




County of Fairfax, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 2, 2024

TO: Board of Supervisors

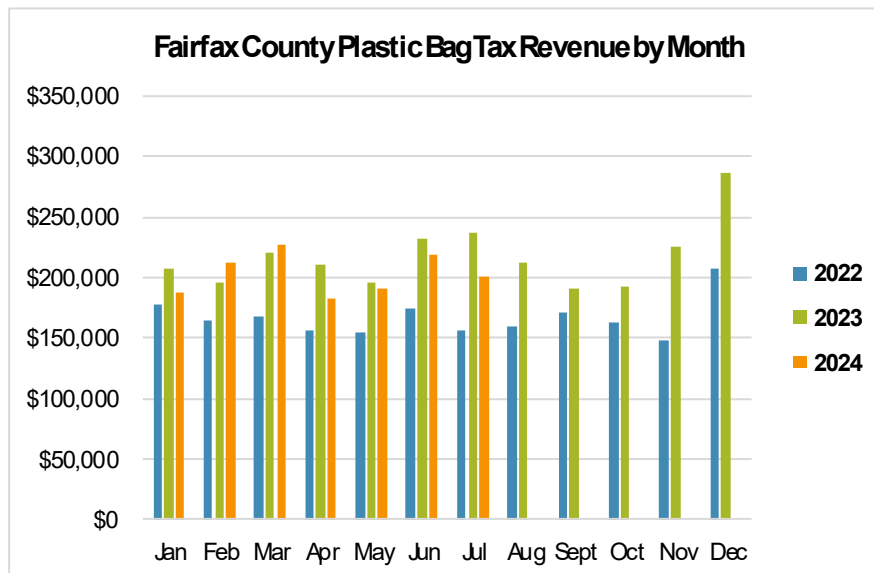
FROM: Bryan J. Hill
County Executive 

SUBJECT: Fairfax County Plastic Bag Tax Revenue Allocations

This memorandum provides an update on the allocation of the county's plastic bag tax revenue, including \$2 million appropriated at *FY 2023 Carryover* and *FY 2024 Third Quarter Review*. Staff is in the process of determining the allocation of funding appropriated at *FY 2024 Carryover* and will provide another update to the Board when that process is complete.

Background

On January 1, 2022, Fairfax County's Plastic Bag Tax Ordinance went into effect, enacting a five-cent tax on each disposable plastic bag provided at grocery stores, convenience stores and drug stores. The tax is collected, administered and enforced by the Virginia Department of Taxation. Revenue is distributed to Fairfax County and, in accordance with Virginia law, appropriated to activities meeting one of four eligible purposes: 1) Education on environmental waste reduction, 2) Environmental cleanup, 3) Pollution and litter mitigation, and 4) Provision of reusable bags to recipients of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) benefits.



Between January 2022 and July 2024, Fairfax received over \$6 million from the plastic bag tax. Revenue beyond July 2024 is yet unknown due to a three-month delay in reporting from Virginia

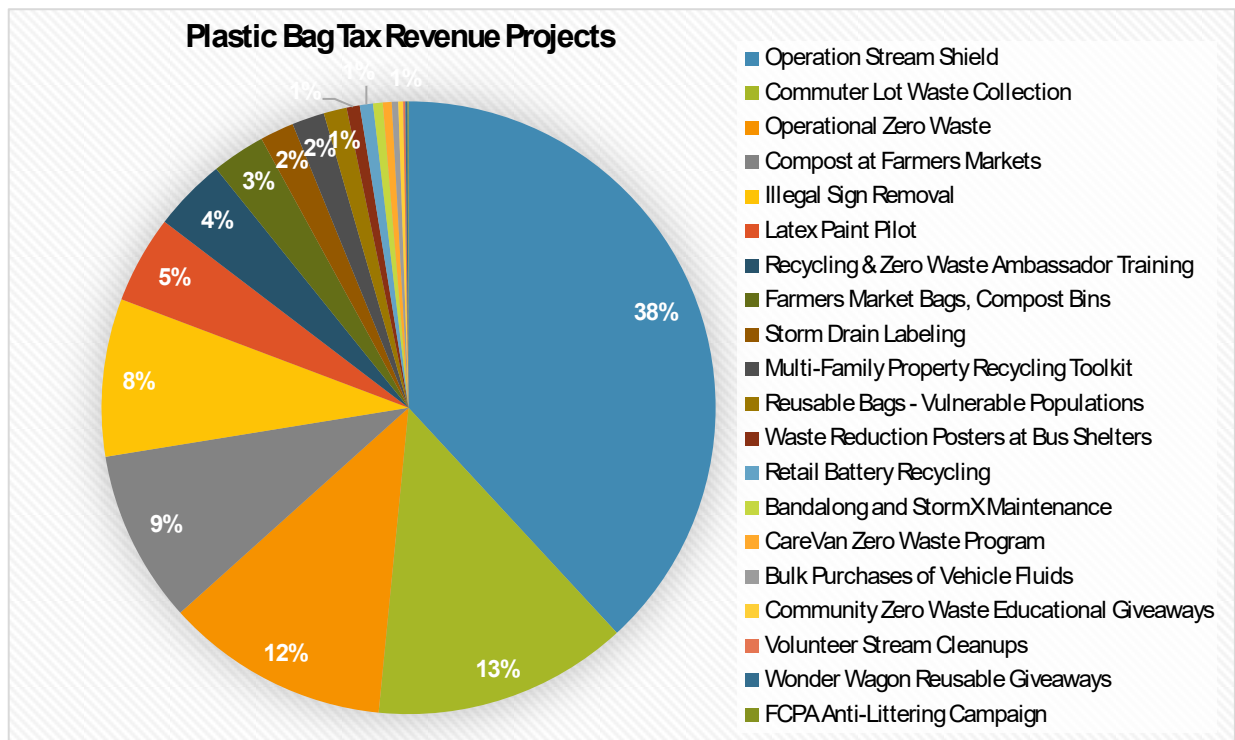
Tax. The chart above shows revenue figures month-over-month from January 2022 to July 2024. Revenue increased in the second year of implementation due to a decrease in the retailer discount from two cents to one cent.

Revenue Allocations

Fairfax County appropriates its plastic bag tax revenue twice a year during the Carryover Review and Third Quarter Review cycles. As funds are appropriated, the Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination (OEEC), in collaboration with a multi-agency project selection committee, solicits and reviews project applications for the use of this revenue. Projects are carefully reviewed to ensure they meet statutory funding requirements as well as other county priorities.

Plastic bag tax projects were recently selected for use of revenue appropriated during *FY 2023 Carryover* and *FY 2024 Third Quarter Review*, totaling over \$2 million. Funding has been allocated to ongoing projects such as [Operation Stream Shield](#), the Illegal Sign Removal Program in VDOT rights-of-way, [composting at county-run farmers markets](#) and [storm drain education and labeling programs](#). Funding has also been allocated to several new pilot programs that support recycling and waste reduction efforts in vulnerable areas of the county, such as residents of multi-family housing communities, communities designated as Opportunity Neighborhoods, and patrons of the Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS) [CareVan](#). A detailed description of funded projects may be found in Attachment 1.

All projects funded with plastic bag tax revenue to date, including those selected for use of *FY 2023 Carryover* and *FY 2024 Third Quarter Review* appropriated funds, are highlighted in the chart below. Additional detail on prior plastic bag tax projects may be found [here](#).



Fairfax County Plastic Bag Tax Revenue Allocations

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cc: Christopher Leonard, Deputy County Executive
Ellicia Seard-McCormick, Deputy County Executive
Christina Jackson, Chief Financial Officer
Philip Hagen, Director, Department of Management and Budget
John Morrill, Director, Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination

Attachments: Attachment 1: FY 2023 Carryover and FY 2024 Third Quarter Review Plastic Bag Tax Revenue Funding Allocations

FY 2023 Carryover & FY 2024 Third Quarter Review Plastic Bag Tax Revenue Funding Allocations

Project Name	Project Summary	Lead Agency	Funding Allocated
Operation Stream Shield (OSS)	Funds the continued implementation and expansion of OSS, a program providing part-time, temporary employment to individuals experiencing homelessness. OSS crew members will remove debris from in and around waterways and VDOT rights-of-way, support the Latex Paint Zero Waste Sustainability Pilot, and remove waste from bus shelters and commuter lots.	DPWES	\$930,000
Illegal Sign Removal Program	Funds the continuation of the Illegal Sign Removal program, which removes illegal signs within VDOT rights-of-way, providing for a litter free, clean and safe environment along county roadways.	DCC	\$360,000
Latex Paint Zero Waste Sustainability Pilot	Funds the contractual and operational costs of the pilot. OSS crew members will intake, sort and ship unused latex paint to Honduras for reuse. The program provides on-the-job training (with the potential to move into a position at the I-66 Transfer Station) while diverting up to 2 million pounds of paint per year from incineration.	DPWES	\$200,000
Recycling and Zero Waste Ambassador Training Program	Funds a new program to train community Zero Waste Ambassadors, who will identify gaps and barriers to recycling, composting and Zero Waste in Opportunity Neighborhoods and conduct audits, demonstrations and community outreach.	DPWES	\$166,500
Compost Collection at County Farmers Markets	Funds the continuation of the compost collection and education program at county-run farmers markets for CY 2025. In 2023, over 140,000 pounds of food waste were diverted through the program.	FCPA	\$165,000
Compost Collection at FRESHFARM Farmers Markets	Funds compost collection and education at three farmers markets in Fairfax County run by a non-profit organization.	OEEC	\$77,000
Reusable Giveaways at County Farmers Markets	Funds reusable shopping bags, countertop compost bins and compostable bin liners and produce bags for patrons of county-run farmers markets to encourage composting and the reduction of single-use plastic bags.	FCPA	\$60,000
Retail Battery Recycling	Funds a residential battery collection program, which will be implemented in partnership with area hardware stores, expanding county collection of batteries beyond the I-66 Transfer Station and I-95 Landfill. The program will mitigate environmental risks and fire hazards associated with improper disposal of batteries.	DPWES	\$30,000

Attachment 1

Project Name	Project Summary	Lead Agency	Funding Allocated
Multi-Family Property Recycling Toolkit	Funds the creation of a multi-family property recycling toolkit to support proper recycling at apartments and condominiums in up to 15 vulnerable communities, for a total of 2,500 units. The toolkit will include a door hanger, magnet, dumpster/recycling container stickers and apartment and curbside recycling bins.	DPWES	\$24,035
CareVan Zero Waste Educational Program	Funds Zero Waste educational materials, reusable bags and other reusable giveaways to community members utilizing the NCS CareVan. The program will reach about 9,000 community members at resource fairs, food distributions, health clinics and other events within vulnerable communities.	NCS	\$20,360
Storm Drain Education and Labeling Program	Funds NVSWCD's long-standing storm drain education and labeling program, through which volunteers label 3,000 county storm drains a year. Educational materials are used to engage with communities where labels are placed.	NVSWCD	\$12,452
DPWES Zero Waste Educational Giveaways	Funds the purchase of DPWES-branded products to be distributed at community events and job fairs to promote sustainability and reduce the use of common disposable items, such as shopping bags, sandwich bags, straws and cutlery.	DPWES	\$11,040
UFMD Reusable Bags	Funds the distribution of reusable bags to residents, primarily in vulnerable regions of the county, that feature Anti-Tree Topping Campaign messaging. The messaging targets residents employed in the tree care and landscaping fields to prevent incorrect pruning practices and preserve tree canopy.	DPWES-UFMD	\$10,000
Metal Storm Drain Label Project	Funds a pilot project to label storm drains in High Priority Municipal Facilities with metal labels instead of plastic, which have an expected 15-20 year additional lifespan, reducing waste generated for this program while educating residents about water quality pollution and the connection of storm drains to local watersheds.	DPWES	\$5,000
FCPA Anti-Littering Campaign	Funds a pilot program implementing signage at Laurel Hill Park with joint messaging on littering and ecological education. Additional parks with high litter rates may be identified for future funding.	FCPA	\$2,200
Bandalong and StormX Trash Collection Maintenance	Funds operation and maintenance of proprietary devices that collect litter at two county-maintained detention ponds and one open concrete channel. The devices identify quantity of litter in different watersheds and help DPWES identify practical and cost-effective strategies for litter management in stormwater systems.	DPWES	\$2,000
		TOTAL	\$2,075,587