

NO: R102

COUNCIL DATE: May 27, 2019

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **May 23, 2019**

FROM: **Acting General Manager, Engineering**

FILE: **0450-01**

SUBJECT: **Update on Single-Use Plastic and Other Items**

RECOMMENDATION

The Engineering Department recommends that Council:

1. Receive this report for information; and
2. Endorse the proposed actions as outlined in this report to commence the development of a Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy for Surrey.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an overview on the Metro Vancouver (“MV”) Regional Single-Use Item Reduction Approach and actions that the City will initiate in 2019 to determine options on how best to proceed with developing a single-use item strategy in Surrey.

BACKGROUND

Single-use items are products and packaging that are disposed of after one use. These include take out containers, disposable cups, utensils, plastic straws, plastic bags and plastic water bottles. These items are produced in significant amounts, and the increase in use of them is driven by several factors, including convenience, transportation of goods, food safety, cost savings and durability. It is estimated that over 1.1 billion single-use items are disposed in the MV region each year, which is equivalent to 440 items per person.

Over the years, there has been progress towards reducing waste generated from some single-use items. Currently, some of these items can be recycled by Surrey residents through the Recycle-BC program. Disposable coffee cups can be recycled through the curbside residential collection service, and plastic bags and expanded polystyrene fast food packaging can be recycled at local depots. In addition, recycling of single-use items is also encouraged by the Encorp Deposit Return Stewardship program, and MV’s disposal bans also support diversion of these items from landfills.

Despite the above efforts, the use of single-use items results in increased energy and resource consumption, scattered litter, illegal dumping, increased costs to collect from public spaces, and increased landfill waste. Additionally, these items are not all recyclable or compostable. Of even greater significance is that single-use items can end up in waterways, contaminating the water and adversely impacting fish and marine life.

DISCUSSION

There has been increasing momentum globally and locally toward further reducing or eliminating single-use items. Various levels of government at the Federal, Provincial, regional and municipal levels are undertaking initiatives focused on managing single-use items. Specifically, in Canada, there is a mix of regulatory authority over the use of single-use items and the waste created by them. Each level of government has a role to play in the future management of single-use item waste.

The implementation of progressive actions at various levels focused on reducing, eliminating or standardizing single-use items will significantly help with managing waste, decreasing reliance on virgin resources and advancing greener and more sustainable alternatives. Some of the work that is currently being undertaken at various levels includes:

- The Government of Canada has recently introduced steps to reduce plastic waste in its own operations, which include new commitments to divert at least 75% of plastic waste by 2030, eliminate the unnecessary use of single-use plastics, and leverage procurement practices to focus on sustainable plastic products;
- Canada has been an important proponent of the G7 Ocean Plastics Charter, which means more international support and a growing momentum for action on plastic pollution globally;
- The Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment approved development for a Zero Plastic Waste Strategy in November 2018, which outlines areas where changes are needed across the plastic lifecycle, from design to collection, clean-up and value recovery, and underscores the economic and business opportunities resulting from long-lasting and durable plastics. This is slated to be ready for consideration in 2019, and staff will provide input and feedback on the proposed plan.
- The MV Regional District, in collaboration with member municipalities, is developing an approach towards single-use item reduction (discussed further below);
- Union of BC Municipalities (“UBCM”) Resolution (Provincial Program) in September 2018 passed the resolution that the Province of British Columbia develop a Provincial Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy, as part of a Provincial Zero Waste Strategy (discussed further below); and
- The City of Vancouver is consulting on and plans to implement several single-use item reduction policies including:
 - Bylaws to reduce the number of plastic bags, paper bags, and disposable cups distributed;
 - A “by-request-only” bylaw for disposable utensils;
 - Straw distribution restrictions; and
 - An expanded polystyrene take-out cup and container ban;

Metro Vancouver Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy

A key priority of the Integrated Solid Waste and Resource Management Plan (“ISWRMP”) is waste reduction. Reducing the use of single-use items, such as coffee cups and grocery bags, is an important opportunity to achieve the waste reduction goals of the ISWRMP. In October 2017, the MV Board directed staff to identify options and determine actions to reduce single-use items that are best done at a Regional level (Appendix “I”). Subsequently, the MV Board approved initiating consultation on a regional single-use item reduction strategy in February 2018 (Appendix “II”).

MV has indicated that they have limited regulatory authority in relation to single-use items, and their approach is to develop a single-use item tool kit that member jurisdictions can use as a framework to implement a strategy that is customized to their community. The tool kit will provide municipalities with resources and best practices towards development of a single-use strategy and will promote regional harmonization. Below is a high-level overview of the proposed MV potential actions that have currently been identified to include in the tool kit.

- Identifying priority single-use items, including plastic and paper shopping bags, polystyrene foam cups and take-out containers, disposable hot and cold drink cups, and disposable straws and utensils;
- Developing educational and promotional materials for businesses and residents;
- Exploring options to increase use of reusable items;
- Identifying options to implement fees, discounts or deposits on single-use items;
- Implementing a disposal ban for single-use items at regional facilities;
- Reviewing requirements for use of recyclable and/or compostable materials for single-use items;
- Exploring options to restrict sale of specific single-use items;
- Analyzing and expanding existing data on the use, recycling and disposal of single-use items; and
- Reviewing regulatory options available to restrict or ban certain items.

A workshop with member municipality staff was held in May 2019 to review potential policy and regulatory approaches that can be taken with the various single-use items. The approaches considered at the workshop to reduce single-use items included a mandatory fee, bans, a requirement of reusable items, a requirement of recyclable/compostable items, and by request only from customers.

In addition, a common theme that emerged from the workshop was that a harmonized approach, either via Extended Producer Responsibility Program (“EPR”) or an alternative Provincial single-use item program would be beneficial. A harmonized approach will reduce potential challenges for various stakeholders and provide for an efficient and consistent approach. Advancing a Provincial program was identified as a key measure to include as both a regional and municipal action.

A broader consultation with other stakeholders, such as businesses, industry and the public, will be held by MV in June 2019 to gather further input and feedback. The feedback and input gathered at the municipal and other stakeholder workshops will be taken into consideration to help develop the single-use item tool kit. The MV draft toolkit is scheduled to be completed by July 2019, with the toolkit being presented to the MV Board for their consideration later in 2019.

Union of BC Municipalities Resolution (Provincial Program)

On September 13, 2018, the UBCM passed the resolution that the Province of British Columbia develop a Provincial Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy as part of a Provincial Zero Waste Strategy, which would include, but not necessarily be limited to, plastic and paper shopping bags, polystyrene foam cups and polystyrene foam containers, other hot and cold drink cups and take-out containers, straws and utensils, but would exclude all single-use items needed for medical use or for people with disabilities.

A successful strategy involves a wide array of stakeholders, including residents, businesses, retailers and industry. On this basis, it is beneficial to have a Provincial strategy which will ensure an equitable, transparent, sustainable and consistent approach throughout the region. Independent strategies or restrictions are problematic for retailers and industries operating across many different locations with different requirements and create confusion for the public.

To support the UBCM resolution, the MV Board in February 2019 endorsed the recommendation to write to the Province expressing support on developing a Provincial Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy (Appendix “III”). A Provincial approach would ensure inter-municipal harmonization and consistency for the public, consumers, producers and businesses with operations throughout the Province.

Next Steps

Staff will continue to be actively engaged in the development of the MV Regional single-use item tool kit. The research conducted and tool kit developed will significantly help the City to develop a single-use strategy. In addition, it will also assist with supporting the development of an integrated, consistent and transparent approach across the MV region.

Furthermore, it is recommended that staff continue to work with the region on supporting a harmonized approach at the Provincial level, whether via implementation of an EPR program or an alternative Provincial single-use item program, which will ensure a consistent and coordinated approach with single-use item reduction among communities. This will significantly benefit residents, consumers, businesses, industry and other stakeholders with transitioning towards reducing or eliminating single-use items.

In parallel, there are certain actions that the City can start to undertake while the regional tool kit is being developed and while other developments emerge at the Provincial level. These specific actions are noted below. The development of an efficient and effective strategy requires significant time, consultation with various agencies, data analysis, regulatory review, community involvement and engagement. The information gathered through these actions, along with the MV single-use tool kit, will assist the City in determining options on how best to proceed with developing a single-use item strategy for Surrey.

Surrey Early Actions on Single-Use Strategy Plan

1. Initiate a preliminary community consultation and engagement of residents and businesses to:
 - Provide information on single-use items;
 - Seek input from stakeholders to better understand the challenges and concerns;
 - Identify type of single-use items to target specific to Surrey;
 - Identify how we can work with businesses to implement the strategy;
 - Review unintended consequences with reducing single-use items, such as impacts to businesses, accessibility to alternative products, persons with disabilities, health concerns, affordability, regulatory changes, public health authority requirement, recyclability/composability of alternative items, etc.;
 - Develop timelines required to implement single-use strategy; and
 - Develop and introduce an education campaign on single-use item reduction.
2. Complete, in 2019, a single-use item waste composition study to gain an understanding of the volume and type of single-use items generated and landfilled in Surrey; and
3. Conduct, in 2019, an extensive review of regulatory and legislative authority, including ability to make amendments that will help support the reduction and increase of single-use items.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

A single-use item reduction strategy supports the objectives of the City's Sustainability Charter 2.0. In particular, it supports the Sustainability Charter 2.0 theme of Infrastructure. Specifically, a single-use item reduction strategy supports the following Desired Outcomes ("DO") and Strategic Directions ("SD"):

- Materials and Waste DO₁₉: Residents and businesses are conscious of their consumer choices and reuse existing materials first;
- Materials and Waste DO₂₀: Materials and resources are used efficiently, sourced locally where feasible, and repurposed or recycled at the end of their life cycle;
- Materials and Waste DO₂₁: The City is moving toward a zero-waste target, in line with regional waste diversion goals;
- Materials and Waste SD₁₃: Work with local businesses and organizations to maximize the recovery and reuse of local materials and waste products as part of the circular economy; and
- Materials and Waste SD₁₄: Provide tools and educational resources that support residents and businesses to reduce consumption.

CONCLUSION

The use of single-use items results in increased energy and resource consumption, scattered litter, and increased landfill waste. Additionally, these items are not all recyclable or compostable and end up in waterways, contaminating the water and adversely impacting fish and marine life. There has been increasing momentum and various levels of government at the Federal, Provincial, regional and municipal levels are undertaking initiatives focused on managing single-use items.

A key priority of the ISWRMP is waste reduction. MV has indicated that they have limited regulatory authority in relation to single-use items, and their approach will be developing a single-use item tool kit that member jurisdictions can use as a framework to implement a strategy. In parallel, the City will start to undertake specific actions as outlined in this report, which can be used as input to the MV tool kit and will assist in determining options on how best to proceed with developing a single-use item strategy for Surrey. In addition, it is recommended that staff continue to work with the region on supporting a harmonized approach at the Provincial level, whether via implementation of an EPR program or an alternative provincial single-use item program.

Staff will prepare a report to Council later in 2019 with updates on the plan and how to proceed with the development of a single-use item reduction strategy in Surrey.

Jaime Boan, P.Eng.
Acting General Manager, Engineering

HJ/cc

Appendix "I" – Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy Update
Appendix "II" – Regional Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy Research and Consultation
Appendix "III" - Single-Use Item Reduction Approach

To: Zero Waste Committee

From: Paul Henderson, General Manager, Solid Waste Services

Date: October 3, 2017 Meeting Date: October 12, 2017

Subject: **Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy Update**

RECOMMENDATION

That the GVS&DD Board direct staff to determine actions to reduce waste from Single-Use Items that are best done on a regional level.

PURPOSE

To provide an update to the Board on the City of Vancouver's Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy and seek direction from the Board to develop actions related to that strategy that are best done on a regional level.

BACKGROUND

The City of Vancouver has initiated consultation on a single-use item reduction strategy, and staff are seeking direction to identify and develop actions that are more appropriate and efficient to be done at a regional level rather than at the municipal level.

CREATING A SINGLE-USE ITEM REDUCTION STRATEGY

A key priority of the *Integrated Solid Waste and Resource Management Plan (ISWRMP)* is waste reduction. Reducing the use of single use items such as coffee cups and grocery bags is an important opportunity to achieve the waste reduction goals of the ISWRMP.

In an effort to achieve waste reduction targets established in the City of Vancouver's *Greenest City Action Plan*, key products identified for management actions to reduce litter and to avoid creating waste include disposable beverage cups, take-out food containers, and plastic and paper shopping bags. The *Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy Consultation Paper* (Attachment 1) identifies an array of regulatory (e.g., bans, fees/deposits, mandatory recycling, etc.) and non-regulatory (e.g., education/behavior change, reusable container exchanges, etc.) approaches to address these product categories. Other options, such as advocating to the provincial government for new extended producer responsibility programs for packaging and printed paper for industrial, commercial and industrial sectors, are also contemplated in the paper.

Specifically, the *Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy Consultation Paper* states its focus on 'reduce' and 'reuse' actions, which supports several initiatives underway within Metro Vancouver and member municipalities and the National Zero Waste Council. The *Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy Consultation Paper* also notes that potential approaches may highlight opportunities and barriers and may carry unintended consequences. The strategy suggests identifying opportunities that are most appropriately implemented on a regional scale rather than municipal scale, and as a consequence

there would be benefit in Metro Vancouver working with the City of Vancouver and other stakeholders to identify and develop those actions.

ALTERNATIVES

1. That the GVS&DD Board direct staff to determine actions to reduce waste from Single-Use Items that are best done on a regional level.
2. That the GVS&DD Board receive for information and provide alternative direction.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

If the Board approves Alternative 1, staff will work with Vancouver staff and other stakeholders to identify actions to reduce waste from Single-Use Items and report back to the Board with proposed actions.

SUMMARY / CONCLUSION

Avoiding the creation of waste in the first place is a key objective of both the ISWRMP and the *Greenest City Action Plan*. Through the *Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy* Consultation Paper, the City of Vancouver is proposing regulatory and non-regulatory approaches to achieve progress in ‘reducing’ and ‘reusing’ single-use items such as disposable beverage cups, take-out food containers, and plastic and paper shopping bags.

A Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy will likely include potential actions that would be best done on a regional level, for reasons on efficiency, consistency, and municipal equity among the residents, retailers and restaurants throughout the region.

Staff recommend Alternative 1, that the Board direct staff to work to determine actions to reduce wastes from Single-Use Items that are best done on a regional level.

Attachment:

1. The *Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy* Consultation Paper, dated September 12, 2017 (*Orbit #23448929*)

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CREATING A SINGLE-USE ITEM REDUCTION STRATEGY

FOR DISPOSABLE CUPS, TAKE-OUT CONTAINERS AND SHOPPING BAGS

Consultation Paper | September 12, 2017



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INTRODUCTION



Volunteers with the City's Keep Vancouver Spectacular Program join together to keep their community vibrant and clean by picking up litter at John Hendry Park.

Cities around the globe are taking action to address single-use item waste. On June 27, 2017, in support of our Greenest City Action Plan and Zero Waste goal, Vancouver City Council directed staff to launch a stakeholder consultation and public engagement program on options to reduce the amount of waste generated from single-use items, including:

- Disposable beverage cups
- Take-out containers
- Plastic and paper shopping bags

As staff develop a Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy, consultation on potential approaches and targets is crucial. Collective effort is needed to create a sustainable strategy that reduces waste from single-use items, works locally and could be adopted by other communities as we all work towards zero waste. Our intention is to spark a conversation on how the City of Vancouver and stakeholders can work together to tackle this problem. We can't do it alone.

The purpose of this consultation paper is to provide information and seek stakeholder feedback on potential approaches and targets under consideration for the City of Vancouver's Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy.

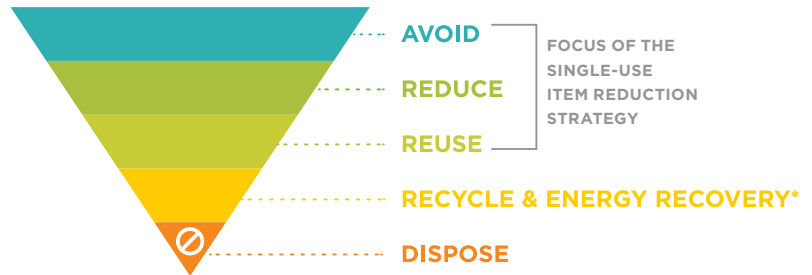
In this consultation paper you will find:

- A "current state" of single-use item waste in Vancouver;
- Background information on the current collection system;
- Key research findings, including local, national and international actions underway;
- A review of regulatory and non-regulatory tools within the City's ability to support;
- Potential approaches, and;
- Discussion of potential two, five and 10 year targets.

POTENTIAL APPROACHES

The potential approaches presented in this paper, shown in tables 1-3, are intended to prioritize “reduce and reuse” over “recycle and dispose,” as shown in the Zero Waste Hierarchy. This aligns with the City’s commitment to become a zero waste community by 2040.

THE ZERO WASTE HIERARCHY



** Recovering energy from organic materials such as food and, in the case of single-use items, compostable packaging.*

TARGETS

Input received through this consultation paper, will inform the development of achievable and measurable two, five and 10-year targets to be included in the strategy. At this time, the City is seeking feedback on the proposed five-year targets included in this paper, as well as input from respondents to develop two-year and 10-year targets.

Two-Year Target(s):

To be determined through consultation

Five-Year Targets:

1. Reduce the amount of disposable cups and take-out containers to landfill/incinerator by 50%
2. Reduce the distribution of plastic and paper shopping bags by 70%

Ten-Year Target(s):

To be determined through consultation

YOUR TURN

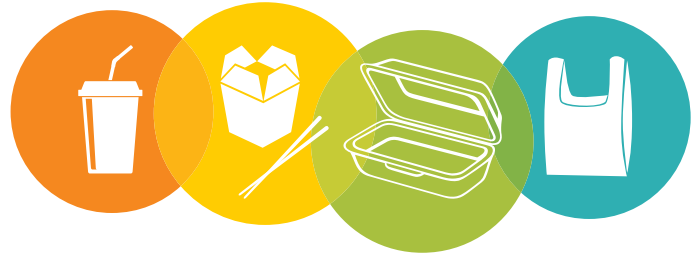
Comments and input are encouraged on all aspects of the consultation paper, particularly on the potential approaches and targets. As you read through this consultation paper, please consider the following questions:

- What action is your organization taking to reduce single-use items? What results have you achieved?
- Which approaches should be included in the strategy, and how should they be phased in?
- What opportunities do you see for collaboration with the City and other stakeholders?
- Are there any approaches you cannot support, and why?
- Are there any approaches we’ve missed?
- What approaches will make the most progress towards the targets?
- What are the barriers to adopting the potential approaches, and how can we work together to overcome them?
- What is your feedback on the proposed five-year targets and what suggestions do you have for two-year and ten-year targets?
- How can stakeholders and the City work together to share data and track performance?

Your input and ideas will be used to help develop a draft Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy that is expected to be presented to City Council in early 2018. **Comments will be received until Friday, December 15, 2017.**

WHY A SINGLE-USE ITEM REDUCTION STRATEGY?

Our Greenest City Action Plan includes a zero waste target to reduce waste disposed to landfill and incinerator by 50% from 2008 levels by 2020. While significant progress has been made towards this target, more work is needed. Addressing waste from single-use items continues to be an area of focus to help deal with litter and environmental challenges. This includes:



- **Disposable beverage cups**
- **Take-out food containers¹**
- **Plastic and paper shopping bags**

Our current single-use, throwaway culture has been decades in the making and has been driven by a number of factors, including: convenience, limited free time, food safety and security, and marketing and branding. Despite these factors, there is growing recognition that single-use items have a lasting impact on our environment, require a significant amount of resources for their production and create an immense amount of waste. In Vancouver alone, 2.6 million polycarbonate paper cups² and 2 million³ plastic shopping bags are thrown in the garbage each week.

Disposable cups and take-out containers make up about 50% (by volume) of all items collected in public waste bins and 41% of large litter⁴ items on Vancouver streets. Plastic bags make up 3% of shoreline litter and 2% of large street litter in Vancouver. Recycling opportunities for polystyrene foam cups and containers exist, but are limited. When littered, foam packaging can break up into small pieces that become widely dispersed by wind and water, ending up in waterways and the ocean.

Despite their convenience, these single-use items:

- **Cost Vancouver taxpayers about \$2.5 million per year to collect from public waste bins and to clean up as litter in our parks, streets and green spaces.**
- **Are not often reused or recycled**
- **Take up valuable space in our landfill**
- **Have a lasting impact on our environment long after their short use**
- **Require a significant amount of resources from our planet**

It's time to shift our thinking about waste, prioritize options that reduce and reuse, and take action to reduce single-use. We want to work with stakeholders and residents to create a made-in-Vancouver solution that dramatically reduces single-use items, supports convenient, affordable and accessible alternatives, and could be adopted by other communities as we all work towards zero waste.

¹ In this paper, "take-out food containers" includes all disposable dishware used by quick service food establishments (restaurants, cafeterias, food trucks) as well as disposable dishware by full service restaurants for take-out food. It includes all disposable containers, plates, bowls, wrappers, etc. that may be used on-site, carried away, or for delivery.

² Paper cups lined with a plastic coating on the inside for hot drinks like coffee, and also the outside for cold drinks like pop.

³ 63% of these plastic bags are reused for garbage and pet waste.

⁴ Large litter items are those that are greater than four square inches.

CURRENT STATE OF SINGLE-USE ITEM WASTE IN VANCOUVER

Single-use, disposable items, such as hot and cold beverage cups, paper and plastic carry bags, and take-out food packaging are commonplace in our fast-paced, on-the-go society. With the launch of the Recycle BC (formerly Multi-Material BC) residential recycling program on May 19, 2014, Vancouver’s recycling program expanded to include many of these single-use disposable items. Disposable coffee cups can be recycled through the residential collection program, while plastic bags and expanded polystyrene packaging can be recycled at depots. Some retailers have also developed take-back programs for some single-use items. Nevertheless, outside of the home a significant amount of these recyclable materials are disposed as garbage or end up as litter.

CUP WASTE

An estimated 2.6 million hot and cold paper beverage cups are disposed as garbage each week in Vancouver. The pie chart to the right represents the amount of paper cup waste from single family homes, multi-family homes, and the industrial, commercial and institutional sector.

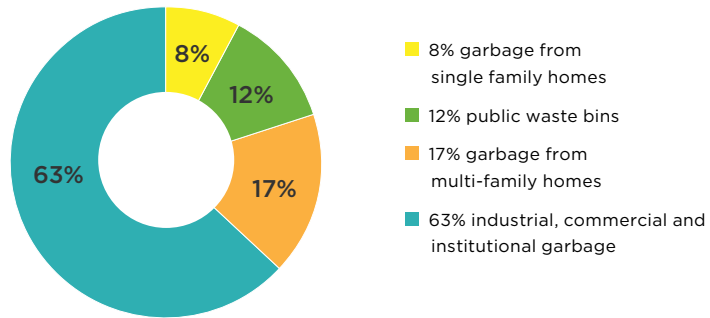


Figure 1: cup waste divided by source of disposal.

PLASTIC BAG WASTE

It’s estimated that over 2 million plastic shopping bags are disposed in the garbage each week in Vancouver.⁵ The pie chart to the right represents the amount of plastic bag waste from single family homes, multi-family homes, and the industrial, commercial and institutional sector.

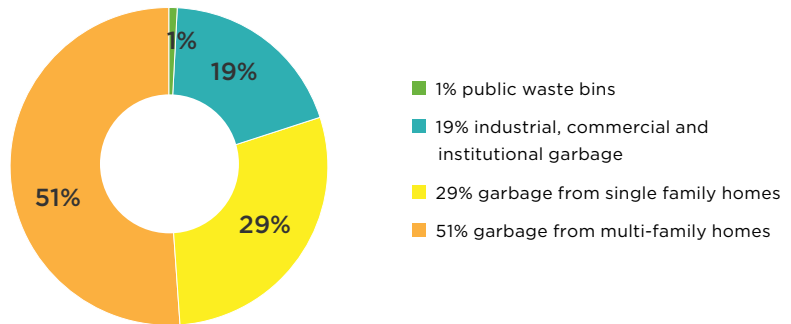


Figure 2: plastic bag waste divided by source of disposal.

LITTER FROM SINGLE-USE ITEMS

Waste from single-use items can have a significant impact on our city and the surrounding marine environment as litter. In Vancouver, 44% of large litter is comprised of these single-use items. The pie chart to the right shows what percentage of different single-use items appear as litter on Vancouver streets.

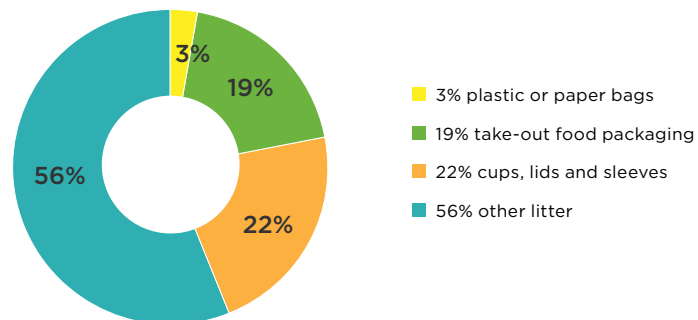


Figure 3: breakdown of litter from single-use items.

⁵ About 63% of plastic shopping bags in garbage were reused as garbage bags.

ABOUT THIS CONSULTATION PAPER

Any strategy to dramatically reduce plastic and paper shopping bags, disposable cups, and take-out food containers will affect almost all consumers and over 10,000 businesses and organizations in Vancouver. This includes almost every business, organization, and social service agency in Vancouver serving food or beverages in disposable foodware, and every business that gives out shopping bags. The recycling industry, and manufacturers and distributors of these products will also be affected.

Balancing convenience versus waste, and changing how single-use items are used, perceived, and managed pose significant challenges. Given the broad nature of the issues and the competing interests of stakeholders, it is critical for the City to consult on long term sustainable solutions.

This consultation paper has been designed for businesses, industry representatives, social service agencies, advocacy groups, local governments, and other government agencies that have an interest or role to play in reducing single-use items.

The aim of this consultation paper is to stimulate discussion around the issues and solutions. Your input will help to provide a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities we will all face and identify how the City can work together with stakeholders and residents to successfully reduce single-use item waste.

OUR PROCESS

This consultation paper is part of a stakeholder consultation process that will also include stakeholder meetings in September and October. These meetings will review information contained in this consultation paper.

Alongside stakeholder consultation, the City is engaging the public through the City's citizen advisory committees, schools, Pop-Up City Hall, community events, and a Talk Vancouver survey.

City staff expect to present a draft Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy to Council in early 2018.

HOW FEEDBACK WILL BE CONSIDERED

The results of the stakeholder consultation and the public engagement process will be used to formulate a draft Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy that is expected to be presented to Council in early 2018.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Your input and suggestions are important to us. Please submit your comments by **Friday, December 15, 2017** in one of the following ways:

- By Email: singleuse.consultationpaper@vancouver.ca
- Online comment form:
vancouver.fluidsurveys.com/surveys/covengage/single-use-item-reduction-consultation-paper/
- By Mail: City of Vancouver – Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy Consultation
453 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4

CONSULTATION TIMELINE

Our process and anticipated milestones



THE COLLECTION SYSTEM TODAY

RESIDENTIAL

Recycling collection for Vancouver residents is provided by Recycle BC, a non-profit organization responsible for residential packaging and printed paper recycling in British Columbia. The program is funded by over 1,200 businesses, including retailers, manufacturers and restaurants.

Recycle BC provides recycling services for various types of packaging and paper including:

- Polycoat paper cups, plastic cups, take-out containers (plastic, metal, polycoated paper) and paper shopping bags in the curbside and multi-family recycling program
- Plastic shopping bags and foam cups and containers at 12 drop off locations provided by Recycle BC throughout Vancouver

BUSINESS, INSTITUTIONAL, AND NON-PROFIT

Some businesses voluntarily provide customer-facing recycling programs in-store for cups, containers and plastic shopping bags. Many organizations also provide recycling programs for employees. The extent of these programs, and their success, particularly customer-facing programs, is not well known.

ON-STREET RECYCLING AND LITTER COLLECTION

In August 2016, the City and Recycle BC launched an on-street recycling pilot project that includes 32 on-street locations in the West End, Second Beach in Stanley Park, and on Cambie at Broadway. In summer 2017, the City expanded on-street recycling with another 15 stations installed on Granville Street and at the Vancouver Art Gallery plaza.

The City has a robust street-cleaning and litter collection program, which includes street sweeping and flushing, abandoned waste collection, and daily emptying of approximately 3,000 litter cans. These efforts are supplemented by community clean-ups by about 23,000 Keep Vancouver Spectacular volunteers, and grants to non-profit organizations to provide micro-cleaning (manual litter collection) in high demand areas.



WHAT WE'VE LEARNED SO FAR

In February 2016, City Council directed staff to review and report back on regulatory options for addressing the distribution, use, and recycling of commonly used single-use items, such as shopping bags, disposable cups and take-out food containers. Staff conducted an extensive review of regulatory and non-regulatory options that have been undertaken in other areas, and held some initial consultations with stakeholders, beginning with a consultation session on single-use items as part of a Zero Waste 2040 workshop consultation series in October 2016.

KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS

- No single approach will result in the changes needed; a suite of options is required.
- Strong regulatory approaches may have unintended consequences or may not move the dial.
- There is confusion among food service establishments and consumers as to what type of packaging is recyclable and/or compostable.
- Some types of compostable packaging may not be compostable in local facilities.
- Food residue can interfere with recycling of single-use cups and containers.
- Single-use plastic bag bans can greatly reduce the number of thin plastic bags used but, unless there is a fee on alternative types of bags, may drive retailers and consumers to switch to paper bags or thicker plastic bags.
- Paper bags have been shown in several life cycle studies to have higher global warming potential and non-renewable energy and water use than plastic bags.
- Deposit-refund systems can achieve high recycling rates, reduce single-use items in public litter bins, and reduce litter from streets and beaches.
- Many existing quick service food businesses may have challenges in increasing the use of reusable dishware due to space restrictions.
- Education/social marketing and communications focused on how we change our behaviour will be a key part of successfully implementing any future strategies considered.

SINGLE-USE ITEM REDUCTION STRATEGY WORKSHOP

On October 28, 2016, the City hosted a workshop with residents, businesses, non-profit organizations and other levels of government to gather input on single-use foam food packaging, disposable cups, plastic and paper shopping bags, and take-out containers.

Six key themes emerged from the workshop:

1. Take a collaborative, systems-wide approach
2. Foster a zero waste culture
3. Transition to a strong circular economy
4. Foster innovation
5. Support infrastructure and technology
6. Develop supportive and enabling policy and regulation

These themes, along with feedback and research conducted to date, support a local call for a Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy and have informed staff in developing potential approaches to address single-use item waste in Vancouver.

To view the Single-Use Item Strategy Workshop Consultation Summary, please visit vancouver.ca/zerowaste.

CURRENT ACTIONS UNDERWAY

COMMUNITY ACTIONS

There are many programs and initiatives already in place or under development here in Vancouver that focus on reducing, reusing, and recovering single-use items for recycling. Examples include:

Disposable cups and take-out food containers

- Residents can drop off polystyrene foam cups and containers for recycling at Recycle BC depots and participating retailers such as London Drugs.
- Several food establishments have voluntarily phased out foam cups and take-out containers.
- Some food service establishments offer reusable dishware for eating in, charge fees for disposable dishware, or offer discounts for using a reusable alternative.
- The University of British Columbia and Simon Fraser University have introduced reusable take-out container options at some campus locations.
- Residents can recycle disposable cups and many types of take-out food containers through Recycle BC's curbside and multi-family residential recycling program.



A local Vancouver business takes action to reduce bag waste by offering a Bag Share Program to patrons.

Plastic and paper shopping bags

- Some retailers have chosen not to provide single-use bags. They provide reminder signage and verbal prompts for customers to use reusable bags or boxes.
- A number of retailers now charge for plastic and/or paper bags, and also sell reusable alternatives.
- Based on waste composition studies, about 63% of plastic shopping bags in the garbage have been reused as garbage bags. Residents also reuse plastic bags as lunch bags or general carry bags.
- Residents can recycle paper bags through Recycle BC's curbside and multi-family residential recycling program.
- Residents can line their kitchen food scraps containers with paper shopping bags for composting in the City's Green Bin program.
- Residents can drop off plastic bags at Recycle BC depots and participating retailers.

CITY ACTIONS

The City has a number of initiatives that support our zero waste goal, including:

- Expansion of on-street recycling in 2017.
- A review of internal practices and procurement policies to lead by example at City and Parks Board operated facilities.
- A pilot in partnership with Vancouver Coastal Health where restaurants and retailers can fill orders in reusable containers brought by customers, modelled after a program offered in New York City.
- A Keep Vancouver Spectacular program, which supports volunteer-led cleanups that help to clean up litter and divert recyclables from the landfill.
- Support for the Binners' Project "Coffee Cup Revolution" to demonstrate the effectiveness of deposits for coffee cups.

CURRENT ACTIONS UNDERWAY

CANADIAN AND INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS

Around the world, other governments and businesses are taking action to reduce the use and disposal of single-use items.

Disposable cups and take-out food containers

- Over 100 cities in the US — including Portland, Seattle and San Francisco — have banned the use of polystyrene foam containers by restaurants, food vendors, and in some cases grocers and other retailers.
- Reusable cup exchange programs are emerging in Germany and New York, and a company that operates in Portland and San Francisco has recently launched a container-share program called “Go-Box”.
- Several cities — such as Seattle, Minneapolis, San Francisco, Davis, and Washington, DC — require that take-out food packaging is compostable or recyclable.
- Seattle, San Francisco and Minneapolis have put requirements in place for mandatory in-store collection of recyclable and compostable disposable food containers.
- New York City revised its health code to allow customers to bring their own containers to approved quick service restaurants with operating procedures that prevent cross contamination and the spread of food-borne illnesses.

Plastic and paper shopping bags

- The City of Montreal has approved a single-use plastic shopping bag ban for 2018 and the City of Victoria is currently consulting stakeholders on options to reduce single-use plastic bag use.
- Plastic bag bans, and fees for the distribution of single-use shopping bags, are the two most common regulatory approaches to addressing bag use.
- Many jurisdictions — including Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Portland, Austin, Dublin, and England — have implemented plastic bag bans or fees on plastic and/or paper bags, or a combination of bag bans and fees, to limit their use.



Questions - Current Actions Underway

We are interested in learning more about best practices and local actions underway.

- a) What steps has your organization taken to reduce disposable beverage cups and take-out food containers made from polystyrene foam or other materials, and plastic and paper shopping bags?
- b) What results have you achieved?
- c) What inspired you to make the change?
- d) Are there any other best practices you'd like the City to know about?

OUR TOOLS: REGULATORY AND NON-REGULATORY SUPPORT

REGULATORY SUPPORT

Vancouver City Council has considerable legislative authority to support the reduction and increase recycling of single-use items. The Vancouver Charter authorizes City Council to regulate businesses through by-law and to establish and maintain a solid waste disposal system. This authority is sufficient to:

- Prohibit businesses from distributing single-use packaging like shopping bags, disposable cups and take-out containers.
- Require customer prompts prior to distributing single-use items (for example, businesses could be required to ask customers at the point of sale if their food and beverages are to stay or go, and only provide single-use items upon request).
- Prohibit single-use packaging from being disposed in the solid waste system.
- Vary business license fees by type of businesses and/or amount or type of single-use items generated.
- Require businesses to ensure their single-use packaging is recyclable or compostable.
- Require businesses/organizations to provide on-site recycling programs for customers.
- Require that specified single-use items (e.g. bags) be made of a specified amount of recycled content.

City Council does not currently have the clear legislative authority to require businesses to charge a fee, provide a discount, or require refundable deposits on single-use packaging. This authority lies with the provincial government. However, the City could seek this authority through a request to the provincial government for an amendment to the Vancouver Charter, or request that the Province of BC either exercise that authority on a provincial level or delegate it to regional governments.

NON-REGULATORY SUPPORT

The City can also provide non-regulatory support in the form of:

- Education programs, for example providing templates, tips, or sharing industry best practices.
- Partnering on behavior change programs.
- Business development. The Vancouver Economic Commission (VEC) works to support innovative, creative and sustainable business development in Vancouver.
- Exploring opportunities to remove barriers to using reusable items (e.g. working with Vancouver Coastal Health to potentially allow customers to bring their own reusable containers for take-out foods).



WHAT WE'RE CONSIDERING: EMERGING DIRECTIONS

POTENTIAL APPROACHES AND PHASING

Recognizing there is no one-size-fits-all approach, and that the economic and social realities of Vancouver are unique, the City aims to address how single-use items are distributed and managed from all angles. Affordability and accessibility for residents, businesses and other organizations will also need to be considered. Some nuance will be required in the strategy.

Table 1 on the following page shows potential approaches the City is considering for polystyrene foam, disposable cups, take-out containers, and plastic and paper shopping bags, subject to consultation and Council approval. The various potential approaches need to be considered in the context of opportunities, barriers, and unintended consequences.

The City's preference is to prioritize approaches in alignment with the zero waste hierarchy, shown below. The Single-Use Item Strategy will focus on the avoid, reduce, and reuse portions of the hierarchy.

The City may or may not include some or all of these options in the strategy. At this time we are seeking input from stakeholders to better understand the challenges, opportunities, and potential phasing of these options. We are also hoping to hear new ideas—above and beyond the options listed in the tables on the following pages - through the course of this stakeholder consultation process.

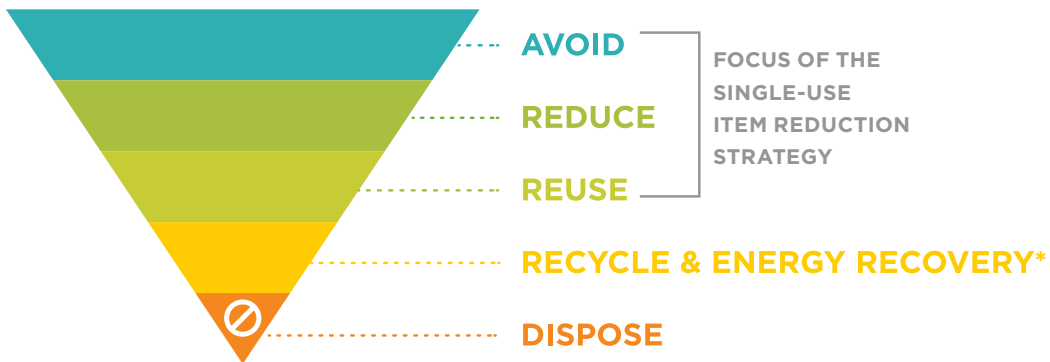


Questions - Potential Approaches and Phasing

We are interested in receiving comments on the potential approaches outlined in Tables 1, 2 and 3.

- a) Which approaches do you think will make the most progress in reducing single-use items?
- b) Which have significant barriers?
- c) How could the City and stakeholders work together to overcome any barriers?
- d) Which approaches should be included in the strategy, and how should they be phased in?
- e) Are there any approaches you cannot support, and why?
- f) What opportunities do you see for collaboration with the City and other stakeholders?
- g) Are there any approaches we've missed?

THE ZERO WASTE HIERARCHY



* Recovering energy from organic materials such as food and, in the case of single-use items, compostable packaging.

TABLE 1. DISPOSABLE CUPS - POTENTIAL APPROACHES

	SHORT TERM (within 5 years)	LONGER TERM (5+ years)
REDUCE/ REUSE	Polystyrene foam restrictions. Prohibit the use and sale of polystyrene foam cups at food service establishments and retailers.	Depending on results achieved in first 5 years, consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use restrictions. Prohibit the use of all disposable cups at food service establishments. • Disposable cups provided only upon request (regulated). Require businesses to only provide disposable cups upon request.
	Fees on cups (voluntary or regulated). Work with businesses to adopt voluntary fees on single-use cups, or request and provide support for the Province to regulate fees at the provincial or municipal level.	
	Require reusable cups. Consider adopting requirements for food service establishments with customer seating to provide reusable cups for in-store use as an option for their customers.	
	Disposable cups provided only upon request (voluntary). Work with businesses to voluntarily provide reusable cups and provide single-use cups only upon request.	
	Education/behavior change programs. Collaborate with partners (e.g. businesses and other governments) to provide education and social marketing programs to increase the use of reusable cups in-store and travel mugs.	
	Cup exchange. Explore opportunities to encourage the development of a city-wide cup exchange program.	
	Proportional billing for City street-cleaning and litter collection. Explore the opportunity to recover some street cleaning/litter collection costs proportional to the number of cups distributed (e.g. through business licence fees or other mechanisms).	
RECYCLE/ COMPOST	Deposits. Request and show support for a province-wide deposit system for cups.	
	Extended Producer Responsibility. Request and show support for a provincial regulation requiring producers to be responsible for cups disposed at industrial, commercial, and institutional locations.	
	Recyclable/compostable cups. Require any disposable cups to be recyclable/ compostable in residential (curbside and multi-family) blue box or organics recycling programs.	
	Mandatory recycling. Require organizations that distribute single-use cups to provide recycling/composting receptacles at the point of entry/exit for their customers. Support this by providing education materials with best practices.	
	Disposal ban. Work with Metro Vancouver to consider banning the disposal of polycoat cups as garbage at City and regional disposal facilities.	
	Expand on-street recycling. In consultation with Recycle BC, continue expanding public space recycling options for the public.	
	Enhance compostability. Work with organizations like NZWC ⁶ and Metro Vancouver to develop policies that support innovation in the packaging and composting industries, reduce contamination in the compostable waste stream, improve labeling, and expand opportunities to compost certified compostable packaging locally.	

⁶NZWC - National Zero Waste Council

TABLE 2. TAKE-OUT CONTAINERS - POTENTIAL APPROACHES

	SHORT TERM (within 5 years)	LONGER TERM (5+ years)
REDUCE/ REUSE	Polystyrene foam restrictions. Prohibit the use and sale of polystyrene foam take-out containers at food service establishments and retailers.	Expand polystyrene foam restrictions. Consider prohibiting the use of foam meat and produce trays.
	Provide disposable take-out containers only upon request (voluntary). Encourage businesses to provide reusable containers for in-store use and provide disposables only on request.	Depending on results achieved in first 5 years for non-foam take-out containers, consider:
	“Bring Your Own Container” guidelines. Support Vancouver Coastal Health in developing a reusable container guideline (subject to proof of concept through successful pilot(s)), which would allow organizations to accept customers’ containers for take-out food.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fees. Work with businesses to adopt voluntary fees on single-use take-out containers or request and show support for regulated fees at provincial, regional or municipal level. Explore this once health guidelines allow restaurants to accept customers’ containers, and/or there is a strong network of reusables provided for in-store use.
	Reusable dishware. Explore opportunities to increase the provision and use of reusable dishware as an option for customers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reusable dishware requirement. Require food service establishments with customer seating to provide reusable dishware as an option for customers.
	Container exchange. Explore opportunities to encourage the development of a city-wide reusable container exchange program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disposable containers provided only upon request. Require businesses to only provide disposable containers on request.
	Education/behavior change programs. Collaborate with partners (e.g. businesses and other governments) to provide education/ social marketing programs to increase use of reusable take-out containers once more alternatives are in place.	
RECYCLE/ COMPOST	Proportional billing for City street-cleaning and litter collection. Explore the opportunity to recover some street cleaning/litter collection costs proportional to the number of disposable containers distributed (e.g. through business licence fees or other mechanisms).	
	Extended producer responsibility. Request and show support for a provincial regulation requiring producers to be responsible for all take-out containers disposed at industrial, commercial and institutional locations.	Disposal ban. Work with Metro Vancouver to explore banning food-soiled paper from disposal as garbage at City and regional disposal facilities.
	Recyclable/compostable containers. Require all take-out containers to be recyclable/compostable in residential (curbside and multi-family) blue box or organics recycling programs.	
	Mandatory recycling. Require organizations that distribute single-use containers to provide recycling/composting receptacles at the point of entry/exit for their customers. Support by providing education materials with best practices.	
	Expand on-street recycling. In consultation with Recycle BC, continue expanding public space recycling options for the public.	
Enhance Compostability. Work with organizations like the NZWC ⁷ and Metro Vancouver to develop local government policies that support innovation in the packaging and composting industries, reduce contamination in the compostable waste stream, improve labeling, and expand opportunities to compost certified compostable packaging locally.		

⁷NZWC – National Zero Waste Council

TABLE 3. PLASTIC AND PAPER BAGS - POTENTIAL APPROACHES

	SHORT TERM (within 5 years)	LONGER TERM (5+ years)
REDUCE/ REUSE	Fees at point of sale (voluntary or regulated). Work with businesses to adopt voluntary fees on single-use paper and plastic shopping bags or request and show support for regulated fees at the provincial, regional, or municipal level.	Depending on results achieved in first 5 years, consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use restrictions. Prohibit the use of plastic shopping bags at retailers and food establishments. • Target other single-use bags. Consider adopting fees, education and behavior change programs aimed at reducing other single-use bags such as produce, bulk food, umbrella, and dry cleaning bags.
	Shopping bags provided only upon request (voluntary or regulated). Work with businesses to voluntarily ask customers if they want a bag before distributing one, or consider adopting an “upon request” requirement where disposable shopping bags cannot be distributed unless a customer has first been asked if they want a bag.	
	Education/behavior change programs. Collaborate with partners (e.g. businesses and other governments) to provide education/ social marketing programs to increase the use of reusable shopping bags.	
RECYCLE/ COMPOST	Extended producer responsibility. Request and show support for a provincial regulation requiring producers to be responsible for plastic and paper shopping bag waste disposed at industrial, commercial and institutional locations.	
	Mandatory recycling. Require organizations to provide in-store customer-facing shopping bag recycling if they distribute single-use plastic or paper shopping bags.	
	Required minimum recycled content. Introduce a requirement for minimum recycled content in plastic and paper shopping bags.	

TARGETS

An effective Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy will require targets to focus efforts, give a clear sense of where to aim, and provide benchmarks for tracking progress.

To be able to set SMART targets (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound) the City will need to work with stakeholders to share data, especially in cases where additional data is needed or access to data is currently not within the City's regulatory scope. We'd like to explore opportunities to work with stakeholders on sharing data in order to measure the success of the Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy.

Setting realistic targets should also take into consideration the maturity of existing programs, and the availability of alternatives. For example, successful programs for plastic bags have achieved high reduction rates, while disposable cups and take-out containers are much harder to address. We recognize that stakeholders have been working to reduce these items, and it would be helpful to know how much stakeholders have already reduced and what barriers need to be overcome to achieve further reduction.

Our Greenest City Action Plan (GCAP) sets an overall zero waste target of 50% less waste disposed in landfill and incinerators by 2020, based on 2008 levels. As of 2016, we have achieved a 27% decrease. In the absence of data, we propose to adopt similar targets for single-use items that tie in with our Greenest City target and achieve as much reduction as quickly as possible.

We would like to discuss potential targets directed at two years (to align with the GCAP 2020 milestone, assuming the final Strategy is adopted by Council in 2018), five years, and 10 years. For the purposes of discussion we are proposing the following as a starting point:

Within five years of Vancouver City Council adopting a Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy:

1. Reduce the amount of disposable cups and take-out containers to landfill/incinerator by 50%
2. Reduce the distribution of plastic and paper shopping bags by 70%

For cups and containers, the proposed target is mirrored after the 50% Greenest City reduction target, which focuses on reducing waste to landfill and incinerator. Our expectation is that this will occur through a variety of activities including improved recycling, reduction, and reuse.

For shopping bags, which have a more mature recycling infrastructure and well developed reusable alternatives, the proposed target is more aggressive and focusses on reduced distribution.



Questions - Potential Targets:

We are interested in receiving comments on possible targets.

- a) What is your feedback on the proposed **five-year targets**:
 - Reduce the amount of disposable cups and take-out containers to landfill/incinerator by 50%
 - Reduce the distribution of plastic and paper shopping bags by 70%
- b) What suggestions do you have for possible **two-year targets** for:
 - Disposable cups and take-out containers?
 - Plastic and paper shopping bags?
- c) What suggestions do you have for possible **ten-year targets** for:
 - Disposable cups and take-out containers?
 - Plastic and paper shopping bags?
- d) What actions would be required to achieve these targets?
- e) What do you see as barriers to achieving these targets, and how can the City work with stakeholders to overcome them?
- f) How can the City work with stakeholders to coordinate data sharing and track performance?

HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR FEEDBACK

YOUR INPUT AND SUGGESTIONS ARE IMPORTANT TO US.

Please submit your comments by **Friday, December 15, 2017** in one of the following ways:

- By Email: singleuse.consultationpaper@vancouver.ca
- By online comment form:
<http://vancouver.fluidsurveys.com/surveys/covengage/single-use-item-reduction-consultation-paper/>
- By Mail: City of Vancouver – Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy Consultation
453 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4



CONFIDENTIALITY

All submissions and comments received on this paper will be treated confidentially by City staff and contractors. Submissions will be compiled and summarized, without specific attribution, in a consultation summary report that will be presented to Council and posted on the City's website along with the draft Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy. Please note, however, that comments you provide and information that identifies you as the source of those comments may be made publicly available if an Access to Information request is made under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

If you have any questions about the collection or use of this information, please contact the Director, Access to Information and Privacy, City Clerk's Department, 3rd Floor, City Hall, 453 – West 12th Avenue, Vancouver V5Y 1V4 or by email: privacy@vancouver.ca.

ADDITIONAL CONSULTATION OPPORTUNITIES

Roundtable discussions

The City will host a series of roundtable discussions in the fall with interested stakeholders. These meetings will review the information contained in this consultation paper. If you are interested in participating in a meeting, please email the City at: singleuse.consultationpaper@vancouver.ca



Stay involved and informed

For updates on the Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy and consultation process, please send an email to: reducesingleuse@vancouver.ca to join our mailing list.

Questions?

If you have any questions or comments about this consultation paper, please email: singleuse.consultationpaper@vancouver.ca

Thank you for participating. We look forward to receiving your feedback.

APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF NON-REGULATORY AND REGULATORY OPTIONS

APPROACH UNDER CONSIDERATION	DISPOSABLE CUPS	TAKE-OUT CONTAINERS	PLASTIC & PAPER BAGS
NON-REGULATORY SUPPORT & VOLUNTARY INITIATIVES			
Voluntary fees	•	•	•
Disposables distributed only upon request (voluntary)	•	•	•
Education/Behavior change	•	•	•
Encourage use of reusable dishware	•	•	
Cup and take-out container exchange programs	•	•	
Expand on-street recycling	•	•	
Enhance compostability	•	•	
REGULATORY SUPPORT			
City regulation			
Prohibit use and sale	•	• (foam)	• (plastic)
Disposables distributed only upon request (requirement)	•	•	•
Must be recyclable/compostable in curbside and multi-family programs	•	•	
Must contain recycled content			•
Mandatory recycling/ composting receptacles	•	•	•
Require reusable dishware	•	•	
City fees proportional to distribution of items	•	•	
Regional regulation (City request/support)			
Ban disposal as garbage (Metro Vancouver)	•	• (food soiled paper)	
Provincial regulation (City request/support)			
Fees	•	•	•
Deposits	•		
Extended producer responsibility at industrial, commercial, and institutional locations	•	•	•
Health guidelines to allow reusable containers		•	

APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY

Circular economy: An alternative to a traditional linear economy (make → use → dispose). The circular economy keeps resources in use for as long as possible, extracts the maximum value from them while in use, then recovers and regenerates products and materials at the end of their service life.

Deposit-refund: A deposit-refund system is a surcharge on a purchased product or package that is refunded when the product or package is returned.

Extended Producer Responsibility: A management system based on industry and consumers taking life-cycle responsibility for the products they produce and use. Referred to as “product stewardship” under the BC Recycling Regulation.

Food-soiled paper: Paper products and packaging that have been soiled with food. This includes but is not limited to paper napkins, plates, wrappers, take-out containers, cardboard pizza boxes, etc.

Greenest City Action Plan: A plan launched by the City of Vancouver in 2011 to meet environmental sustainability related targets in 10 goal areas, including achieving a target of reducing solid waste going to the landfill and incinerator by 50% by 2020 as compared to 2008 levels.

Polycoat cups and containers: Paper cups and containers that are coated with a polyethylene plastic lining on the inside, and sometimes the outside, which acts as a moisture barrier. Coffee cups are typically polycoat cups.

Quick service restaurant: A quick service restaurant, also known fast food restaurant, is a type of restaurant that typically serves fast food cuisine and has minimal table service.

Take-out containers: In this paper, “take-out food containers” includes all disposable dishware used by quick service food establishments (restaurants, cafeterias, food trucks) as well as disposable dishware by full service restaurants for takeout food. It includes all disposable containers, plates, bowls, wrappers, etc. that may be used on-site, carried away, or for delivery.

Zero Waste: As both a philosophy and a goal, aims to reduce and ultimately eliminate garbage.

To: Zero Waste Committee

From: Karen Storry, Senior Project Engineer, Solid Waste Services

Date: February 2, 2018 Meeting Date: February 8, 2018

Subject: **Regional Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy Research and Consultation**

RECOMMENDATION

That the GVS&DD Board approve initiating consultation on a regional single-use item reduction strategy as outlined in the report dated February 2, 2018, titled "Regional Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy Research and Consultation".

PURPOSE

The purpose of the report is to seek Board approval to initiate consultation on development of a regional strategy to reduce single-use items.

BACKGROUND

On October 30, 2017, the GVS&DD Board approved the following recommendation:

That the GVS&DD Board direct staff to determine actions to reduce waste from Single-Use Items that are best done on a regional level.

Single-use items that have been identified as important targets for waste reduction include disposable cups, take-out containers and plastic and paper shopping bags. Reducing waste from single-use items aligns with the goals of Metro Vancouver's *Integrated Solid Waste and Resource Management Plan*. Since the Board approved identifying actions to reduce single-use item waste, staff have conducted an initial review of regional data, research and actions best done at the regional level and are now seeking approval to consult on potential elements of a regional single-use item reduction strategy as outlined in this report.

REGIONAL SINGLE-USE ITEM REDUCTION STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Based on research and analysis to date, staff have identified a number of potential actions that could be the basis of a regional single-use item reduction strategy. Determining which actions to take at a regional level will require further research and consultation. Metro Vancouver is proposing to conduct additional research and engagement with member jurisdiction staff in the first half of 2018, followed by a broader consultation with other stakeholders in the second half of 2018. Staff anticipate reporting back to the Board on a regional strategy for consideration in late 2018 or early 2019.

Potential Regional Actions

Significant reduction of single-use items across the region will require a suite of actions, including possible educational, behavioral change and regulatory components over the shorter and longer terms. Confirming targeted single-use items will also be an important component of any strategy. Table 1 summarizes potential regional actions identified by staff.

Table 1 – Potential Regional Actions for Consultation

Potential Action
Education and Promotion for Business and Residents. Development and dissemination of education and behavior change resources including guides and best practices.
Reusable dishware, containers and cup exchanges. Explore options to increase use of reusable items. Could include programs, pilots and/or policies to encourage reuse and/or exchange programs for containers and cups.
Fees, discounts or deposits. Identify options to implement fees, discounts or deposits on single-use items.
Disposal ban. Implement a disposal ban for single-use items.
Require recyclable or compostable items. Consider requirements for use of recyclable and/or compostable materials for single-use items.
Restrict sale and use. Explore options to restrict sale of specific single-use items.

Future Research

Further research is needed to assess which regional actions are most effective to reduce waste from single-use items. To build on research already done by member jurisdictions, staff will:

- review approaches in other jurisdictions;
- analyze and expand existing data on the use, recycling and disposal of single-use items;
- explore technical feasibility and legal authority as implementing some of these actions may require new or expanded authority for the region; and
- evaluate economic, environmental and social impacts of potential actions.

Consultation

Metro Vancouver will consult with other levels of government, member jurisdictions, businesses, organizations and residents with an interest in single-use items, to discuss regional goals and develop a regional strategy for single-use item waste reduction. Consultations may include a website, webinars, workshops and meetings and will focus on:

- priority single-use items;
- goals, targets and regional actions;
- implementation approach;
- potential barriers and impacts; and
- timeline.

ALTERNATIVES

1. That the GVS&DD Board approve initiating research and consultation on a regional single-use item reduction strategy as outlined in the report dated February 2, 2018, titled “Regional Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy Research and Consultation”.
2. That the Zero Waste Committee receive for information the report dated February 2, 2018, titled “Regional Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy Research and Consultation” and provide alternate direction to staff.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Cost to undertake research and consultation activities are expected to be minimal; any staff resources and costs have been included in the 2018 budget. Financial implications of any actions both to Metro Vancouver and others would be identified and brought forward as part of a regional strategy.

SUMMARY / CONCLUSION

In October 2017, the Board approved proceeding with work to determine actions to reduce waste from single-use items that are best done at a regional level. Further research and stakeholder consultation are planned throughout 2018 to develop a regional single-use item reduction strategy. Significant reduction of single-use items across the region will require a suite of actions, including possible educational, behavioral change and regulatory components over the shorter and longer terms. Staff anticipate reporting back to the Board on a regional strategy for consideration in late 2018 or early 2019.

24263543

To: Zero Waste Committee

From: Karen Storry, Senior Project Engineer, Solid Waste Services

Date: January 31, 2019 Meeting Date: February 8, 2019

Subject: **Single-Use Item Reduction Approach**

RECOMMENDATION

That the GVS&DD Board write the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy expressing support for the Union of British Columbia Municipalities' resolution requesting that a provincial single-use item reduction strategy be put in place.

PURPOSE

To update the Zero Waste Committee and GVS&DD Board on work to develop a single-use item strategy and propose next steps.

BACKGROUND

On October 30, 2017, the Board approved the following recommendation:

That the GVS&DD Board direct staff to determine actions to reduce waste from Single-Use Items that are best done on a regional level.

And on February 23, 2018, the Board approved the following recommendation:

That the GVS&DD Board approve initiating consultation on a regional single-use item reduction strategy as outlined in the report dated February 2, 2018, titled "Regional Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy Research and Consultation".

On September 13, 2018 the Union of BC Municipalities, passed the following resolution:

Therefore be it resolved that the Province of British Columbia develop a provincial Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy as part of a provincial Zero Waste Strategy, which would include but not necessarily be limited to plastic and paper shopping bags, polystyrene foam cups and polystyrene foam containers, other hot and cold drink cups and take-out containers, straws and utensils, but would exclude all single use items needed for medical use or for people with disabilities.

Staff are reporting back to recommend that the Board write the Ministers of Environment and Climate Change Strategy and Municipal Affairs and Housing to express support for the Union of BC Municipalities' resolution recommending a provincial single-use item reduction strategy.

SINGLE-USE ITEM REDUCTION

Jurisdictional Scan

Various entities are taking action towards reduction of single-use items. Of note:

- Canada has been an important proponent of the G7 Ocean Plastics Charter.
- The Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) released their strategy for Zero Plastic Waste November 23, 2018 which prioritizes reducing demand for disposable plastic items.
- City of Vancouver is consulting on and plans to implement several single-use item reduction policies including:
 - bylaws to reduce the number of plastics bags, paper bags, and disposable cups distributed;
 - a by request-only bylaw for disposable utensils;
 - straw distribution restrictions; and
 - an expanded polystyrene take-out cup and container ban.
- City of Victoria banned the sale of plastic bags and required a charge for paper and reusable bags as of July 1st 2018.

Union of BC Municipalities' Resolution on a Provincial Strategy for Single-use Item Reduction

The Union of BC Municipalities' resolution on single-use items calls for a provincial single-use item reduction strategy targeting shopping bags, cups, containers, straws, utensils and other single-use items. A provincial approach would ensure inter-municipal harmonization and consistency for consumers and for producers and businesses with operations throughout the province.

Potential Regulatory Measures

Effective regulatory approaches to reduce single-use items that may be appropriate under a provincial single-use item strategy include:

- "By request-only" regulations;
- Mandatory fees; and
- Restrictions on sale/distribution.

"By request-only" regulations require that single-use items are only distributed on request of the customer. These regulations reduce the number of single-use items distributed but have less impact on business than distribution bans.

Mandatory fees for single-use items have been found to be more effective than discounts to change behaviour. To be most effective fees should be visible (ie. explicitly shown on a receipt), and either retained by the retailer or remitted to a stewardship agency. A 2018 study by Cardiff University comparing the effectiveness of fees for disposable coffee cups with discounts for reusable cups confirmed that people are far more sensitive to losses than to gains when making decisions.

Outright prohibition on sale/distribution of certain single-use items can be effective and equitable for waste prevention. However, unless carefully implemented, prohibitions on sale/distribution may create unintended consequences such as creating other waste or adversely impacting the people that need the single-use items.

Potential Regional Actions

To reduce single-use items in the region, an approach that includes education and collaboration to complement an effective regulatory framework is required. Possible actions include:

Education – As part of the 2020 budget cycle, identify specific education and awareness activities that can be implemented by Metro Vancouver, particularly activities that can be done in partnership with member jurisdictions or can be used by member jurisdictions to supplement their own resources.

Collaboration – Collaborate with member jurisdictions and others to identify collaborative and harmonized measures to reduce single-use items.

Metro Vancouver will continue to consult on possible measures to reduce single-use items, and report back to the Board with a recommended list of actions to communicate to member jurisdictions for their consideration for regulatory change.

Working with the National Zero Waste Council

Several major municipalities across Canada have expressed interest in a coordinated approach to reducing and managing single-use-items. Metro Vancouver will work with the National Zero Waste Council and other Canadian municipalities to harmonize national approaches to reducing single-use items. Metro Vancouver can also collaborate with other municipalities on research and behavior change initiatives.

ALTERNATIVES

1. That the GVS&DD Board write the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy expressing support for the Union of British Columbia Municipalities' resolution requesting that a provincial single-use item reduction strategy be put in place.
2. That the GVS&DD Board receive for information the report dated January 31, 2019, titled "Single-Use Item Reduction Approach" and provide alternate direction to staff.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

If the Board approves Alternative 1, a letter will be written to the Province supporting the Union of BC Municipalities' resolution on a provincial single-use item reduction strategy. Metro Vancouver will continue to consult on possible measures to reduce single-use items and will work through the National Zero Waste Council to collaborate with municipalities across the country on harmonizing single-use item reduction options.

SUMMARY / CONCLUSION

Single-use items are a significant issue from a waste and environmental perspective and many jurisdictions are taking action to reduce these items. In 2018, The Union of British Columbia Municipalities passed a resolution recommending that the Province develop a single-use item reduction strategy. Staff recommend alternative 1 that the Board write the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing supporting the Union of British Columbia Municipalities' resolution requesting a provincial single-use strategy.