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. AESTHETICS. Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?				X
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?				X
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?				X
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?				X

Existing Setting

Carmel-by-the-Sea is internationally recognized as a unique small coastal community with a residential village character. Early development was predominantly residential. Commercial development began as small-scale village enterprises designed to serve the needs of the local residents. Through the years, these commercial uses have expanded to cater largely to visitors.

Located adjacent to Carmel Bay with gently rising slopes, the City has conscientiously retained its residential village character in a forest setting, dominated by Monterey Pines. The special character of this residential coastal community is considered a unique asset of statewide and national significance that should be maintained as a resource both for local residents and for visitors. The incorporated limits of the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea has been designated a special community and a highly scenic area within the meaning of Coastal Act sections 30251 and 30253 and for the purposes of implementing section 30610 and corresponding regulation section 13250 of the California Code of Regulations. Carmel Bay is also considered an Area of Special Biological Significance.

Discussion

(a - c) **No Impact**

One of the primary purposes of the proposed ordinance is to reduce litter and the unsightly impacts that single-use carryout bags can have on scenic vistas, scenic resources and on the visual character of the City and its surroundings. Because single-use bags are used primarily to transport goods from a retail establishment to a home, they are likely to end up as trash after a single-use. In addition, because these bags are designed for a single-use, rather than being used over and over again, they are much more likely than reusable bags to become litter. Due to Carmel's location adjacent to the Carmel Bay ASBS, litter that ends up in the ocean is of particular concern. Adopting this ordinance would prohibit the use of plastic and other single-use carryout bags and promote the use of reusable bags thereby reducing trash and litter in the community. Therefore, the proposed ordinance will have no impact on aesthetics in the community.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS **Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):**	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(d) **No Impact** The proposed ordinance will not create a new source of light or glare and will have no impact on day or nighttime views.				
2. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES. In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				X
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				X
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use?				X
Existing Setting While Monterey County provides an extensive amount of prime agricultural land, the City of Carmel is an existing developed community with no agricultural resources. **Discussion** (a-c) **No Impact** The proposed project will have no impact on agricultural resources.				
3. AIR QUALITY. Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?			X	
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation?			X	
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions, which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone			X	

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
precursors)?				
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?				X
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?				X

Discussion

Existing Setting

Air quality is regulated by both federal and state requirements. Applicable laws include the Federal Clean Air Act, the California Clean Air Act, State Executive Orders S-3-05, and S-20-06, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, California Senate Bill 97 and the State of California Office of the Attorney General Guidance Letter on California Environmental Quality Act, Addressing Global Warming Impacts at the Local Agency Level.

The City of Carmel is located in the North Central Coast Air Basin (NCCAB), which is under the jurisdiction of the Monterey Bay Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD). The NCCAB is currently not in attainment for the federal PM10 (particulate less than 10 microns in diameter) and O3. The NCCAB is in attainment of all NAAQS.

The City of Carmel is only one square mile in size with a population according to the 2000 census of 4,081. While there are approximately 270 commercial businesses in the City, there are no large scale supermarkets or big box stores that are typically the largest providers of single-use carryout bags. Many of the retail businesses either have minimal or no single-use carryout bags such as the approximately 90 art galleries.

Thresholds of Significance

For the purposes of this initial study, the following thresholds of significance would result in a significant global climate change impact:

- generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment; or
- conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs.

(a-c)**Less than Significant**

The City is unaware of any identified ozone depleting chemicals associated with bag life cycle assessments (LCA's). Since the proposed ordinance would establish a fee for the distribution of recycled paper bags, it is assumed that plastic bags would not be replaced by paper bags on a one to one ratio. It is also assumed that any emissions resulting from a change from a plastic to a recycled content paper or reusable bag would be negligible since fewer bags presumably will be needed and the requirement for recycled content bags will result in fewer emissions than those using virgin materials. As a result, the proposed ordinance will have a less than significant impact on ozone and PM10.

Various LCAs of single-use carryout bags have been completed in support of bag regulation policies worldwide. Most LCAs try to account for GHG emissions that result from all stages of

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS **Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):**	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
product life, from product creation to disposal. LCAs, however, do not have consistent methodologies, and frequently use assumptions that differ from each other, and from local conditions. According to some LCAs prepared by consultants to the plastic bag industry, single-use paper bags generally result in greater GHG emissions when compared to single-use plastic bags and reusable bags. This is attributed to several factors, including the manufacturing process and the effect of paper bag weight and bulk on the transportation process, plus the eventual degradation of paper bags in landfills. The findings from other LCAs seem to differ depending on the study, and no comprehensive comparison of the studies has been made by a neutral third party and will not be attempted in this initial study. A common criticism of plastic bag bans it that they would lead to an increase in single-use paper bag use. An increase in single-use paper bag use could then lead to incremental increases in GHG gas emissions associated with their manufacture and delivery. Of course, a substantial decrease in greenhouse gas emissions associated with the elimination of plastic bag manufacturing and delivery to the city would be occurring simultaneously. Since the ordinance promotes reusable bags and requires a charge for recycled paper bags, paper bags will not be replacing plastic bags on a one to one ratio. Also Based on available information, it cannot be definitively determined what the net increases or decreases in GHG emissions would be from the proposed ordinance. However, based on the small scale of the City and the limited reach of the proposed ordinance, even if the GHG emissions did increase, any increases would be de minimis. (d-e) **No Impact** This ordinance will not impact any sensitive receptors to substantial pollution or create objectionable odors.				
4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				X
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				X
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh,				X

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS **Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):**	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?				
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?				X
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?				X
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				X
g) Will the project remove significant trees or significant groups of trees?				X
h) Will the project threaten rare and endangered species or marine animals?				X

Discussion

Existing Setting

Carmel-by-the-Sea is internationally recognized as a unique small coastal community with a residential village character. Early development was predominantly residential. Commercial development began as small-scale village enterprises designed to serve the needs of the local residents. Through the years, these commercial uses have expanded to cater largely to visitors.

Located adjacent to Carmel Bay with gently rising slopes, the City has conscientiously retained its residential village character in a forest setting, dominated by Monterey Pines. The special character of this residential coastal community is considered a unique asset of statewide and national significance that should be maintained as a resource both for local residents and for visitors. The incorporated limits of the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea has been designated a special community and a highly scenic area within the meaning of Coastal Act sections 30251 and 30253 and for the purposes of implementing section 30610 and corresponding regulation section 13250 of the California Code of Regulations.

Carmel Bay is designated as an Area of Special Biological Significance (ASBS) by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). Areas of special biological significance are those areas designated by the State Water Control Board as requiring protection of species or biological communities to the extent that alteration of natural water quality is undesirable. Carmel also has three Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHA) including portions of Carmel Beach, Pescadero Canyon and Mission Trails Nature Preserve.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS **Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):**	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a-h) **No Impact** Of the two types of carryout bags currently in distribution, plastic bags pose a greater overall hazard to wildlife species. Single-use carryout bags have a much higher risk (than reusable bags) of becoming litter. Carryout bags that are disposed of as waste may still become litter, especially plastic bags. Most plastic bags do not biodegrade but instead persist in the environment, slowly breaking down through abrasion, tearing and photo degradation into toxic plastic bits that contaminate soil and water. This is of particular concern to the City based on its location adjacent to the Carmel Bay ASBS. While paper bags will usually degrade at a fast rate, plastic bags will degrade much slower. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), most plastic does not fully go away but rather breaks down into smaller and smaller pieces. Without this complete degradation, plastic bags and/or pieces of plastic bags may hurt fish, birds and mammal species within a marine environment through ingestion or entanglement. The Pacific Ocean contains a huge accumulation of debris known as the "Great Pacific Garbage Patch" which consists mostly of plastic debris. Some scientists estimate the density of plastic in this garbage patch as one million pieces of plastic per square mile. While plastic does not biodegrade, it does photo-degrade breaking down into smaller pieces which can make their way into the food chain. While the exact numbers are unknown, there are many reported instances of marine animals being injured or dying from ingesting or choking on plastic debris in the ocean. It is reasonable to conclude from such information that the presence of plastic debris in the ocean provides a hazard for marine life. This ordinance will have beneficial impacts on the City by reducing litter and protecting the Carmel Bay ASBS.				
5. CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5?				X
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to section 15064.5?				X
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?				X
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?				X
Existing Setting: The City of Carmel prides itself in its historic character. The General Plan establishes clear goals regarding the protection and enhancement of the historic character and				

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS **Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):**	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
cultural resources. The City has approximately 300 structures listed on its Inventory of Historic Resources including three properties that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. **Discussion:** (a-d) **No Impact** The proposed ordinance will not result in any impacts to Cultural Resources.				
6. GEOLOGY AND SOILS. Would the project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury or death involving:				X
• Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42?				X
• Strong seismic ground shaking?				X
• Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?				X
• Landslides?				X
b) Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?				X
c) Would the project be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?				X
d) Would the project be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?				X
e) Would the project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater.				X

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS **Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):**	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Existing Setting: California is situated in a seismically active area that lies within the California Coast Ranges geomorphic and physiographic province. The region's geology is dominated by active tectonics on the margin between the Pacific and North American tectonic plates. Regional tectonic forces generate an estimated relative motion between the North American and Pacific plates of approximately two inches per year. Faults that could present a hazard to Carmel during an earthquake event include the following active or potentially active faults: San Andreas, San Gregorio-Palo Colorado, Chupines, Navy, and Cypress Point. The San Andreas and San Gregorio faults are two dominant faults within the Monterey County region that are considered active with evidence of historic or recent movement. Landslide is a general term for the dislodgment and fall of a mass of soil or rocks along a sloped surface or for the dislodged mass itself. Landslides in Carmel area historically have been caused by waterlogged soil rather than ground shaking due to an earthquake. **Discussion** (a-e) **No Impact** The proposed ordinance will not result in any impacts with respect to Geology and Soils.				
7. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?				X
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?				X
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within ¼ mile of an existing or proposed school?				X
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment? (V.13)				X
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in				X

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS **Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):**	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
the project area?				
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?				X

Existing Setting
The City of Carmel-by-the-Sea has no facilities for permanent storage or transfer of hazardous waste. The City has no industrial zone or zoning district compatible with a hazardous waste site. The City is not in the vicinity of any pipeline, nor on the route of an airline transporting potentially hazardous materials. As such the most probable exposure would be due to transport of hazardous materials on state highways. In Carmel-by-the-Sea, hazardous waste is generated by households (paint products, motor oil, solvents, pesticides, oven cleaners and disinfectants), and a small number of commercial generators (dry cleaners, service stations, and photo processing).The City is not located within the vicinity of a private air stip.

Fire poses a significant threat to life and property. The City of Carmel is located on a hillside. Steep slopes promote spreading of a fire and increase its speed due to preheating of vegetation. Canyons and hillsides also promote gusts of wind, which increase the unpredictable and uncontrollable nature of wildfires.

Carmel's Emergency Operation Plan (CEOP) 2008, incorporates the policies and principles of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), which were originally developed and employed by the State of California. The purpose of CEOP is to provide guidelines for operations during all hazard emergencies that could affect the City (Carmel 2008).

Discussion
(a-h) **No Impact**
The manufacturing of single-use carryout plastic and paper bags involves the release of certain toxic chemicals into the environment. Implementation of this ordinance will result in the net reduction of single-use carryout bags in distribution in the City. As both the plastic and paper industries produce toxic materials, this net reduction in bag distribution will reduce the total amount of toxins released that were associated with their manufacture.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS **Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):**	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
The proposed use will not cause increased use, disposal or disruption of hazardous materials, create a public or safety hazard, or affect existing emergency response plans or routes. The City is not within an airport land use plan or within 2 miles of a public airport, and the project will not create or result in a safety hazard for people residing or working within the City. The ordinance will not impact emergency procedures or result in exposure of people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires.				
8. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY. Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?				X
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local ground water table level (for example, the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?				X
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner, which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site.				X
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner, which would result in flooding on- or off-site.				X
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?				X
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?				X
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood-hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance				X

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS **Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):**	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?				
h) Place within a 100-year flood-hazard area structures, which would impede or redirect flood flows?				X
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?				X
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?				X

Existing Setting

Carmel Bay is considered an Area of Special Biological Significance (ASBS) by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). The City operates under the General Permit issued to the Monterey Regional Storm Water Permit Participants Group issued by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) for storm water runoff that affects Carmel Bay.

The City has adopted the Best Management Practices Guidance Series found in Appendix E of the Monterey Regional Storm Water Management Program. The Guidance Series describes Best Management Practices designed to reduce the discharge of pollutants from the municipal separate storm sewer systems to the maximum extent practicable, to protect water quality of the ASBS, and to satisfy the appropriate water quality requirements of the Clean Water Act.

Discussion

(a-j)

The proposed ordinance does not involve any development and therefore would not violate water quality standards or water discharge requirements. The reduction of single-use carryout bags would not generate increased use of groundwater, alter existing drainage patterns, increase surface water runoff or degrade water quality. The proposed ordinance does not involve any flood hazard area and would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, or inundation by seiche, tsunami or mudflow.

Single-use carryout bags have the potential to become litter and end up in local creeks, streams and the Pacific Ocean. Plastic bags degrade at a slower rate and break into smaller and smaller pieces. As previously discussed, plastic never completely degrades which is particularly harmful to the marine environment (See Biological Resources Section).

Implementation of the ordinance will result in the substantial reduction of litter from single-use plastic bags and single-use carryout bags in general in the City of Carmel. As more and more people become accustomed to using reusable bags, and similar ordinances are adopted on a regional scale, the single-use carryout bag litter will continue to decrease.

9. LAND USE AND PLANNING. Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?				X

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS **Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):**	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				X
c) Conflict with any applicable Habitat Conservation Plan or Natural Community Conservation Plan?				X
Existing Setting The City of Carmel-by-the-Sea is a unique coastal community that prides itself on its community character. The City has adopted a General Plan and Municipal Code, along with other planning documents, that strive to protect the village character through clear policies and regulations. The City consists of three commercial districts and a multi-family district totaling approximately 46 acres. The commercial district contains a mix of retail, service commercial, restaurants, hotel/motel, and residential uses. The majority of the land in the City is zoned Single Family Residential and totals approximately 345 acres. **Discussion** (a-b) **No Impact** The proposed ordinance will not result in any land use and planning impacts.				
10. MINERAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				X
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?				X
Existing Setting According to the City's General Plan, there are no known mineral resources located within the City of Carmel. **Discussion** (a-b) **No Impact** The proposed ordinance will not impact any known state, regional, or local mineral resources.				
11. NOISE. Would the project result in:				
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance or applicable standards				X

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS **Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):**	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
of other agencies?				
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?				X
c) Substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?				X
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?				X
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X

Existing Setting
The greatest noise source in Carmel is the large volume of automobile traffic that travels through Carmel. The Noise Element of the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea's General Plan was prepared pursuant to Section 65302(g) of the California Government Code. The primary goals associated with the Noise Element include preserving Carmel's overall quiet environment; reducing noise to levels compatible with the existing and future land uses and to prevent the increase of noise levels in areas where noise sensitive uses are located.

Discussion
(a-f) **No Impact**
The proposed ordinance will likely result in slightly fewer delivery trucks, which would reduce existing noise impacts (See Transportation/Traffic section). The proposed ordinance will not create any new noise impacts.

12. POPULATION AND HOUSING. Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?				X
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS **Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):**	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X

Existing Setting
The City's Housing Element of the General Plan is designed to achieve the following:

- Identify adequate sites for a range of housing types;
- Assist in the development of adequate and affordable housing;
- Address constraints to meeting the City's housing needs;
- Conserve and improve the condition of existing housing; and
- Promote housing opportunities for all persons.

Discussion
(a-c) **No Impact**
The proposed ordinance will not impact population and housing.

13. PUBLIC SERVICES. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities or need for new or physical altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
a) Fire protection?				X
b) Police protection?				X
c) Schools?				X
d) Parks?				X
e) Other public facilities?				X

Existing Setting
The City of Carmel recognizes the unique social, cultural and recreational aspirations and activities which contribute to the vitality of the community and seeks to provide a range of public and semi-public facilities and programs responsive to those aspirations. The City provides a broad range of public services to ensure each resident a safe, healthful and attractive living environment.

Discussion
(a-e) **No Impact**
The proposed ordinance will not have any impacts related to public services.

14. RECREATION. Would the project:				
a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?				X
b) Include recreational facilities or require				X

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS **Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):**	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?				

Existing Setting

The City of Carmel has nine formally designated park, open space, and recreational areas as well as the Rio Park, which is located outside of the City limits, but is owned by the City. The parks and open space amount to over 68 acres of land. In addition, the City has approximately 67 acres of other areas that can be considered an important open space resource, but are not available for the traditional park and recreation use. Unimproved rights-of-way, otherwise known as a linear greenbelt are examples of such resources.

Discussion

(a-b) **No Impact**

The proposed ordinance will not have any impacts on recreation in the City.

15. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC. Would the project:				
a) Cause an increase in traffic, which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (for example, result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?				X
b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?				X
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?				X
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (for example, sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (for example, farm equipment)?				X
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?				X
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?				X
g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (for example, bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?				X

Existing Setting

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS **Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):**	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Traffic in the City of Carmel is somewhat unique in that it experiences heavy peak periods during weekends and over the summer when there are a high number of tourist. Many of the visitors can be considered short-term or "day visitors," who travel by car from other bay areas to Carmel and the Monterey Peninsula for the day. This "day visitor" phenomenon often places a burden on Carmel's circulation and parking facilities, particularly in the downtown area and the Del Mar parking lot located at the west end of Ocean Avenue. The Circulation Element of the General Plan addresses the following issues of local significance: ▪ Traffic Congestion and Circulation Patterns: o Traffic congestion in the commercial district, o Delivery trucks double parking, o Tour buses, o Seasonal traffic patterns, and o Pedestrian safety and auto/pedestrian conflicts at many of the downtown intersections. ▪ Parking: o Parking for residents, employees and visitors, and o On- and off- street parking supply. ▪ Alternate Modes of Transportation: o Bus service, o Local shuttle service, and o Bike routes. **Discussion** (a-f) **No Impact** The reduction in the use of single-use carryout bags will likely result in a slight reduction of the delivery truck traffic. The proposed ordinance will not impact any level of service standards, impact any air traffic patterns, increase traffic hazards, result in inadequate emergency response or parking capacity and will not conflict with any alternative transportation plans.				
16. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS. Would the project:				
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?				X
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction or which could cause significant environmental effects?				X
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects				X

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS **Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):**	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?				X
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?				X
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?				X
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?				X

Existing Setting

The Carmel Area Wastewater District is located approximately a quarter mile west of Highway 1, south of the Carmel River. In addition to Carmel-by-the-Sea, the District serves Pebble Beach, portions of Carmel Valley and Carmel Highlands, as well as Carmel Meadows and Mission Fields.

Carmel is under the jurisdiction of the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District (MPWMD) and receives its water from the California-American Water Company (Cal-Am). The MPWMD has permit authority over the production and distribution of all water supplies within the Monterey Peninsula region. The District allocates water supplies to cities and the County areas within its jurisdiction. Water service by Cal-Am is constrained by SWRCB Order WR 95-10, which determined that approximately 70 percent of Cal-Am supply is based on unlawful diversion from the Carmel River.

Due to Carmel's topography, the City's drainage system is based on gravity pull. Given the fact that Carmel have few curbs, a significant portion of the runoff from roadways sheet flows into the adjacent swales and is infiltrated as groundwater. The remaining surface water is collected via a series of culverts located throughout the City. Ultimately, these surface flows are released into the ocean via several drainage outlets located along Carmel Beach.

The City has an exclusive franchise agreement with the Waste Management Company for trash and recycling collection, which occurs once per week in the residential district and daily in the commercial district. Households are issued yard waste, mixed recycle and trash cans.

Discussion

(a-g) **No Impact**

One of the purposes of the proposed ordinance is to reduce the amount of trash that is diverted to the landfill by the elimination of single-use bags. Implementation of the proposed ordinance will have no impacts on water, wastewater, or other utilities.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS **Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):**	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
17. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE. Does the project:				
a) Have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?				X
b) Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of the past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)			X	
c) Have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?				X

The project will not substantially degrade the quality of the environment as documented in this Initial Study. Specifically, implementation of the Ordinance will not trigger any mandatory thresholds of significance with respect to potential impacts to fish and wildlife species or examples of California history or prehistory. As discussed in the Biological Section, implementation of the ordinance will not have any potential significant impacts on biological resources. The ordinance will also not result in any potentially substantial impacts on human beings either directly or indirectly.

Over the last several years, legislation has been proposed at the international, national, state and local level regarding the use of carryout bags. Some of the California communities that have either banned or restricted the use of single-use carryout plastic bags include:

- City & County of San Francisco
- City of Malibu
- City of Fairfax
- City of Palo Alto
- Los Angeles County
- City of Santa Monica
- City of Calabasas
- City of Long Beach

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS **Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):**	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

- City of San Jose
- Santa Clara County
- Marin County
- City of Monterey
- Santa Cruz County
- City of Pasadena
- City of Sunnyvale
- City of San Luis Obispo
- San Luis Obispo County

Extensive environmental review was included in many of the ordinances outlined above that have concluded that banning single-use plastic bags will not result in negative environmental impacts.

The proposed ordinance is also supported by at least the following Goals, Objectives and Policies of the Carmel-by-the-Sea General Plan:

G1-2: Preserve the residential village character and perpetuate a balance of land uses compatible with local resources and the environment. (LUP)

O1-6: Recognize the natural resources and scenic quality of Carmel as a coastal community and allow uses in the community that are consistent with local needs, the Carmel Local Coastal Plan, and the California Coastal Act.

G1-6: Protect, conserve and increase Carmel's available water resources and water quality.

G5-2: Establish and implement a comprehensive shoreline management program for the beach, bluffs and dunes that mitigates degradation caused by public use and natural forces.

O5-6: Keep the beach free of refuse.

G5-3: Protect, conserve and enhance the unique natural beauty and irreplaceable natural resources of Carmel and its Sphere of Influence, including its biological resources, water resources, and scenic routes and corridors.

G5-12: Identify, protect and manage Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHAs) to ensure their long-term integrity and the biological productivity of these habitats.

P5-184: Maintain, enhance, and where feasible, restore marine resources.
Special protection shall be given to areas and species of special biological or economic significance. Uses of the marine environment shall be carried out in a manner that will sustain the biological productivity of coastal waters and that will maintain healthy populations of all species of marine organisms adequate for long-term commercial, recreational, scientific, and educational purposes (Section 30230, California Coastal Act)

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS **Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):**	Potentially Significant Issues	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

P5-185 Maintain and restore, where feasible, the biological productivity and the quality of coastal waters, streams, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes appropriate to maintain optimum populations of marine organisms and for the protection of human health, through, among other means, minimizing adverse effects of waste water discharges and entrainment; controlling runoff; preventing depletion of ground water supplies and substantial interference with surface water flow; encouraging waste water reclamation; maintaining natural vegetation buffer areas that protect riparian habitats; and, minimizing alteration of natural streams.

P6-9: Work with service providers, commercial businesses and residents to minimize the amount of waste going to landfills through improved recycling efforts and programs.

G7-1: To protect, conserve and enhance the unique natural beauty and irreplaceable natural resources of Carmel and its Sphere of Influence.

P7-18: Adopt and encourage sustainable practices that promote energy efficiency, improve air quality and preserve natural resources when consistent with the City's diverse design traditions.

As disclosed within this Initial Study, implementation of the Ordinance will not result in any potentially significant environmental impacts. In all environmental categories discussed, there would be no increase in environmental impacts. As a result, this project will not add to any cumulative impact. Thus, implementation of other proposed ordinances in addition to the City of Carmel's ordinance would result in no environmental impacts that could be considered "cumulatively considerable".

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