



Single-use items waste reduction strategy

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard

January 14, 2019

Project overview

The City of Calgary wants to understand your views on whether we should create a strategy to reduce waste from single-use items and, if so, what items should be targeted in the strategy and how would the implementation of a strategy impact you.

Waste & Recycling Services is developing a scoping report that investigates options and unintended consequences for significantly reducing waste from avoidable plastic and single-use items. A scoping report is a report that outlines an approach for how the work will advance.

The scoping report will include:

- Overview of policy options for reducing single-use waste.
- Unintended consequences associated with each option.
- Proposed approach to further engage and obtain feedback from citizens and waste generators to develop a single-use reduction strategy for Calgary.
- Estimated cost of developing a single-use reduction strategy for Calgary.

Engagement overview

Citizens, businesses and organizations have the opportunity to help chart the way forward. Feedback will help outline the recommendations for investigating this issue further. We wanted to understand:

- Your perceptions of single-use items
- Your interest and impact level in a single-use items waste reduction strategy
- Which items you think are important to include in a single-use items waste reduction strategy

This Engagement is a preliminary snapshot into Calgarians' perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages associated with exploring a single-use items waste reduction strategy. This feedback, in addition to items listed in the [Project Overview](#), will be included in the scoping report that is presented to the Standing Policy Committee (SPC) on Utilities and Corporate Services Spring 2019. By conducting preliminary engagement online, we were able:

- To get input from Calgarians that would inform the scoping report and therefore, next steps;
- Be cost-effective; and,
- Provide recommendations of additional engagement and research that is needed on this project. Research insights focus on population metrics while Engagement insights provide an opportunity for any interested or affected Calgarian to participate, and both sets of insights complement each other. These recommendations will be included in the scoping report presented to the Standing Policy Committee (SPC) on Utilities and Corporate Services.



Single-use items waste reduction strategy

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard

January 14, 2019

To see the engagement principles used in shaping and executing the engagement process for this project see [Appendix B](#).

What we asked

Engagement was conducted online from October 29 – November 13, 2018.

We asked you to tell us:

- Do you believe The City of Calgary should take action to reduce garbage from single-use items? Why or why not?
- Which single-use items do you think The City of Calgary should take action to reduce?
- Which single-use items do you use most frequently?
- Which single-use items do you think you could live without?

This Engagement is intended to be a multi-phased approach so that the project team is able to include information in their scoping report that will help influence next steps, including scope of the project, and amount of engagement and research expected, while allowing flexibility to consider engagement and research opportunities that respond to Committee's direction following the presentation of the scoping report in April 2019.

What we heard

There was a total of 3,431 unique contributors to this engagement. We wanted to understand whether The City of Calgary should take actions to reduce garbage from single-use items. Below are the themes that emerged from engagement for those that support and oppose The City exploring a single-use items waste reduction strategy.

1. Of those that responded online, majority of you shared that you would like The City of Calgary to take action to reduce garbage from single-use items. The following are themes that emerged from engagement:
 - Protect people and the environment
 - Enhance climate resilience
 - Too much waste is ending up in landfills
 - The City of Calgary should be a leader in reducing waste generated by single-use items
 - Single-use items are too readily available
 - More options / material alternatives for single-use items are needed / should be available
 - Consider the needs of those individuals for whom single-use items are still needed
 - Businesses and individuals should be active participants in reducing garbage from single-use items.



Single-use items waste reduction strategy

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard

January 14, 2019

2. Of those that responded online, few of you shared that you would not like The City of Calgary to take action to reduce garbage from single-use items. The following are themes that emerged from engagement:
 - The City of Calgary should be focusing resources elsewhere. A single-use items waste reduction strategy should not be a priority.
 - A reduction strategy will not have an impact and government should not be directing people what they can and cannot use.
 - There is already enough happening to reduce waste from single-use items and more work is not needed.
- For a detailed summary of the input that was provided, please see the [Summary of Input](#) section.
- The verbatim section listing all input that was provided is in a separate document due to the volume of input.

Next steps

Your feedback was reviewed and will be shared with the project team for use in their scoping report. A scoping report is a report that outlines an approach for how the work will advance and will be presented to the Standing Policy Committee (SPC) on Utilities and Corporate Services in Spring 2019. This What we Heard report will also be shared to engage.calgary.ca/single-use along with a separate document with all verbatim comments.



Single-use items waste reduction strategy

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard
January 14, 2019

Summary of Input

The summary of input here is reflective of your responses to the first question posed in engagement, which sought to understand your perspectives on The City of Calgary taking action to reduce garbage from single-use items.

Your comments are reviewed to create themes. Each theme includes a summary and examples of verbatim comments in italics. These are the exact words you used. To ensure we capture all responses accurately, verbatim comments have not been altered. In some cases, we utilized only a portion of your comment that spoke to a particular theme. This is reflected by using ‘...’.

Preference	Theme	Detailed explanation and supporting examples
<p>Majority of you shared that you would like The City of Calgary to take action to reduce garbage from single-use items.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect people and the environment • Enhance climate resilience 	<p>Most of you indicated your main reasons for supporting a single-use items waste reduction strategy were to protect people and the environment and enhance climate resilience. You told us you are concerned with the time it takes for items to biodegrade/decompose. You voiced strong support for actions that counteract the negative impacts of single-use plastics, indicating that reduction of plastics and use of less harmful alternatives are desired approaches.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Single use plastic items that do not easily biodegrade are poisoning the environment.</i> • <i>Single-use plastics are used by so many people and they pile up in our landfills, using up a lot of resources, polluting air and water quality, and harming animals.</i> • <i>Single use items are detrimental to the environment. They are often made of plastic, a material that takes hundreds of years to decompose...</i> • <i>We owe it to our children, wildlife, and the planet. if you consider them important. Let us not be selfish.</i>



Single-use items waste reduction strategy

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard

January 14, 2019

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We live in a world of over-consumption, we are depleting the world's resources, consuming more than our planet can handle and EVERY SINGLE THING we can now do to reduce our human footprint, reducing the amount we just use once and throw away is CRITICAL</i> • <i>Non-recycleable plastics are killing our planet and we need to do everything in our power to tackle this issue by implementing strategies to reduce this kind of unnecessary waste.</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too much waste is ending up in landfills 	<p>We heard from many of you concerns regarding the excess amount of waste you see in landfills, especially waste caused by single-use plastics. You also voiced concerns about the amount of landfill space required to support the current usage and noted that actions to reduce use of landfills would be desired.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Single use items create excessive disposable waste that in many cases end up in landfill. Even those items that can be recycled often become contaminated and therefore still end up in landfill...</i> • <i>Waste, landfill capacity, recycling system capacity, green house gas footprint, unchecked consumerism. all negative consequences of single use plastics.</i> • <i>These items do not biodegrade for a LONG time. They contaminate not only land but water. The amount of material going to our landfill could be greatly reduced by the elimination of these single-use items.</i> • <i>There is so much unnecessary waste. I think a strategy that targets one or 2 items at a time would be the most effective to allow people to adapt to change.</i> • <i>Reducing waste means reducing energy consumption, and less land needed for landfill, which could be used for food production, carbon sequestration and ecological sustainability.</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City of Calgary should be a leader in 	<p>Many of you shared that you view The City of Calgary as being well-positioned to implement</p>



Single-use items waste reduction strategy

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard

January 14, 2019

	<p>reducing waste generated by single-use items</p>	<p>strategies that would support waste reduction from single-use items. You noted that being a leader in this area also means leading by example. We heard from many of you that you expect your government to do what is needed to support you to take action to reduce waste from single-use items.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It is wasteful, plain and simple. Convenience should not come at the cost of our future. As a 17 year old with many years ahead of me, it is reasonable and rationale to ask my government to protect my future.</i> • <i>The amount of waste we generate is harming our planet and ecosystems. We need strong leadership, policies and programs from our municipal government ASAP.</i> • <i>Yes! It is important that we do our part to reduce waste, and individuals cannot be expected to do this alone. Governments like the City of Calgary should provide citizens with support needed to reduce waste.</i> • <i>Without the effort from the City and the City setting an example, no one else will really try to reduce waste from single-use items.</i> • <i>While Calgary's reduction of single-use items would be a drop in the bucket in the global picture, at least it would be a drop. I would be proud to live in a city taking such a strong stance toward the importance of a healthy natural world...</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-use items are too readily available • More options / material alternatives for single-use items are needed / should be available • Consider the needs of those individuals for whom single-use items are still needed 	<p>We heard from many of you that you feel the availability of single-use items contributes to their excessive use. You shared that you would support initiatives that reduce their availability and you wanted leadership to support this endeavor. A number of you also indicated that beyond reducing single-use item availability, you would like to have more options for biodegradable/compostable items so that you did not have to completely sacrifice use of the product, rather focus efforts towards environmentally-friendly products that would not overextend landfills. Further to this, few of you indicated that you wanted to see a reduction, rather than a ban, of plastic straws. You shared personal</p>



Single-use items waste reduction strategy

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard

January 14, 2019

		<p>experiences of disabilities where the pliability of plastic straws are easier for you to use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Because it is so easy to shift to not using single use items if they are not offered. We can re-train our behaviour if there is support from the city</i> • <i>Single use items make no logical sense, you should generate items for multiple use to save on the amount of materials produced. Decreasing the economic factor and also the ecosystem damage</i> • <i>Single-use items are extremely harmful to the environment and consumers should have reusable or biodegradable items available to them instead</i> • <i>Because single-use items are far too accessible. If the people of Calgary had to put more thought into going out for coffee, they could simply grab the reusable mug on their counter instead of disregarding it.</i> • <i>For the vast majority of uses it is just unnecessary. I only support this after appropriate consultation with vulnerable groups who may require such items. Eg. many disabled people require plastic straws to safely drink.</i> • <i>It is essential for the sustainability of our city that we reduce our impact on the environment. It is also crucial that we take these strategies in ways that do not disproportionately affect lower income</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses and individuals should be active participants in reducing garbage from single-use items. 	<p>We heard from many of you that while you want The City of Calgary to take a leadership role in reducing waste accumulated from single-use items, you also felt that the responsibility resides with all of us, including consumers, manufacturers and suppliers. You shared that you would be less likely to use these products if they weren't as readily available and would welcome regulations that hold the public and commercial industry accountable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Consumers can choose to buy items with less waste, but there are not always options. If there</i>



Single-use items waste reduction strategy

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard
January 14, 2019

		<p>were regulations on business/commerce regarding single use items giving consumers more choice, consumers would make better choices for the environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to make an impact, we need regulations and initiatives in place to hold the public and businesses accountable, as well as rewards/incentives to get people to *actually* participate. • Consumers use it because there aren't many other options. Laws and regulations tackle the issue and force larger corporations to problem solve, and become better at providing new, less damaging packaging • I think that the problem starts with the companies that create the packaging & they need some motivation to change their ways. • Reduction of unnecessary garbage or non-recyclable plastics in landfills, and encouraging businesses to utilize fully recyclable or compostable materials. • Yes. I think if the single use products are compostable its ok. But everything elase should be banned. I own a cafe, and 90% of my single use products are compostable. • We need to take more personal responsibility, and remember to bring re-usable items. Too much garbage - our poor planet! We need to get a handle on this now. • Yes because it's everyone responsibility and will improve the city's standings in terms of quality is life in the long run.
Preference	Theme	Detailed explanation and supporting examples
<p>Few of you shared that you would not like The City of Calgary to take action to reduce garbage from single-use items.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City of Calgary should be focusing resources elsewhere. A single-use items waste reduction strategy should not be a priority. 	<p>We heard from few of you that you do not see a single-use items waste reduction strategy as a priority and would prefer that The City allocate resources to other areas of concern, including environmental issues that you see as more problematic. Few of you also voiced concerns over the cost associated with such a strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not at this time. This is not a NEED nor a priority. It's a Nice-to-Have if we had \$. We



Single-use items waste reduction strategy

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard

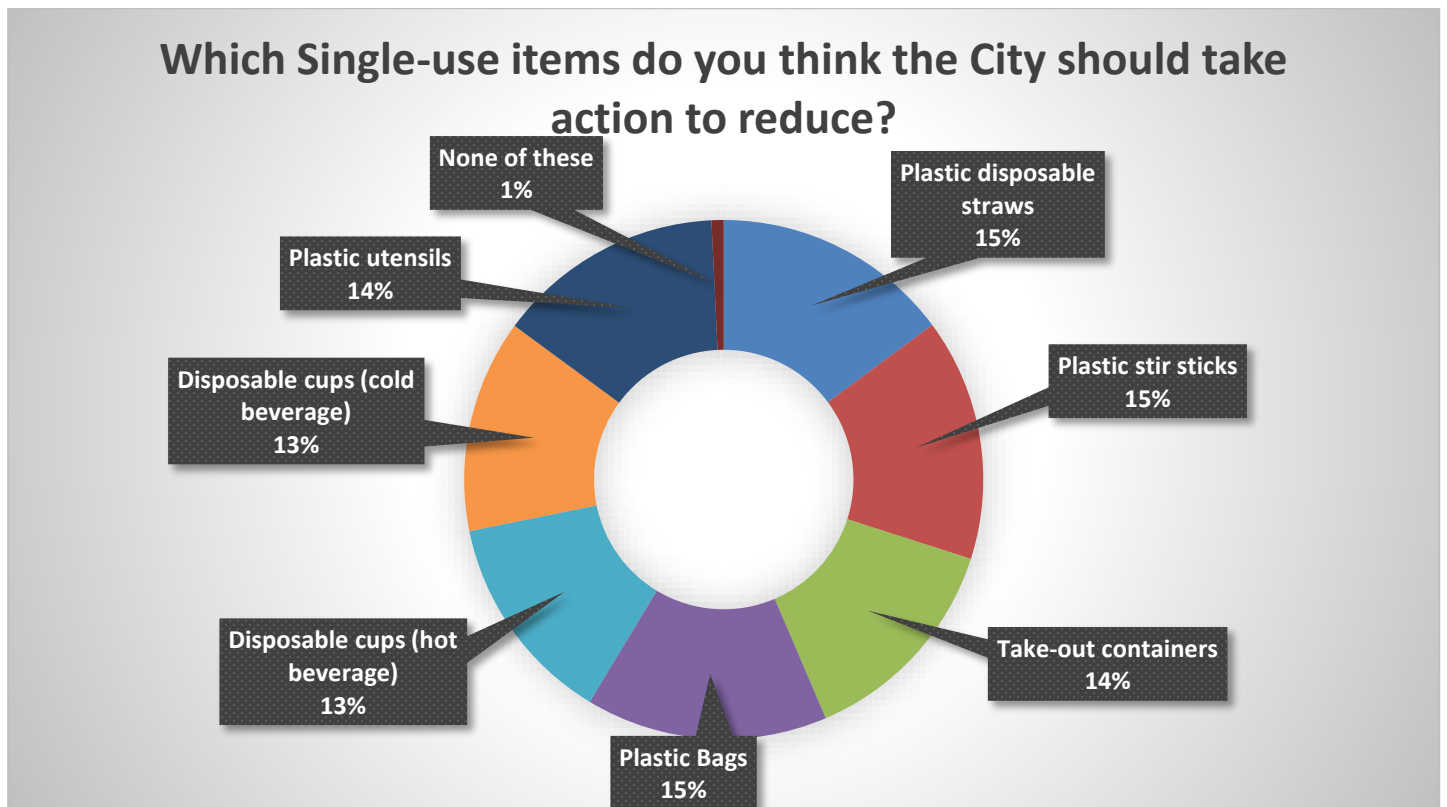
January 14, 2019

		<p><i>have limited \$ to do what needs to be done and i don't see this as a priority at this time.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>It would not be enforceable and the city could better spend money on more significant Environmental problems. How about focusing on micro plastics in water treatment?</i> <i>There are far bigger problems to address. Stop micromanaging - people can make their own decisions.</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A reduction strategy will not have an impact and government should not be directing people what they can and cannot use. 	<p>Few of you shared that you do not want The City pursuing a single-use items waste reduction strategy because you feel that the decision to use, or not use, single-use items should be yours to make. You indicated that you are concerned with what could happen to taxes if a waste reduction strategy were explored.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Government should not order or even get involved in such a low level problem. I suggest consumers and business take the lead where it makes sense. Plastic bags from grocery stores have useful second purposes</i> <i>I don't think it is the responsibility of the city and I also do not want my tax dollars going to this. The City has taxed us citizens to the max, It is not up to you to tell me how or what items I use.</i> <i>Let people make their own choice and quit trying to run or lives.</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is already enough happening to reduce waste from single-use items and more work is not needed. 	<p>Few of you shared that you feel there is already enough work happening to reduce waste from single-use items. We heard from you that you already follow current processes. You shared that you would rather the recycling facilities have more capacity to recycle a wider range of materials rather than placing more responsibility on you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>No we already have blue and green bin that we can use to help to reduce garbage.</i> <i>Can you give us a bit of a break for a bit? We just changed the garbage rules - it's too much at once. We try to reduce our environmental footprint at home, but don't feel that the city should be making us do anything.</i>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No need to since most of not all can be recycled if Calgary actually had a proper recycling facility
--	--	--

Summary of responses to questions 2 – 4

There were 3,431 unique contributors to the online survey. The following charts reflect the responses of only those of you that responded to each question and should not be considered statistically representative.



Other suggestions that you provided were:

- Styrofoam products
- Shrink-wrapped items
- Plastic rings on cans
- Packaging (including those with non-recyclable materials, e.g. candy bars, chips)
- Plastic food containers and wrap (including wrap on produce)
- Single-use creamer and butter containers
- Condiment packets
- Water bottles and other plastic beverage containers
- Paper towels and paper napkins
- Lids on disposable cups

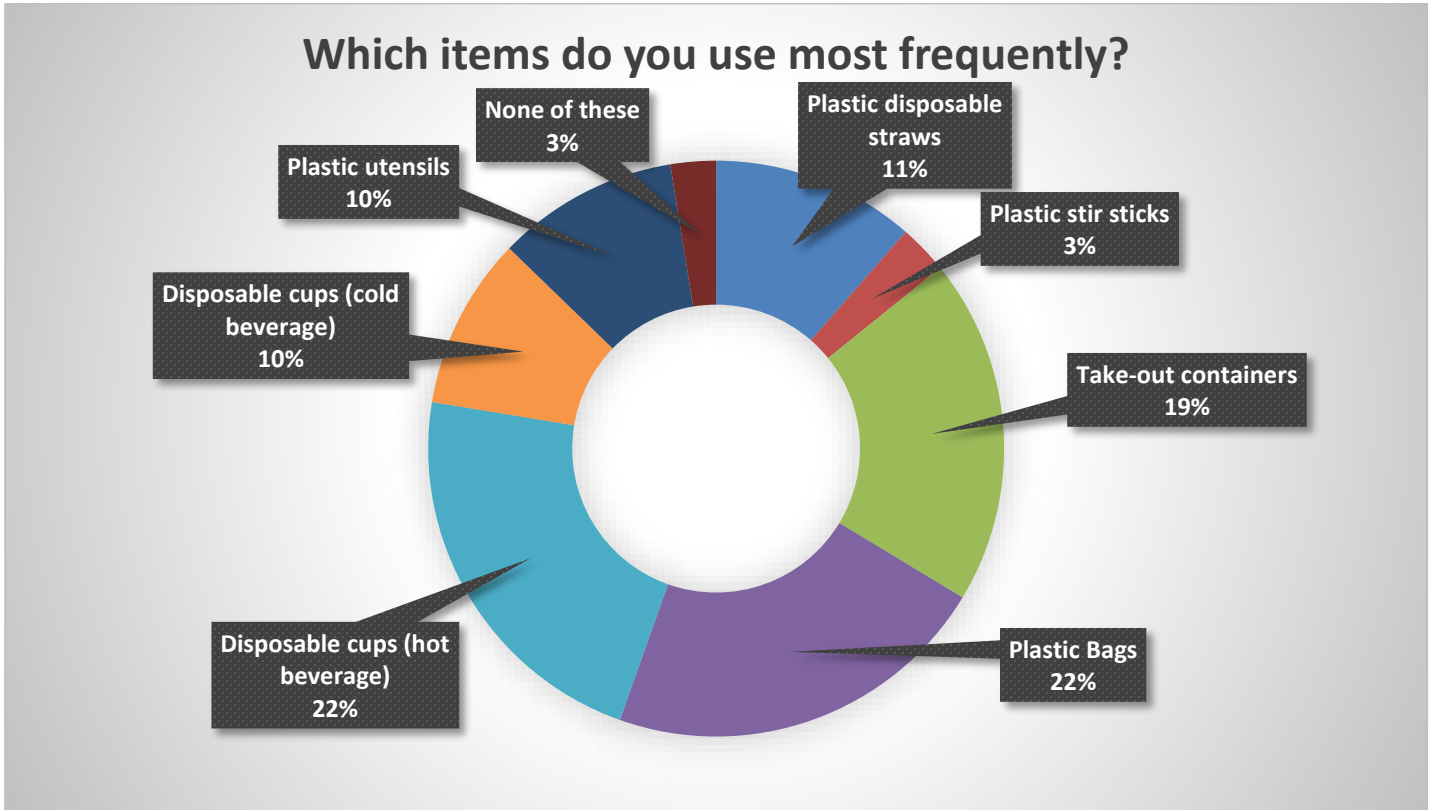


Single-use items waste reduction strategy

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard

January 14, 2019

- Cigarettes and cigarette butts
- Mixed material packaging
- Plastic garbage bags and sandwich bags
- Plastic dishes
- Plastic boxes at bakeries
- Food liners
- Individually wrapped items double-wrapped
- Cellophane
- Coffee pods
- Coffee spill stoppers
- Bag tags
- Pill containers
- Plastic razors and toothbrushes
- Plastic fast food toys
- Clamshell packaging
- Small plastic sauce containers
- Single-use diapers
- Plastic dog waste bags
- Lanyards and plastic name tag sheaths
- Balloons
- Cleaning wipes
- Paper bags
- Paintbrushes (face painting)
- Cotton buds
- Free plastic collateral at events
- Bottle caps
- Thermal paper receipts
- Sanitary products
- Produce stickers
- Hard shell plastic cases
- Gift cards and membership cards
- Expanded polystyrene
- Envelopes with plastic windows
- Single-use pens and markers
- Facial tissues
- Non-numbered plastics
- Beauty products and cleaning packaging
- Bubble wrap
- Hot beverage sleeves
- Excess packaging
- Promotional / marketing items
- Single-use coasters
- Tray liners
- Foil wrap
- Office paper



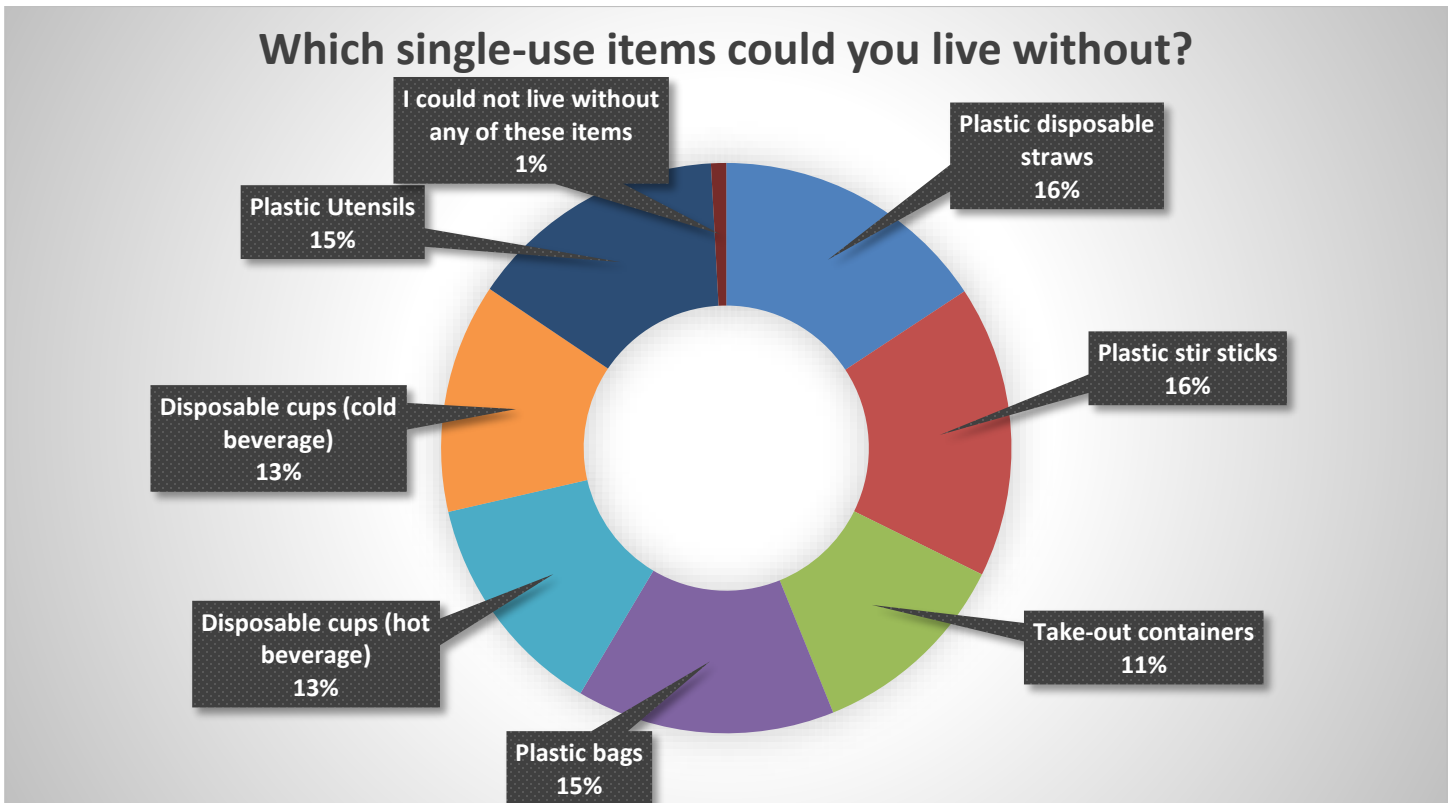
Other items that you shared were:

- Food packaging
- Beverage cans
- Produce in plastic wrap
- Plastic bags
- Plastic food containers
- Excessive plastic packaging
- Toothpicks
- Dental floss
- Bags
- Plastic bottle caps
- Pill containers
- Disposable plates
- Stretch film
- Plastic cutlery in take-out
- Lids for disposable cups (hot and cold)
- Paper napkins
- Food pouches for children
- Meat packaging and wrap
- Meat Styrofoam
- Take-out containers
- Hot beverage sleeves
- Plastic wrap
- Paper towels
- Single-use condiments
- Clamshell packages
- Hard shell plastic cases
- Surgical gloves
- Coffee pods
- Bread clips
- Envelopes with plastic window
- Single-use pens
- Marijuana packaging tubes
- Candy wrap
- Sandwich bags

Single-use items waste reduction strategy

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard
January 14, 2019

- Water bottles
- Cotton buds
- Shampoo and conditioner bottles
- Yogurt containers



Other items that you listed are:

- Styrofoam
- Plastic and styrofoam take-out containers
- Water and pop bottles
- Plastic beverage containers
- Condiment packets
- 1 and 5 gallon plastic pails
- Packing supplies
- Health care items including gloves, sterile trays wrapped in plastic, syringes, etc.
- Clamshell packaging
- Coffee pods
- Coffee spill stoppers
- Plastic wrap and packaging
- Produce bags
- Plastic fast food toys
- Plastic 6-pack rings
- Hot beverage lids
- Excess packaging
- Single-use creamers
- Single-use diapers and wipes
- Paper towels
- Sandwich bags
- Dental floss



Single-use items waste reduction strategy

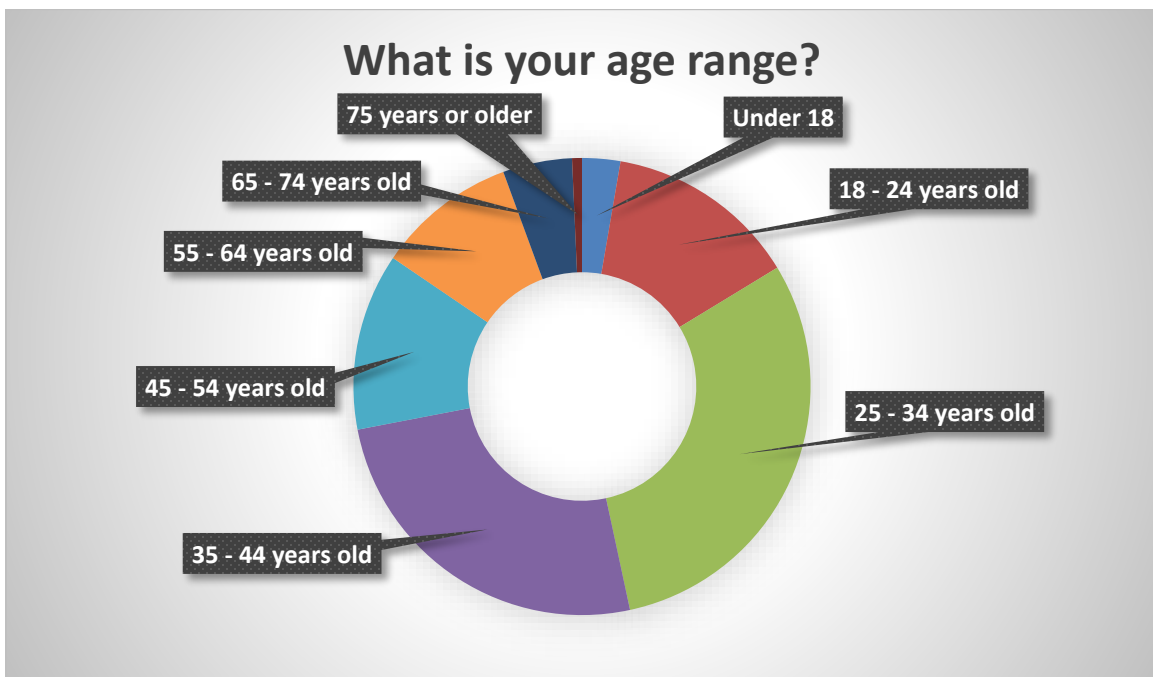
Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard

January 14, 2019

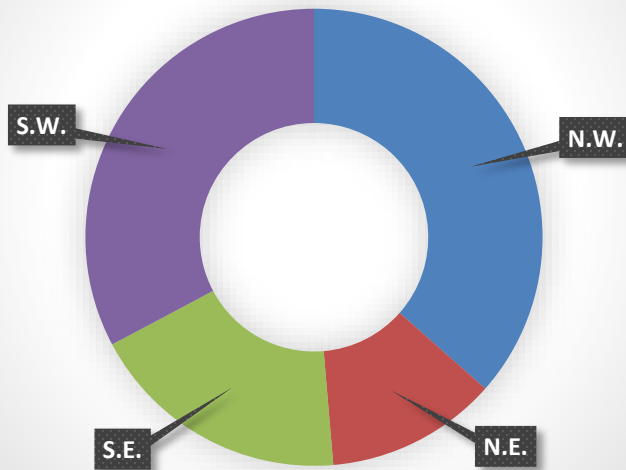
- Paper napkins
- Polystyrene foam
- Single-use pens
- Receipts
- Plastic produce containers
- Plastic meat containers
- Individually wrapped produce
- Single-serve yogurt
- Plastic dishes
- Sanitary products
- Pre-packaged foods
- Collateral/promotional materials
- Restaurant coasters
- Tray liners
- Foil
- Office paper

Appendix A - Demographics

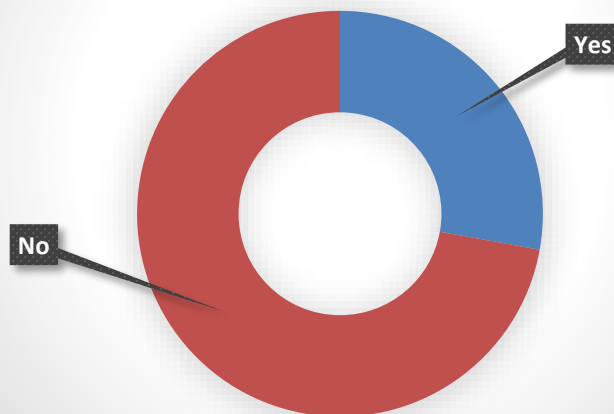
We asked you to tell us a bit about yourselves. Your responses to these questions were optional and were not tied to your responses. This information will be used by the project team to understand the value of reducing single-use items according to age, quadrant and connection to industry.



Which quadrant do you live in?



Do you own, operate or work at a business or organization that utilizes single-use items?





Single-use items waste reduction strategy

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard

January 14, 2019

Appendix B – Engagement Principles

In alignment with City Council's [Engage Policy](#), all engagement efforts, including this project are defined as: *Purposeful dialogue between The City and citizens and stakeholders to gather meaningful information to influence decision making.*

As a result, all engagement aligns with the following principles:

Citizen-centric: focusing on hearing the needs and voices of both directly impacted and indirectly impacted citizens.

Accountable: upholding the commitments that The City makes to its citizens and stakeholders by demonstrating that the results and outcomes of the engagement processes are consistent with the approved plans for engagement.

Inclusive: making best efforts to reach, involve, and hear from those who are impacted directly or indirectly.

Committed: allocating sufficient time and resources for effective engagement of citizens and stakeholders.

Responsive: acknowledging citizen and stakeholder concerns.

Transparent: providing clear and complete information around decision processes, procedures and constraints.

For more information about engagement at the City of Calgary, please visit: engage.calgary.ca