

**THE BAG FEE BY-LAW  
HAS DONE ITS JOB  
TIME TO RESCIND**

**PLASTIC BAGS ARE MORE  
ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE**  
Myths and Facts about Plastic Bags

## THE BAG FEE BY-LAW IS THERE A BETTER WAY

There are a lot of questions – need answers

- Do we need a bag fee by-law in Toronto?  
Is it necessary?
- Does Toronto already have a better green solution based on the 3R's?
- Are plastic shopping bags really an environmental villain?
- Who benefits? Just how green is the alternative and have we been misled?

## THE BAG FEE BY-LAW IS THERE A BETTER WAY

Why the bag fee by-law exists

- We were told the following “myths”:
  - Plastic shopping bags fail the 3R’s test
  - They are not reused
  - They are not recycled
  - They are a litter problem in Toronto
  - They are a waste of resources

## THE BAG FEE BY-LAW IS THERE A BETTER WAY

Why the bag fee by-law exists

- We were told that:
  - there is a wonderful alternative – reusable bags
  - an alternative that would reduce the number of bags distributed and the amount of plastic going to landfill
  - an alternative that is recyclable
  - and protects the health of the public

## THE BAG FEE BY-LAW IS THERE A BETTER WAY

Myth: Bags are a large part of waste stream.



Fact: On Landfill

- Plastic shopping bags are a tiny part of our waste stream – only <0.8%. Not even a 1% problem (Source: City of Toronto Waste Data/Stewardship Ontario 2005 Carry Out Bag Audit)
- **The bag fee by-law has led to an increase of +17% in plastic consumption** (Source: City of Toronto Waste Data/Stewardship Ontario 2005 Carry Out Bag Audit)
- **Why? Because residents for their household garbage have substituted kitchen catchers which contain 85% more plastic.**

**THE BAG FEE BY-LAW  
IS THERE A BETTER WAY**

Myth: Plastic bags are not reused.

Fact: On Reuse

- 70% of the bags distributed in Toronto are **REUSED** by residents in the green bin etc. (Source:

Stewardship Ontario 2005 Carry Out Bag)



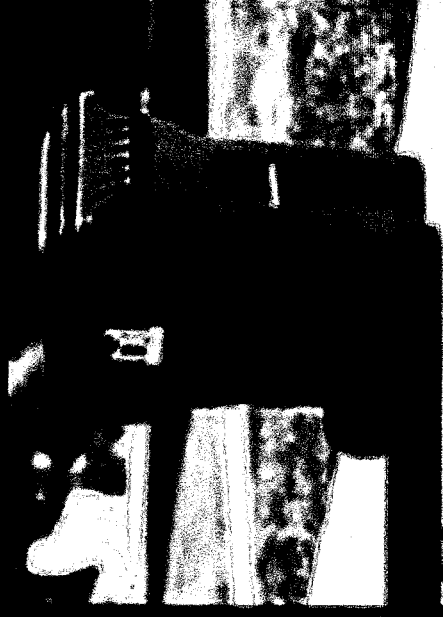
## THE BAG FEE BY-LAW IS THERE A BETTER WAY

Myth: Bags are not being recycled.

Fact: On Recycling

- 40% of the plastic shopping bags left after reuse are recycled in Toronto's blue bin

(Source: Provincial Bag Report - 2010)



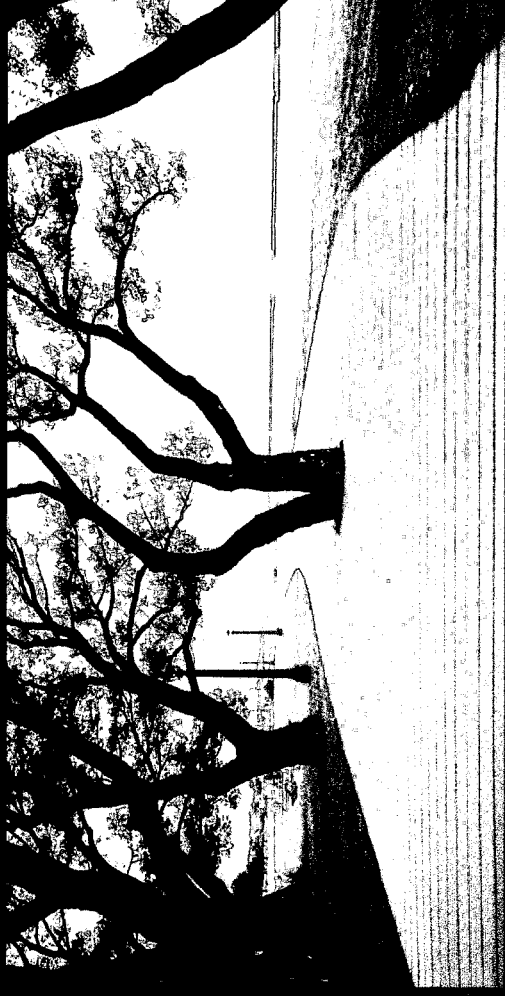
**THE BAG FEE BY-LAW  
IS THERE A BETTER WAY**

Myth: Bags are not being recycled.



Fact: On Recycling

- Toronto's Western Beaches Boardwalk is made from recycled plastic shopping bags - 32 million bags.



(Source: Trex Lumber )



**THE BAG FEE BY-LAW  
IS THERE A BETTER WAY**

Myth: Bags are a litter problem.



Fact: On Litter

- The latest Toronto City litter audit shows that plastic shopping bags are only 13/100's of 1% of the litter stream

(Source: Toronto Litter Audit Report 2006)

**THE BAG FEE BY-LAW  
IS THERE A BETTER WAY**

Fact: Bags do pass the 3R's Test



**ON ALL DIMENSIONS THEY PASS IN TORONTO**

- On landfill - YES
- On reuse - YES
- On recycling - YES
- On litter - YES
- On conservation of resources - YES

## THE BAG FEE BY-LAW IS THERE A BETTER WAY

**Myth: The five cent bags are produced in China.**

- No.
- 90% of the 5 cent fee bags are made in Canada and recycled in Canada

**Myth: Reusable bags are better.**

- Alternative Reusable Bags are **NOT RECYCLABLE IN CANADA** because the equipment needed to dismantle bags is not readily available in North America because the textile industry has largely migrated to China
- At the end of their life, reusables end up in landfill or have to be shipped back to China

## **THE BAG FEE BY-LAW IS THERE A BETTER WAY**

### **SO WHO BENEFITS?**

- **Not the City - The City earns no revenue on the bags.**
- **Not the environment – More plastic is being consumed +17%.**
- **Not residents - The bag fee is very unpopular**
- **Waste savings to the City of \$100,000 have cost residents \$5 million in fees**
- **While there is some support for the bag fee; people want the fee to be voluntary.**

## **THE BAG FEE BY-LAW IS THERE A BETTER WAY**

### **Vote to rescind the bag fee by-law**

- The City of Orillia which copied Toronto's bag fee by-law rescinded it May 2012
- Why? Because:
  - The bag fee has done its job changing behaviour
  - Those who are going to convert to reusables have done so
  - There is a better environmental solution through recycling/blue bin programs

## **THE BAG FEE BY-LAW IS THERE A BETTER WAY**

**Vote to rescind the bag fee by-law**

- It makes environmental and economic sense.
- The bag fee has done its job changing behaviour
- Those who are going to convert to reusables have done so
- **On top of that: Toronto already has a 3 R's – GREEN SOLUTION to Bags with recycling program/blue bin**