

May 25, 2022

Re.: Item IE 30.17 - Single-Use and Takeaway Items Reduction Strategy - Voluntary Measures Program Launch

Dear Members of the Infrastructure and Environment Committee,

We are writing to you about Toronto's stalled SUTI reduction strategy. After a long and involved process of public consultations including surveys and webinars with the public and stakeholders in the food sector, we were excited and hopeful (after the unanimous vote to start stage 1 in 2021!) to see City Council adopt an impactful strategy to reduce single-use plastics beginning asap with the voluntary measurement program and first mandatory steps as early as September 2022 and fees for disposables beginning in January 2023.

We are very disappointed and confused to hear that the much-needed implementation of the strategy has been put on hold without explanation.

I am writing to you as a member of Roncy Reduces and Canada Reduces - the network of Reduces Groups in and around Toronto (as well as in Ottawa and Vancouver). We are a grassroots organization that aims to reduce single-use plastics and packaging in our respective neighbourhoods because the plastic we use and throw away every day results in a terrible toxic pollution of our environment and as a fossil fuel product plastic hurts our climate! We all know that we need to phase out single-use plastic and start a culture of reuse. Many people are glad about our work and many businesses and restaurants are willing to make changes: the majority of restaurants in my Roncesvalles neighbourhood have posted our Roncy Reduces sticker at the door to show that they allow customers to BYO Bring Your Own reusable cup, bag or container. What are we waiting for?

It is high time for the city to get on with the voluntary stage (education campaigns and support for businesses), plus, to follow up on the Council commitment to lead by example in City facilities. Instead, we've heard nothing, and the Stage 1 voluntary program hasn't even started.

We urge you to show leadership today and start the SUTI reduction strategy that so many city staff have been working on. I believe Torontonians can handle it and many are ready and willing to start making changes.

Thank you for considering us today!

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