

# **Sustainable Office Supplies:** ***Town of Chapel Hill Purchasing Decisions***

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# Goals

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- Analyze current & past purchasing decisions
- Relate Chapel Hill to other towns/orgs with EPPPs
- Improve the town's EPPP in a cost efficient manner

# Methods

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- Internal Research
  - Office Depot purchases
  - Purchaser Survey
- External Research
  - Office Depot product analyses
  - EPPP Case Studies

# Methods: Internal Research

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- Office Depot
  - 2+ years of town purchases
  - Individual product analysis
  - Recycled product analysis
- Town purchaser survey
  - Qualtrics
  - *Mail and Internet Surveys* by Don Dillman
  - Including open ended response questions

# Methods: External Research

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- Office Depot product analysis
  - Recycled cost analyses
  - Product price analyses (w/ staples too)
- Purchasing policy case studies
  - Origins
  - King County
  - Langley
  - NASA
  - Burlington

# Development of Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policies

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- In response to the nation's waste disposal
  - 1970: "America has been described as a nation knee-deep in garbage, firing rockets to the moon"
  - 2009: Orange County's landfill nearing capacity, and more residents recycling
- Public organizations develop EPPPs to ensure a market for recycled materials and recycled-content goods

# Innovation and the Green Market

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- Drivers of innovation of green products:
  - Consumers
  - Regulation
  - Advocacy groups
- These forces pressure suppliers and manufacturers to develop “green” products and services
  - Organizations *acting as consumers* can impact the supply chain.

# Conclusions from Case Studies

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- NASA's Langley Research Center
  - NASA benefited from the federal government's enormous buying power; price and performance are significant
- California
  - Communication between consumers, suppliers, governmental organizations, and other parties is vital.
- King County, Washington
  - The policy places a premium on maintaining the *environmental dialogue*
- Burlington, Vermont
  - Policy reflects the growing concern over public health and climate change, and the capacity of small organizations to pressure distributors/manufacturers



# Policy Suggestions

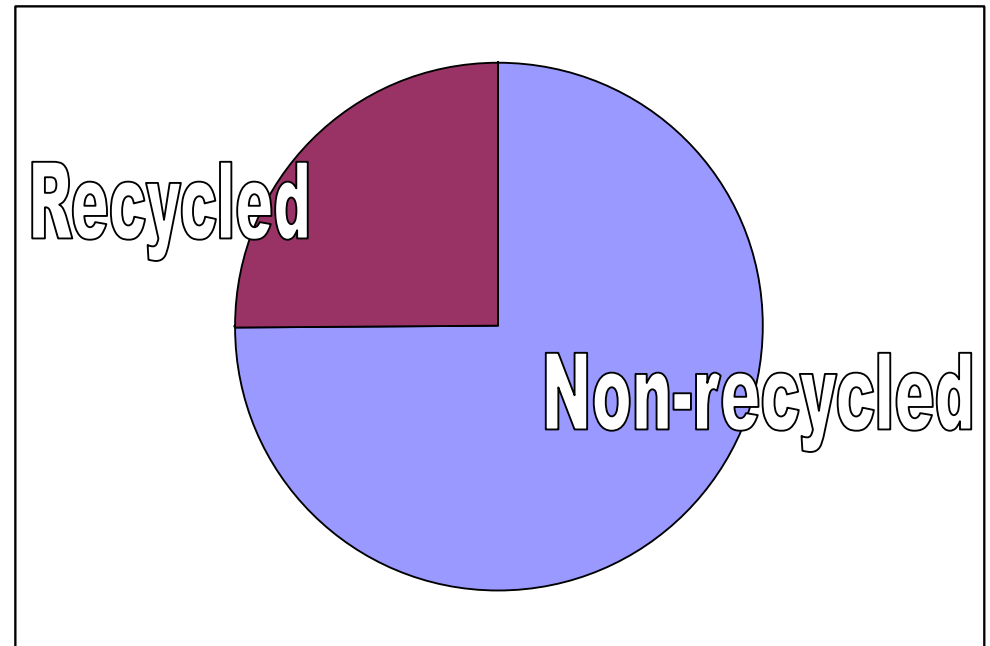
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- A mechanism for employee feedback (departmental evaluation of “green” products)
- Ensure *environmental dialogue* (communication) between suppliers, purchasers, residents, and other interested parties: reports, newsletters, publicity
- A paper policy that promotes environmental awareness: printing the recycle logo on documents, duplexing
- Take advantage of existing environmental certifications/standards
  - Green Seal and the EPA

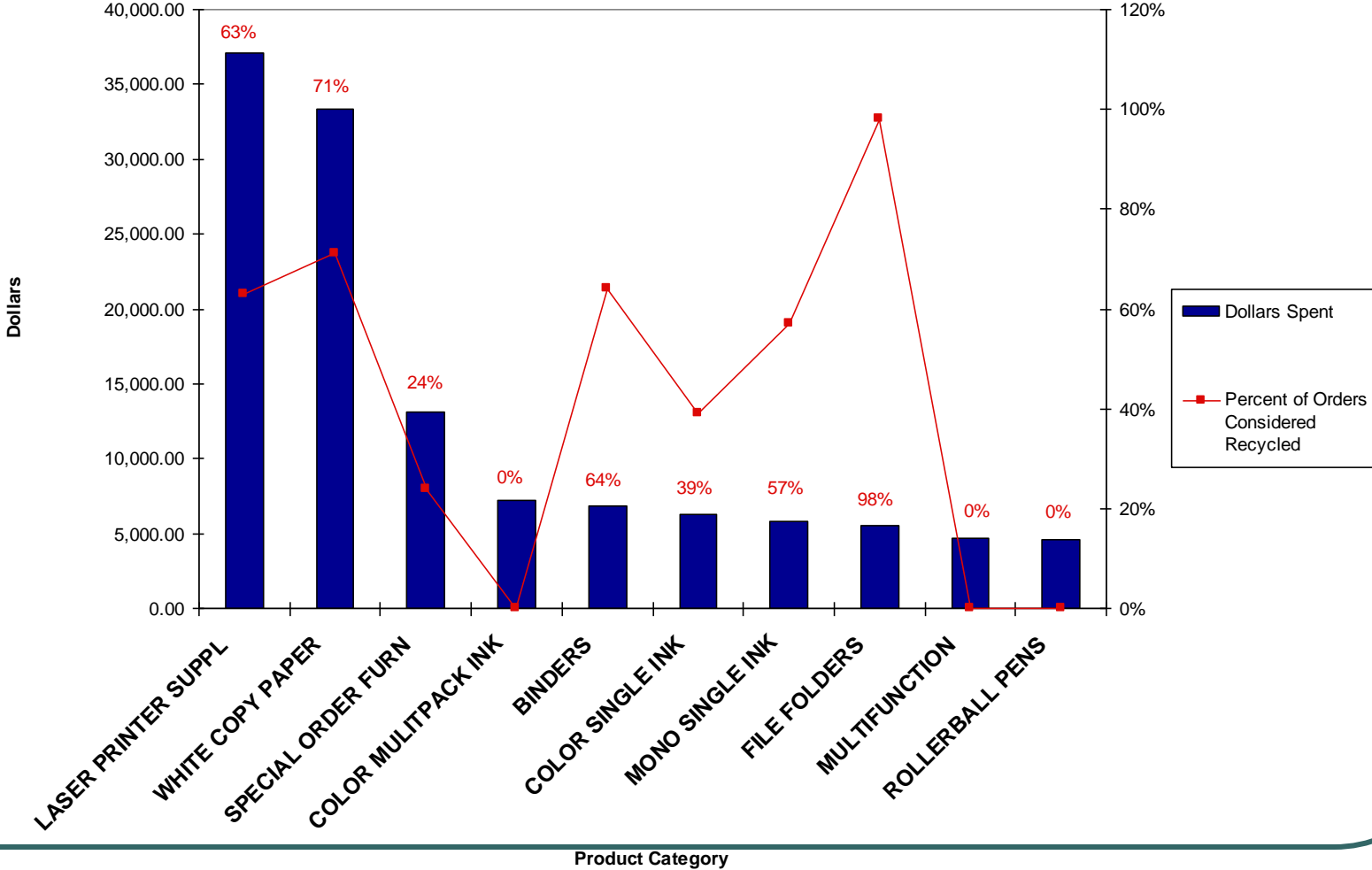
# Results: Purchasing Overview

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- Current Purchasing
- \$100,000 yearly average spending
- Most commonly purchased items:
  - Copy Paper
  - Ink Supplies



# Results: Greatest Expenditures



# Results: Recycled products overview

PRODUCT	%RECYCLED	PRODUCT	%RECYCLED
FILLER PAPER	100%	MAILING SUPPLIES	50%
DESK COLLECTIONS	99%	COLOR SINGLE INK	39%
FILE FOLDERS	98%	PAPER PRODUCTS	33%
INDEX CARDS & FILES	95%	APPT. BOOKS/PLANNERS	31%
COLOR COPY PAPER	92%	WIREBOUND NOTEBOOKS	31%
WHITE COPY PAPER	71%	LEGAL PADS	21%
BINDERS	64%	ENVELOPES	20%
LASER PRINTER SUPPL.	63%	BUSINESS FORMS	19%
OFFICE STATIONERY	60%	SELF STICK NOTES	11%
MONO SINGLE INK	57%	WIRELESS NOTEBOOKS	5%

# Office Depot's Product Guidelines

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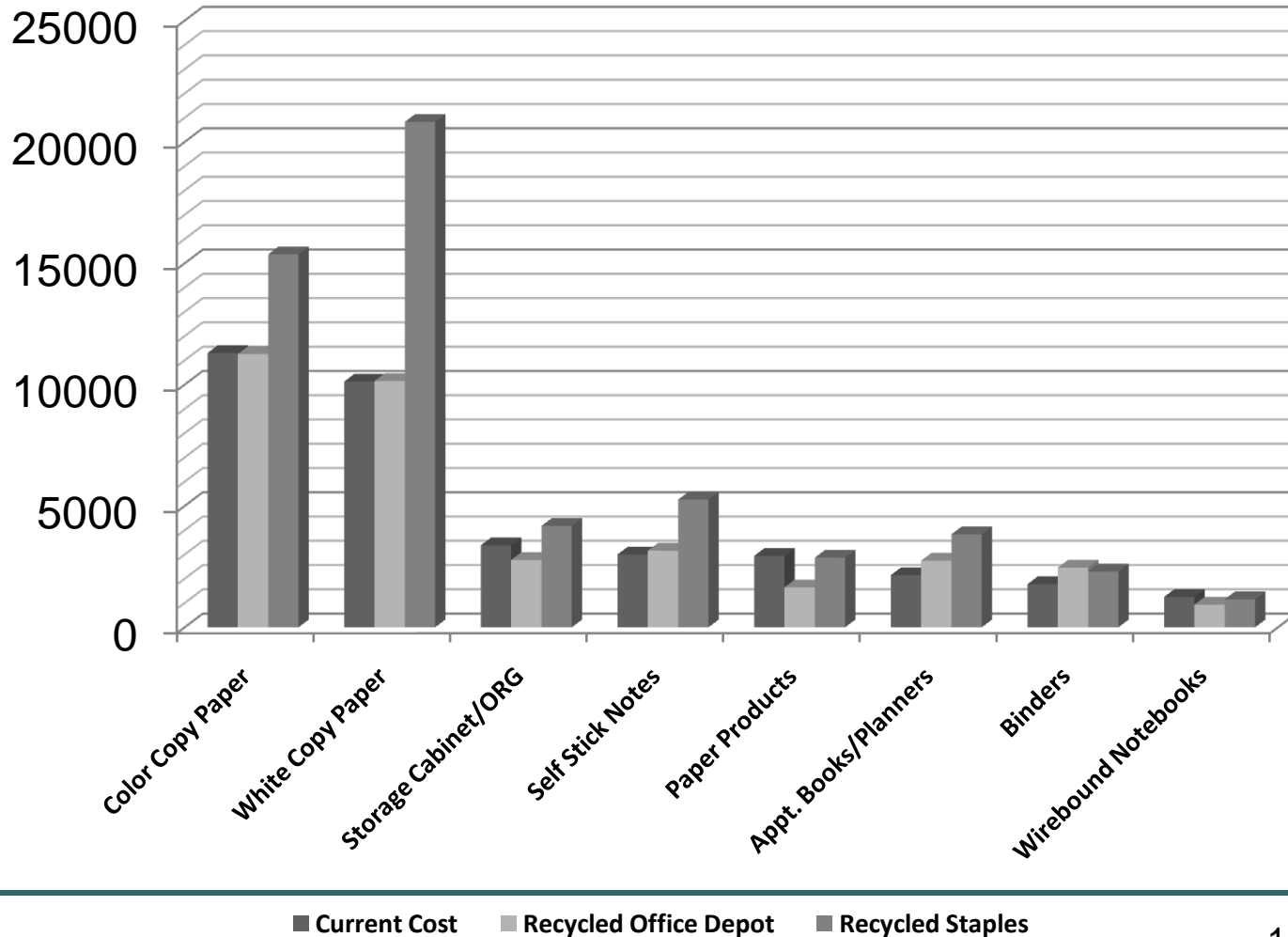
- Reduced waste
  - Recycled: minimum 10% post-consumer recycled or 20% total recycled (10% PCR and 50% total for mailing supplies)
  - Remanufactured: ink and toner cartridges from previously used products
  - Refillable & refills: products that replace one-time-use disposables
  - Rechargeable: batteries and chargers to replace one-time use batteries
  - Rewritable: CDs, DVDs and Flash Drives to reduce paper and allow reuse

# Office Depot's Product Guidelines

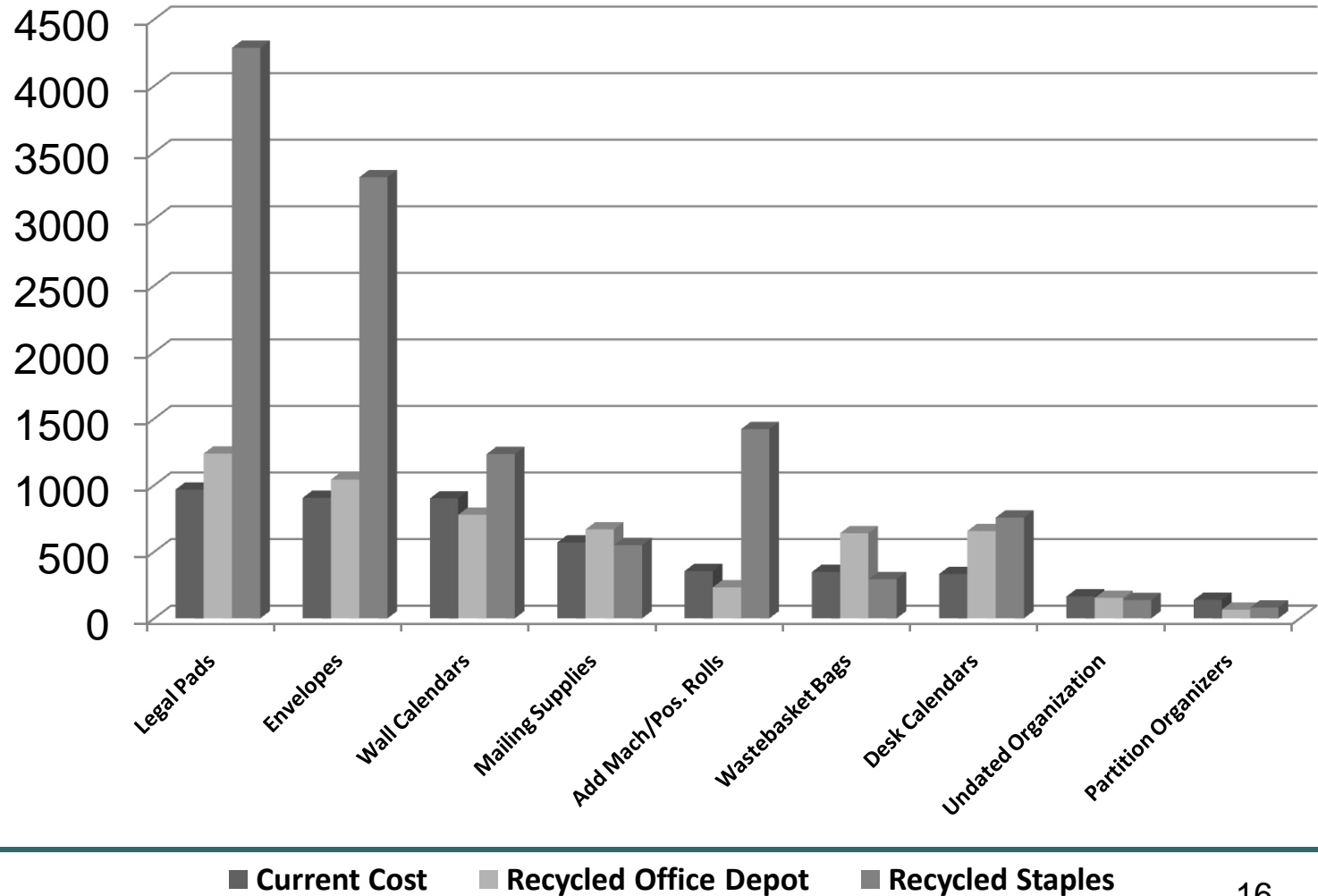
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- Reduced energy
  - Reduced energy in use: "Energy Star" qualified electronics and lights
  - Renewable energy in use: solar powered or manually cranked products
- Reduced chemical use
  - Reduced chemicals in use: Certified non-toxic writing instruments and supplies
  - Reduced chemicals and waste in disposal: Biodegradable liquids and non-toxic solids

# Cost Comparison

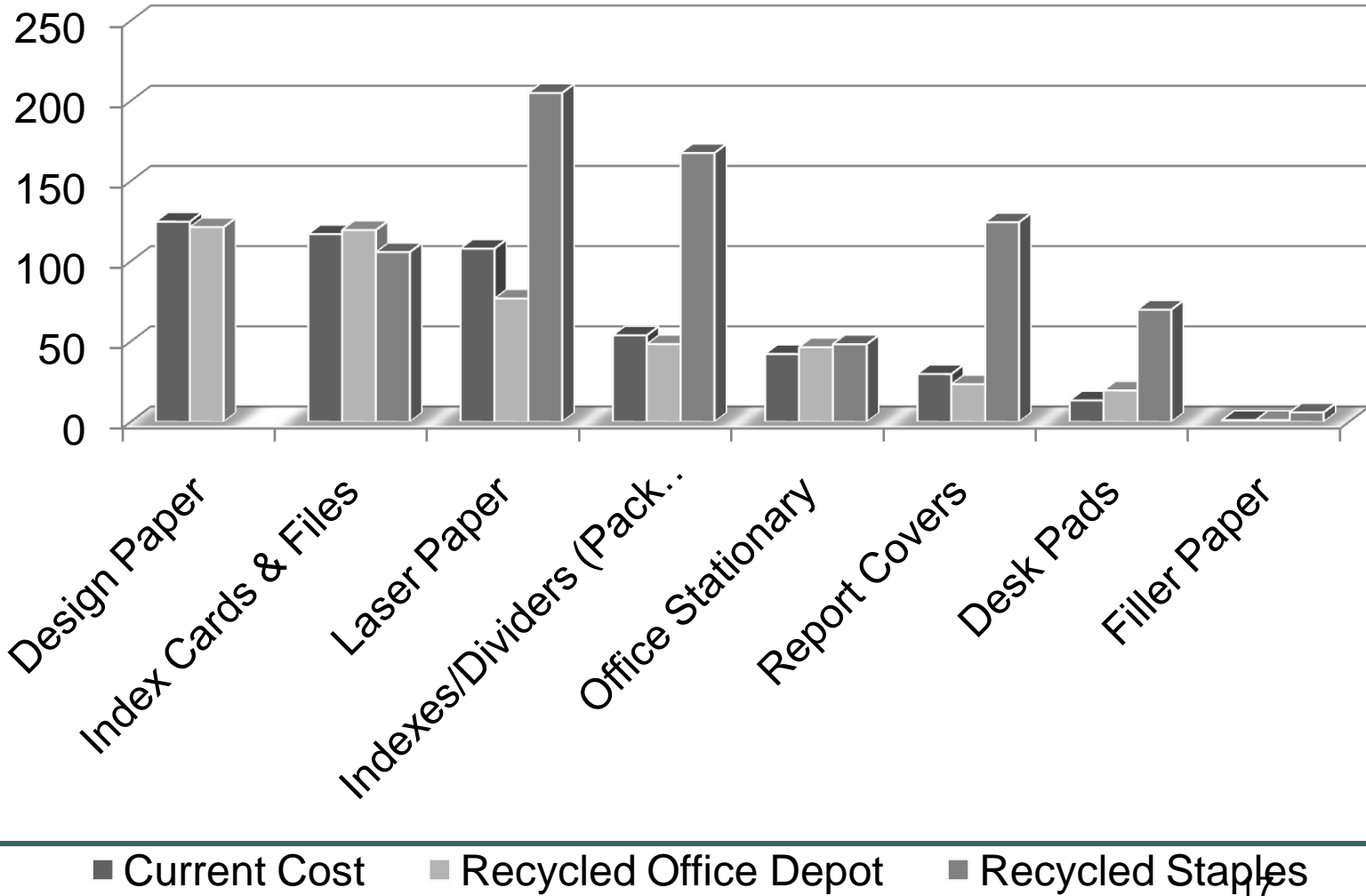


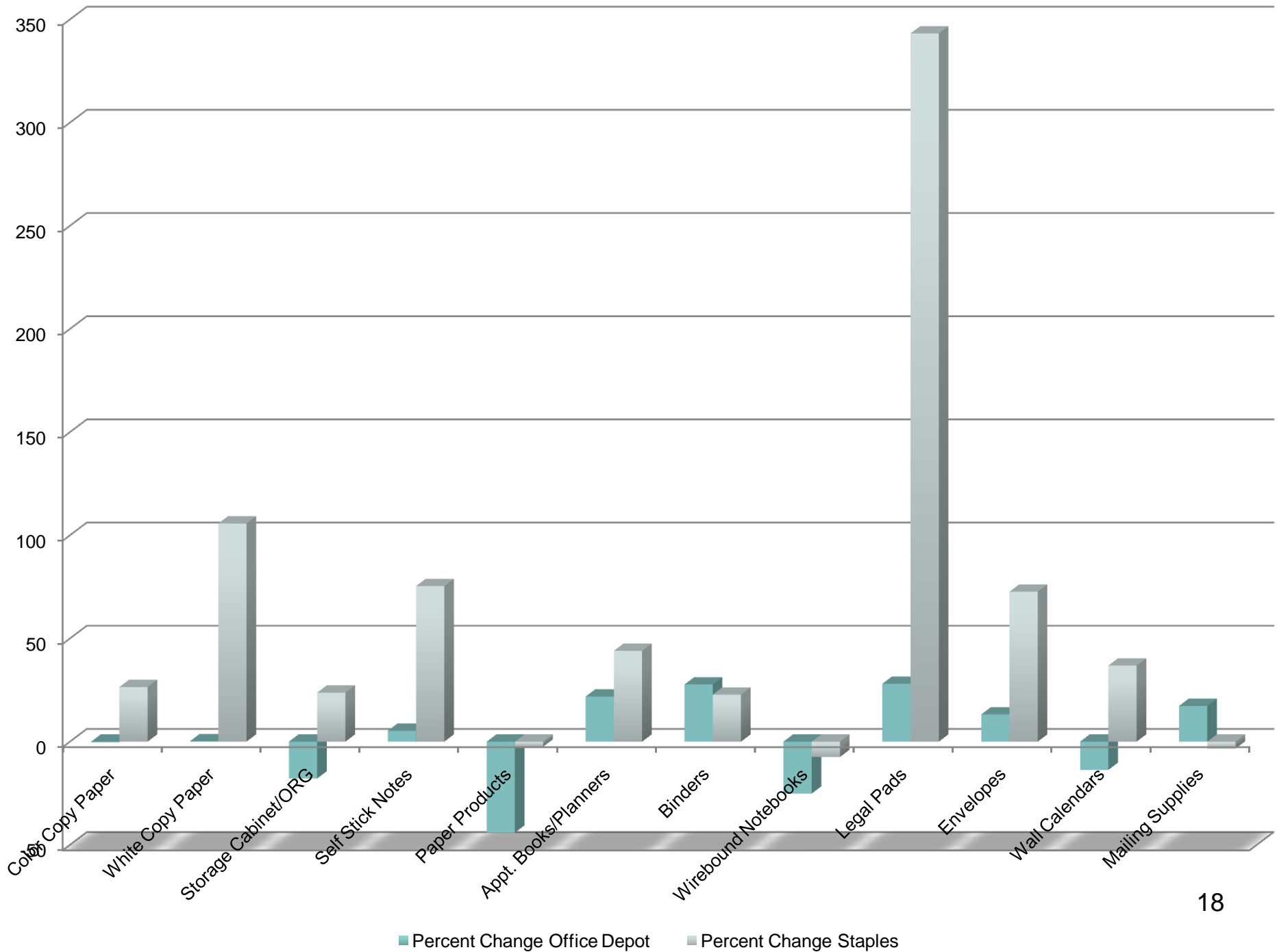
# Cost Comparison

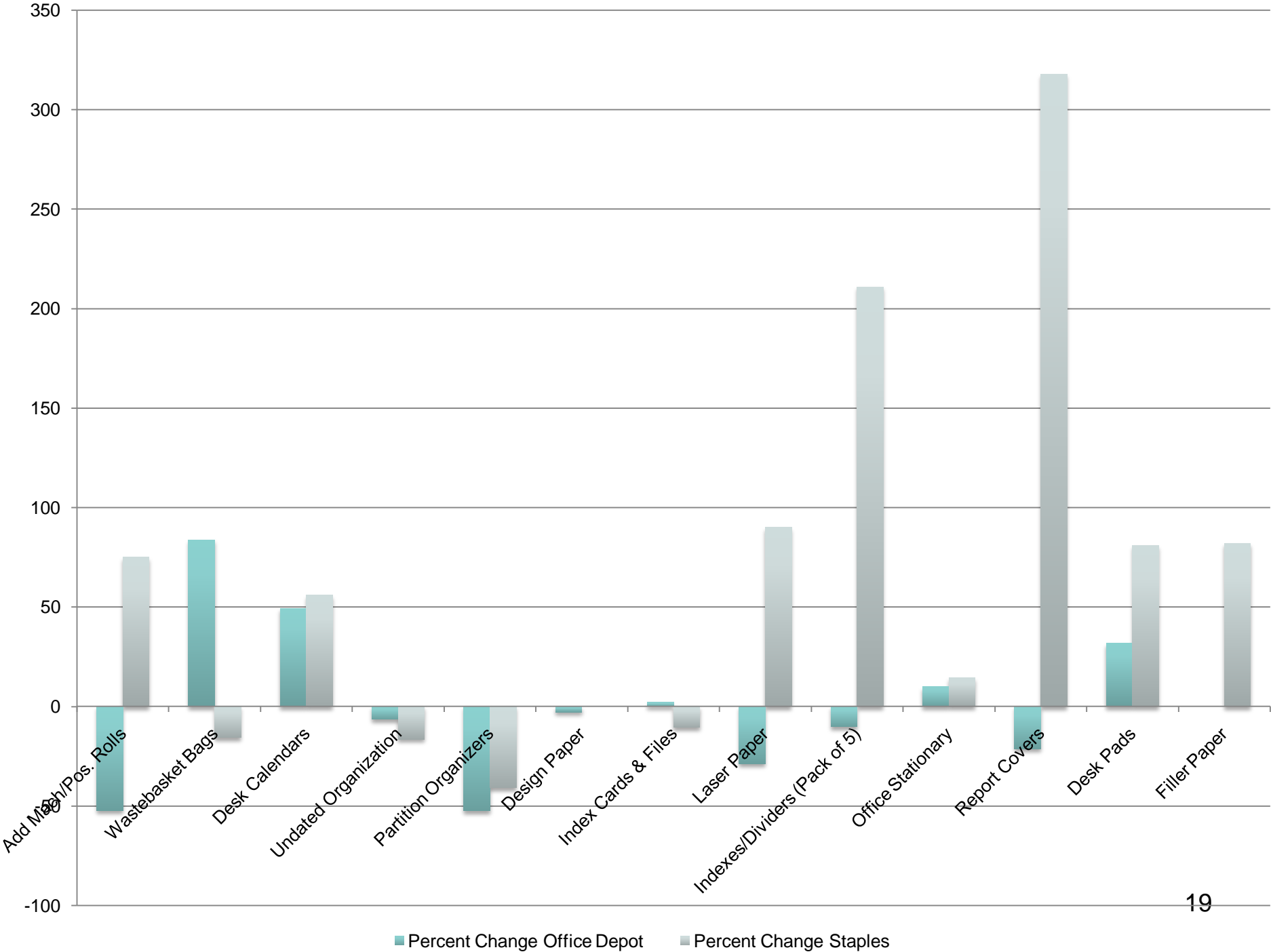




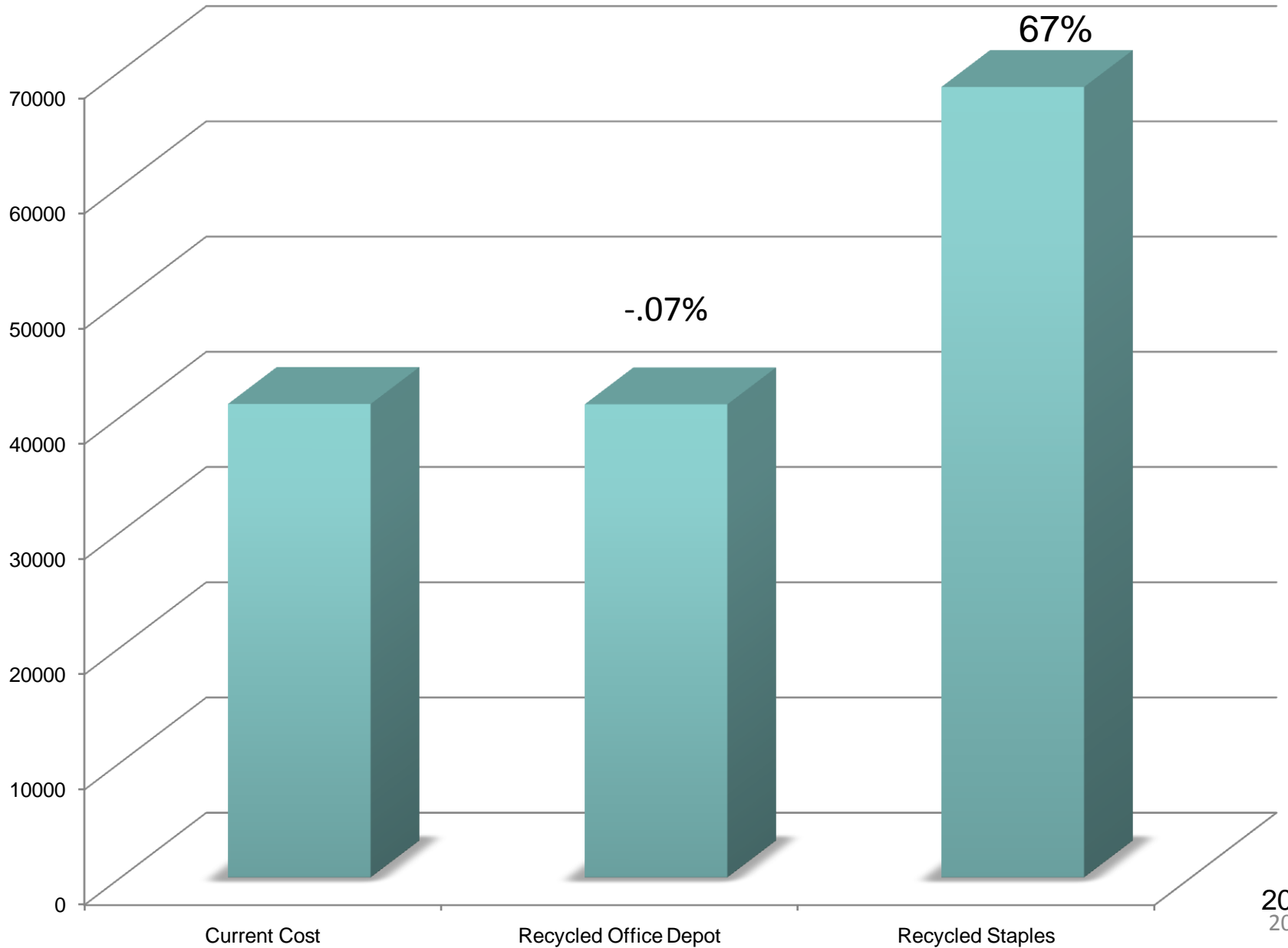
# Cost Comparison







# Total Money Spent



1. For which Town department do you work?

2. In an average month, how many times do you purchase office supplies for your department?

3. In an average month, how many dollars do you spend on office supplies for your department?

4. Please list the **three** office supply items you purchase most frequently.

5. a. Where do you usually purchase office supplies for your department? Check all that apply.

Online from Office Depot

Online from a local office supply retailer

In-store from Office Depot

In-store from a local office supply retailer

Online from a chain retailer other than Office Depot

Other

In-store from a chain retailer other than Office Depot

# Results: Purchaser Survey

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- Average Purchases
  - 3 times monthly for \$215
  - Most purchased: toner cartridges and paper
  - Variety of retailers (majority Office Depot)
  - Focused on **bulk purchasing**

## **Results: Purchaser Survey cont.**

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- Saving money: greatest priority
- 30% aim for recycled paper content
- Noteworthy purchaser recommendations:
  - Less paper usage
  - More bulk purchasing
  - Strict town purchasing guidelines

# Future Purchasing Suggestions

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- Bulk purchases
- Remove desktop inkjet printers
- Expanded toner & paper policy
- Increase accessibility
- Price points and sustainability
- Brochure for purchasers



# Conclusions

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- Past purchasing
  - Decent attempt at purchasing recycled
  - Many small purchases
- Future purchasing
  - Decrease purchase frequency and quantity
  - Strengthen purchasing guidelines
    - Target green products
  - Continue analysis to monitor trends
    - Similar studies for other products