



Statement from Mayor Helps on Federal Single-Use Plastics Ban

Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2020

For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC — Mayor Lisa Helps issued the following statement today about the federal government's plan to ban single-use plastics in 2021:

"I want to thank the federal government for announcing this necessary first step in reducing the amount of single-use items in our communities. The items included in the ban are problematic from a waste management perspective but are also harmful to the natural environment including our coastal wildlife. The issue of plastic pollution is global, but we can continue to tackle this challenge at a local level. The federal ban on these items will support us in this work. The cities and towns we live in are where waste is generated and disposed. We can't continue to throw away taxpayer money on paying to manage plastic pollution in our local landfills when many of these items are not necessary to begin with.

"This action to be taken by the federal government is good timing, as we work to develop Zero Waste Victoria, which is our ambitious plan to reduce all kinds of waste across our community. Part of this work began in 2018, with the City of Victoria's Checkout Bag Regulation which prevented millions of plastic bags from entering our environment and regional landfill. Our checkout bag regulation demonstrated that it *is* possible to eliminate plastic pollution in a way that is supported by residents and businesses, which is why it has been replicated by numerous communities across Canada.

"There is more work to be done. More than 120 tonnes of material are thrown out every day in the City of Victoria. As we enter the final stages in developing Zero Waste Victoria, we're encouraged that the federal government is joining us in the fight to eliminate single-use plastic items. We need cooperation and commitment from all levels of government along the way so that we don't end up in more unnecessary legal battles, just to do the right thing. This pandemic has generated an unprecedented amount of take-out food container waste, so now is the time to intensify our efforts to ensure plastic bags, cutlery, straws, and food containers are not needlessly produced, used for merely minutes, and left as a legacy for our future generations to manage."

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