

**To: Warden and Members of County Council**

**From: Director of Public Works**

## Proposed Federal Government Single-Use Plastics Ban

### RECOMMENDATION

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1. That Oxford County Council endorse the submission comments in response to Environment and Climate Change Canada's proposed Single-Use Plastics Prohibition Regulations as outlined in Report No. PW 2022-07.

### REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

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- The purpose of this report is to seek Oxford County Council endorsement of submission comments prepared by Staff in response to Environment and Climate Change Canada's draft Single-Use Plastics Prohibition Regulations, which was posted on the Canada Gazette, Part 1, Volume 155, Number 52 for public consultation until March 5, 2022.
- The proposed Federal regulations would ban plastic checkout bags, cutlery, food service ware, ring carriers, stir sticks, and straws. Regulatory standards would be established to increase the use of recycled content in plastic products (50% by 2030) and strive towards a 90% diversion target for plastic beverage containers.
- Submission comments in response to the draft regulations were prepared in collaboration with municipal staff (City of Woodstock, Township of South-West Oxford) and the Zero Waste Oxford (ZWO) Advisory Committee.

### Implementation Points

Following Council endorsement of this report, Staff will submit final comments along with a copy of the Council resolution to Environment and Climate Change Canada by March 5, 2022.

### Financial Impact







No financial impacts will result from adopting the recommendations contained in this report.

## Communications

The attached submission to the Federal Government is a coordinated effort between the County, the City of Woodstock, the Township of South-West Oxford and Zero Waste Oxford.

Report No. PW 2022-07 will be circulated to Area Municipalities for information and forwarded to Environment and Climate Change Canada, upon endorsement by County Council.

## Strategic Plan (2020-2022)

					
<i>WORKS WELL TOGETHER</i>	<i>WELL CONNECTED</i>	<i>SHAPES THE FUTURE</i>	<i>INFORMS &amp; ENGAGES</i>	<i>PERFORMS &amp; DELIVERS</i>	<i>POSITIVE IMPACT</i>
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## DISCUSSION

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### Background

County Council received Report No. [PW 2020-22](#) prepared by staff in response to a Delegation request to impose a ban on single-use plastic shopping bags (checkout bags). This report analyzed the issues, complexities, and opportunities associated with implementing such a ban at the County level as well as Provincial and Federal undertakings to address adverse environmental impacts related to single-use plastics. Staff recommended support of a harmonized Provincial and/or Federal ban on single-use plastic shopping bags which could be universally implemented in a manner which would be fair and balanced for all impacted businesses and one which services the overall end goal of reducing plastic waste and litter.

On December 21, 2021, the Federal government released draft regulations under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999 (CEPA) banning certain single-use plastics, for public consultation. The proposed regulations would ban plastic checkout bags, cutlery, food service ware, ring carriers, stir sticks, and straws. Regulatory standards would be established to increase the use of recycled content in plastic products (50% by 2030) and strive towards a 90% diversion target for plastic beverage containers.

Following the public consultation period that ends on March 5, 2022, the government plans to finalize the Regulations after reviewing and considering comments received and bring the ban into force as early as late 2022 with a one-year transition period.

## **Comments**

The submission comments (Attachment 1) in response to the proposed Federal single use plastics ban regulations was prepared in collaboration with municipal staff from the City of Woodstock and the Township of South-West Oxford and the ZWO Advisory Committee. Commentary from ZWO is included in Attachment 2.

The Single-Use Plastics Prohibition Regulations is the result of over three (3) years of stakeholder consultations and scientific research into the plastic pollution problem and its impact nationwide. Through their research, the federal government estimates that only 9% of plastics are recycled with the remaining material either going to landfill or ending up as litter. On an annual basis in Oxford County, approximately 2% of residential household waste and 13% of Industrial, Commercial and Institutional (IC&I) waste is comprised of non-recyclable plastics which end up in landfill.

The regulation proposes several actions that will begin to address the plastic pollution issue in Canada. Specifically, through the regulation, the federal government proposes the implementation of a unified approach to the reduction/elimination of the ban materials across Canada. A unified approach will result in more consistent promotion and educational messaging which will hopefully ignite change among the public to switch to using viable non-plastics alternatives. Additionally, this unified approach is expected to complement existing provincial extended producer responsibility programs.

The elimination/reduction of the six materials banned under the regulation will reduce the burden placed on municipalities to manage these problematic materials. However, the County has requested further clarification regarding how enforcement responsibilities and associated costs are to be managed.

To better understand how businesses will comply with the regulations and their impact on municipalities, the federal government intends to develop a guidance document. This guidance document will address things like consistent product labeling and developing products which can be managed through municipal programs like the blue box program as well as reporting and achievement of targets. The County and its municipal partners would like to see stakeholder consultation undertaken for this document as all levels of government will be affected by the actions of the IC&I sector.

## **Conclusions**

Staff support the proposed federal initiative to ban single-use plastics and will provide Environment and Climate Change Canada with comments on the proposed regulation. It is anticipated that further consultation may occur around the development of the guidance document associated with this regulation targeting the IC&I sector; staff will continue to participate in any related consultations.

## **SIGNATURES**

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### **Report Author:**

Original signed by:

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Pamela Antonio, BES, MPA  
Supervisor of Waste Management

### **Departmental Approval:**

Original signed by:

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David Simpson, P.Eng., PMP  
Director of Public Works

### **Approved for submission:**

Original signed by:

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Michael Duben, B.A., LL.B.  
Chief Administrative Officer

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1: Oxford County Submission - Proposed Single-Use Plastics Prohibition Regulations, Environment and Climate Change Canada's Canada Gazette, Part 1, Volume 155, Number 52 posting Single-Use Plastics Prohibition Regulations

Attachment 2: Zero Waste Commentary Letter