
REPORT TITLE: **Peel's Comments on the Proposed Federal Single-Use Plastics Prohibition Regulation in the Canada Gazette, Part I, December 25, 2021**

FROM: Kealy Dedman, Commissioner of Public Works

RECOMMENDATION

That the comments included in Appendix I of the report of the Commissioner of Public Works, listed on the April 7, 2022 Waste Management Strategic Advisory Committee agenda titled “Peel’s Comments on the Proposed Federal Single-Use Plastics Prohibition Regulation in the Canada Gazette, Part I, December 25, 2021”, be endorsed.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- On December 25, 2021 the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change Canada posted the proposed single-use plastics prohibition regulation in the Canada Gazette, Part I for review with comments due by March 5, 2022.
- Staff generally supports the proposed single-use plastics prohibition regulation as it supports Council's goals to reduce plastic pollution and move towards a circular economy.
- The comments included in Appendix I of this report were submitted to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Canada with the proviso that the comments were subject to Council endorsement.
- The comments include recommendations that the federal government develop national standards or a certification program for compostable and biodegradable products and packaging; invest in waste management infrastructure to ensure consistency and capacity for these products; expand the list of banned items over time to include additional harmful single-use plastic items; and require all businesses ensure their alternative of choice is recyclable or compostable with the local service provider.
- Staff will continue to participate in federal consultations related to the reduction of plastic waste and provide updates to Regional Council as appropriate.

DISCUSSION

1. Background

In 2018, Regional Council adopted a motion requesting the federal government to develop a national strategy that addresses plastic pollution (Resolution 2018-630).

In 2020, Regional Council adopted a motion in support of the federal proposal to ban harmful single-use plastic items in 2021 and directed staff to submit comments by the deadline to Environment and Climate Change Canada (Resolution 2020-869).

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In 2021, Regional Council endorsed staff comments on the proposed federal ban on harmful single-use plastic items (Resolution 2021-121).

On December 25, 2021, the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change Canada posted the proposed single-use plastics prohibition regulation in the Canada Gazette, Part I for review with comments due by March 5, 2022.

2. Comments on the proposed federal single-use plastics prohibition regulation in the Canada Gazette, Part I, December 25, 2021

Staff reviewed the proposed single-use plastics prohibition regulation, participated in the consultation, and submitted comments to the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change Canada.

Overall, staff is generally supportive of the proposed approach as it is a necessary step towards zero plastic waste and a circular economy and aligns with the objectives of Peel's long-term waste management strategy.

Staff provided recommendations that the federal government:

- Develop national standards or a certification program for compostable and biodegradable products and packaging that is in line with municipal processing capabilities in practice and at scale.
- Invest in waste management infrastructure to ensure consistency and capacity for municipal governments to accept more compostable or biodegradable alternatives within their composting programs.
- Continually expand the list of banned items to include additional harmful single-use plastic items based on evidence and that consultations be held on future bans.
- Require all businesses ensure their alternative of choice is recyclable or compostable with the local service provider before it is implemented.

Comments on specific parts of the proposed amendments are included in Appendix I of this report.

Staff submitted the appended comments to the Ministry by the deadline of March 5, 2022 with the proviso that they were subject to Council approval.

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

The proposed single-use plastics prohibition regulation could lead to an increase of compostable and biodegradable products and packages in the marketplace. These products are not compatible with Peel's current organics processing system and would end up as residue. These products could also increase Peel's processing costs, contamination levels in both the green bin and blue box and decrease the value of Peel's compost. Further, it could lead to resident confusion and frustration. To mitigate this risk, staff will continue to engage with the federal government to advocate for national certification standards for compostable and biodegradable plastic products, clear labelling for proper disposal, and their end-of-life management and engage with the provincial government to advocate for producer responsibility programs for compostable and biodegradable products and packaging.

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FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate financial implications resulting from this report.

CONCLUSION

Staff reviewed the proposed federal single-use plastics prohibition regulation and submitted comments to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Canada by the March 5, 2022 deadline, with the proviso that the comments were subject to Council approval.

Staff will continue to participate in federal consultations related to the reduction of plastic waste and provide updates to Regional Council as appropriate.

APPENDICES

Appendix I - Peel's Comments submitted on February 24, 2022

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