



Scarborough Zero Waste Scarborough, ON
Scarborough Environmental Association, Scarborough, ON

November 27, 2023

To: Members of the Infrastructure and Environment Committee and Mayor Chow

Re: IE 9.3 - Update and Action Plan on the Single-Use and Takeaway Items Reduction Strategy

We are writing on behalf of Scarborough Zero Waste and The Scarborough Environmental Association to express our strong support for the proposed Single-Use Reduction Strategy within the city of Toronto. We commend the council's proactive steps toward reducing single-use food ware and bags, and we believe that these regulations will contribute to a more sustainable and environmentally conscious community. However, Toronto's Single Use Reduction Strategy can and must go further. We urge you to commit to the following:

- 1. Regulations that require reuseable cups, cutlery, and dishes for city events and festivals**
- 2. Ensuring that a Toronto Water Truck is made available for every Toronto event or festival therefore reducing the number of plastic water bottles**
- 3. Pass local bans on single-use plastics such as bags, Styrofoam, plastic cutlery, and black plastic containers**
- 4. Require foodservice establishments to serve dine-in and take-out orders on reusable cups and foodware**
- 5. Enforce stricter bylaw fines for littering, most notably cigarette butt littering**

Our small but growing, grassroots organization has not just been a voice in taking a stand against waste reduction but we have also been putting our words into action within the Scarborough community. We are doing our best to engage and educate local restaurants and food establishments about the benefits of adopting reusable take-out containers. Additionally, since 2021, we have organized four community clean-ups and just this past October, we had the support of the local BIA and will continue to work with them for this bi-annual event. These clean-up efforts have revealed the alarming amount of single-use items, much of which includes coffee cups, Styrofoam, food wrappers, and cigarette butts—littering our streets, green spaces, and waterways. And as you can see from the attached photos, the magnitude of this waste is disheartening and emphasizes the urgent need for action.

Scarborough Zero Waste has been working with the Taste of Lawrence, offering guidance to limit the use of single-use take-out food containers, cups, and cutlery. But despite all these efforts, we firmly believe that the most effective approach to curbing waste is through legislative measures that prohibit the distribution of single-use items.

The impact of single-use items on our environment, ecosystems, and water sources cannot be overstated. We implore the Toronto City Council to prioritize the well-being of future generations and the protection of our invaluable ecosystems by enacting laws that restrict the use of single-use items.

Thank you for your consideration of this crucial matter. Scarborough Zero Waste and the Scarborough Environmental Association remains committed to supporting and collaborating with the council to create a cleaner, more sustainable Toronto.

Sincerely,

Scarborough Zero Waste

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Photos from our spring and fall 2023 community clean-ups:

