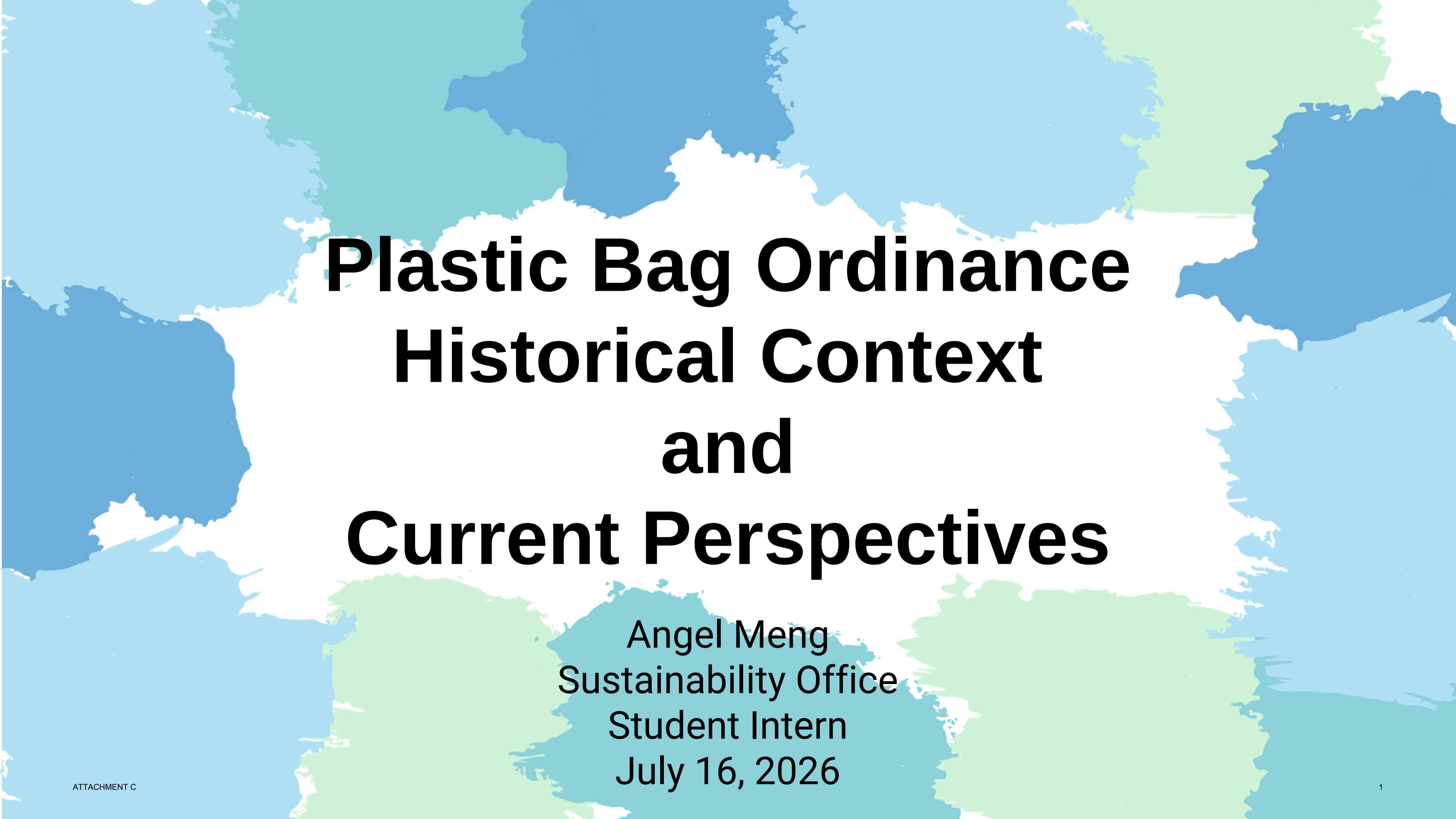




Plastic Bag Ordinance Historical Context and Current Perspectives

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History of Plastic Ban Ban (2015)

- Citizen petition requesting a plastic bag ban and a \$0.10 paper bag fee

- County Council directed ESB to conduct public outreach

- 80.1% out of 251 participants opposed a plastic bag ban

- 72.2% out of 252 participants opposed reducing the distribution of single-use bags

- Resulted in ESB recommending education rather than regulation

History of Plastic Ban Ban (2019)

- Second citizen petition sought to ban plastic bags, straws, and Styrofoam

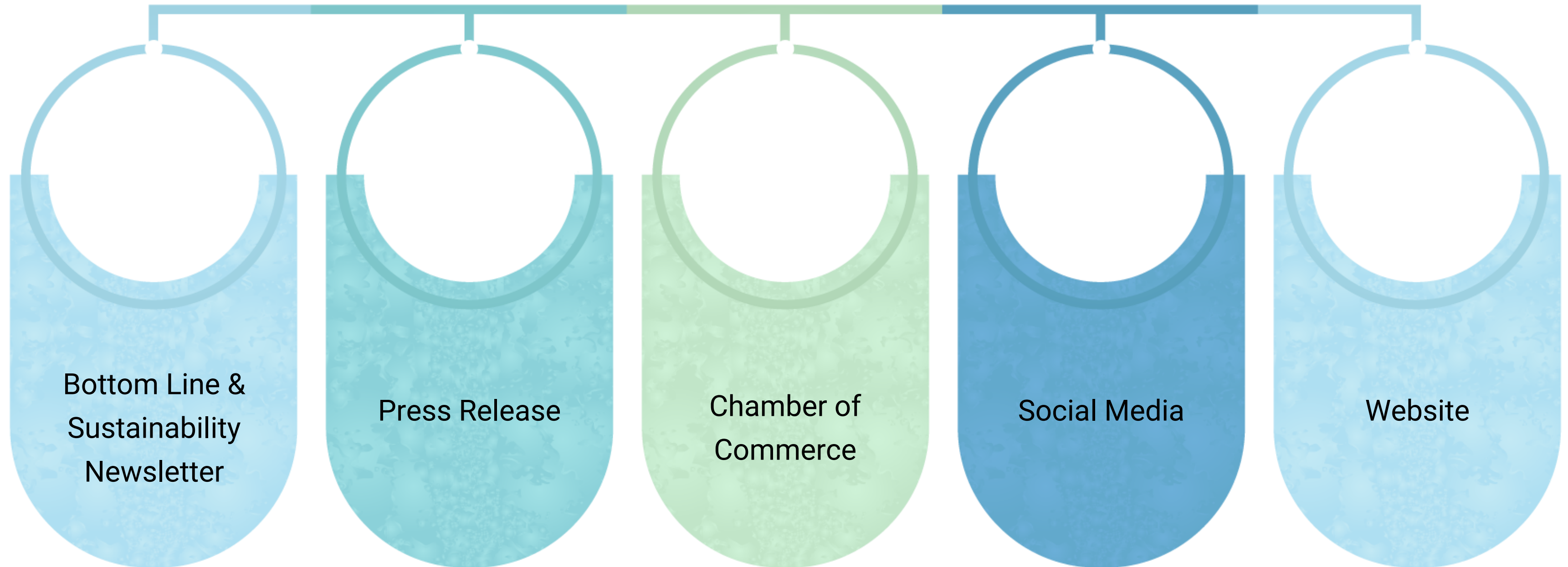
- Council instead focused on waste reduction initiatives, largely due to the COVID-19 virus, where reusable bags were banned from Smith's to reduce spread of disease

History of Plastic Ban Ban (2025-2026)

- In 2025, Council asked ESB to evaluate recyclability, alternatives, costs, and impacts of single-use plastic bags

- In 2026, Council directed ESB to develop a single-use plastic bag ordinance, resulting in the draft ordinance currently under consideration

Outreach



Overview of All Comments



- Total of 213 comments were collected (Email, Cognito Forms, Facebook Commentary)



- 66% in opposition



- 28% in support



- 4% gave general feedback



- 3% have a neutral stance

Overview of Comments Excluding Facebook

- 
- Total of 110 comments were collected (Email, Cognito Forms)

- 
- 49% in opposition

- 
- 43% in support

- 
- 7% gave general feedback

- 
- 1% have a neutral stance

Main Themes from Opponents

Single-Use Plastic Bags are not “Single-Use”

- Bags are reused for small trash cans, pet waste, packing materials, cleaning messes, general household use
 - People will simply buy single-use plastic bags online if banned from stores
-

Government Overreach vs. Personal Choice

- Issue should be left to individual choice rather than govt. mandates
 - Limits personal freedom
 - Unnecessary govt. regulation
-

Main Themes from Opponents

Businesses and Citizens

- Increased costs for small businesses already struggling
 - Increased costs for customers already on low incomes
 - Administrative complexity
-

Education Instead of Regulation

- Encourage voluntary reusable bag use
 - Educate residents
 - Incentives instead of bans
 - Many shared the sentiment that “people who want reusable bags already use them
-

Main Themes from Opponents

Only Addresses Small Part of Plastic Waste

- Why grocery bags are being targeted while items such as plastic packaging, food containers, bottles, remain widely used
-

Education Instead of Regulation

- How would enforcement occur
 - Whether resources should be spent policing bags
 - Whether the punishment fits the crime
-

Main Themes from Supporters

Reduces Plastic Pollution (most common)

- Litter reduction
 - Wildlife protection
 - Cleaner community
 - Risk to long-term health through microplastics
 - Risk to wildlife
-

Encourage Reusable Bags

- Reusable bags are easy to use
 - Many people already use them
 - The community can adapt quickly
-

Main Themes from Supporters

Aligns with Climate and Sustainability Goals

- Reducing waste and single-use plastics
 - Reducing carbon footprint
 - Creating a cleaner community in Los Alamos
-

Other Communities Have Succeeded

- Argument that residents adapt after a short adjustment period
 - Referenced other locations that have successful plastic bag bans such as Las Cruces, Santa Fe, San Diego, Colorado
-

The background of the slide is composed of several large, overlapping brushstrokes in various shades of blue and green. The strokes are thick and have a textured, painterly appearance. The colors range from light sky blue to deep navy blue, and from pale mint green to a slightly darker teal. These strokes are arranged in a way that they frame the central text, with some strokes extending towards the corners and others more centrally located.

Thank You