POSSIBLE SCENARIOS: *City of Gearhart*

1) Implement a ban on all single-use plastic bags only;
2) Implement a conditional ban on plastic bags; Examples:
    a. Single-use plastic bags are banned; 100% recyclable paper bags made with a minimum of 40% recycled content available for a $.10 fee; reusable bags with handles available for purchase comprised of cloth or other material (natural or synthetic, washable); if plastic, minimum of 4.0 mils thick.
    b. Single-use plastic bags are banned; 100% recyclable paper bags made with a minimum of 40% recycled content available for a $.5 fee; reusable bags with handles available for purchase comprised of cloth or other material (natural or synthetic, washable); if plastic, minimum of 2.25 mils thick.
    c. All plastic bags are banned; 100% recyclable paper bags made with a minimum of 40% recycled content available for no fee; reusable bags with handles available for purchase comprised of cloth or other material (natural or synthetic, washable).
    d. Any combination of the above, including fee charged, reusable plastic bag thickness, etc.
3) Require businesses to recycle plastic bags, and/or provide a plastic bag recycling bin on site;
4) Do nothing.

THINGS TO CONSIDER…

YES BAN & NO BAN

- For every seven trucks needed to deliver paper bags, only one truck is needed for the same number of plastic bags, helping to save energy and reduce emissions;
    - The amount of petroleum used to make 1 plastic bag would drive a car about 11 meters;
- It takes 91% less energy to recycle a pound of plastic than it does to recycle a pound of paper;
    - Only 1-3% of plastic bags are recycled worldwide;
- Plastic bags generate 80% less waste than paper bags;
    - It takes 1000 years for polyethylene bags to break down;
- The production of plastic bags consumes less than 4% of the water needed to make paper bags;
    - 100,000 marine animals are killed by plastic bags annually;
- Plastic grocery and retail bags make up a tiny fraction (less than 0.5%) of the U.S. municipal solid waste stream;
    - It takes 500 (or more) years for a plastic bag to degrade in a landfill. Unfortunately, the bags don't break down completely but instead photo-degrade, becoming microplastics that absorb toxins and continue to pollute the environment;
- Plastic bags require 70% less energy to manufacture, produce 50% less greenhouse gas emissions and create five times less waste than paper bags;
    - Americans use 100 billion plastic bags a year, which require 12 million barrels of oil to manufacture;

REUSABLE COTTON BAGS AREN'T REUSED ENOUGH: Standard reusable cotton grocery bags must be reused 131 times "to ensure that they have lower global warming potential than" a plastic bag used only once.[2]

NO OIL INVOLVED: American-made plastic bags are produced from byproducts of natural gas, not oil.[3]

LANDFILL WASTE *INCREASES*: Plastic bags account for just half of 1% of U.S. waste, and without plastic grocery bags, people purchase replacement bags — often made of thicker, heavier plastic — and then send *those* bags to the landfill instead.[4]

LITTLE TO NO IMPACT ON OVERALL LITTER: Plastic retail bags comprise a very small portion of litter –less than 2% – making bans and taxes ineffective when it comes to reducing overall litter.[5]

2. U.K. Environment Agency, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/291023/scho0711buan-e-e.pdf
3. U.S. Energy Information Administration, https://www.eia.gov/tools/faqs/faq.php?id=34&t=6
4. The Advertiser, https://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/bin-line-sales-double-nation-average-after-plastic-bag-ban/news-story/5110eb1ecbe8e10e3e18d16e11545940
5. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-11/documents/2014_smm_tablesfigures_508.pdf

Proposed ordinances to ban and tax plastic bags threaten nearly 30,000 American manufacturing and recycling jobs in 344 plants across the country.[4]

4. Society of the Plastics Industry, http://www.plasticsindustry.org/membership/resources-members/reports/size-and-impact-plastics-industry-us-economy

Recyclable plastic bags don't pose the potential health risks associated with alternative bags. Hundreds of millions of petroleum based, "non-woven polypropylene" reusable bags are imported from China and other countries each year.[1] These are by far the dominant type of "reusable" bags, and some have been found to contain dangerous levels of lead.[2] These bags also end up in landfills when they tear. If reusable bags aren't sanitized properly after each use, they can harbor dangerous bacteria. Microbiologists have found E. coli, salmonella, fecal coliform, and other harmful bacteria in reusable bags.[3] Plastic bags aren't just 100% recyclable — they're reusable, too! More than 90% of Americans say they reuse their plastic bags at least once, for everything from lining trash cans to packing lunches and picking up after pets.[4]

1. U.S. International Trade Commission, General First Unit of Quantity by HTS Number and by General First Unit of Quantity Annual, https://otexa.trade.gov/scripts/tqquantity.exe/runquery2?hts=4202923031
2. New York Daily News, http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/reusable-grocery-bags-made-china-found-lead-fueling-calls-fda-investigation-article-1.453594
3. Dept. of Soil, Water, and Environmental Science; University of Arizona; Loma Linda University School of Public Health; Dept. of Environmental Health; https://lluh.org/sites/medical-center.lomalindahealth.org/files/docs/LIVE-IT-Sinclair-Article-Cross-Contamination-Reusable-Shopping-Bags.pdf?rsource=medical-center.lomalindahealth.org/sites/medical-center.lomalindahealth.org/files/docs/LIVE-IT-Sinclair-Article-Cross-Contamination-Reusable-Shopping-Bags.pdf
4. American Plastics Council, http://www.bagtheban.com/assets/content/bag-recycling-signage-testing.pdf

If the bigger issue is whether or not plastic bags are being recycled rather than the plastic bags themselves, is a possible solution requiring stores to provide plastic bag recycling bins?