



# SHOPPING BAG BY-LAW SUPPORT PLAN

## 2020 Engagement Summary Report

JUNE 2021



The City of Vancouver is located on the traditional, unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, who have lived in their territories since time immemorial. We acknowledge that Indigenous peoples have been stewards and protectors of land and marine environments for thousands of years on this land.

We also acknowledge that this ability was taken away through the devastating and persistent impacts of colonization, and that as a result, Indigenous peoples are disproportionately represented among residents with low incomes and people experiencing homelessness in Vancouver. Despite this, the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh people have continued to protect and improve the health of this land.

Vancouver aspires to be a zero waste community by 2040. In a zero waste community, materials are valued as finite resources. Shopping bags and other single-use items, made from all types of materials, require a significant amount of resources to produce, and have lasting impact on our environment long after being used for a short period of time.

As we transition towards zero waste, we endeavour to prioritize equity, inclusion and decolonization to mitigate any further social and economic impacts towards Indigenous people and those disproportionately affected by income inequality in Vancouver. We are humbled and grateful for the environmental stewardship and guidance of Indigenous groups and organizations, and the contributions made by Indigenous peoples who have engaged in our projects now and into the future.

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# Executive Summary

## Introduction and Background

Vancouver's ban on plastic shopping bags and fees for paper and new reusable shopping bags begin January 1, 2022. When this by-law was adopted, Vancouver City Council also approved a staff recommendation to collaborate with non-profits and social enterprises on the development and roll-out of a Support Plan to mitigate potential impacts the shopping bag by-law may have on residents disproportionately affected by income inequality. For example, affordability challenges due to the cost of purchasing reusable shopping bags, and other substitutes for the many uses for plastic shopping bags.

## Engagement Approach and Participation

Between September 11 to November 20, 2020, City staff engaged non-profits and social enterprises that offer programs and services to residents with low incomes and people experiencing homelessness to better understand the potential impacts of the shopping bag by-law, explore potential actions to include in the support plan, and identify opportunities to collaborate on the roll-out of the plan. Staff received input from 68 stakeholders across 45 non-profits and social enterprises.

The engagement approach was developed to respond to the capacity and availability of stakeholders during the COVID-19 pandemic, and used the following methods to gather input:

- *Online meetings* with network organizations made up of non-profits and social enterprises in Vancouver that offer programs and services to residents disproportionately affected by income inequality;
- *Online survey* shared with meeting attendees and through distribution lists maintained by network organizations;
- *Email*; and
- *Individual and small group discussions*.

## Results

Several themes emerged during the engagement process. Key findings include:

1. **Equity and inclusion.** Participants encouraged the City to work together with residents disproportionately affected by income inequality to find substitutes for single-use shopping bags that respond to peoples' needs. Participants called for prioritizing support plan actions that create a more inclusive economy.
2. **Impacts of COVID-19.** The COVID-19 pandemic has made things harder for residents disproportionately affected by income inequality. Non-profits and social enterprises have been at the forefront of responding to the need for additional support and services, and this experience offers many lessons learned for efficiently providing resources to residents in need.
3. **Environmental benefits.** Despite the potential impacts, participants were supportive of Vancouver's shopping bag by-law due to the overall environmental benefits, and in particular, concern for plastic pollution in the environment.
4. **Demand for bags.** Two sources of demand were identified for free reusable shopping bags. First, residents' individual needs after the shopping bag by-law takes effect. Second, many non-profits and social enterprises could use free reusable shopping bags right now and after the by-law starts to help with the distribution of food, clothing and other items. There is expected to be ongoing demand for free bags after the by-law

takes effect because it will take time for residents to transition to new behaviours like bringing your own bag.

5. **Network to distribute bags.** We heard consistent and widespread support for the idea of the City working with non-profits and social enterprises to make free reusable shopping bags available to residents disproportionately affected by income inequality. Participants recommended building on existing networks, rather than trying to create a new system from scratch. However, storage and delivery solutions may be needed to implement a program.
6. **Keeping bags clean.** Participants advised that some residents disproportionately affected by income inequality do not have access to laundry facilities to keep reusable shopping bags clean. One idea we heard for overcoming this challenge was to offer take-a-bag, leave-a-bag programs at non-profits and social enterprises that have access to laundry facilities.
7. **Many uses for plastic shopping bags.** There are several uses for plastic shopping bags, especially for residents with low incomes and people experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity. Plastic shopping bags are used for: carrying and storing belongings; as a semi-waterproof material (e.g. for carrying belongings and making footwear more waterproof); disposing garbage and pet waste; and collecting deposit-refund recyclables (binning).
8. **Barriers to access alternatives.** Participants described several barriers to accessing alternatives to plastic shopping bags. For example: reusable shopping bags, backpacks, waterproof bags and footwear, garbage bags, etc. Barriers include the cost of alternatives, and the volume, condition and seasonality of donations to clothing rooms managed by non-profits and social enterprises.
9. **Systemic issues.** Participants explained that potential impacts of the shopping bag by-law on residents disproportionately affected by income inequality are exacerbated by the housing and affordability crises in Vancouver.

## Next Steps

Based on the engagement findings, City staff are implementing the following next steps:

1. **Quick Start Actions**
  - a. **Pilot to collect reusable shopping bags.** March – May 2021.  
The City implemented a pilot to test different methods of collecting donated reusable shopping bags. Donated bags were laundered and inspected to ensure they are in good condition for reuse.
  - b. **Pilot to distribute reusable shopping bags.** June – July 2021.  
The City partnered with local non-profits to test different methods for making the reusable shopping bags collected from the above pilot available for free to residents disproportionately affected by income inequality.
2. **Develop and Publish Shopping Bag By-law Support Plan.**  
Development of the Shopping Bag By-law Support Plan with a complete list of actions the City proposes to take is ongoing, to be completed and published later in 2021.
3. **Targeted Conversations to Address Knowledge Gaps.**  
City staff will reach out to participants and additional stakeholders as needed to address knowledge gaps that were identified during the engagement.

## Acknowledgements

The City would like to express its gratitude to all the individuals from non-profits and social enterprises in Vancouver who participated in this engagement process. We appreciate the time, energy and expertise you shared to help us gain a deeper understanding of the potential impacts of the shopping bag by-law on residents disproportionately affected by income inequality, and opportunities to mitigate these impacts through collaboration. We look forward to continuing the conversation as we begin to implement next steps together. The City is also grateful to the individuals and organizations who helped to spread the word about the project, and encouraged others to participate in the engagement process.

- Association of Neighbourhood Houses
- BC Housing
- BC Non-profit Housing Association
- Bidders Project
- Capilano University
- Catholic Charities Shelter Services
- Covenant House
- Downtown Community Court
- Downtown Eastside Chefs
- Downtown Eastside Literacy Roundtable
- Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House
- EMBERS Eastside Works
- Exchange Inner City of Vancouver
- First United Church
- Frontier College
- Greater Vancouver Food Bank
- hua foundation
- Immigrant Services Society of BC
- JustWork Economic Initiative
- Kits Cares Café
- Kitsilano Neighbourhood House
- La Boussole
- Lu'ma Housing
- Mission Possible
- Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House
- Network of Inner City Community Services Society
- Open Door Group
- Our Place
- Planted Network
- Quest Food Exchange
- Racial and Ethno-Cultural Equity Advisory Committee
- REACH Community Health Centre
- Recycling Alternative
- Saint Augustin's Anglican Church
- Salvation Army Belkin House
- Salvation Army Boundless Vancouver
- South Vancouver Neighbourhood House
- SRO Collaborative
- University of British Columbia
- UBC Learning Exchange
- Union Gospel Mission
- Urban Core
- Vancouver Second Mile Society
- Vancouver Community College
- Vantage Point
- WePress Community Arts Space Society
- Writers Exchange
- YWCA Crabtree Corner

# Introduction and Background

In 2019, Vancouver City Council adopted five by-laws for reducing single-use items, including plastic and paper shopping bags. At that time, Council also approved staff's recommendation to collaborate with non-profits and social enterprises on the development and roll-out of a Support Plan to mitigate potential impacts the shopping bag by-law may have on residents disproportionately affected by income inequality.

## Vancouver's Shopping Bag By-law

The shopping bag by-law is a priority action in the City's Single-use Item Reduction Strategy. Key requirements of Vancouver's shopping bag by-law are:

- Effective January 1, 2022
- Ban on plastic shopping bags
- A minimum fee of \$0.15 must be charged for each paper shopping bag distributed; minimum fee increases to \$0.25 in 2023
- A minimum fee of \$1 must be charged for each new reusable shopping bag distributed; minimum fee increases to \$2 in 2023
- Charitable food services are exempted from the fee requirement<sup>1</sup>
- Does not apply to other plastic bags, such as garbage bin liners, sandwich bags, etc.

Vancouver's by-laws for reducing single-use items are part of the City's actions to become a zero waste community by 2040. The shopping bag by-law addresses impacts from all types of shopping bags, and was developed to address the following issues:

- **Collection costs.** Despite their convenience, plastic and paper shopping bags and other single-use items cost Vancouver taxpayers about \$2.5 million per year to collect from public waste bins and to clean up as litter in our parks, streets and green spaces.
- **Plastic pollution.** An estimated 89 million plastic shopping bags were thrown in the garbage in Vancouver in 2018, and plastic bags were the sixth most common type of litter found on shorelines in 2019, according to the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup. Reducing plastic pollution and litter is critical for the protection of our shorelines and environment.
- **Substitution effects.** Banning plastic shopping bags without regulating paper and reusable bags tends to result in substitution rather than reduction. For example, Portland, Oregon reported a 491% increase in paper shopping bag use one year after banning plastic shopping bags in 2011. In 2018, about 4 million paper shopping bags were thrown in the garbage in Vancouver.
- **Lifecycle environmental impacts.** Paper and reusable shopping bags have higher greenhouse gas emissions and toxicity impacts than plastic bags due to material extraction and production processes and additional fuel used to transport heavier bags. Paper shopping bags need to be reused at least 4 times to offset GHG emissions

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<sup>1</sup> Organizations must be incorporated and in good standing under the Societies Act (BC), or registered as a charitable organization under the federal Income Tax Act to qualify for this exemption.



compared to plastic shopping bags. Reusable bags made from non-woven polypropylene and cotton need to be reused at least 14 and 173 times, respectively.<sup>2</sup>

For more information on Vancouver’s Single-use Item Reduction Strategy and by-laws for reducing single-use items, visit [vancouver.ca/reduce-single-use](http://vancouver.ca/reduce-single-use).

### **Support Plan to Mitigate Potential Impacts**

Staff identified potential impacts to residents disproportionately affected by income inequality during consultation on the shopping bag by-law in 2019. When the by-law was adopted on November 27, 2019, Vancouver City Council also approved staff’s recommendation to collaborate with non-profits and social enterprises on the development and roll-out of a Support Plan to mitigate impacts such as those described in Table 1.

*Table 1. Potential Impacts to Residents Disproportionately Affected by Income Inequality Identified During Consultation on the Shopping Bag By-law in 2019*

- Affordability challenges due to the initial cost to purchase reusable shopping bags
- Many uses for plastic shopping bag by residents experiencing homelessness, such as carrying belongings and making footwear more waterproof
- Possible odour and litter impacts that could result if residents cannot afford to purchase garbage bin liners and dispose residential garbage without bagging it first

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<sup>2</sup> Environment Agency. (2011) “Life cycle assessment of supermarket carrier bags: a review of the bags available in 2006.” Retrieved from: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/291023/scho0711buan-e-e.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/291023/scho0711buan-e-e.pdf)

# Consultation and Engagement Approach

## Engagement Approach

The COVID-19 pandemic has had significant impact on residents disproportionately affected by income inequality, and non-profits and social enterprises have been at the forefront of responding to the need for additional support and services. Within this context, City staff sought to engage stakeholders through a range of convenient and flexible methods. Between September 11 to November 20, 2020, City staff engaged non-profits and social enterprises that offer programs and services to residents disproportionately affected by income inequality to better understand the potential impacts of the shopping bag by-law, explore potential actions to include in the plan, and identify opportunities to collaborate on the roll-out of the plan.<sup>3</sup>

To support the goal of beginning to implement responsive actions before the shopping bag by-law came into effect,<sup>4</sup> City staff sought input primarily from non-profits and social enterprises. The engagement approach was developed to respond to the capacity and availability of these stakeholders during the COVID-19 pandemic, and relied on the following:

- **Connect with existing networks.** There are several formalized networks in Vancouver made up of non-profits and social enterprises (“network organizations”). Many network organizations meet with their members periodically to discuss and collaborate on issues that affect the communities they serve. City staff reached out to several network organizations whose members provide services and programs to residents disproportionately affected by income inequality to share information about the Shopping Bag By-law Support Plan, and requested to attend a regularly scheduled meeting with their members. Several network organizations also shared information about the Support Plan and engagement opportunities via their newsletter to members or email distribution list.
- **Direct referrals.** Several engagement participants recommended other non-profits and social enterprises that should provide input on the project. Staff reached out to these suggested organizations via email introductions or using publically available contact information.
- **Responsive outreach.** City staff maintained a list of engagement participants on an ongoing basis throughout the engagement period to ensure we received input from non-profits and social enterprises that provide a wide range of services and programs to residents disproportionately affected by income inequality. Staff reached out to targeted organizations as needed to identify the best way to share information and gather input, including scheduling individual or small group discussions when this was the most convenient option for stakeholders.
- **Flexible opportunities.** In addition to attending online meetings and scheduling individual or small group discussions, staff developed an online survey to gather input from stakeholders and invited participants to send input via email.

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<sup>3</sup> Language accessibility needs were evaluated while developing the engagement approach. Staff and volunteers at non-profits and social enterprises were able to participate in engagement activities in English.

<sup>4</sup> The shopping bag by-law was originally scheduled to start on January 1, 2021. Due to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, plans to initiate the project and begin engagement activities earlier in the year were delayed. In December 2020, Vancouver City Council approved a revised start date of January 1, 2022 for the shopping bag by-law.

## Engagement Opportunities

The City collected input on the development of the Shopping Bag By-law Support Plan using the following methods:

1. **Online Meetings.** Network organizations made up of non-profits and social enterprises in Vancouver generously invited City staff to attend one of their scheduled meetings to share information about the Shopping Bag By-law Support Plan and seek input from attendees. When members expressed a desire for further discussion, some network organizations scheduled subsequent meetings with City staff to provide additional input. In advance of all meetings, City staff provided a background document (see Appendix A) with information about the project and a list of engagement questions. Network organizations sent meeting invitations to their members and in some cases, to additional non-profits and social enterprises, and provided the online meeting platform for each meeting.
2. **Online Survey.** City staff developed an online survey (see Appendix B) to capture input from engagement participants. The online survey was shared with non-profits and social enterprises via several distribution lists and newsletters managed by various network organizations.
3. **Email.** Engagement participants were invited to submit input via email in addition to (or in lieu of) attending an online meeting or completing the survey.
4. **Individual and Small Group Discussions.** Some non-profits and social enterprises participated in individual or small group discussions with City staff, either by phone or Webex. These meetings were scheduled as needed when other methods of sharing input were not possible.

## Participation

Staff received input from 68 stakeholders across 45 non-profits and social enterprises.<sup>5</sup> Table 2 summarizes the number of participants we heard from using each engagement method. Refer to Appendix C for a list of all non-profits and social enterprises that participated in the engagement.

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<sup>5</sup> The count of participants includes five individuals who were not associated with a non-profit or social enterprise.

Table 2. Number of Participants and Organizations that Shared Input Using Each Engagement Method

Engagement Method	Number of Participants <sup>6</sup>	Dates
Online Meetings	42 meeting attendees  from 29 organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oct 6, 2020 – Urban Core Executive monthly meeting</li> <li>• Oct 8, 2020 – DTES Chefs monthly meeting</li> <li>• Oct 13, 2020 – Urban Core General monthly meeting</li> <li>• Oct 21, 2020 – DTES Literacy Roundtable monthly meeting</li> <li>• Oct 30, 2020 – Extra meeting hosted by DTES Chefs</li> <li>• Nov 9, 2020 – Our Place monthly meeting</li> <li>• Nov 17, 2020 – Extra meeting hosted by Urban Core</li> </ul>
Online Survey	13 survey respondents  from 8 organizations	<p>Open from: Oct 7 – Nov 20, 2020</p> <p>The survey was shared with all online meeting attendees, and sent to non-profits and social enterprises via distribution lists managed by the following organizations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban Core</li> <li>• Downtown Eastside Chefs</li> <li>• Our Place</li> <li>• Downtown Eastside Literacy Roundtable</li> <li>• Network of Inner City Community Services Society</li> <li>• SRO Collaborative</li> <li>• Vantage Point</li> <li>• Exchange Inner City</li> </ul>
Input sent by email	4 emails  from 4 organizations	October – November 2020
Individual and Small Group Discussions	10 participants  from 8 organizations	September – November 2020
Total:	68 people from 45 organizations	

<sup>6</sup> In some cases, different participants from the same organization shared input using different methods (for example, one by email and one by phone). In one case, the same participant shared input using two different methods.

# Results

Overall, engagement participants agreed with the potential impacts of the shopping bag by-law on residents disproportionately affected by income inequality that were initially identified during consultation on the by-law details in 2019 (see Table 1). Participants shared their expertise and experience to discuss these impacts in more depth, and identified challenges and opportunities for mitigating the potential issues. The following sections describe key themes and findings that emerged.

Refer to Appendix D for a list of ideas for City and community actions put forward by participants.

## Overarching Themes

### 1. Equity and inclusion

Participants advised the City to work together with residents disproportionately affected by income inequality to find substitutes for single-use shopping bags, and ensure that actions respond to peoples' needs. For example, one participant shared: "Careful not to do something in the name of environmental good that will be a slap in the face to many people. You need to show 'we see you.'"

### 2. Education and public awareness

Vancouver's shopping bag by-law aims to encourage residents to use a reusable shopping bag for the majority of trips. Participants highlighted the importance of supporting residents disproportionately affected by income inequality with this behaviour change, and other zero waste actions, by ensuring that public awareness and behaviour change campaigns are accessible to all residents. For example, by including information about the by-law alongside free reusable shopping bags, putting up posters and flyers in common areas of buildings, and providing translated materials. Participants recommended that education materials should be bright, bold, colourful and concise.

### 3. By-law information for non-profits and social enterprises

Participants asked the City to ensure that resources for complying with the shopping-bag by-law, and other single-use item by-laws, are widely shared with affected non-profits and social enterprises.

### 4. Impacts of COVID-19

Participants shared that the COVID-19 pandemic has made things harder for residents disproportionately affected by income inequality. For example, charitable food services reported a significant increase in demand for their programs. Participants also described reduced service availability for other programs, and fewer places where people can spend time. Non-profits and social enterprises have been at the forefront of responding to the need for additional support and services. This experience offers many lessons learned for efficiently providing resources to residents in need. For example, the use of centralized community-level warehousing and mobilization of network organizations to collaborate effectively.

### 5. Environmental benefits

Participants were supportive of Vancouver's shopping bag by-law and other by-laws to reduce single-use items due to the overall environmental benefits, and in particular, concern for plastic pollution in the environment. For example, some participants shared, "The long-

term benefits of reducing plastic bags while supporting low-income people would be positive in so many ways.” and, “Despite the impacts, this is good for the planet.”

## 6. **Inclusive economy**

Participants encouraged the City to identify and prioritize actions in the Shopping Bag By-law Support Plan that create opportunities for a more inclusive economy. For example, programs that offer low barrier employment.

## **Reusable Shopping Bags**

This section describes engagement findings about using plastic shopping bags to transport purchases and other items, and challenges and opportunities for substituting reusable shopping bags for this purpose.

### 1. **Sources of demand**

Engagement participants described two sources of demand for reusable shopping bags. First, residents’ individual needs for access to free reusable shopping bags after Vancouver’s ban on plastic shopping bags and fees for paper bags and new reusable bags begin on January 1, 2022. Second, many non-profits and social enterprises expressed an interest in having access to free reusable shopping bags right now and after the by-law starts to help with the distribution of grocery hampers, prepared meals, clothing and other materials. Access to free reusable shopping bags would help non-profits and social enterprises avoid comparatively higher costs of purchasing paper or reusable shopping bags instead of plastic bags. Paper shopping bags were also seen as an impractical option for carrying grocery hampers and other items, because they are not waterproof.

### 2. **Impacts of COVID-19**

Participants reported increased demand for charitable food services during the COVID-19 pandemic. This demand increases the quantity of shopping bags needed by non-profits to distribute grocery hampers and prepared meals. Many participants reported purchasing larger amounts of plastic shopping bags, and in some cases, businesses that used to donate plastic bags to non-profits have not been able to continue this support during the pandemic.

### 3. **Ongoing demand for bags**

Participants identified two reasons to expect ongoing demand for free reusable shopping bags leading up to and after the shopping bag by-law comes into effect. It will take time for residents to transition to bringing a bag with them for most trips. (See also item 8 - behaviour change.) Also, some residents do not have access to laundry facilities where they can wash bags between uses, and will need ongoing access to clean bags.

### 4. **Network to distribute free reusable shopping bags**

We heard consistent and widespread support for idea of the City working with non-profits and social enterprises to make free reusable shopping bags available to residents disproportionately affected by income inequality. During the engagement, 34 non-profits and social enterprises indicated interest in participating in a network to distribute reusable shopping bags. Participants advised that multiple organizations would need to be included to distribute bags most effectively.

## 5. **Strength of existing networks**

Participants recommended building on existing networks, rather than trying to create a new system from scratch. Most non-profits and social enterprises shared that they would be able to make reusable shopping bags available to residents as part of ongoing programs and services. Some participants recommended bags be made available for distribution at set times, and others suggested additional bags be given out by-request or as-needed.

## 6. **Recommended network locations**

Participants recommended several types of organizations as being well-suited to participating in a network to make reusable shopping bags available to residents disproportionately affected by income inequality. These included: community centres, neighbourhood houses, charitable food services, clothing rooms, housing organizations, youth outreach programs, churches, mosques and temples, schools, libraries and various locations in the Downtown Eastside and Downtown neighbourhoods.

## 7. **Manufacture of reusable shopping bags**

Participants were supportive of working with social enterprises in Vancouver to manufacture reusable shopping bags, and identified potential organizations that could provide this service.

## 8. **Behaviour change**

Participants shared that the percentage of people picking up grocery hampers and prepared meals that currently bring their own reusable shopping bags varies between organizations. (From “one third” to “the majority.”) It will take time for the behaviour of bringing your own reusable shopping bag to be widely adopted, and some may never adopt the behaviour. During the COVID-19 pandemic, some food hamper organizations have not been able to allow people to bag groceries in their own reusable shopping bags, in order to serve many people quickly while maintaining physical distancing.

## 9. **Take-a-bag, leave-a-bag programs**

Participants advised that some residents do not have access to laundry facilities to keep reusable shopping bags clean. One idea we heard for overcoming this challenge was to offer take-a-bag, leave-a-bag, or bag-share, programs at non-profits and social enterprises that have access to laundry facilities. For example, residents would drop off dirty bags and pick up items such as grocery hampers, prepared meals and clothing, in clean reusable shopping bags. The non-profit or social enterprise would then launder the bags and reuse them.

## 10. **Storage and delivery**

Most participants advised that their organizations have limited space available to store reusable shopping bags, and limited capacity to pick up bags. Storage and delivery solutions are needed to implement a reusable shopping bag program. Participants suggested that the City, or non-profits and social enterprises with support from the City, could develop storage and delivery programs to be run by non-profits and social enterprises.

## **Other Uses for Plastic Shopping Bags**

This section describes engagement findings related to uses for plastic shopping bags other than transporting purchases, and challenges and opportunities for mitigating potential impacts stemming from these other uses.

**1. Many uses for plastic shopping bags**

Participants affirmed that there are several uses for plastic shopping bags, especially for residents with low incomes and people experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity. In addition to transporting purchases and other items, plastic shopping bags are commonly used for:

- Carrying and storing belongings
- As a semi-waterproof material (for carrying and storing belongings)
- Making footwear more waterproof
- Disposing garbage and pet waste
- Binning. I.e., collecting discarded items of value from the waste stream (e.g. deposit-refund recyclables) as a means of supporting one’s livelihood.<sup>7</sup> Plastic bags, including shopping bags, are commonly used to transport collected recyclables. Some residents also use plastic shopping bags to put out bottles and cans for binners to more easily collect (e.g. using a binners hook).

The use of plastic bags as a semi-waterproof material for carrying belongings was identified as one of the most important issues. For example, one participant shared: “We give everything we happen to have on hand. For example, if we have plastic bags we give those, if we have reusable [bags] we give those, if we have backpacks and/or luggage, and that is what is asked for or required we give those. When we have none of those things, we use black plastic garbage bags that we use in our facility for our regular garbage. ... When we give this type of thing, mostly it’s to carry stuff.”

**2. Barriers to accessing alternatives**

Table 3 identifies the uses for plastic shopping bags, and barriers to accessing alternatives to plastic shopping bags that provide the same function.

*Table 3. Barriers to Accessing Alternatives to Plastic Shopping Bags*

<b>Uses for Plastic Shopping Bags</b>	<b>Barriers to Accessing Alternatives</b>
Transporting purchases and other items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of reusable shopping bags</li> <li>• Lack of access to laundry facilities to keep reusable shopping bags clean</li> </ul>
Carrying and storing belongings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of backpacks, duffels bags</li> <li>• High demand so not always readily availability from clothing rooms</li> <li>• Donated backpacks are often in poorer condition and in need of repair</li> </ul>
As a semi-waterproof material (for carrying and storing belongings)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of products such as dry bags, backpacks</li> <li>• Reusable shopping bags are not waterproof</li> <li>• Other soft plastic bags are less readily available, and may not be the right sizes</li> </ul>
Making footwear more waterproof	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of rain boots and other waterproof footwear</li> <li>• Not frequently donated, so not available from clothing rooms</li> <li>• Donated waterproof footwear tends to be in poorer condition</li> </ul>

<sup>7</sup> See also: <https://www.biddersproject.org/>



Uses for Plastic Shopping Bags	Barriers to Accessing Alternatives
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demand is seasonal, and limited storage is available when waterproof footwear is donated out-of-season</li> <li>• Other soft plastic bags are less readily available and less likely to be the right sizes</li> </ul>
Disposing garbage and pet waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of store bought garbage bin liners and pet waste bags</li> <li>• Other types of plastic bags (for example: produce bags, bread bags) may not be the right shape or size, and people experiencing food insecurity may not have many food and product packaging options to choose from</li> <li>• Involves a more significant behaviour change – participants’ opinions were divided on whether other types of plastic bags or food and product packaging are acceptable to use as substitutes for garbage bin liners and pet waste bags</li> </ul>
Binning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of store bought garbage bags and bin liners<sup>8</sup></li> <li>• Availability and access to equipment such as carts and wagons<sup>9</sup></li> </ul>

### 3. Substitute bags

Participants suggested designing bags for carrying belongings that can replace, and improve upon, the features of a plastic shopping bag. For example, lightweight, durable bags, that can be closed (using a zipper, Velcro, etc.) made from a waterproof fabric, in a range of sizes, with adjustable straps or handles. Participants advised that many residents would prefer bags in dark or neutral colours, with no large logos and graphics.

### 4. Knowledge gaps

Some knowledge gaps remain following the engagement activities. Participants agreed that backpacks, duffel bags, rain boots and other waterproof footwear were the best substitutes for some of the uses for plastic shopping bags. I.e. carrying belongings, as a semi-waterproof material, and making footwear more waterproof but it was not clear what role the City could play to help increase access to these items. For example, some participants suggested that the City could help to collect needed materials, but other participants indicated they would not have sufficient storage capacity to accept collected items.

### 5. Systemic issues

Participants explained that potential impacts of the shopping bag by-law on residents disproportionately affected by income inequality are exacerbated by the housing and affordability crises in Vancouver. Residents would have less need for plastic shopping bags for the uses described above if they had greater access to affordable housing in Vancouver. For example, one participant shared that “money would be better spent on housing” than on substitute products, such as waterproof footwear.

<sup>8</sup> Barrier identified through previous partnership and engagement with the Bidders Project

<sup>9</sup> See footnote 8.

# Conclusion

## Reflection on the Engagement Process

This engagement process, like many of our communities, was significantly affected by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Participants were able to share many applicable lessons learned from the experience of responding and adapting to COVID-19. However, the pandemic also delayed the start of the project and imposed limitations on the options for gathering input. For example, to ensure the health and safety of engagement participants and City staff, we did not meet to discuss and explore ideas in person. Under these circumstances, we recognize that the voices of people who did not have access to digital spaces, or could not afford the time during the crisis of a pandemic may be missing from these findings. We look forward to continuing the conversation with past and future participants as we implement next steps together.

## Next Steps

Based on the engagement findings, City staff are implementing the following next steps:

### 1. Quick Start Actions

#### a. Pilot to collect reusable shopping bags. March to May 2021.

Based on the finding that there is high demand for free reusable shopping bags, the City implemented a pilot to test different methods of collecting reusable shopping bags. The pilot collected reusable shopping bags donated by residents and dropped off at the Zero Waste Centre, and from thrift store donations. As part of the pilot, donated bags were laundered and inspected to ensure they were in good condition for reuse.

#### b. Pilot to distribute reusable shopping bags. June to July 2021.

The City partnered with local non-profits to test different methods for making the reusable shopping bags collected from the above pilot available for free to residents disproportionately affected by income inequality.

### 2. Develop and Publish Shopping Bag By-law Support Plan.

Development of the Shopping Bag By-law Support Plan with a complete list of actions the City proposes to take is ongoing, to be completed and published later in 2021.

### 3. Targeted Conversations to Address Knowledge Gaps.

City staff will reach out to participants and additional stakeholders as needed to address knowledge gaps that were identified during the engagement. For example, to better understand the challenges and opportunities for increasing access to backpacks, duffel bags, rain boots and other waterproof footwear.

For more information and to sign up for updates on the Support Plan, visit:

[vancouver.ca/shopping-bag-support](https://vancouver.ca/shopping-bag-support) or send an email to [ShoppingBagSupportPlan@vancouver.ca](mailto:ShoppingBagSupportPlan@vancouver.ca)

## **Appendix A. Background Document and Discussion Topics**

A background document with a list of discussion topics was posted online on the City's website. The URL was provided to engagement participants in advance of online meetings and shared via several distribution lists managed by non-profits and social enterprises that provides programs and services to residents disproportionately affected by income inequality.

## Share Your Input: Shopping Bag By-law Support Plan

The City of Vancouver is interested in collaborating with non-profits and social enterprises on the development and roll-out of a Support Plan for the upcoming Shopping Bag By-law, which starts January 1, 2021.<sup>10</sup> The Support Plan is being developed to mitigate potential impacts the Shopping Bag By-law may have on residents disproportionately affected by income inequality

As a first step, the City is seeking input from non-profits and social enterprises in Vancouver to identify:

- What actions should be included in the Support Plan; and
- What organizations would be interested in collaborating with the City in the roll-out of the Support Plan.

There are three ways to share input:

1. **Online Meetings.** If your non-profit or social enterprise is hosting a meeting that you'd like City staff to attend (before November 13, 2020),<sup>11</sup> please contact [ReduceSingleUse@vancouver.ca](mailto:ReduceSingleUse@vancouver.ca)
2. **Online Survey (Oct 7 – Nov 13, 2020).**<sup>12</sup> Multiple people from the same organization are welcome to complete the survey. [survey.vancouver.ca/s3/Shopping-Bag-By-law-Support-Plan](https://survey.vancouver.ca/s3/Shopping-Bag-By-law-Support-Plan)
3. **Email.** Send your input on the Discussion Topics to [ReduceSingleUse@vancouver.ca](mailto:ReduceSingleUse@vancouver.ca)

### Recap: Shopping Bag By-law

In 2019, Vancouver City Council adopted five by-laws for reducing single-use items, including plastic and paper shopping bags. Key requirements of the shopping bag by-law are:

- Start date: January 1, 2021<sup>13</sup>
- Ban on single-use plastic shopping bags
- \$0.15 minimum fee on paper shopping bags, increasing to \$0.25 in 2022<sup>14</sup>
- \$1 minimum fee on reusable shopping bags, increasing to \$2 in 2022<sup>15</sup>
- Charitable food services are exempted from fee requirement
- Does not apply to other plastic bags, such as garbage bin liners, laundry bags, etc.

### COVID-19 Pandemic

At this time, the City's priority continues to be responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuring essential services continue uninterrupted.

Given the extenuating circumstances of COVID-19, the City is using discretion on when and where to enforce Vancouver's by-laws to reduce single-use items. Within this discretion, charitable food services may continue to distribute single-use items with food or meals during

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<sup>10</sup> In December 2020, Vancouver City Council approved a revised start date of January 1, 2022.

<sup>11</sup> The last online meeting was scheduled for November 17, 2020 to accommodate participants' availability.

<sup>12</sup> The survey was extended to November 20, 2020 to give meeting attendees from November 17 an opportunity to also share input using the online survey.

<sup>13</sup> See footnote 10.

<sup>14</sup> Vancouver City Council approved a revised date for increasing minimum fees of January 1, 2023.

<sup>15</sup> See footnote 14.

COVID-19. Charitable food services are expected to begin working towards complying with the by-laws as soon as it is possible for them (either during or after COVID-19).

Outreach and education will restart soon to help businesses, non-profits and other organizations comply with the by-laws. For the latest information on outreach and enforcement, visit [vancouver.ca/reduce-single-use](http://vancouver.ca/reduce-single-use).

### ***For Review and Consideration***

#### **Potential Impacts**

Several potential impacts to residents disproportionately affected by income inequality were identified during consultation on the shopping bag by-law in 2019.

<b>Potential Impacts Identified During Engagement</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Charitable food services</b> Paper and reusable bag fees are barriers to accessing services	✓ Added exemption to by-law
<b>Affordability</b> Cost to purchase reusable shopping bags Cost to purchase garbage bin liners and pet waste bags	<input type="checkbox"/> To be addressed through support plan
<b>Residents experiencing homelessness</b> Carrying belongings Waterproofing footwear	<input type="checkbox"/> To be addressed through support plan
<b>Odour and litter issues</b> Disposal of loose garbage if residents don't have plastic shopping bags to use as garbage bags	<input type="checkbox"/> To be addressed through support plan

#### **Distributing Reusable Shopping Bags**

Many non-profits and social enterprises have expertise in distributing resources such as food and clothing efficiently. An option we are considering is to provide free reusable shopping bags to several organizations to distribute to low-income residents, residents in SROs and social housing, and residents experiencing homelessness. This could take place as a one-time initiative or as an ongoing program.

## Substitutes for Plastic Shopping Bags

We are seeking input on common uses for plastic shopping bags, the appropriate substitutes for plastic shopping bags after they are banned, and possible roles for the City in helping to make these substitutes readily accessible.

Use for Plastic Shopping Bag	Proposed substitute
Transport purchases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reusable shopping bags</li> </ul>
Garbage bin liners/pet waste bags	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other types of bags or product packaging (e.g. produce bags, bread bags)</li> </ul>
Carry belongings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Backpacks, suitcases, etc.</li> <li>• Reusable shopping bags</li> </ul>
Waterproofing footwear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rain boots etc.</li> <li>• Other soft plastic bags (e.g. bread bags)</li> </ul>

## Discussion Topics

1. **Impacts.** Are there other potential impacts of the shopping bag by-law?
2. **Substitutes.** Are the identified substitutes appropriate?
3. **Bin liners.** Public outreach and education about the shopping bag by-law will include messaging to all Vancouver residents recommending product packaging as a zero waste alternative to purchasing bin liners (for example: produce bags, bread bags). Which types of packaging that could be used as garbage bin liners are most readily accessible to residents that access your programs?
4. **Distribution.** Is the proposal to distribute reusable shopping bags via non-profits and social enterprises reasonable? What support is needed to help with distribution?
5. **Partners.** Could your organization be a distribution point? Which organizations are well-suited to distribute reusable shopping bags?
6. **Other items.** Donated backpacks and waterproof footwear are distributed by several organizations in Vancouver. Is support needed, and how might the City support this work?
7. **Sourcing.** What local organizations that help to create social benefits manufacture reusable shopping bags?
8. **Other roles.** What other opportunities are there for the City to work with non-profits and social enterprises to rollout the shopping bag by-law support plan?

For more information on Vancouver's by-laws for reducing single-use items, visit [vancouver.ca/reduce-single-use](http://vancouver.ca/reduce-single-use) or email us at [ReduceSingleUse@vancouver.ca](mailto:ReduceSingleUse@vancouver.ca).

## **Appendix B. Online Survey Questions**

The online survey was created using Alchemer (formerly Survey Gizmo). The survey was shared with meeting attendees and via several distribution lists managed by non-profits and social enterprises that provide programs and services to residents disproportionately affected by income inequality.

## Shopping Bag By-law Support Plan

The City is interested in collaborating with non-profits and social enterprises on the development and roll-out of a Support Plan for the upcoming Shopping Bag By-law, which starts January 1, 2021.<sup>16</sup> The Support Plan is being developed to mitigate potential impacts the Shopping Bag By-law may have on residents disproportionately affected by income inequality.

As a first step, the City is seeking input from non-profits and social enterprises through meetings and an online survey to identify:

- What actions should be included in the Support Plan; and
- What organizations would be interested in collaborating with the City in the roll-out of the Support Plan.

**The survey will be open October 7 – November 20, 2020.**

Note: Multiple people from the same organization are welcome to complete the survey.

## Recap: Shopping Bag By-law

In 2019, Vancouver City Council adopted five by-laws for reducing single-use items, including plastic and paper shopping bags. Key requirements of the shopping bag by-law are:

- Start date: January 1, 2021<sup>17</sup>
- Ban on single-use plastic shopping bags
- \$0.15 minimum fee on paper shopping bags, increasing to \$0.25 in 2022<sup>18</sup>
- \$1 minimum fee on reusable shopping bags, increasing to \$2 in 2022<sup>19</sup>
- Charitable food services are exempted from fee requirement
- Does not apply to other plastic bags, such as garbage bags, laundry bags, etc.

For more information on Vancouver's by-laws for reducing single-use items, visit [vancouver.ca/reduce-single-use](http://vancouver.ca/reduce-single-use) or email us at [ReduceSingleUse@vancouver.ca](mailto:ReduceSingleUse@vancouver.ca).

## COVID-19 Pandemic

At this time, the City's priority continues to be responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuring essential services continue uninterrupted.

Outreach and education will restart soon to help businesses, non-profits, and other organizations comply with Vancouver's by-laws to reduce single-use items. Given the extenuating circumstances of COVID-19, the City is using discretion on when and where to enforce these by-laws. Within this discretion, charitable food services may continue to distribute single-use items with food or meals during COVID-19. Charitable food services are expected to begin working towards complying with the by-laws as soon as it is possible for them (either during or after COVID-19).

For the latest information on by-law outreach, education and enforcement, visit [vancouver.ca/reduce-single-use](http://vancouver.ca/reduce-single-use)

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<sup>16</sup> In December 2020, Vancouver City Council approved a revised start date of January 1, 2022.

<sup>17</sup> See footnote 16.

<sup>18</sup> Vancouver City Council approved a revised date for increasing minimum fees of January 1, 2023.

<sup>19</sup> See footnote 18.



## Contact Information

Mandatory questions are marked with an asterisk (\*)

1. \*Name the organization you work for or volunteer with:
  - a. Organization: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. N/A – I'm not associated with an organization.
2. \*Does your organization provide programs in Vancouver to residents disproportionately affected by income inequality?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. N/A – I'm not associated with an organization
  - d. I don't know
3. Provide your organization's website, if available: \_\_\_\_\_

## Potential Impacts

Mandatory questions are marked with an asterisk (\*)

Several potential impacts to residents disproportionately affected by income inequality were identified during consultation on the shopping bag by-law in 2019.

Impact Area Identified During Engagement	Status
<b>Charitable food services</b> Paper and reusable bag fees are barriers to accessing services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Added exemption to by-law
<b>Affordability</b> Cost to purchase reusable shopping bags, Cost to purchase garbage bin liners and pet waste bags	<input type="checkbox"/> To be addressed through support plan
<b>Residents experiencing homelessness</b> Carrying belongings, Waterproofing footwear	<input type="checkbox"/> To be addressed through support plan
<b>Odour and litter issues</b> Disposal of loose garbage if residents don't have plastic shopping bags to use as garbage bags	<input type="checkbox"/> To be addressed through support plan

4. \*Are you aware of any potential impacts missing from this list?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No

\*If yes, please describe:

## Proposed Substitutes for Plastic Shopping Bags

Mandatory questions are marked with an asterisk (\*)

We are seeking input on common uses for plastic shopping bags, the appropriate substitutes for plastic shopping bags after they are banned, and possible roles for the City in helping to make these substitutes readily accessible.

Use for Plastic Shopping Bag	Substitute
Transporting purchases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reusable shopping bags</li> </ul>
Garbage bin liners/pet waste bags	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other types of bags or product packaging (e.g. produce bags, bread bags)</li> </ul>
Carrying belongings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Backpacks, suitcases, etc.</li> <li>Reusable shopping bags</li> </ul>
Waterproofing footwear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rain boots etc.</li> <li>Other soft plastic bags (e.g. bread bags)</li> </ul>

5. \*Are you aware of any potential substitutes for plastic shopping bags missing from this list?

- Yes
- No

\*If yes, please describe:

6. \*Are you aware of any important uses for plastic shopping bags missing from this list?

- Yes
- No

\*If yes, please describe:

\*If yes, what are some potential substitutes for those uses?

## Proposed Substitutes for Plastic Shopping Bags - Continued

Mandatory questions are marked with an asterisk (\*)

7. \*Do you agree or disagree with using the following items as substitutes for common uses for plastic shopping bags?

	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	I don't know
Using reusable shopping bags for transporting purchases	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
*If disagree or somewhat disagree, explain why:						

	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	I don't know
Using product packaging for garbage bin liners and pet waste bags	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
*If disagree or somewhat disagree, explain why:						
	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	I don't know
Using backpacks and suitcases for carrying belongings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
*If disagree or somewhat disagree, explain why:						
	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	I don't know
Using reusable shopping bags for carrying belongings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
*If disagree or somewhat disagree, explain why:						
	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	I don't know
Using rain boots for waterproof footwear	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
*If disagree or somewhat disagree, explain why:						
	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	I don't know
Using other soft plastic bags (for example: bread bags) for waterproofing footwear	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
*If disagree or somewhat disagree, explain why:						

**Product Packaging as Bin Liners**

Public awareness and outreach about the shopping bag by-law will include messaging to all Vancouver residents recommending they use product packaging as a zero waste alternative to purchasing garbage bin liners.

8. \*Several types of product packaging can be used as garbage bin liners. Which of the following examples are most readily available to residents that access your programs? (select all that apply):
  - a. Produce bags

- b. Bread bags
- c. Potato bags
- d. Toilet paper overwrap
- e. Frozen fruit and veggie bags
- f. Chip bags
- g. Pet food bags
- h. Dry cleaning bags
- i. Cereal bags
- j. Rice bags
- k. Stand-up and zipper lock pouches, such as those used for granola, coffee, snacks and other dry and frozen foods
- l. Diaper overwrap
- m. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Distributing Reusable Shopping Bags**

Mandatory questions are marked with an asterisk (\*)

Many non-profits and social enterprises already provide items such as food and clothing, and have expertise in distributing these resources efficiently. An option we are considering is to provide free reusable shopping bags to several organizations to distribute to low-income residents, residents in SROs and social housing, and residents experiencing homelessness. This could take place as a one-time initiative or as an ongoing program.

9. \*Do you agree or disagree with the City providing non-profits and social enterprises with free reusable shopping bags to distribute to people who access their programs?

Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	I don't know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

\*If disagree or somewhat disagree, explain why:

10. \*Would your organization be well-suited to distribute free reusable shopping bags (provided by the City)?

- a. Yes
- b. Yes, but only if it was a one-time initiative
- c. Maybe
- d. No
- e. I don't know
- f. N/A – I'm not with an organization

If yes, please provide:

- a. \*Contact info so we can further discuss:
  - i. Name:
  - ii. Email address:
  - iii. Phone number:
- b. Brief description of the community that typically accesses your programs:

If no, explain why (optional):

11. What support would you need from the City to successfully distribute free reusable shopping bags (provided by the City)?
12. What other organizations are well-suited to distribute free reusable shopping bags (provided by the City)?

### **Sourcing Reusable Shopping Bags**

13. Are you aware of any social enterprises, or other relevant organizations that help to create social benefits, that manufacture reusable shopping bags? If yes, please list here.

### **Backpacks and Waterproof Shoes**

We know that some residents experiencing homelessness use plastic shopping bags to waterproof footwear and carry belongings. We're aware that several organizations in Vancouver have programs to distribute donated backpacks, suitcases and waterproof shoes.

14. Is there a role for the City in supporting organizations with the collection and distribution of donated backpacks, suitcases and waterproof shoes? If yes, please describe.

### **Other**

15. What other opportunities are there for the City to work with non-profits and social enterprises to rollout the shopping bag by-law support plan?
16. Please share feedback on the design of the survey.
17. Please share any other input or comments.

### **Thank You!**

Thank you for completing the survey. Your input will inform the development and rollout of the Shopping Bag By-law Support Plan.

For information on Vancouver's Single-use Item Reduction Strategy or by-laws, visit [vancouver.ca/reduce-single-use](http://vancouver.ca/reduce-single-use) or email us at [ReduceSingleUse@vancouver.ca](mailto:ReduceSingleUse@vancouver.ca)

## Appendix C. Engagement Participants

Participants from the following non-profits and social enterprises shared input on the Shopping Bag By-law Support Plan:

- Association of Neighbourhood Houses
- BC Housing
- BC Non-profit Housing Association
- Binnars Project
- Capilano University
- Catholic Charities Shelter Services
- Covenant House
- Downtown Community Court
- Downtown Eastside Literacy Roundtable
- Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House
- EMBERS Eastside Works
- Exchange Inner City of Vancouver
- First United Church
- Frontier College
- Greater Vancouver Food Bank
- hua foundation
- Immigrant Services Society of BC
- JustWork Economic Initiative
- Kits Cares Café
- Kitsilano Neighbourhood House
- La Boussole
- Lu'ma Housing
- Mission Possible
- Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House
- Network of Inner City Community Services Society
- Open Door Group
- Our Place
- Planted Network
- Quest Food Exchange
- REACH Community Health Centre
- Recycling Alternative
- Saint Augustin's Anglican Church
- Salvation Army Belkin House
- Salvation Army Boundless Vancouver
- South Vancouver Neighbourhood House
- SRO Collaborative
- University of British Columbia
- UBC Learning Exchange
- Union Gospel Mission
- Urban Core
- Vancouver Second Mile Society
- Vancouver Community College
- WePress Community Arts Space Society
- Writers Exchange
- YWCA Crabtree Corner

## Appendix D. Ideas for Actions

Engagement participants shared several ideas for actions that could either be implemented by non-profits, social enterprises and others in the community, or considered by the City as part of the Shopping Bag By-law Support Plan or in future programs.

### Reusable Shopping Bags

1. Develop programs operated by non-profits and social enterprises to pick up, launder and drop off reusable shopping bags to participating locations. For example, this could be developed as a take-a-bag, leave-a-bag, or bag-share program.
2. Network organizations made up of non-profits and social enterprises could play a coordinating role to distribute bags among their members and other organizations they work with.
3. Deliver reusable shopping bags to centralized distribution hubs that can provide storage space. From there, they can be more easily distributed amongst non-profits and social enterprises.
4. Increase access for non-profits and social enterprises to equipment to help with distribution of reusable shopping bags from centralized hubs. For example, wagons.
5. Develop incentives for residents to bring their own bags when they pick up grocery hampers and other items, such as point cards or punch cards.
6. Increase access for residents, non-profits and social enterprises to laundry facilities and washing machines.
7. Increase access for residents to rolling carts to transport purchases and other items.
8. Develop programs for sewing reusable shopping bags (using textiles diverted from landfill or incinerator) and donating them to non-profits and social enterprises.
9. Encourage Buy Nothing groups to redistribute excess reusable shopping bags among residents in their neighbourhood.
10. Encourage businesses to use the revenue from fees on paper and new reusable shopping bags to purchase reusable shopping bags and donate them to non-profits and social enterprises.
11. Provide reusable shopping bags to staff at non-profits and social enterprises to help model the desired behaviour change.
12. Make free reusable shopping bags available at businesses where residents disproportionately affected by income inequality shop most often.<sup>20</sup>

### Other Uses for Plastic Shopping Bags

1. Increase public awareness about the need for donated items that replace the various uses for plastic shopping bags (e.g. backpacks, duffel bags, rain boots, waterproof footwear, garbage bin liners, pet waste bags).

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<sup>20</sup> The shopping bag by-law does not allow businesses to provide a free reusable shopping bag to customers, unless the bag has already been used once and returned for reuse (e.g. take-a-bag, leave-a-bag, or bag-share programs).

2. Increase public awareness about the importance of donating items to align with the seasonal demand.
3. Encourage businesses to donate leftover stock of new, clean plastic shopping bags (e.g. after the ban comes into effect) to non-profits and social enterprises, so they can be provided to residents in need for use as garbage bin liners, a semi-waterproof material for carrying belongings, etc.
4. Develop programs to collect donated items that replace the various uses for plastic shopping bags.
5. Deliver donated items that replace the various uses for plastic shopping bags to centralized distribution hubs that can provide storage space. From there, they can be more easily distributed amongst non-profits and social enterprises.
6. Develop a program to clean and repair donated backpacks and duffel bags.
7. Increase access to storage products, such as suitcases, plastic boxes and boxes lined with water-resistant materials such as tarps or plastic garbage bags (e.g. for storing belongings inside tents).
8. Develop a waxing service to make cloth/canvas items more water-resistant. For example, the program could use wax from beekeeping in community gardens.
9. Design and manufacture water-resistant bags from materials usually sent for recycling, such as juice boxes.
10. Design and manufacture reusable garbage bin liners.
11. Increase access to options for disposing garbage for residents experiencing homelessness, such as public litter cans.