

Thursday, March 16, 2023 | For Immediate Release

City Zeros in on Single-Use Items to Reduce Waste

VICTORIA, BC — The City of Victoria is moving forward with the development of a new bylaw to reduce single-use items and make reuse common practice.

Council voted unanimously to direct staff to prepare a bylaw that will require businesses to only distribute food ware accessories, such as utensils, stir sticks and straws, when requested, and use only reusable dishware when consuming food or beverages on-site.

New data from a Capital Regional District waste composition study indicates that 220,000 single-use items are thrown away every day in Victoria such as disposable containers, drink cups and cutlery.

Packaging materials, including single-use items, contributes 13 per cent of the material sent to Hartland landfill and are the main sources of plastic pollution. The new bylaw will complement federal and provincial bans on problematic single-use plastics rolling out in 2023.

“The City’s garbage bins tell a story of needless waste. I know Victorians want us to work together to do better,” said Mayor Marianne Alto. “Reusable alternatives to disposable single-use items have a clear benefit to the cleanliness of Victoria streets and parks, and to our environment.”

The City has been working closely with businesses since 2019 to develop an approach to reduce the impacts of single-use item waste.

“As a carbon-neutral company, we have always made it a priority to encourage reuse as often as possible,” said Shane Devereux, owner of Sherwood and Habit Coffee. “Disposable items add up quick, both in the landfill and as a cost; just one disposable coffee cup costs me 20 cents. I’m optimistic that these new policies will nudge consumers to think more about their use of convenience items.”

“The City’s staff took a careful and cautious approach to developing a bylaw that is fair and addresses the importance of reducing single-use items,” said Ian Tostenson, President of the BC Restaurant and Foodservices Association. “The BCRFA would like to thank the staff at the City of Victoria for working with industry on the implementation of a single-use item reduction bylaw.”

Reducing single-use items is a priority under Zero Waste Victoria, the City’s plan to reduce waste by 50 per cent by 2040.

For more information, visit victoria.ca/reducesingleuse.

—30—

For More Information:

Colleen Mycroft

Manager of Executive Operations and City Communications

[250.896.5325](tel:250.896.5325) | cmycroft@victoria.ca