

Media Release



29 Local Governments Speak as One in Feedback to the Province on Plastics Reduction

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For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC – Local governments across British Columbia have worked together to present a joint letter to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy in response to the Province’s call for input to its Plastics Action Plan. In all, 29 governments have signed the letter aligning their voices and calling for the Province to adopt bold legislation to significantly reduce and regulate plastics in British Columbia.

“We are grateful to the Province for engaging British Columbians on the future of waste reduction,” says City of Victoria Mayor Lisa Helps. “Local governments are on the front lines of dealing with waste and have the best potential to help the Province move to a zero waste economy. I’m confident this coalition of communities represents a strong voice that will resonate with the Province’s aims.”

Signatories include many local governments who have, or who are in the process of, adopting single-use plastics regulations. The letter represents a unifying voice, which brings a strong message to the Province on behalf of municipalities and regional districts all over B.C.

“Local government is the level of government closest to the ground. Every single day, we deliver services that citizens depend on, and we hear from those same citizens about what matters to them”, says Josie Osborne, Mayor, District of Tofino. “By collaborating to provide our collective advice to the Province on the regulation and management of single-use plastics, we are more likely to be heard and less likely to be ignored. It’s an effective strategy to maintain a healthy working relationship between local government and the Province.”

The joint letter highlights five topic areas which include:

1. the need for a greater focus on reduction and reuse over recycling and disposal;
2. clarification of local government authority to regulate for environmental reasons through local bylaws;
3. an appeal for a stepped or phased implementation approach;
4. improved extended producer responsibilities; and
5. sufficient consultation with key stakeholders when policy tools are developed and evaluated.

The signatories include:

Alberni-Clayoquot

Regional District

Capital Regional District

Cariboo Regional District

City of **Chilliwack**

City of **Colwood**

City of **Courtenay**

Village of **Cumberland**

Township of **Esquimalt**

Regional District of

Fraser-Fort George

Village of **Harrison Hot**

Springs

District of **Mission**

Regional District of

Nanaimo

District of **North**

Vancouver

Regional District

Okanagan-Similkameen

Village of **Pemberton**

Town of **Qualicum Beach**

City of **Rossland**

District of **Saanich**

Town of **Sidney**

District of **Sooke**

District of **Squamish**

Squamish-Lillooet

Regional District

District of **Summerland**

Sunshine Coast Regional

District

Village of **Tahsis**

District of **Tofino**

District of **Ucluelet**

City of **Victoria**

Resort Municipality of

Whistler

“Individual municipalities want to work with the Province to introduce stronger regulations around single use plastics and at the same time, protect their right to regulate local business practices. The level of collaboration we have seen in the development of this submission has real power, and it is incredibly exciting to see how we can learn from one another and adopt best practices,” says Karen Elliott, Mayor, District of Squamish. “The bigger opportunity here is that this level of local government collaboration can work across so many other topics that our communities are all grappling with, from climate change to affordable housing and beyond.”

Many of the 29 local governments are also sending individual letters to the Province in addition to the joint letter.

The joint letter to the Province can be viewed here: <http://www.tofino.ca/plastics>

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