



## Community Services *Staff Report*

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REPORT NO: CS-2024-35

TO: Committee of the Whole

SUBMITTED BY: Chris Catania, Director of Community Services

PREPARED BY: Geoff Dubrick, Manager of Parks/Facilities  
Chris Catania, Director of Community Services

REVIEWED BY: Greg Clark, Acting Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: January 6, 2025

SUBJECT: Single Use Plastics

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### RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report CS-2024-35, Single Use Plastics be received for information.

### SUMMARY:

To provide Council with information related to a Notice of Motion on best practices and feasibility of implementing a policy banning the purchase of single-use plastics by the Township.

### BACKGROUND:

Council approved a Notice of Motion on May 27, 2024, that staff be directed to report back to Council on municipal best practices and the feasibility of implementing a Policy banning the purchase of single-use plastics by the Township of Wilmot, and the use of single-use plastics for Township business in municipal facilities by staff and Members of Council.

### REPORT:

## Single Use Plastics

Single use plastics are designed to be used once before they are sent to recycle bins or landfill. These include but not limited to the following:

- Plastic bags
- Plastic eating utensils
- Straws
- Food packaging
- Drink containers, (paper and plastic)

Production of single use products have been devastating to the natural environment as a global issue. The Government of Ontario's goal is to reduce plastic waste, thus reducing litter in our neighborhoods, parks and nature areas. According to the Province of Ontario recycling annual reports, plastic have the lowest recycling rates among all consumer products:

- Paper packaging = 74%
- Glass = 73%
- Metal = 53%
- **Plastic/Plastic packaging = 29%**

Waste and Recycling in the Township is administered by the Region of Waterloo. The Region's recycling program currently accepts the following:

- Plastic bottles, jars and jugs.
- Plastic trays and food containers
- Plastic take-out containers, cups, bowls and coffee cup lids
- Plastic garden containers
- Clean plastic bags
- Cardboard that is broken down and tied
- Paper products
- Aluminum and metal

Items not accepted include:

- Diapers and feminine hygiene products
- Straws, chip bags and snack wrappers
- Styrofoam containers
- Plastic cutlery
- Garden hoses
- Clothes hangers

## Single-Use Plastic Prohibition Regulations

The [Single-use Plastics Prohibition Regulations \(SUPPR\)](#) are part of the Government of Canada's comprehensive plan to address pollution, meet its target of zero plastic waste by 2030, and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The Regulations prohibit the manufacture, import and sale of single-use plastic checkout bags, cutlery, foodservice ware made from or containing problematic plastics, ring carriers, stir sticks, and straws. An exception in the Regulations allow single-use plastic flexible straws to remain available, under certain conditions (outlined in the guidance documents below), so people who need them still have access.

The Regulations will prohibit anyone to manufacture, import or sell the 6 categories of single-use plastics identified below.

1. Plastic checkout bags designed to carry purchased goods during point of sale.
2. Plastic cutlery that includes knives, forks, sporks, spoons and chopsticks.
3. Foodservice ware items designed for serving or transporting food or beverages.
4. Ring carriers that are flexible plastic rings designed to surround beverage containers so the consumer can carry multiple containers together.
5. Stir sticks designed to stir or mix beverages.
6. Straws which are manufactured with corrugated sections that allow the straw to bend, commonly packaged with beverage containers (juice boxes/pouches).

## **Municipal Scan**

Staff conducted a municipal scan reaching out to the following municipalities regarding recycling programs and single use plastics. These included Kitchener, Waterloo, Stratford, Perth East, Wellesley and Woolwich.

These municipal comparators have varying degrees of diversion programs. All have identified and reduced single use plastics within their organization. This has included the elimination of plastic bags, styrofoam cups, plastic eating utensils, plastic straws and stir sticks. Even with this reduction, consensus with other municipalities was that further restrictions from upper levels of government are required on certain manufacturers that produce single use or non-reusable plastics.

## **Wilmot Strategy**

The Township within municipal facilities has taken action in 2024 with a strategy of reducing single use plastics. Community Services has implemented standard operating procedures within facilities, highlighted with the concessions at the Wilmot Recreation Complex by eliminating the following items:

- Styrofoam take out containers
- Plastic straws
- Plastic coffee stir sticks
- Styrofoam coffee cups
- Styrofoam plates and bowls
- Plastic cutlery (Knives, forks and spoons)

These items have been replaced with items that are either bio-degradable or that achieve proper diversion in a waste/recycling program.

In addition, posted signage in Township facilities encourages facility users to bring reusable items, this includes further strategy of education on how to reduce single use plastics (reusable beverage containers, metal utensils, glass food ware.....etc.). Aside from the Wilmot Recreation Complex Concessions, bottle fill water stations are present at select facilities to encourage reusable beverage containers for recreation as well as for administrative needs during meetings in place of single use water bottles.

#### ALIGNMENT WITH THE TOWNSHIP OF WILMOT STRATEGIC PLAN:

- Prosperous Business and Balanced Growth through Protecting our natural environment.

#### FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Township staff have streamlined many items in the Wilmot Recreation Complex Concession to reduce single use plastics. Staff have recently engaged with food suppliers investigating further ways of reducing single use plastics. Staff are awaiting this information on alternative products/packaging that may be offered without further impact on budget or operations.

#### ATTACHMENTS:

N/A