

## **ANNEX B: ADDITIONAL STAKEHOLDER CONSIDERATIONS / INFORMATION**

### **Environmental Advocacy Groups**

The local Surfrider Foundation chapter and Glenlyon Norfolk School students continue to lead efforts to raise awareness in support of a ban of plastic retail bags. This bid aligns with Surfrider's international corporate program to minimize plastic ocean waste. These teams, supported by other environmental advocacy groups and concerned citizens continue to engage directly with the public, businesses and local governments on this issue, and has partnered with various retailers to successfully shift them away from single use plastic checkout bags.

The groups support an immediate ban on single use plastic bags, the rapid shift to reusable bags, and any action to reduce litter and ocean debris. They support increased education and awareness efforts, strong collaboration and incentivized strategies to help progress change. They also offer creative options for managing outstanding issues like surplus plastic bags after any regulation begins, which include repurposing ideas, art displays, buyback programs, and design programs. These groups continue to give freely of their time to meet one on one with stakeholders to share their ideas, stewardship experiences, and resources. It is assessed that these groups have broad support across community, with over 10,000 signatures on their own petition in support of a ban on single use checkout bags.

### **Business Representatives**

Several meetings have been conducted with business leaders from retailers across the community, with a majority who are opposed to an outright ban on single use plastic bags, and a minority from some select businesses (including one major retailer and grocery store) that are strongly in favour of a ban, and its positive, sustainable impact on businesses and the community.

Retailers at these meetings included representatives from business advocacy groups, local regional, and national retailers, and boutiques as follows: Retail Council of Canada, Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Victoria Business Association Capital Iron, London Drugs, Shopper Drug Mart, Mountain Equipment Coop, city shopping mall managers, Loblaws, Yates Street Market, local boutiques, gift stores, book stores and others.

### **Retail Store - Voluntary Actions to Reduce Bags**

Save On Foods has recently introduced a bag levy of five cents for all plastic checkout bags, and a 10 cent charge for paper bags. Thrifty Foods offers a three cent rebate for those who bring their own carrier bags. Both Whole Foods (Saanich) and Thrifty Foods currently stock only paper check out bags (note: Thrifty's does not use post-consumer recycled paper). Whole Foods also has a Nickels for Non-Profits program where five cents is donated to charity each time a consumer brings their own bag. At Hillside Mall, customers are invited to return their single use plastic bags through a "Bank a Bag" program. For each bag returned, they donate five cents to World Fisheries Trust, up to \$1,500 per year. In addition to this program, Hillside Mall's Sea Rangers Kids Club completes two to three beach clean ups each year to remove plastic bags and other waste from the ocean. Other retailers ensure that bag-free checkout options are promoted at the till, and reusable bag alternatives are available in store.

### **RecycleBC - Provincial Programs**

Both the CRD and the Province support efforts to reduce single-use packaging waste and any efforts to reduce wasteful behavior, but have not yet identified any intent to increase regulations associated with single use plastic bags. The Province has approved the Recycle BC program (previously – "MMBC"), which focus on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for packaging and

printed paper (PPP), which requires industry to improve take-back of PPP and minimize waste to landfill.

RecycleBC has stated that it is “the first 100% Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) program in Canada where industry assumes full financial and managerial responsibility for the residential recycling system. The program is funded by over 1,200 businesses that supply packaging and printed paper to BC residents, shifting costs away from homeowners. Recycle BC ensures household materials are collected, sorted and responsibly recycled and each year publishes an annual report that details the amount of material collected and recycled across the province and by regional district. All plastic collected through the Recycle BC program is sold to end markets in British Columbia”<sup>16</sup>.

Recycle BC is uniquely situated as the bridge between industry / business and government, and is motivated and an active partner in the development of effective programs to ensure materials are reintroduced as viable nutrients in recycling loops. The focus of the current Recycle BC programs is on recycling activity, using curbside or depot recycling for many types of materials. RecycleBC is active and willing to partner with industry on the development of new materials and schemes that will potentially increase diversion and recycling rates. Their mandate is not currently focused on waste-prevention programs. Their program has received some criticism for not achieving more meaningful reduction of plastic film waste, and some would argue that bolder action is required.

Recycle BC also stated repeatedly that their recovered plastics are NOT shipped to overseas markets within their program, suggesting that if any overseas shipping was to take place, it would be through private buyers and sellers of recycled materials. The City has not been able to confirm or refute this claim, and there may still be a risk that other private plastic recovery schemes do sell to overseas markets that could possibly end up as litter or ocean debris. More analysis would be required to gain further assurance or determine actual risks in this area.

### **Absent Business Stakeholders**

Several city retail stakeholders were not able or chose not to participate in the series of meeting organized by the City or the business groups. Various large grocery chains, retailers, and restaurants have not been present at sessions to date, and could potentially have different or important views to share. This information should be sought via an initial review period of any legislation, and reported to Council for consideration.

### **Neighbouring Municipalities**

Several CRD municipalities are reviewing the issue of single-use checkout bag waste and sustainability, and most recently, Saanich (October 3, 2017) has expressed unanimous support for regulation of single-use plastic checkout bags, and subsequent fee for paper and reusable bags. This issue has been referred to Saanich staff for committee review and consultation before coming back to Council in the coming months.

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<sup>16</sup> From RecycleBC correspondence to the City of Victoria, October 17, 2017.