

**From:** ["Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>](mailto:Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca)  
**To:** ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)  
**Date:** 2/6/2023 9:34:31 AM  
**Subject:** Single Use Beverage Cup Fee - update

---

Dear Mayor and Council,

During the Council meeting on Jan. 31, 2023, I received a formal enquiry from Councillor Fry regarding the timeline on the report "Revisiting the City's Single-Use Beverage Cup Fee Policy" from March 2, 2022, and a request for any interim update. Our Solid Waste team have compiled the following update on this issue for your information.

### **Revisiting the City's Single-Use Beverage Cup Fee – Report Back RTS 15082**

The subject of this report back is staff Recommendation D in the Council [report](#) titled, *Revisiting the City's Single-Use Beverage Cup Fee Policy*, dated February 18, 2022 (RTS 15017), which was approved by Council on March 2, 2022, as noted in the [minutes](#):

*D. THAT staff report back within 18 months [by Sep. 2023] with potential options for requiring businesses to provide reusable cups for drinks ordered to-stay and to participate in a reusable cup-share program for to-go drinks, including recommendations for timing.*

Although Council did not direct staff to include a progress report of the cup fee policy in the report back, staff do intend to provide a high level status update of the program using available information to support Council with decision making. Staff also intend to use preliminary data from cup reports submitted with the business licence renewals to inform a review of the potential options for requiring reusable dine-in cups and cup borrowing for take-away.

The report back is currently planned as a memo to provide an update on the potential options and feedback received through stakeholder engagement.

It is not possible to provide this report back before Sep. 2023 as the work to explore potential options, per Recommendation D above, is still underway.

Also, given the focus on options to require the use of reusable cups for dine-in and take-away drinks, this report back would not provide sufficient context for the Council Member's motion on Repealing Vancouver's Single-Use Beverage Cup Fee that may be placed on the Council meeting agenda of Feb. 14, 2023.

### **Preliminary Results**

Staff are actively collecting and analyzing data for a suite of performance indicators to measure the effectiveness of the cup fee and other requirements in the cup by-law.

This will be need to be an ongoing process as the impacts of any new policy, particularly ones that involve significant behaviour change, may not be seen for some time.

Where possible, staff have provided preliminary results through this email as context for the motion on repealing the cup fee that may be placed on the Council meeting agenda of Feb. 14, 2023.

### ***Single-use cup reports submitted with business licence renewals:***

Staff are collecting cup distribution data submitted with the 2023 business licence renewals. Cup reports are still coming in with overdue renewals. Staff are working to complete and analyze this data set by Q4 2023.

Approximately 70% of businesses have submitted their cup reports through online business licence renewals. Of these, two thirds may require staff follow-up to review and correct possible data entry errors. (For example, misunderstanding what cup borrowing, or "cup-share," means.)

The 70% does not include cup reports that businesses mailed-in or submitted in-person. These will be entered into the licence database with the overdue renewals.

The intent of the cup reporting data is to monitor trends of single-use cups that businesses use over time, and also monitor the uptake of cup borrowing programs. However, there are several limitations with this data set. For example, businesses that offer cup borrowing programs are exempted from reporting the number of single-use cups distributed.

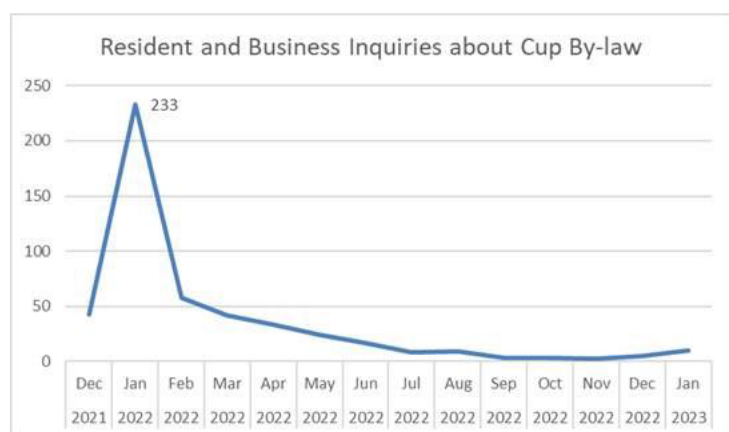
#### ***Waste composition and litter data:***

Waste composition studies are conducted on a regularly scheduled basis, typically every 2-3 years. The study focuses on single-family residential garbage, litter cans and park litter totes. Single-use cups are just one of the items measured in the study. The previous study was done in 2021, before the cup fee by-law came into effect, and the next study is scheduled for Q4 2023. Waste composition data in Vancouver is not available for 2022.

Street litter audits are performed annually. Litter audits are most helpful in understanding the different types of litter, rather than the amounts of litter. This data is a snapshot in time and results can vary based on a variety of factors such as weather and cleaning service levels at the time the audit is conducted. In 2022, single-use cups and lids comprised 10% of litter items counted during the City's street litter audit (compared to 12% in 2021, 10% in 2020, and 12% in 2019). At the time of the audit (Sep. 2022), by-law amendments for businesses to accept customers' clean personal cups had been in effect for 2.5 months. Although these trends are helpful as an indicator, cups reported by businesses will be the more valid measure of reduction progress.

#### ***Inquiries:***

The City has received a total of 447 inquiries (via 3-1-1 or [reducesingleuse@vancouver.ca](mailto:reducesingleuse@vancouver.ca)) since the cup by-law came into effect on Jan. 1, 2022. Total inquiries peaked at 233 in Jan. 2022 when the cup by-law took effect, and tapered to an average of 3.25/month in Sep-Dec 2022.



Of the inquiries received, 86% were from residents, and 13% from businesses.

68% of the inquiries were complaints, mostly from residents, and mostly in Jan. and Feb. 2022 when the by-law took effect.

The remaining inquiries are businesses seeking clarification, residents asking the City to enforce the by-law with specific businesses, and some positive feedback.

#### ***Cup borrowing programs and infrastructure:***

- 103 business locations offer cup borrowing in Vancouver as of Jan. 30, 2023, including:
  - ☐ Programs through 3 local cup borrowing service providers
  - ☐ 3 chains with branded programs (1 operates an in-house program and 2 engage a local service provider)
  - ☐ The Vancouver Park Board offers cup borrowing at 6 golf courses through a local service provider, and plans to expand to 13 concessions in 2023
- Two of the branded programs offer cup borrowing at all of their Vancouver locations. The third offers cup borrowing in 12 locations with a publicly-stated goal to expand to the rest of Vancouver this year.
- At least three festivals offered cup borrowing in 2022.
- A local cup and container borrowing service provider is expanding its cup and container washing facility in Vancouver with a \$600,000 upgrade. In 2022, the company applied for a \$400,000 grant to the [Clean BC Plastics Action Fund](#), coordinated by Alacrity Cleantech, with a letter of support from the City. The application has cleared the first two stages of the review and is awaiting government approval.
- Return-It to Reuse-It and Recycle-It pilot: Launched May 2022 in partnership with four large chains to test the

viability of a collection network for borrowed reusable cups and recycling single-use cups in downtown Vancouver. Currently there are bins at 19 locations for reusable cups and 30 locations for single-use cups, with plans to expand in 2023.

At least 2 large chains accept personal cups at drive-thru in Vancouver. One of them offers cup borrowing at drive thru. A third chain has a goal to accept personal cups at drive thru by the end of 2023.

***Mobile Orders:***

At least one large chain allows guests in Vancouver, and eventually nationally, to order beverages ahead on their app and still use their own personal cup. The chain advised City staff they have seen growth in customers bringing their own cup as a result. Another large chain announced a goal to accept personal cups for mobile orders by the end of 2023.

I hope the foregoing information is helpful.

If you have any other questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me or Lon LaClaire.

**Paul Mochrie (he/him)**  
City Manager  
City of Vancouver  
[paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca](mailto:paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca)



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθŋ̱l̓əm (Musqueam), ḵwá7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.