

HALIFAX

Single-Use Plastics in HRM

Halifax Regional Council
January 15, 2019

Background

- Recommendation report responds to 2 motions
 - RC Jan 16, 2018 – reduction of plastic shopping bags and promotion of extended producer responsibility
 - ESSC May 3, 2018 – reduction of plastic straws
- Previous report
 - January 16, 2018 - Options to Reduce or Eliminate the use of Plastic Shopping Bags in the Municipality

Plastics – Local to Global Issue

- International
 - Meeting of G7 Environment, Oceans & Energy Ministers in Halifax in September – Ocean Plastics Charter
 - 2018 UN Environment report
 - Too early to tell if bans are effective, mixed results.
 - Bans address some symptoms of overuse of single-use plastics, but long-term solutions are key.

Plastics – Local to Global Issue

- Canada
 - National survey of environmental concerns by EcoAnalytics
 - Top 3 relate to plastic pollution in the oceans
 - 65% agreement that governments should ban single use plastic
 - Circular Economy Leadership Coalition
 - Developing framework for a zero plastic waste strategy

Plastics – Local to Global Issue

- Nova Scotia
 - 300-500 million grocery bags used per year
 - Plastic bags make up 3% of total litter observed
 - 41 of 50 municipalities have made motions in support of a distribution ban and support a province-wide approach and EPR legislation

Plastics – Local to Global Issue

- HRM
 - Plastic bags captured in blue bag and diverted from landfill
 - 382 tonnes or 25% of the film plastic processed in 2017/18 was plastic carry out bags
 - This makes up 1% of the total material processed at the recycling facility in 2017/18
 - Plastic bags enter waste stream to landfill
 - soiled bags used for pet waste, garbage

Consultations

- Staff completed a focused consultation with industry and stakeholders:
 - Consumer demand for action is growing
 - Businesses are adapting
 - Various models being used
 - Leadership by some to reduce single-use plastics
 - Ban not their preference, especially if not province-wide
 - Ban does not align with Red Tape Reduction Strategy

Regulatory Modernization

- Red tape reduction joint project
- HRM Charter of Governing Principles for Regulation - Administrative Order Number 2017-0002-ADM
 - Regulation should never be an instrument of first resort, and should be deployed only when necessary and where there is clearly no better policy alternative.
 - 8 (c) if the purpose of a Regulation may be achieved by an alternative means, including (i) whether a Regulation is preferable to a self-regulatory approach, such as doing an education program

Alternatives to Regulation

- Public-private partnerships
- Promotion of eco-friendly alternatives
- Social awareness and public pressure
- Voluntary reduction strategies
- Voluntary agreements
 - ON Bag Reduction Task Group
 - Quebec MOU

Building on the momentum

- HRM businesses are already voluntarily implementing single-use waste reduction strategies.
- The municipality can assist businesses to improve reduction and expand efforts through partnerships.
- HRM has the systems and infrastructure in place to recycle retail plastic bags, and local businesses are beginning to use this material to create products (circular economy).

Staff Recommendations

- Attempt voluntary approach first
 - Collaborate with ICI sector on voluntary waste reduction strategy
 - Education campaign for ICI sector and public

Vancouver, BC

- Zero Waste 2040: Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy
- Two years of industry and public consultation prior to final strategy approval in June 2018
- Reduction Strategy multi-items of focus:
 - Plastic and paper shopping bags
 - Polystyrene foam cups and take-out containers
 - Disposable hot and cold drink cups
 - Take-out food containers
 - Disposable straws and utensils

Vancouver (cont.)

- 2019 – 2020
 - Business License holders required to have reduction plans and report on amount of bags distributed
 - Plastic or paper shopping bags cannot be distributed for free
 - Other mechanisms that achieve a reduction target
 - If reduction targets are not met by 2021, regulatory measures such as bans on distribution of single use items will be evaluated.

Staff Recommendation

- Be prepared with regulation should the voluntary approach fail
 - Consult on the regulatory framework and By-law on the prohibition of single-use plastics developed in tandem with education and engagement efforts on the voluntary reduction strategy.

Victoria, BC

- October 2017 - Council direction to create a bylaw
 - Consultation was held on the draft bylaw
- January 2018 - Bag Reduction Bylaw adopted
 - Effective July 1, 2018 with phase-in
 - Enforcement began January 1, 2019 with an 'education first' approach

PEI

- Ban on plastic retail carry-out bags effective July 1, 2019
 - Paper bags charged minimum fee of 15 cents
 - Reusable bags charged minimum fee of \$1
- Business associations are being consulted
 - Relaxed approach to enforcement during the implementation phase

Thank You

Shannon Miedema
Manager
Energy & Environment
Planning & Development

miedems@halifax.ca
902.490.3665

Laurie Lewis
Program Manager
Solid Waste
Transportation & Public Works

lewisr@halifax.ca
902.490.7176

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