



# SINGLE-USE ITEM REDUCTION STRATEGY

## Phase 2 Consultation Summary Report: Feedback, Priorities and Ideas

2018

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# Executive Summary

The City of Vancouver is developing a **Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy** to reduce waste from disposable hot and cold drink cups, plastic and paper shopping bags, plastic straws and utensils, and polystyrene foam and other take-out containers. This Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy is one of the early priorities under Zero Waste 2040, the City's roadmap to becoming a zero waste community by 2040.



To inform the development of the strategy, from June 2017 to February 2018, the City **heard ideas and feedback from over 6,000 stakeholders and members of the public** through a consultation and engagement process.

Feedback collected has helped:

- Better understand why Vancouverites and businesses use single-use items
- Test support for options to reduce the amount of single-use items being disposed of as garbage
- Raise awareness to City staff on key issues of concern and impacts from unintended consequences
- Inform the development of a Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy that is expected to be presented to Vancouver City Council on May 16, 2018



## 715

people came to the pop-up engagement space



## 145

people who came to the pop-up engagement space wrote pledges to reduce their use of single-use items



### More engagement by the numbers

- 804 people participated through social media
- 258 stakeholders attended other meetings and events with City staff
- 168 people wrote through the City’s listserv
- 89 people participated through City’s citizen advisory committees
- 80 students participated through a display at the Vancouver School Board’s sustainability conference
- An additional 1,000 people shared their perspective through a public opinion survey

# 3163

people provided feedback through a Talk Vancouver survey



# 233

stakeholders attended in-person roundtable meetings

### How input was used

Input received during this consultation and engagement process was considered, along with other technical information, in developing the Draft Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy. Phase 3 of the public and stakeholder consultation is taking place from March-April 2018 to inform the Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy which is expected to be presented to Council on May 16, 2018.



# Overall Key Themes



The consultation uncovered the following key themes that guided the development of the draft strategy:

**Education and Behaviour Change:** Strong support was heard for a public education campaign for residents and business owners about the entire reduce, reuse, recycle and composting system. The need to shift norms in society to help support lasting behaviour change was frequently mentioned by participants. The education gap between large and small businesses was also a priority concern. Members of the public also indicated that education must include children and youth.

**Even the Playing Field:** A key theme that emerged was that the City needs to ensure the strategies to reduce single-use items do not unevenly benefit or hinder certain groups (e.g. small businesses, social service providers, persons with disabilities, homeless). Avoiding a one-size fits all approach to policy was viewed as important. More specifically, participants believed the City needs to consider different kinds of businesses when developing the strategy (e.g. restaurants, grocery stores, hardware stores, etc.) and include flexible policies and by-laws.

**Support Business Community:** The need for the City to support large and small businesses transitioning to waste reduction was important among stakeholders and the general public. Suggestions on how to achieve this included:

- financial support, such as grants for dishwashers
- education and training
- guidelines for best practices and assistance with reporting
- recognition and certification of businesses doing “zero waste work”
- pledges, points or tax credits via business licenses

Members of the public also highlighted that many local businesses in Vancouver are already working to reduce single-use items (e.g. implementing fees for bags, discounts for using reusable cups, and offering refills of containers). However, most indicated that more could be done by the City to recognize businesses taking leadership in waste reduction.

**Convenience:** Participants were supportive of actions that make it easier for them to be sustainable. For example, there was a high level of support for reusable dishware in coffee shops and cafes, container exchange programs, and clearly marked recycling/compostable on-street and in-store recycling systems. Many respondents in Talk Vancouver and at the pop-up engagement space indicated that the main reason they did not use reusables was because they forget to carry them with them or they did not plan their shopping trip in advance.





# 1.0 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Our current single-use, throwaway culture has been decades in the making and has been driven by a number of factors, including: convenience, limited free time, food safety and security, marketing and branding. Despite these factors, there is growing recognition that single-use items have a lasting impact on our environment, require a significant amount of resources for their production and create an immense amount of waste.

The City of Vancouver is developing a Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy to reduce waste from disposable hot and cold drink cups, plastic and paper shopping bags, plastic straws and utensils, and polystyrene foam and other take-out containers.

The City is in the process of developing a plan focused on transitioning Vancouver into a zero waste community by 2040. Development of a Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy is one of the early priorities in the Zero Waste 2040 plan.

## Quick Facts:

- In Vancouver alone, 2.6 million polycarbonate paper cups and 2 million plastic shopping bags are thrown in the garbage each week.
- Disposable cups and take-out containers make up about 50% (by volume) of all items collected in public waste bins and 41% of large litter items on Vancouver streets.
- Plastic bags make up 3% of shoreline litter and 2% of large street litter in Vancouver.
- It costs the City \$2.5 million per year to collect these items from public litter bins and clean up from our streets, parks and green spaces.

## 1.1. Engagement Approach

### Phase 1: Zero Waste 2040 workshop on Single-Use Items

Consultation for the Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy began on October 28, 2016, when the City hosted a workshop with residents, businesses, non-profit organizations, and other levels of government to gather input on single-use foam food packaging, disposable cups, plastic and paper shopping bags, and take-out containers.

The information gathered at this initial meeting supported a local call for a Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy and informed staff in developing potential approaches to address single-use item waste in Vancouver.

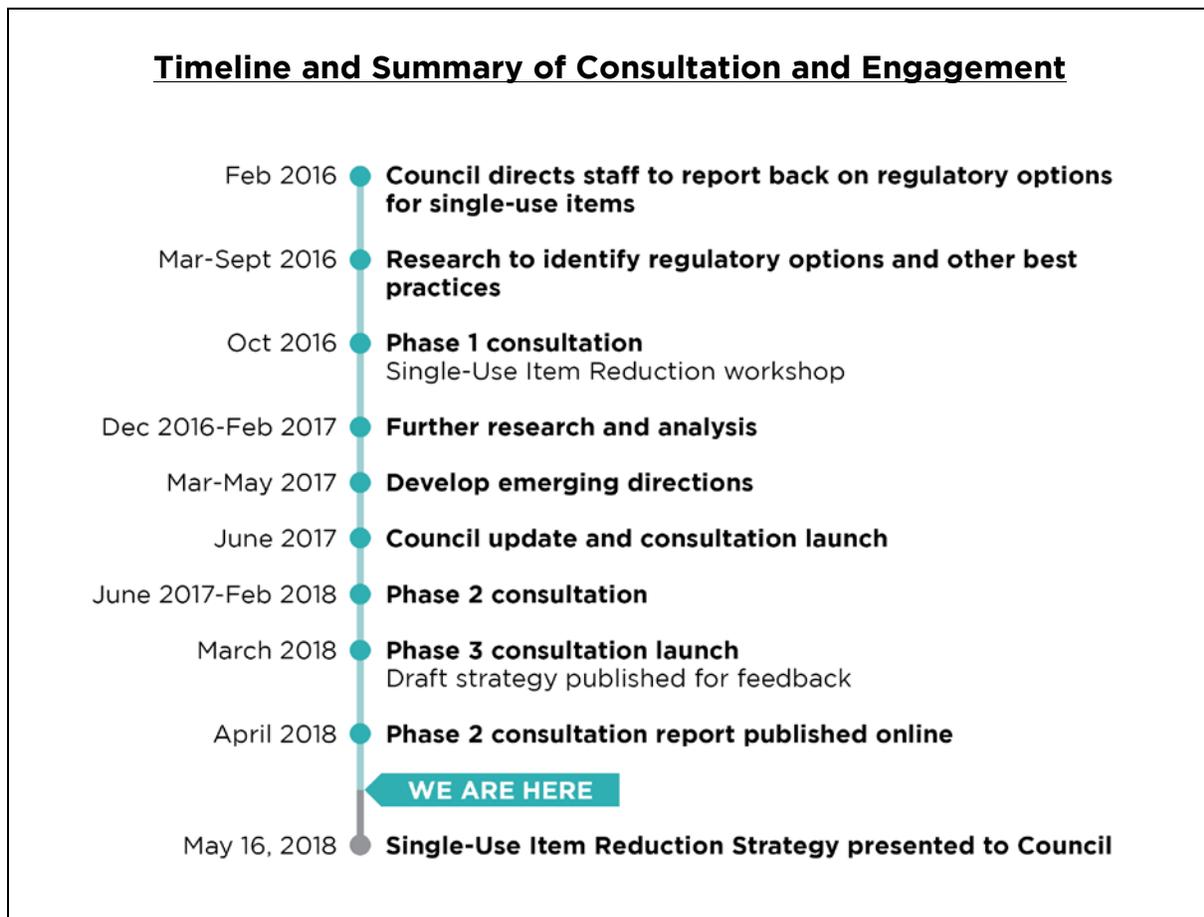
To view the Phase 1 Single-Use Item Strategy Workshop Consultation Summary, please visit [vancouver.ca/zerowaste](http://vancouver.ca/zerowaste).

## Phase 2: In-depth stakeholder consultation & public engagement

From June 2017 through February 2018, the City carried out a stakeholder consultation and public engagement process to connect with stakeholders and members of the public to better understand why single-use items are used, test support for various options under consideration and engage through in-person and online dialogue about the future of single-use items in Vancouver.

This summary report outlines the process and results from the Phase 2 stakeholder consultation and public engagement process. The results are being used to inform the development of the Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy, which is expected to be presented to Vancouver City Council for consideration in Spring 2018.

The overall timeline and summary of consultation and engagement is shown in the following figure.



## 2.0 PHASE 2 CONSULTATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

### 2.1. Engagement Approach

From June 2017 through February 2018, the City carried out a stakeholder consultation and public engagement process to connect with stakeholders and members of the public to better understand why single-use items are used, test support for various options under consideration and engage through in-person and online dialogue about the future of single-use items in Vancouver.

The approach first involved consultation with stakeholders such as businesses, industry representatives, non-profits and other government agencies. The process involved a consultation paper and in-person roundtable discussions to enable deep discussion on options, targets and priorities to be considered for the Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy. Second, public engagement was undertaken to educate and connect with the public on key issues and unintended consequences, solicit feedback and ideas on potential regulatory and non-regulatory options under consideration, and to gauge public sentiment.

### 2.2. Participation

The following table summarizes the stakeholder and public participation in this process.

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION	# Meetings / Days	# Participants
Roundtable Meetings	10	233
Consultation Paper - Written Responses	94	29
Other Stakeholder Meetings, Discussions, or Events	19	258
Subtotal	123	520

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT		
CoV Citizen Advisory Committee Meetings	6	89
City Lab Pop-Up Engagement Space	12	715
Talk Vancouver Survey	22	3163
VSB Student Sustainability Conference		80
Listserv Emails		168
Social Media		804
Subtotal		5,019

OPINION RESEARCH		
Subtotal		1,000

<b>TOTAL TOUCHPOINTS</b>		<b>6,539</b>
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The goal of 5000 touchpoints for this process was exceeded.

### 2.3. Engagement Opportunities

To hear from a wide variety of stakeholders and members of the public, the City designed an engagement process with a series of in-person and online opportunities to provide feedback. Specifically, the following engagement methods were utilized to gather input:

#### Stakeholder Engagement Process

##### **Consultation Paper:** September 12 - December 15, 2017

A consultation paper entitled, “Creating a Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy for Disposable Cups, Take-Out Containers and Shopping Bags” was released to outline potential approaches under consideration for the Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy. The paper included background information on the current state of waste and collection systems in Vancouver, key findings from previous consultation and research, and an overview of the options and targets under consideration. Readers were encouraged to provide feedback on the paper through an online comment form or via email to a City email address:

singleuse.consultationpaper@vancouver.ca.

The consultation paper was widely disseminated among stakeholder groups and member associations; it was published on the City’s website and was available in hard-copy at the pop-up engagement space and upon request.



Copy of the consultation paper

##### **Roundtable Discussions:** September 26 - November 24, 2017

To provide a forum for discussing the options presented in the consultation paper, ten facilitated roundtable meetings were held with stakeholders. Seven of the meetings were hosted by the City, and to focus the discussion, these meetings were generally themed into the following categories: 1) Food sector; 2) Retail industry; 3) Environmental organizations and academia; and 4) General Interest. The other three meetings were coordinated with support from Restaurants Canada, the Retail Council of Canada and Tourism Vancouver. Eight of the meetings were held in Vancouver, one in Toronto, and one in Montreal to coincide with the Conference on Canadian Stewardship and national meetings of retailers.

Each session was facilitated by an independent third-party facilitator. At each meeting, City staff presented an overview of options under consideration for the strategy, and captured participant comments and key themes using flipcharts and hand written notes. At all sessions, feedback forms were distributed and participants were given opportunities to share their opinions through written responses or face-to-face conversations with project staff. In total, 233 participants attended the meetings. Please see appendix A for the meeting schedule and list of participating organizations.

Key themes from these meetings are summarized in 2.0 Results section of this report.

### **Other Stakeholder Meetings & Events: June 13, 2017 - February 19, 2018**

The City conducted a number of additional consultation activities with key stakeholders, which ranged in scale and format. These activities included additional stakeholder meetings, community events, conference calls, and inter-governmental collaborations and conferences.

Additional stakeholder meetings included:

- Coffee Cup Revolution - Binner's Project
- REAC Solid Waste Sub-Committee Meeting
- DTES Kitchen Table
- Vancouver Coastal Health
- City of Toronto
- City of Montreal
- City of Victoria
- Coast Waste Management Conference
- Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors
- Conference on Canadian Stewardship
- Vancouver School Board Student Sustainability Conference
- Centric Culinary Inc.
- Drop the Straw



### **Written Feedback**

Stakeholders were encouraged to send written feedback in response to the consultation paper and stakeholder meetings. The commenting period commenced on September 12, 2017 and concluded on December 15, 2017. Throughout the process, the City received 16 written responses and 13 fluid survey responses.

### **Public Engagement Process**

#### **City of Vancouver Citizen Advisory Committee Meetings: August 18 - October 9, 2017**

To gather input on the options under consideration for the Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy, City staff consulted with the following Council endorsed Citizen Advisory Committees:

- Children, Youth and Families Advisory Committee
- Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee
- Food Policy Council
- Food Policy Council Sub-Committee Waste Working Group
- Seniors' Advisory Committee
- Cultural Communities Advisory Committee.

The meetings were an opportunity to provide key information and materials to committee members and provide them with an opportunity for feedback.

#### **Pop-Up Engagement Space: November 25 - December 7, 2017**

The City hosted a pop-up engagement space, located at Cambie and Broadway, which invited members of the public to learn about waste from single-use items and solicit feedback on the options under consideration for the strategy. Participants were encouraged to partake in educational activities, learn about initiatives within the Zero Waste and Resource Recovery



- **Art Display**

To highlight the amount of coffee cup waste produced in Vancouver every five minutes throughout the day, a large bag filled with empty coffee cups was put on display. The display offered a visual cue to remind participants that 2.6 million coffee cups get thrown into the garbage each week in Vancouver.

- **Comment Cards**

Feedback from participants was collected on double-sided comment cards that asked both open-ended and closed questions about the engagement space and the options being proposed as part of the strategy. Participants could also provide suggestions to the project team and sign up to be on the mailing list. In total, 174 comment cards were completed.



Coffee cup art display at the pop-up storefront space.

**Talk Vancouver Survey** - December 13, 2017 - January 4, 2018

To gather information from residents about how they use single-use items and their opinions about how to reduce them, the City released an online survey through the City of Vancouver's Talk Vancouver platform. The survey ran for 22 days from December 13 to January 4 and received more than 3,160 responses. Appendix B provides a full list of questions and results.

**Public Opinion Research** - December 15 - December 22, 2017

To gather baseline research on Vancouver residents' attitudes, values and behaviours related to single-use items, the City contracted NRG Group to execute a statistically valid, randomized public opinion survey. The key objectives of the survey were to understand attitudes and behaviours towards the reduction of single-use items and to measure the level of support for key emerging options.

## 2.4. Promotion of Process

Stakeholders and members of the public were notified about opportunities to participate in the consultation process, through the following channels:

- City of Vancouver website had 2,000 visits 1,500 unique visitors. 358 visitors came directly to the site by entering a URL, 680 came through social media channels and the remainder came from other city sites.
- According to Hootsuite Analytics, the following social media data was collected:

Reach Type	# of Posts	Likes/Reactions	Reach	Impression
Facebook	33	964	108,106	108,106
Twitter Organic	24	238	N/A	127,966
Instagram	10	2,304	N/A	N/A
LinkedIn	4	101	N/A	40,717
Facebook Paid Ad	2	728	87,429	237,517
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>4,335</b>	<b>195,535</b>	<b>514,306</b>

- Email notifications to 2,039 food-service establishments in Vancouver, 231 organizations that organize special events in Vancouver, all permitted street vendors (140), and other stakeholders through the project Listserv.
- Newspaper advertisements that ran in the following publications:
  - Vancouver Courier
  - Georgia Straight
  - Ming Pao
  - Sing Tao
- Emails with information about upcoming consultation opportunities and sample messaging and graphics for email, website and social media were also sent to stakeholder organizations, with requests that they distribute the information to their networks. Organizations that received these packages included Recycle BC, Restaurants Canada (who distributed the information to 30,000 Canada-wide members and a targeted list of chains), Retail Council of Canada (sent to 584 local members and 30,000 Canada-wide retail staff), Tourism Vancouver (distributed to about 4000 members), BC Restaurant and Food Services Association Building (distributed to 1500 members), Owners and Managers Association of BC (BOMA BC) and Vancouver BIAs.
- About 500 postcards with information about the upcoming consultation opportunities were also hand-delivered to potentially impacted businesses in non-BIA areas.

## 3.0 RESULTS

### Analysis of Input

All feedback submitted was coded into categories, such as item-type (e.g. cups, bags, containers) and sentiment (e.g. 'support' and 'do not support'). For larger quantitative data sets, the use of Sparq3 and *NVivo Qualitative Data Analysis* software was utilized to manage and code the feedback into separate datasets. The results presented in this report reflect the general concerns, ideas and feedback heard from stakeholders and members of the public during the consultation period.

### 3.1. Stakeholder Roundtables and Other Meetings

#### Roundtable Discussions

Feedback collected from flip charts, placemats and open plenary conversations was compiled using *NVivo Qualitative Data Analysis* software by a third-party consultant, Lynda Gerty Consulting Group. The findings below reveal the overarching key themes that emerged across the sessions.

#### Education and Behaviour Change

'Education and behaviour change' was by far the most common theme to emerge across all stakeholder groups during the roundtable meetings. There was support for education targeted at both the public and businesses on reuse, reduction, recycling and composting. It was frequently suggested that education be done in partnership with aligned organizations like Recycle BC, BIAs and businesses. The education gap between large and small businesses was identified as a priority concern. The need to shift norms in society was frequently brought up, to help support lasting behaviour change.

The following suggestions on education were identified:

- Customer prompts at point-of-sale, as well as consistent, repetitive messaging, were identified as important tools for educating the public.
- Effective avenues for education include schools, local community spaces and tourist industry sites such as airlines.
- Suggestions for education channels included video, television, radio advertisements, social media, posters; making the public aware of sustainable alternatives through recognition of 'green' business; promoting sorting stations at events; and clarification on waste streams including what is accepted and what is not.
- It was also suggested that education activities should be designed to raise awareness of the social, economic and environmental consequences of reuse, reduction, recycling and composting.
- Overall, stakeholders' felt that leadership on education should be taken by the City, through the implementation of zero waste policies - leading by example via City Operations.

#### Systems Alignment

Systems alignment refers to 'getting everyone on the same page' by creating partnerships and collaborations and by moving towards greater standardisation of policies, strategies and regulations across industry and government bodies. The importance of building partnerships was stressed, with suggestions for collaboration between BIAs, Recycle BC, Metro Vancouver,

the Binner's Project and businesses (large and small). This would provide opportunities to share data and lessons learned, and to build on work that has already been done. It was suggested that by branding Vancouver as "waste free", the City could begin working to get everyone together under this goal. The importance of communicating and coordinating strategies and regulations across jurisdictions was stressed in order to harmonize across industry and government bodies.

### **Even the Playing Field**

Evening the playing field refers to making sure that strategies/expectations for waste reduction do not unevenly benefit or hurt certain groups, in particular small businesses. Participants stressed the importance of distinguishing between the needs and capacities of large and small businesses, and they urged that a one-size fits all approach be avoided. In general, it was expressed that the onus for leadership in waste reduction should be placed on big businesses - although participants also noted the challenges with alignment across jurisdictions and the ability of small business to move more quickly and innovatively, and some examples of local small businesses innovators were provided. It was suggested that the City also consider the needs of different kinds of businesses, such as department stores, grocery stores and restaurants. The idea of having a flexible bylaw that allows organizations to design their own waste reduction strategy was brought up several times, and this idea received significant support. The importance of phased implementation of strategies, harmonization between districts, standards for design and consistent enforcement were all identified. Finally, it was brought up that the City must be careful of penalizing marginalized people or groups (such as the homeless) with fees or new regulations.

### **Clarity**

Increasing clarity refers to informing people and organizations about the terminology, sorting, systems and materials involved in reuse, recycling and composting processes. Concerns were expressed that this overall lack of clarity regarding supply chain in terms of which recyclable or compostable packaging to procure, and confusion about 'where to put what' is leading to contamination in waste streams. Confusion was expressed over composting and it was suggested that better branding and certification be used. Many participants expressed the need for more visuals and colour coding, as well as printing standards directly onto single-use items like bags. The need for making this process easy and convenient as well as the need for clarifying misconceptions over waste streams was highlighted.

### **Support Business**

The need for City support for large and particularly small businesses to transition to waste reduction was identified many times. There were many ways that participants suggested this could be achieved. Space is a major constraint for many small businesses, who may need infrastructure for recycling, dishwashers etc. Financial support and grants to ease this transition were identified as ways the City could support small business. Education and training support, guidelines for best practices and assistance with reporting were also identified. There is a desire for the City to support innovation by recognizing businesses leading the way in waste reduction. There are many ways that this could be achieved, including through certification, pledges, points, grants, sharing positive actions on social media, offering tax credits to participating businesses and by leveraging business licenses. The importance of avoiding duplication was also stressed so that businesses do not experience increased complexity.

## New Ideas

The agenda for each roundtable session included a specific question that prompted participants to share other options and ideas they saw as possible and wanted the City to consider. In addition, new options and ideas often emerged organically, through the course of the discussion. The most commonly heard ideas are compiled below:



### Top ten new options and ideas

1. Ban straws and utensils and other plastics
2. Certification for zero waste for business
3. Mandate that events are required to have a waste program and sorting staff
4. Cup and bag free lines, or jump the line with your own mug/bag
5. Flexible by-laws that allow businesses to design their own waste reduction plan
6. Pledge programs for business
7. Ban bottled water
8. Reusable bag exchange or bag share
9. Large recycling symbols on bags, standard colours and patterns for recognition
10. Grants to businesses to support transition (especially small businesses)



### Noteworthy new options and ideas

Other new ideas beyond the “top 10” list include:

- Drop off points for reused bags and cups
- Public design contest for a “Vancouver Cup” by local artists
- Creative branding ideas (i.e. plastic bag monsters, ‘bag it forward’, #Mugshot Van take photo with reusable cup campaign)
- Reverse vending machine for plastic bottles
- Cup free ‘Zero waste day’
- Focus on new Canadians and visitors to Canada to educate
- Endorsement deals with Vancouver sports team
- Centralized drop off washing facilities like UBC program to overcome issues with space
- “Boomerang Bags” citizens make and contribute to system, builds sharing economy
- Generic bags without branding, consumers might be more likely to use
- Add price of cup to menu to show economic and ecological value
- Crowd source map to identify businesses that allow Bring Your Own Cup
- Contest between BIA’s for waste reduction

## Feedback on Metrics

The agenda for each roundtable session also included time for City of Vancouver staff to share information about possible targets and measurements, as outlined in the consultation report. Participants were asked to provide their feedback and ideas, and comments were recorded by City of Vancouver staff on flip chart notes.

The following are common themes that emerged on the topic of targets and measurements:

- Decide on aspirational versus achievable targets
- Set clear timelines, long-term targets and interim goals
- Evidence-based targets: cost-benefit analysis, Life Cycle Analysis
- Consider targets by sector, or participation-based targets
- Invest in data tracking, create partnerships
- Consider targets for education
- Link targets to business licenses
- Targets need to account for growth over time

- At City level, important to have absolute reduction target
- Accountability is important: self-reporting, random checks
- Develop baselines
- Use common metrics and consistent terminology
- Lead by example: internal City targets
- Harmonization as much as possible nationally
- Look to what others have done

## Other Stakeholder Meetings and Events

City staff attended 19 meetings with various stakeholders and community associations to discuss the options, barriers and opportunities in reducing the amount of single-use items in our waste-stream. The following list compiles the feedback received:

What We Heard	
<b>Economic Hardship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Businesses are concerned around affordability and whether there is appetite for consumers to pay more for recyclable and compostable items.</li> <li>• Some of the options presented have unintended costs that could affect businesses bottom line. For example, to encourage businesses to use reusable dishware means that more money will need to be spent on infrastructure, water usage and employee training on new operating procedures. Some businesses indicated that they have switched to reusable dishware, but the products go missing or require additional resources for cleaning and managing these items as they break often.</li> <li>• Concern around the recycling system and if businesses are paying more for compostable products but there is a lack of on-street and in-store receptacles to take these products, the efforts are cancelled out.</li> </ul>
<b>Poverty Reduction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create low barrier employment opportunities for binners and those seeking entry into the workforce to earn money from deposit programs, collecting over stock, or dishwashing.</li> <li>• Encourage solutions that give individuals agency to make their own food and use reusable items at home. It is wasteful to feed people through individual meals in food lines.</li> <li>• Reduce barriers to a zero waste lifestyle by establishing exchange programs “take a bag, leave a bag” and connecting with local organizations to offer donations (e.g. swag bags from conferences).</li> <li>• Set criteria for acceptability of dishware and bag donations and provide education on donation chain standards to organizations and businesses.</li> </ul>
<b>Food and Health Safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns around cleanliness of reusable dishware, and exchange programs. How will products be sanitized and appropriately cleaned for those with limited access to dishwashing facilities?</li> <li>• Explore alternatives for those with physical impairments and health care needs to participate in reducing single-use items (e.g. design considerations).</li> <li>• Consider exemptions for those who need single-use items (e.g. straws), for dental needs and musculoskeletal challenges.</li> </ul>
<b>Phasing of Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure appropriate time is allocated for organizations and businesses to adapt to any policies that restrict the use of single-use items. Give organizations and businesses ample time to use their materials, provide appropriate training, and avoid situations where social service agencies and other non-profits end up with a large amount of overstock items.</li> <li>• Provide information or guidelines on alternative products that are consistent with the City’s recycling system.</li> </ul>
<b>Regional Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support opportunities to connect and work with other governments at the municipal level, to address single-use items, as this is a shared responsibility.</li> <li>• Share data and consultation findings with Metro Vancouver and its members.</li> </ul>



New ideas that emerged out of these meetings:

- Inventory of companies going out of business that need to sell their dishware and old stock. Connect these businesses with NGOs to facilitate a buying consortium.
- Swag bags could be donated to help support the idea of “take a bag, leave a bag”
- The City should help coordinate and set criteria around acceptability of dishware donations.
- The City should do outreach to volunteer and faith-based organizations to educate them to reduce waste when providing donations.
- “Certified Sellers” of products that meet City of Vancouver standards and could also apply to donations.
- Compostable and recyclable material workshops to provide and support education efforts.

### Written Responses - Key Themes

In response to the consultation paper, “Creating a Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy: For Disposable Cups, Take-Out Containers and Shopping Bags”, the City received 29 written submissions from a variety of member associations, recycling advocates, local businesses and those working in the solid waste processing industry.

The submissions were first compiled and analyzed to check their degree of overall support or concern for options being considered for the strategy. Respondents were overall the most supportive of expanding recycling education and behaviour change programs, undertaking more stakeholder consultation such as through an industry-involved working group, and creating incentives or financial supports for businesses that are leading the way in adopting zero waste practices. The most contentious options (where there were many respondents indicating their preference both for or against the option) were deposits on cups, fees for bags at point of sale (voluntary or regulated), and voluntary options (as opposed to regulatory options).

The submissions were then subjected to a process of thematic analysis which grouped the responses into commonly discussed categories, which were further refined into key themes, as follows:

- **Streamlining Recycling System:** Respondents noted a disconnect between offering compostable and recyclable products and the availability of adequate receptacles on city streets, in parks and at transit stations. Concerns were also expressed around product confusion (between various standards of “biodegradable” and “compostable” products available) and enhancing compostability that aligns with local haulers and suppliers’ capacities in the region. Respondents commented on the need for language translations on all bins and materials to ensure consistency.
- **Equitable and Affordable:** Respondents commented on the importance of involving the binner population and encouraging low-barrier employment opportunities (e.g. cup collection, dishwashing). Respondents noted the need to promote the donation of reusable items to shelters and those experiencing financial hardship to reduce barriers to zero waste. Respondents also commented on the need for a level playing field among large and small businesses and supports to help with transition. Many respondents expressed concern to businesses’ ‘bottom-line’ and the need to balance new policy with pre-existing funding models and end-markets.

- **Public Education and Behaviour Change:** Respondents emphasized the importance of social media to market and connect with influencers, stakeholders and the public on consumer awareness, the costs associated with single-use items as well as alternative options. Some respondents indicated that funds to support this type of public education could be drawn from fees already paid by producers for consumer awareness and education. There was also strong support for elevating the conversation away from ‘recycling’ to “Avoid, Reduce and Reuse”, and educating and empowering both Vancouver residents and businesses about sustainable living and making reusable containers as well as dining-in fashionable.
- **Support for Businesses:** Respondents suggested that rather than impose regulation, the City should provide incentives for businesses that are already doing or planning to do this work. Respondents noted the importance of supporting existing businesses and organizations doing waste diversion work, such as sorting and educating, profiling zero waste businesses through marketing and offering supports to businesses that will need to reorganize workflow. Some respondents were supportive of the voluntary bag prompt and saw opportunities where the City could support this work through education and awareness.
- **Collaboration and Data Sharing:** Respondents expressed a desire to create a single-use packaging committee to have in-depth conversations on the options that can best accomplish the management of single-use items. Respondents voiced support for sharing data and working with the City on standardized reporting and providing businesses with case studies and qualitative research.

### Written Feedback on Potential Targets

Feedback received on proposed targets and suggestions for how to reduce waste from disposable cups and containers and plastic and paper shopping bags within two and ten-year targets was varied and inconclusive, but there was a common theme that the City of Vancouver needs to take bold, transformative actions to reduce the amount of single-use items entering the landfill.

Some comments received:

“The City of Vancouver needs to be a world leader in this area - other cities have already made bold steps. Ignore nay-sayers and move forward with bans. Businesses will adapt, consumers will adapt”

“We need Vancouver to be a leader in this area. It is very clear where we need to be and we can no longer wait. Businesses and people can and will adapt to changes and the City needs to be firm and clear about the reasons and its primary goal to protect its people”

“We think the city should be bold, ambitious, determined and unwilling to settle for a non-zero waste solution”

There was also strong support for the City of Vancouver to facilitate a combined multi-criteria metrics approach that focuses on education, awareness and public support and reduced consumption because taking regulatory action alone will not achieve the desired effect of moving the dial towards zero waste. Lastly, there were suggestions around collaborating with businesses to collect information and root targets in evidence-based data.



From the written responses, the City also received the following new ideas:

- Include a consultation target - engage with at least 60% of the 10,000 businesses - work with the BIAs, Vancouver Board of Trade, VEC and Vancity.
- Explore opportunities to support bulk procurement to help small businesses bring costs down.
- Provide information to businesses about the long-term cost savings of transition to reusable dishware and dishwashing facilities.
- Establish an on-going pledge program from residents and businesses.
- Charge higher fees on cups lined with polyethylene - make the fees based on the material type.
- Produce a Retail Coffee Best Practices document that includes information about inside and outside litter, customer prompts; signage about bringing reusables, asking patrons whether they want dine-in dishware etc.
- Establish an industry led single-use packaging committee to offer strategic advice and coordination to support City efforts.

### 3.2. Public Engagement and Citizen Advisory

#### Pop-Up Engagement Space - Feedback

To collect feedback at the engagement space, comment cards asking the following questions were readily available:

1. What do you think of the options being considered for the Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy? What options do you like the most?
2. What options do you like the least?
3. Do you have any suggestions or other comments?

Comment cards completed by participants who visited the pop-up engagement space were compiled and analyzed, revealing several major themes.

#### Quantitative Responses

- Respondents were the most supportive of a ban on all polystyrene foam, and expanded education and behaviour change programs (regarding single-use cups, take-out containers, and bags), with strong support also for cup and container exchange programs, deposits on cups, expanded on-street recycling for all single-use items, and encouraging businesses to play an active role.
- Respondents were overall least supportive of voluntary measures (as opposed to regulatory measures), and a disposal ban on single-use cups. The most contentious options were fees on cups and bags (voluntary or regulated) with many responses for and against.

## Qualitative Responses on the Strategy

**Education and Behaviour Change:** Respondents were most supportive of education and behaviour change efforts to reduce waste from plastic and paper shopping bags, disposable hot and cold drink cups and take-out containers. Some respondents indicated that this is a shared responsibility among businesses, residents and the City; however there was a greater emphasis on the role of government to provide education, especially among children and youth, to help transition away from single-use items and focus on avoid, reduce and reuse.

Below is a sample of comments from respondents:

“Increase education. Make people more aware of the costs of single-use item waste. More programs to teach youth as well”

“Making it completely voluntary on the parts of citizens and businesses won’t work. Like it or not, we need to be forced to some degree to achieve wholesale change. That being said, positive incentives, education and encouragement are always good to aid the cultural shift”.

“We need to share more information with the community. It’s all about educating the residents of Vancouver so the process goes quickly and smoother (transition).”

“I think the use of "one-time use" requires multiple approaches (bottom-up, top-down) and that it will take time for change to happen. It takes more than awareness for behaviour to change. So it also requires system change. People will complain but will also get over it.”

**Encourage Business to Pay an Active Role:** While respondents were generally supportive of options that affect consumer choice (e.g. fees on bags and cups), there was a lot of support for making businesses responsible for the waste material that they produce, both in-store and on-street. Respondents would like to see businesses show leadership by providing supports like in-store recycling, reusable dishware and are supportive of proportional billing for City street cleaning and litter collection.

A few comments from respondents:

“I prefer the "fees on use" and use restrictions; making businesses responsible for recycling waste they generate and require recycling.”

“I think a big impact would be reducing the use of single-use items for businesses (e.g. plastic packaging, meat trays, etc). Proportional billing sounds great!”

“Strongly think that the businesses should be responsible. They should spend a bit more on recycling. Do not pass the cost to the customer. Don't penalize the citizens.

**Clarity:** Respondents noted confusion around not only recycling choices (e.g. paper versus plastic), but also the recycling and composting system in general. Respondents requested a better understanding the differences between commercial and residential curb-side recycling.

A few comments from respondents:

“Standardize the recycling material criteria across all residential and commercial buildings. People are confused about what’s recyclable - not the same in every residence and business.”

“Education/classification system needs to be very simple for people to understand and follow. People do not have the time to differentiate or learn. Businesses need to be the same as each other and same as curbside pickup. Has to be consistent and the signage needs to be clear.”

“Work with businesses to standardize recycling bins.”

**Convenience:** Respondents were supportive of things that make it easier and more accessible for them to be sustainable - there was high support for reusable dishware in coffee shops and cafes, container exchange programs, and clearly marked recycling/compostable on-street or in-store recycling. Some respondents also indicated a desire to be reminded to bring reusable bags and coffee cups or asked if they wanted them, as opposed to automatically being given one.

A few comments from respondents:

“I think it could be difficult for people if you take single-use containers and products from them, they need an alternative that suits their busy schedule and meets their needs.”

“I like the idea of businesses and a cup dishshare program. The number one reason I don't use my cup is because I forget it or I don't want to ask them to clean it. Pick-up/drop-off program would be great for people like me.”

“I think the Vessel program that is done in New York is amazing! We can have this program here between Tim Hortons, Starbucks, and Blenz. Moreover, people are usually into cool things. The cooler the mug is (and the idea) the more we will have people who use it.”

“Reusable take-out containers and drink containers that you can drop-off elsewhere (e.g. transit system) or bring back to a store to exchange with next meal/ or get a deposit back”

**Regulation:** Many respondents voiced that without mandatory regulation and enforcement, many businesses and residents would not participate in reducing their amount of single-use items. As a result, options that required regulatory authority such as charging fees on cups and bags received more support as it would affect behaviour change and sustainable action.

A few comments from respondents:

“Reduce/restrict and even banning single use items is the right direction. You'll likely have to force residents and businesses to comply some people won't like it, but we'll all adapt. Just do it :)”

“A suite of tools will need to be used but focus needs to be on bold steps relating to regulatory tools as opposed to voluntary-based programs. Financial disincentives and incredible public engagement/education.”

“Regulatory” will always be better (if possible), compared to “voluntary” because big corporations will always have a degree of “push-back.”

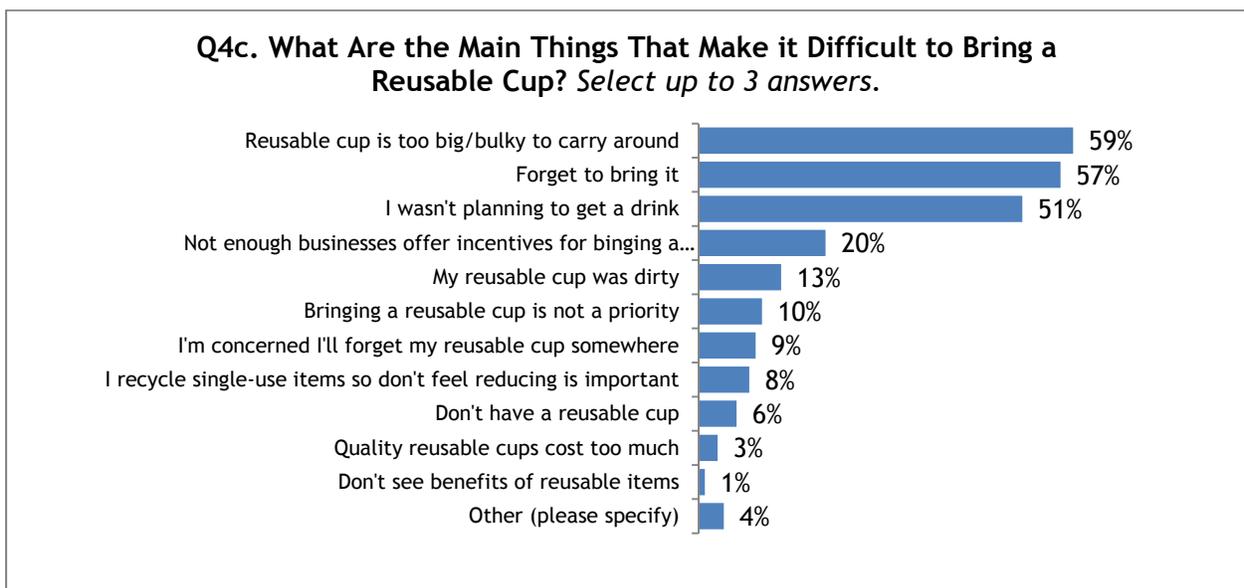
“Make “for here” options mandatory for certain sized restaurants or have reusable container program priority - especially in closed spaces like food centres (e.g. food courts, downtown).

### Online Questionnaire

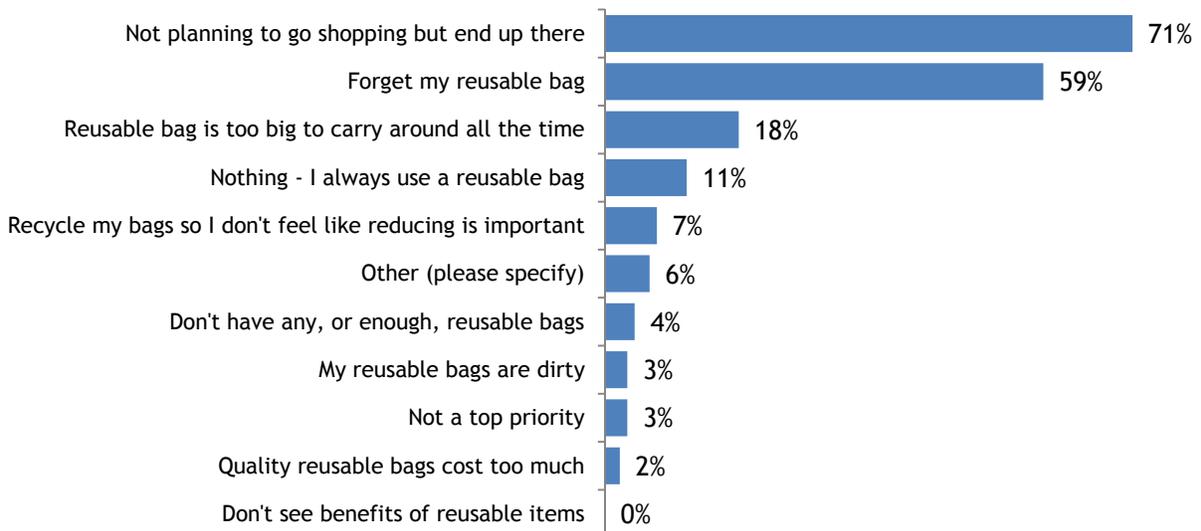
A questionnaire was posted on Talk Vancouver and was open for comment between December 13<sup>th</sup> - January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018. In total, 3163 complete responses were received. The survey included a number of questions to help understand the behaviour of Vancouver residents towards their use and acceptance of single-use items (disposable hot and cold beverage cups, plastic and paper shopping bags and take-out containers), as well as their level of support for regulatory and non-regulatory options under consideration. Complete results can be found in Appendix B.

Some key findings are as follows:

**Convenience:** Many respondents indicated that the main reason they did not use a reusable cup and a reusable bag was because they forgot to bring it, hadn't planned on making a shopping trip or found those items to bulky to carry around.



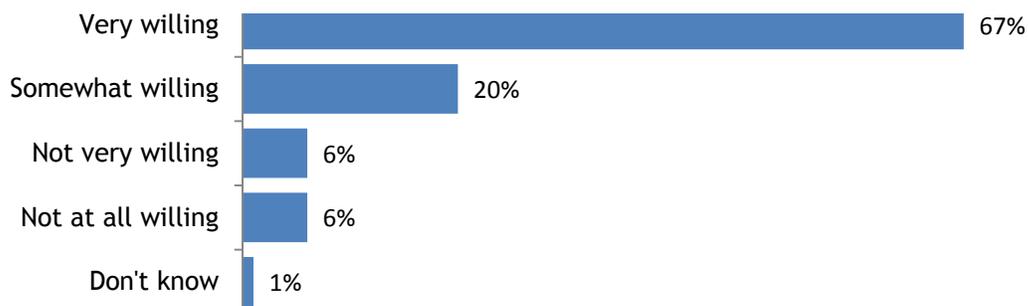
#### Q4. What are the main things that make it difficult to bring your own reusable bag?



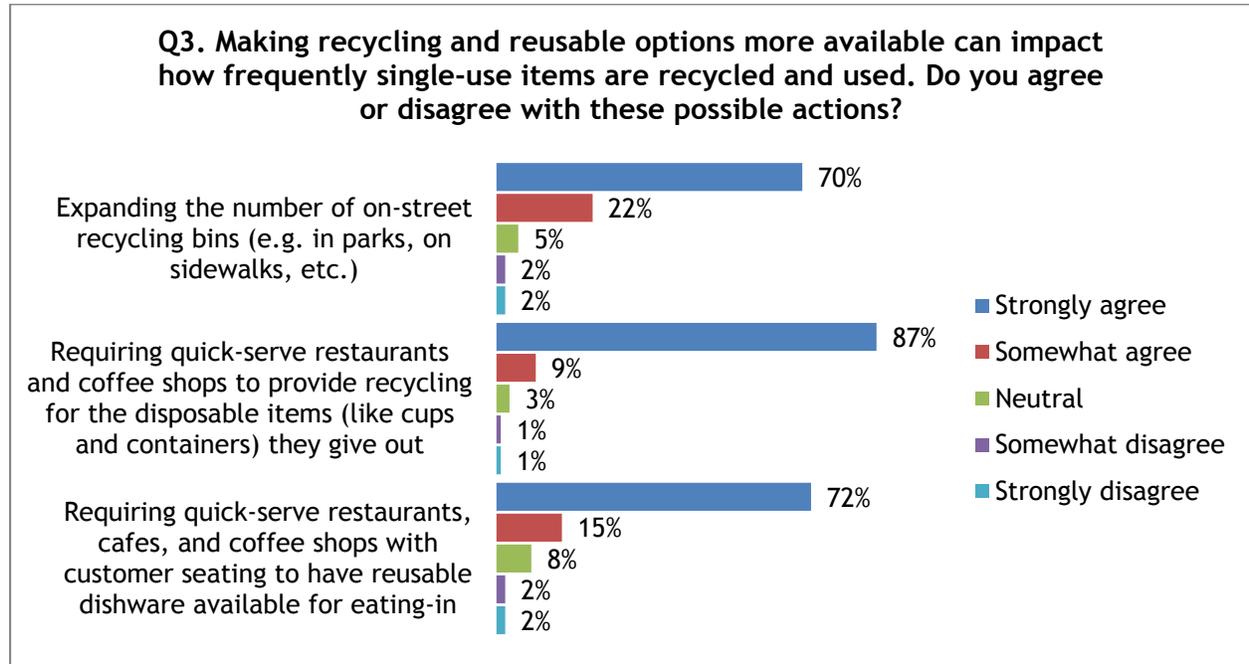
**Willingness to Pay More:** About 87% of Talk Vancouver respondents acknowledged that they would be willing to pay more (e.g. 5 cents), for single-use items that were reusable or that could be recycled within their residential curbside program or apartment building recycling program.

#### Q9. If a single-use item ban was in place, your local restaurant/coffee shop may need to switch from an inexpensive disposable item (e.g. polystyrene foam containers) to a slightly more expensive option that was reusable or could be recycled within curbside or apartment building recycling programs.

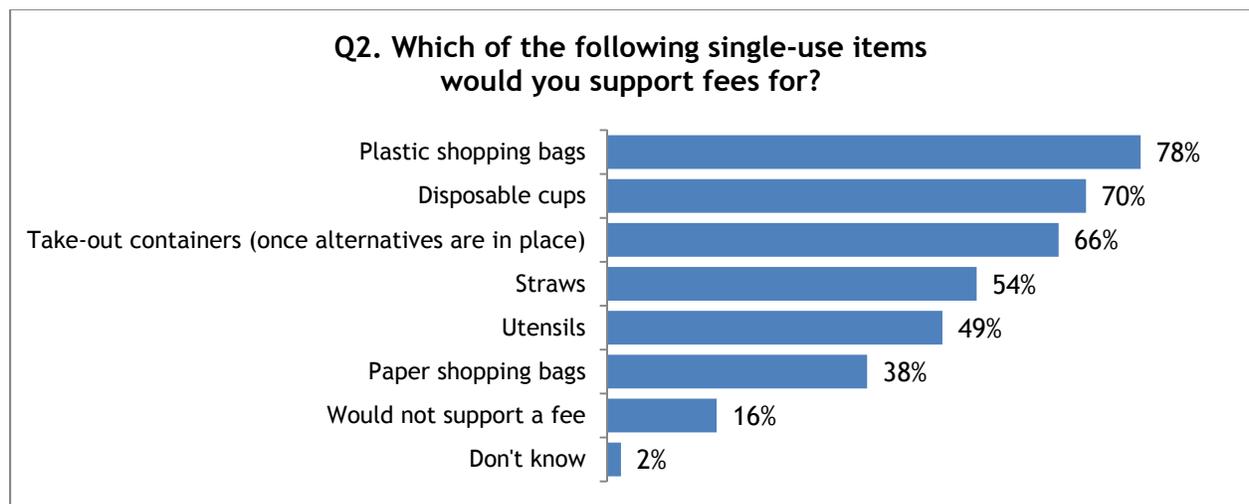
Would you be willing to pay slightly more in price because of this change (e.g. 5 cents)?



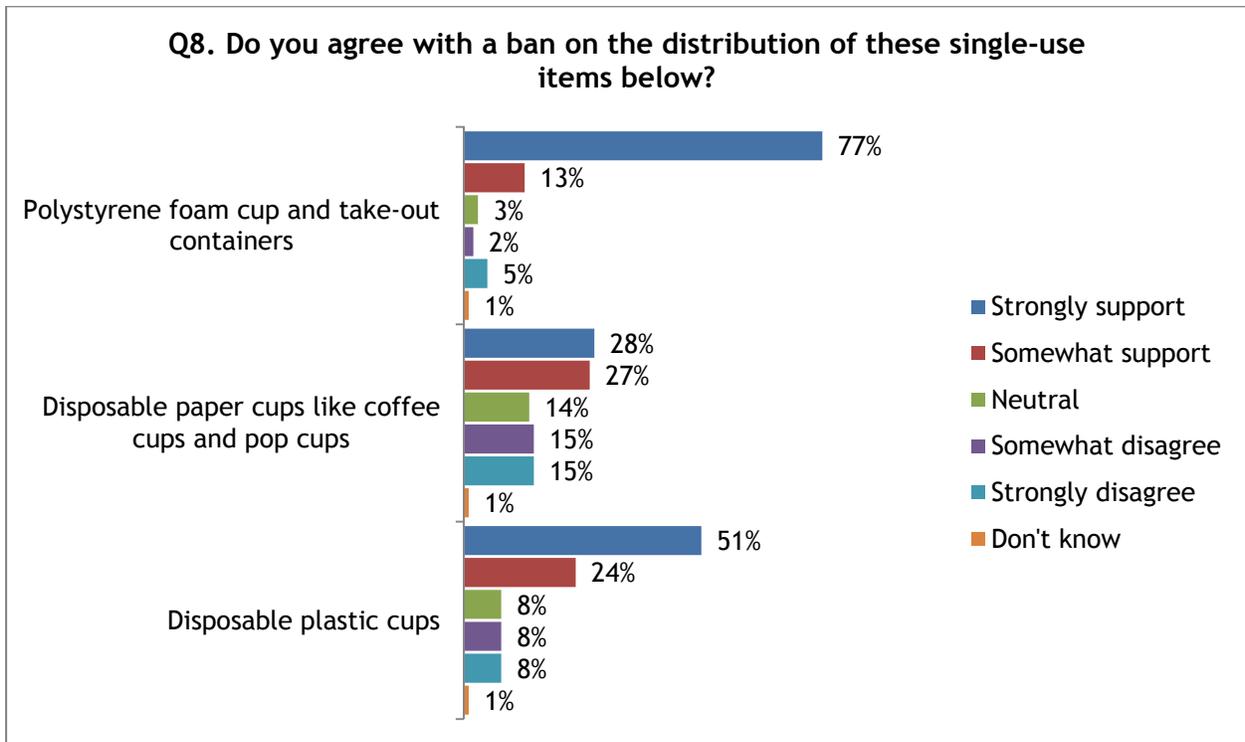
**Support for Reusable and Recycling Options:** 96% of respondents supported requiring quick-serve restaurants, cafes and coffee shops to provide recycling for the disposable items that they give out. They also supported requiring quick-serve restaurants, cafes and coffee shops with customer seating to have reusable dishware available for dining in (87%) and that the Vancouver needs additional on-street recycling bins in parks and on sidewalks (92%).



**Support for Fees:** When asked whether they could support fees for the following single-use items (select up to 3) a majority of respondents indicated that they would support fees for plastic shopping bags (78%); disposable cups (70%) and take-out containers (once reusable alternatives were in place) (66%). The slightly higher level of support for acceptability for fees on plastic bags may be because some stores in Vancouver already charge fees on plastic bags and customers have become accustomed to the practice.



**Support for Bans:** 90% of respondents supported a ban on the distribution of polystyrene foam cups and take-out containers and 75% of respondents supported a ban on disposable plastic cups. The idea of a ban on disposable paper coffee and pop cups received less support, with 55% of respondents in support of a ban on disposable paper cups.



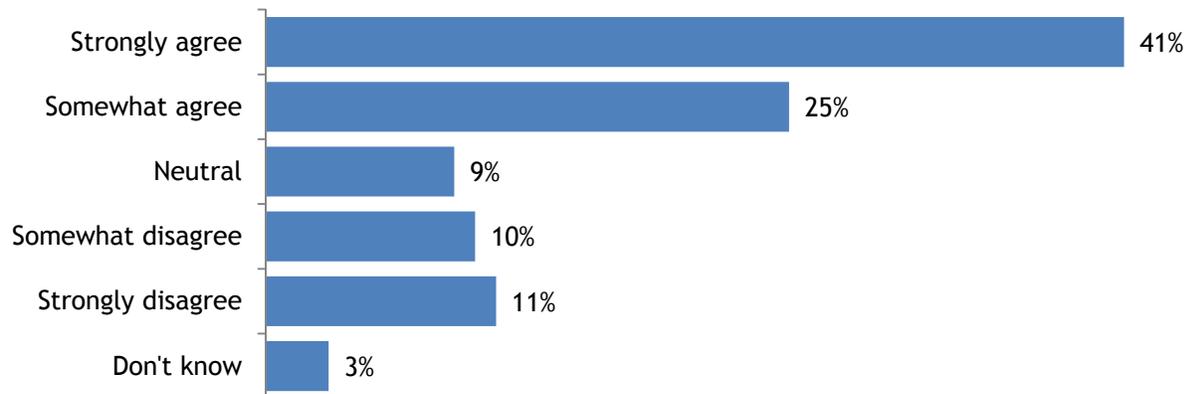
**Support for Bans of Single-Use Plastic and Paper Bags:** Since both single-use plastic bags and paper bags have environmental impacts due to their production, transportation, use and disposal, respondents were provided with the following information to make an informed decision:

Plastic bags can be particularly harmful as litter as they are easily transported by wind and can end up in the ocean. But, paper bags have a higher environmental impact than plastic bags in other ways, such as the amount of non-renewable energy and water used to make them and they have a higher potential to impact global warming.

When plastic bags are “banned” the bans usually only stop retailers from distributing thin (single-use) plastic bags, which are considered single-use. This often results in the unintended consequences like increasing the use of paper bags. Retailers can also work around the bans by switching to thicker “reusable” plastic bags, which often are not reused very many times by consumers. So while plastic bans reduce the number of thin plastic bags used, they may shift the problem to paper bags or thicker plastic bags.

With this information, 66% of survey respondents indicated support for a disposable plastic bag ban. 79% of respondents also indicated that they use their plastic bags as garbage bin liners at home.

**Q7(i). With this information, do you agree or disagree with banning the distribution of disposable (thin) single-use plastic bags? Please select one response only.**



The questionnaire also included three open-ended questions, the responses from which highlighted several key takeaways:

- Respondents who reported bringing their reusable cup regularly indicated this was due to: finding a cup they really liked and keeping it handy in their backpack or purse, keeping cups in multiple places such as at work or in their car, and staying to enjoy their drink in a reusable cup in the shop.
- Respondents who reported bringing their reusable bags regularly indicated this was due to: keeping compact bags with them in a backpack or purse, and keeping bags in their car.
- Respondents indicated many sources of motivation for using fewer single-use items, including: concern for the environment and pollution in waterways, striving to create less garbage, concern for litter, the prevalence of alternatives to single-use items, and discounts provided by businesses.

For complete results, please see Appendix B.

## City of Vancouver Citizen Advisory Meetings

From August 18<sup>th</sup> to October 9<sup>th</sup> 2018, City staff attended and liaised with the following Citizen Advisory Meetings to review options under consideration to reduce single-use items and solicit feedback. Below is a summary of the comments received:

Who We Spoke To	What We Heard
Senior's Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider options that make things easier for seniors to reduce single-use items like the proposed BYOC pilot and free zero waste drop-offs, which are favourable because they reduce food waste and help seniors save money.</li> <li>• Draw on “lessons learned” from other countries (e.g. Japan, Taiwan).</li> <li>• Offer more clarity around fees and where collected money would go.</li> <li>• Explore options to include straws into the project scope.</li> <li>• There is a need to provide education and awareness at cash registers.</li> </ul>
Persons with Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategy should be flexible and not one-sized fits all. Some options will be challenging for individuals to adopt (e.g. a ban on straws).</li> <li>• Dishware and reusable items must be designed for accessibility (e.g. firm, non-slip with good handles), for example glass and heavy ceramics are not ideal.</li> <li>• Ensure dignity in options.</li> </ul>
Food Policy Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns around increased costs to businesses if polystyrene foodware is banned.</li> <li>• The desire for more clarity around compostable plastics and collaboration with Composting Council of Canada.</li> <li>• Provide guidelines to help businesses with purchasing decisions.</li> </ul>
Waste Working Group (sub-committee of Food Policy Council)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer more clarification around what can and cannot be recycled and composted and how it can be broken down from a lifecycle perspective.</li> <li>• Provide transparency around fee options.</li> <li>• Connect with other organizations that are reducing their single-use items (e.g. Granville Island).</li> </ul>
Children, Youth and Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide opportunities to engage and educate children and youth through behaviour change programs.</li> <li>• Make it easier for families to reduce their waste at curbside recycling or via local neighbourhood drop-offs.</li> <li>• Offer more clarity around health and sanitation for exchange programs and reusable alternatives.</li> </ul>
Cultural Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the connection between convenience, affordability and freedom.</li> <li>• Acknowledge concerns around classism and applicability within different communities.</li> <li>• The City should disseminate social media information via non-English channels and through peer-to-peer mentorship with local service area providers.</li> <li>• Engage children and older generations in this process to make change.</li> </ul>



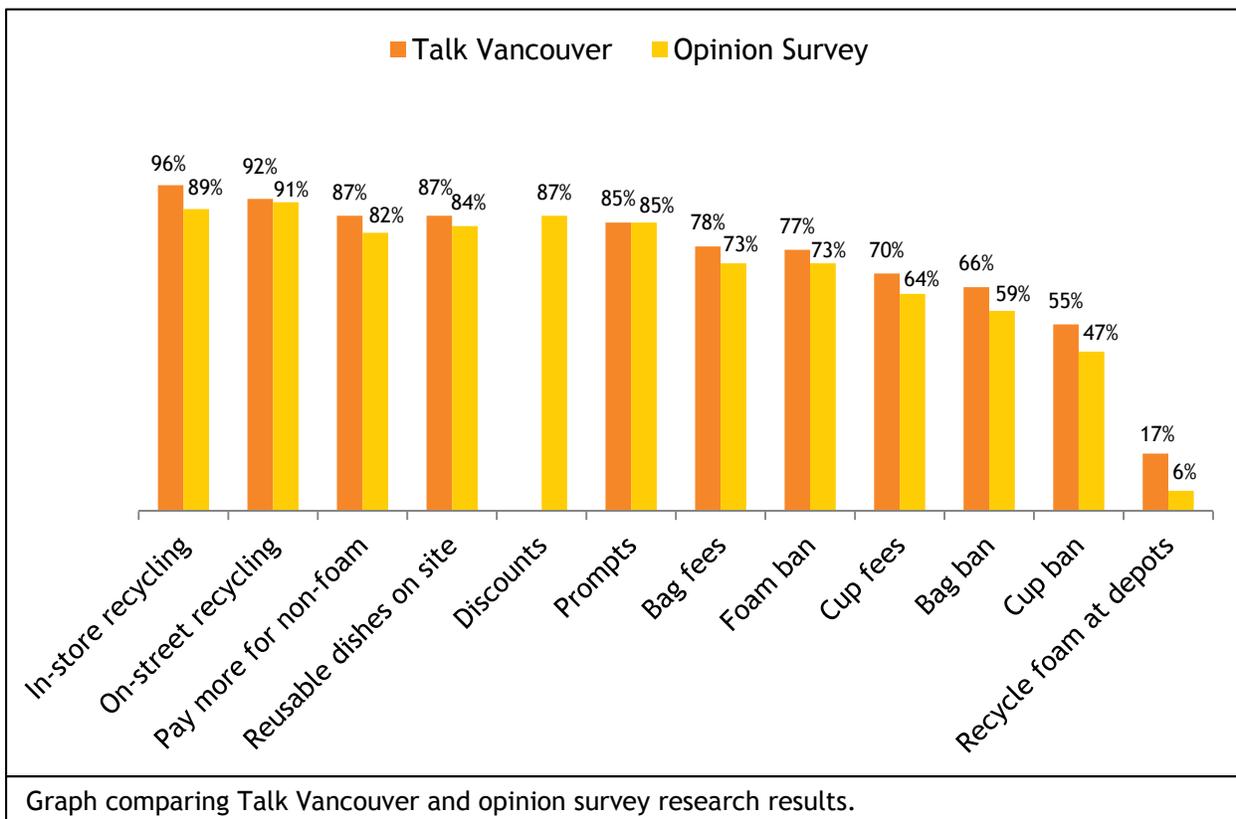
From the project email account, the City also received the following new ideas:

- A city-wide mug sharing system that involves a sophisticated network of coffee shops and reusable mugs.
- Explore opportunities to work with the Province to legislate a \$2 discount for bringing your own reusable takeout container to restaurants.
- Establish a coffee cup washing station to make it easier for people to easily rinse and sanitize their reusable mugs.
- Help businesses switch to using glass or stainless steel straws.
- Provide more information to businesses about the different types of options for reusable and compostable take-out containers and the price difference between each option.

## 4.0. OPINION RESEARCH

To gather baseline randomized and statistically significant data on Vancouver residents' attitudes, values and behaviours related to single-use items, an opinion survey was created by NRG Research Group in collaboration with the City of Vancouver. The opinion survey was administered through telephone interviews of 1000 residents between December 15<sup>th</sup> to December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017.

By engaging a random sample of Vancouver residents, the opinion survey conducted by NRG Research Group provides a statistically-valid snapshot of local views, values, and attitudes towards the reduction of single use items. Overall, the Talk Vancouver and Opinion Research results are very similar, as shown in the chart below.



## 5.0. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND NEXT STEPS

The City would like to express our gratitude to all individuals who participated in this consultation process. We appreciate the time, energy, and feedback you provided to help us gain a deeper understanding of how single-use items are used in Vancouver, and your ideas and feedback on options to reduce them. Over the course of seven months: we spoke with people of all ages and abilities, we witnessed pledges from individuals inspired to take action and we had in-depth conversations with industry members who shared their expert knowledge of the waste management industry with us. Thanks to all of you and those who also submitted personal petitions, business research and data with us; this process is richer from your contributions.

### **Next Steps**

All input received from this consultation summary report will be considered along with financial, legal and technical information for the development of a Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy for Vancouver City Council's consideration. As emerging policy develops, there will be additional opportunities for public and stakeholder input on the final strategy and during implementation phases.

## APPENDIX A.

Session dates, locations, and invitees took place as follows:

Sector	Location	Date	Number of Participants
Food Sector	Toronto	September 26, 2017	9
Retail Sector	Montreal	September 27, 2017	15
Retail Sector	Vancouver	October 3, 2017	9
Food Sector	Vancouver	October 4, 2017	10
Food Sector	Vancouver	October 11, 2017	31
Environmental/Non-profit organizations	Vancouver	October 17, 2017	30
General Interest	Vancouver	October 23, 2017	17
Public General Interest	Vancouver	November 2, 2017	31
Retail Sector	Vancouver	November 8, 2017	30
Tourism Industry	Vancouver	November 23, 2017	39

### Organizations that were part of the Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy - Phase 2 Consultation Process:

- 7-Eleven Canada
- A.E. Vancouver Private Tours & Charters Inc.
- ARC Restaurant - Fairmont Waterfront
- Aritzia
- A&W Food Services of Canada Inc.
- Azuza Inc.
- BC Place
- Binner's Project
- Belkhin House
- Bokoeco
- BOMA BC
- BRANDLIVE
- BSI Bio
- Cadillac Fairview
- Canadian Beverage Association
- Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors
- Canadian Plastics Industry Association
- Carnegie Centre
- Cartems Donuts
- Centric Culinary Café

- CCPA
- City of Port Coquitlam
- CKF Inc.
- COBS Bread
- Common Energy UBC
- Dart Canada
- Deep Cove Canoe and Kayak Centre
- Dillon Consulting Limited
- Drop the Straw
- Dyne-a-Pak
- Ecoinspire
- Eternal Abundance
- Evergreen
- Fairleigh Dickinson University
- Fairmont Waterfront
- FoamOnly
- Foodservice Packaging
- Fortis BC
- Fraser Academy
- Grandview Woodlands Food Connection
- Green Chair Recycling.
- Green Coast Coffee
- Hermes Canada Inc.
- JINYA Ramen Bar
- Kinpack
- Kissa Tanto Restaurant
- LOCO BC
- London Drugs
- Lululemon
- Lupii Cafe
- Malachite Management Inc.
- Metro Vancouver
- Museum of Anthropology
- Net Zero Waste Abbotsford
- Ocean Ambassadors
- Ocean Wise
- Olive and Ruby Cafe
- One Earth
- Pacific National Exhibition
- Patex Research
- Pathway Group
- Pharmasave Drugs (Pacific) ltd.
- Planted Food Network
- Potluck Café Society
- Powell River Regional District’s “Let’s Talk Trash Team”
- Provincial Health Services Authority

- Raincity
- RANA Inc.
- Recycle BC
- Recycling Alternative
- Recycling Council of BC
- Regional Engineers Advisory Committee - Solid Waste Sub-Committee
- Restaurants Canada
- Retail Council of Canada
- Salt Spring Coffee
- Science World British Columbia
- School of Community & Regional Planning, UBC
- Society Promoting Environmental Conservation (SPEC)
- Stand.earth
- Stojó Cups
- Suzuki Elders
- Tap and Barrel - Convention Centre
- The Naked Business
- The Soap Dispensary
- Tourism Vancouver
- Tractor Everyday Healthy Foods
- Trees Organic Coffee
- UBC
- UBC/JJ Bean Coffee Roasters
- University of BC
- University of British Columbia
- Urban Impact
- Vancouver Aquarium
- Vancouver Airport Authority
- Vancouver Aquarium an Ocean Wise Initiative
- Vancouver Convention Centre
- Vancouver Farmers Markets
- Vancouver Fraser Port Authority
- Vancouver Food Tour
- Vancouver Pride Society
- Vancouver Visitor TV
- Vera's Burger Shack
- Waste Control Services
- West Coast Management Association
- White Spot Ltd
- WISH
- Zero Waste Canada



# Talk Vancouver Questionnaire Responses to Inform Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy

**Summary Report**  
**March 2018**



**The City of Vancouver is developing a new strategy to change the way Single-Use Items are distributed, used, and disposed of in the city.** In order to develop this strategy, the City has sought public input through multiple events and surveys.

**This report is a detailed summary of an online questionnaire that was posted on Talk Vancouver and open for comment from December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017 to January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018. In total, 3163 complete responses were received.** The survey was divided into several categories and included questions on disposable hot and cold beverage cups, plastic and paper shopping bags, take-out containers, as well as several demographic questions. This report includes both the text of the questionnaire as well as the tabulated responses.

**The questionnaire included four open-ended questions, the responses from which highlighted several key takeaways:**

- Respondents who reported bringing their reusable cup regularly indicated this was due to: finding a cup they really liked and keeping it handy in their backpack or purse, keeping cups in multiple places such as at work or in their car, and staying to enjoy their drink in a reusable cup in the shop.
- Respondents who reported bringing their reusable bags regularly indicated this was due to: keeping compact bags with them in a backpack or purse, and keeping bags in their car.
- Respondents indicated many sources of motivation for using fewer single-use items, including: concern for the environment and pollution in waterways, striving to create less garbage, concern for litter, and discounts provided by businesses.



## **Detailed Questionnaire Results**

# Help Us Develop A Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy!



**The City of Vancouver is developing a strategy on how to Reduce Single-Use Items and needs your input!** The single-use items we are focusing on for this strategy include: disposable cups, plastic and paper shopping bags, polystyrene foam and other take-out containers (polystyrene foam is what people commonly called "Styrofoam").

**Over the past several decades there has been an increasing trend towards items that are used once and then thrown away.** It has been driven by a desire for increased convenience due to faster lifestyles, concerns around food safety and security, and opportunities for companies to brand their products.

**But now, there is an increased focus on the impacts of the increased use of these disposable items.** Some countries, communities and members of the public are starting to focus on how to reduce the use of these items.

**Consider that every week in Vancouver, 2.6 million disposable cups and 2 million plastic bags are thrown in the garbage. Cups, bags and take-out containers also make up about 50% of all items collected in public waste bins, as well as a significant portion of litter on Vancouver streets. Despite their convenience, it costs Vancouver taxpayers \$2.5 million a year to collect these items from public waste bins and to clean up as litter.**

# Help Us Develop A Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy!



**To help develop a strategy for Vancouver, we'd like to understand more about** how these single-use items are used or impact your daily life, opportunities and barriers to shift towards more reusable alternatives, and to gauge the level of support for some of the options that could be considered.

**Share your thoughts on these single-use items with us!** Your feedback will help us develop a Single-use Item Reduction Strategy for consideration by City Council in 2018.

A final consultation report incorporating the outcomes of this survey will be made available on [vancouver.ca/zerowaste](http://vancouver.ca/zerowaste). If you have any questions or comments please contact us at: [reducesingleuse@vancouver.ca](mailto:reducesingleuse@vancouver.ca)

***Definition:***

***Single use items:*** disposable items designed for single use, which include: disposable cups, plastic and paper shopping bags, polystyrene foam and other take-out containers.

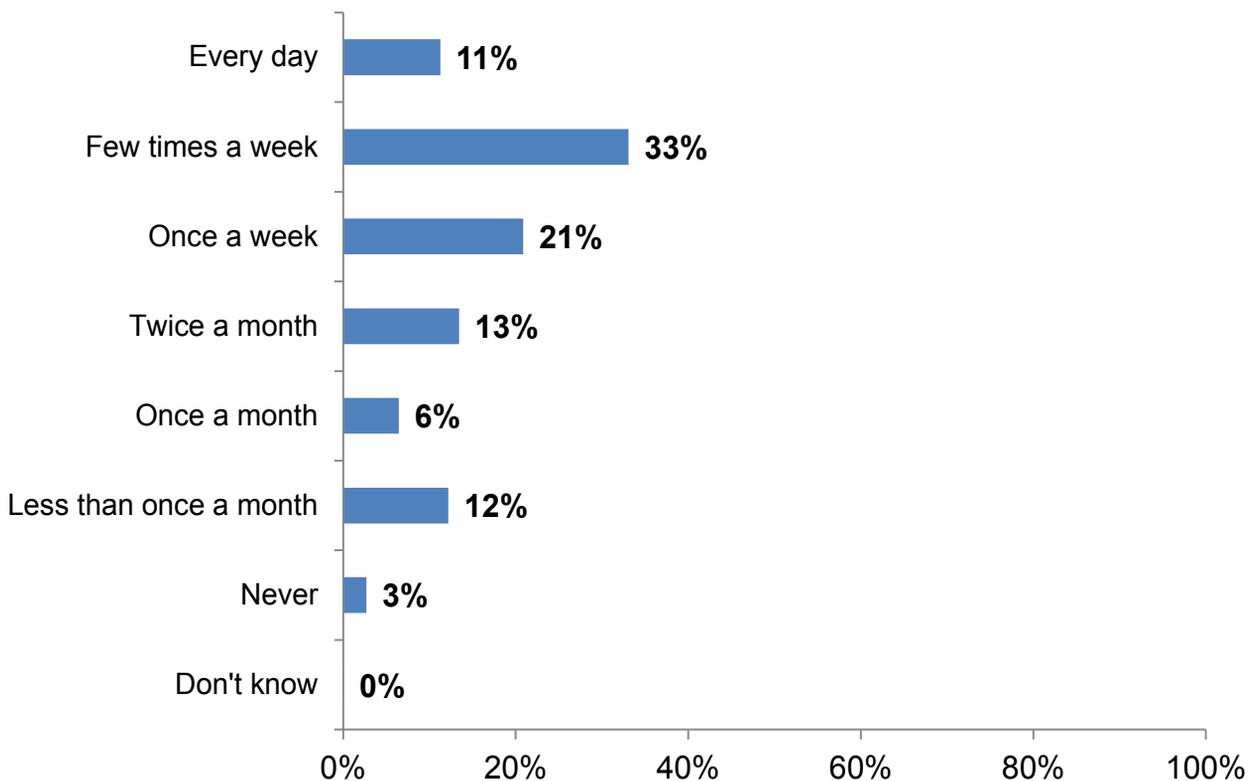
*[Participants were then asked “Which single-use items would you like to share your thoughts on?”, and asked to select all that apply from: disposable cups, plastic and paper bags, take-out containers.]*



## 1. How often do you buy a drink from a café, coffee shop or “quick-serve” restaurant?

*“Quick-serve” restaurant: a restaurant that typically serves fast-food and has counter-service instead of table service.*

*Please select one response only.*

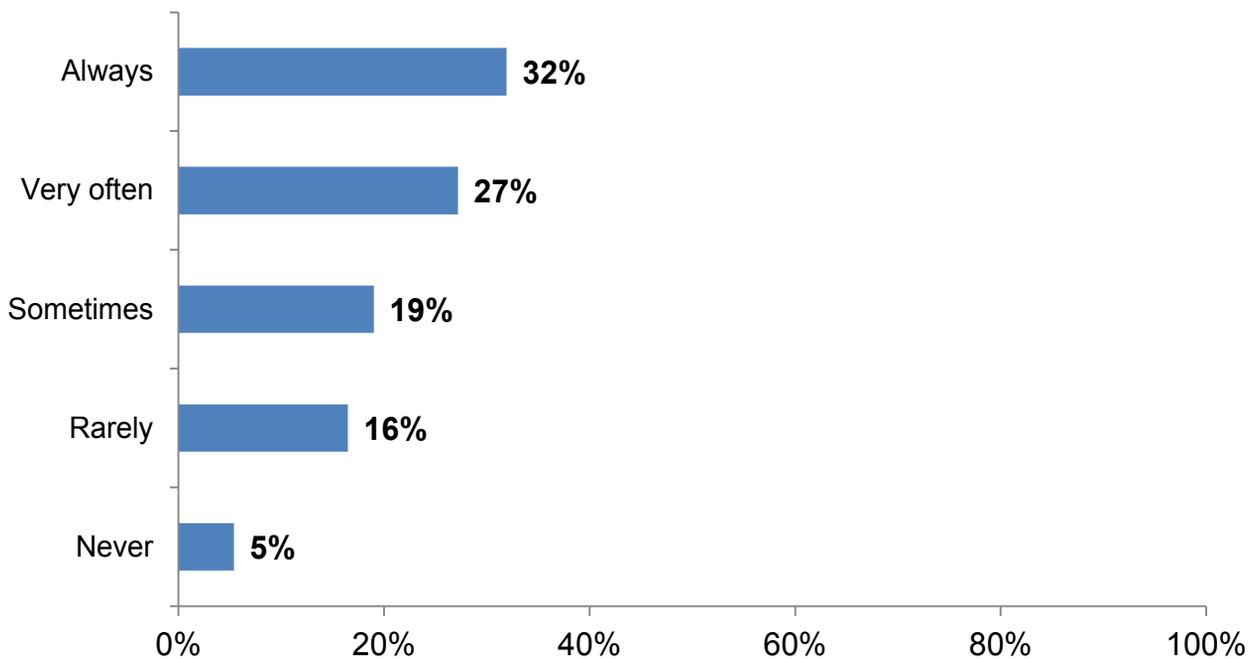




*[If previously answered yes to purchasing drinks]*

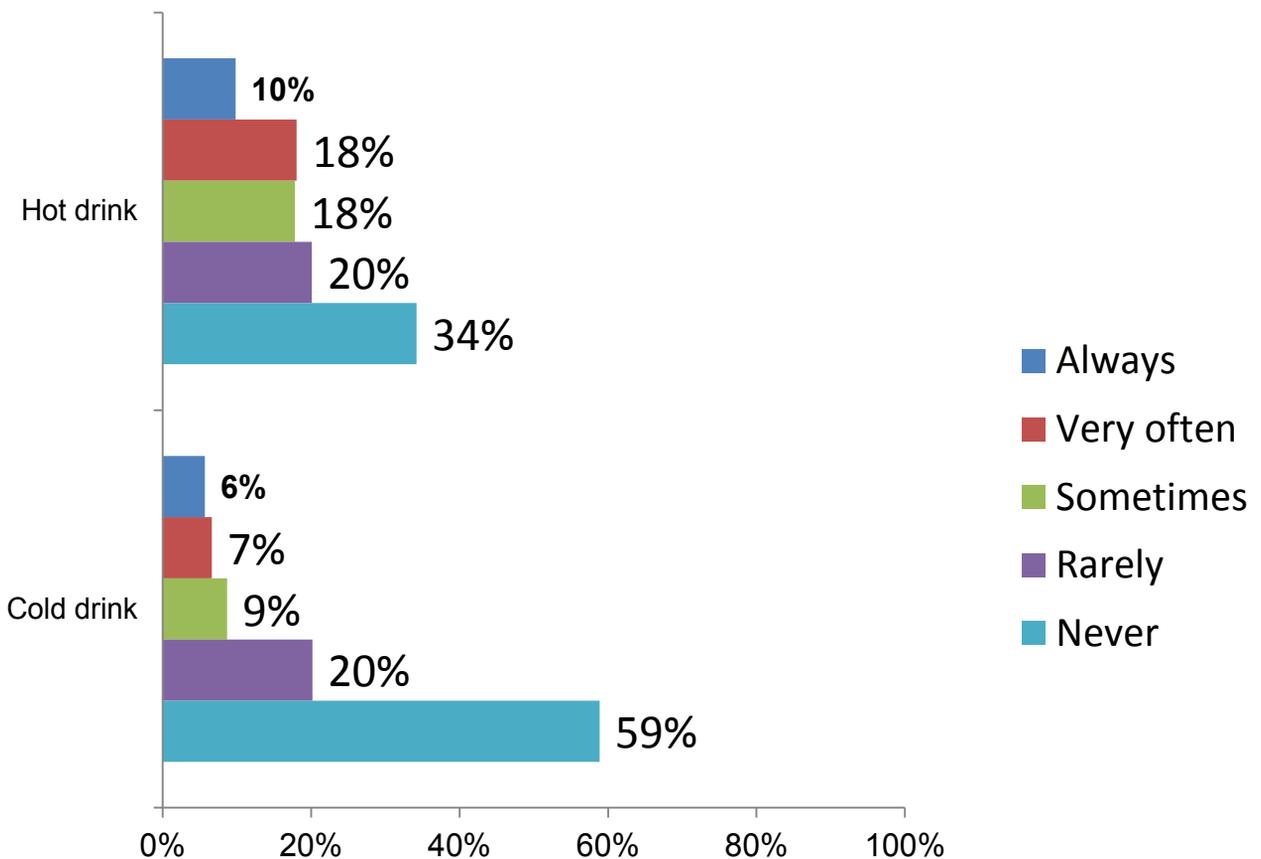
## 2a. And when you do, how often do you get it in a disposable cup?

*Please select one response only.*





## 2b. Do you bring your own reusable cup when you buy a... [hot drink/cold drink] ?





*[If previously indicated bringing a reusable cup very often or always]*

## **2c[i]. How do you manage to bring your reusable cup so regularly? What's working for you?**

*Please be as specific as possible.*

**This open-ended question received 1271 responses.**

**Analysis of the responses revealed several major themes, including:**

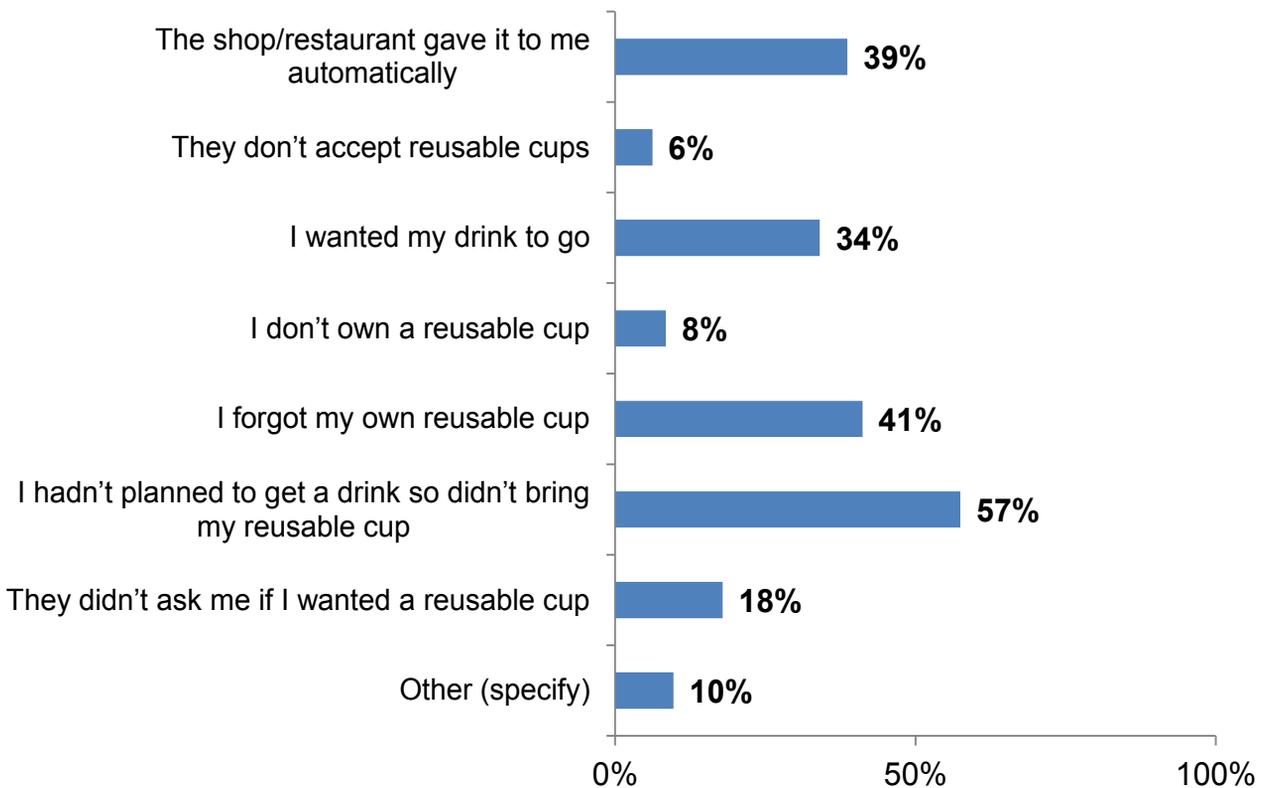
- **Finding a reusable travel mug that you really like, and always keeping it handy in a backpack or purse.**
- **Keeping a few reusable cups in different places, such as at work, in your car, and/or in your bicycle panier.**
- **Plan ahead, and keep your reusable cup in a visible place so you remember to take it.**
- **Make an effort to change your own behavior, and when you forget your travel mug, choose to stay and enjoy your drink in a reusable cup in the shop.**



*[If previously indicated getting a disposable cup rarely or more]*

## **2c[ii]. When you do get your drink in a disposable to-go cup it's usually because...**

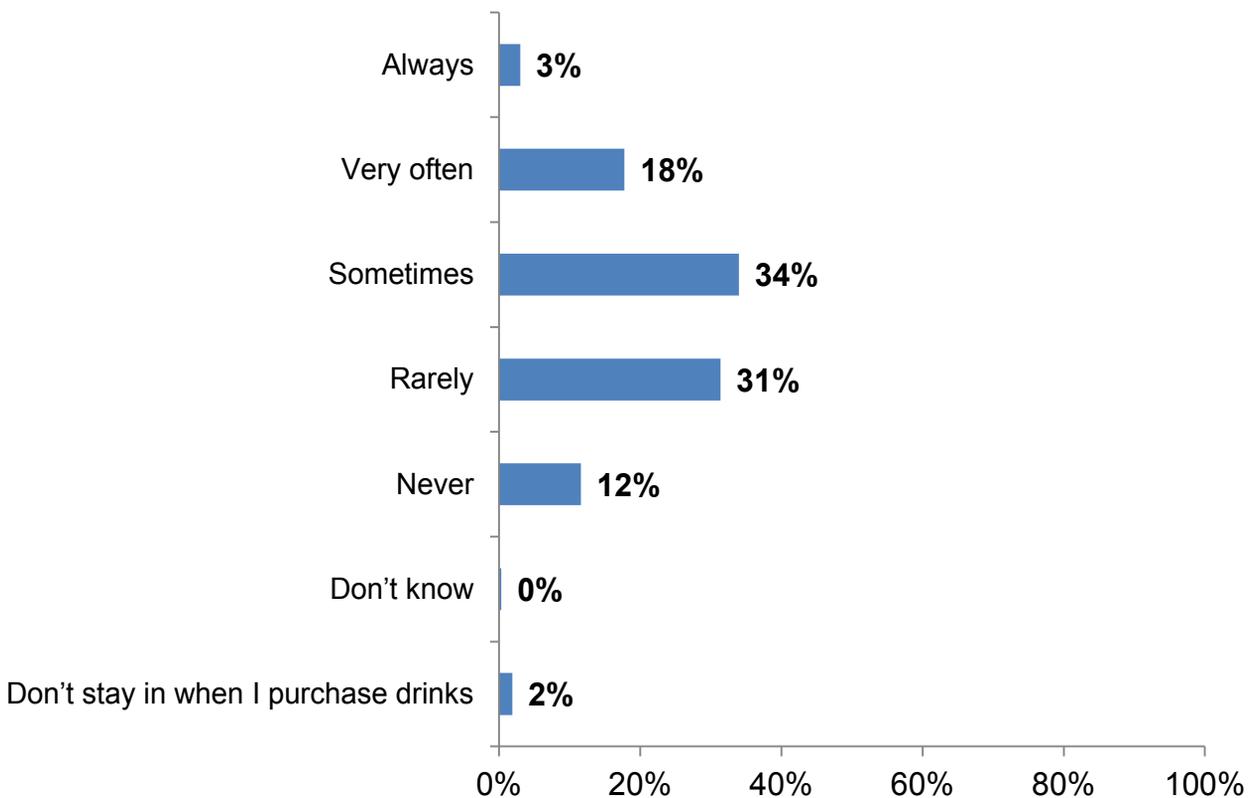
*Select up to 3.*





### 3. Are there times where you receive a disposable to-go cup for your drink but stay in to drink it? How often do you think that happens?

*Please select one response only.*

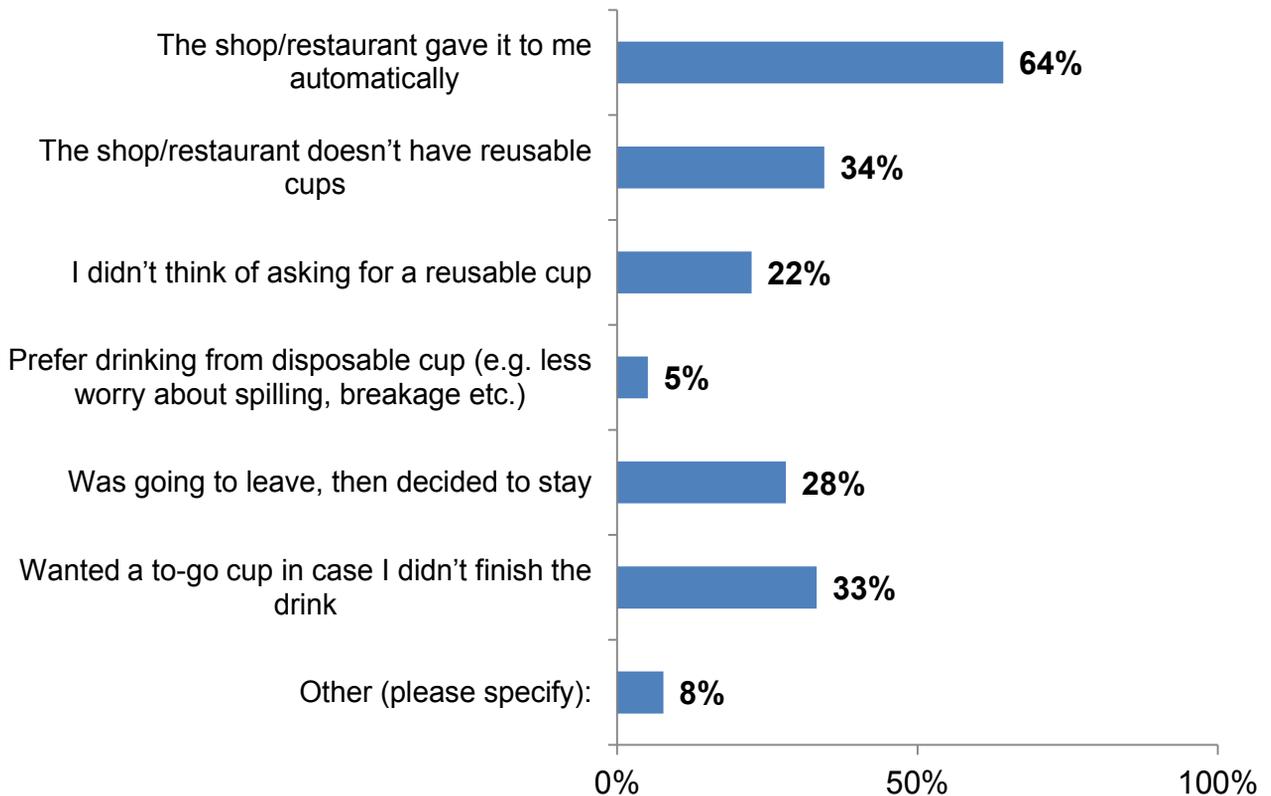




*[If previously answered yes to receiving a disposable cup when staying in sometimes]*

## 4a. Can you tell us why you've ended up with a disposable to-go when staying in the shop/restaurant?

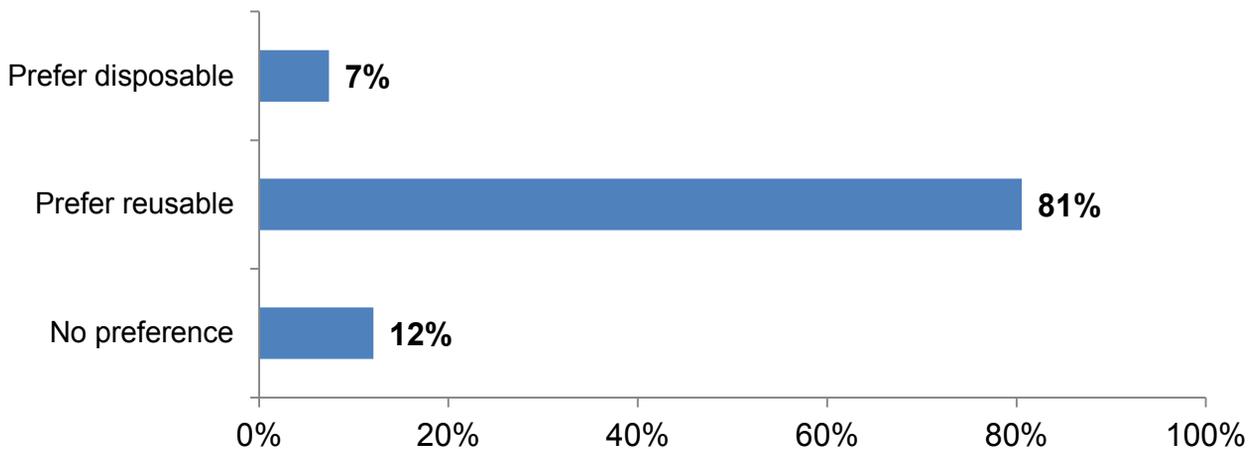
*Select up to 3.*





## 4b[i]. Do you prefer to use a disposable or reusable cup when staying in to have a drink?

*Please select one response only.*

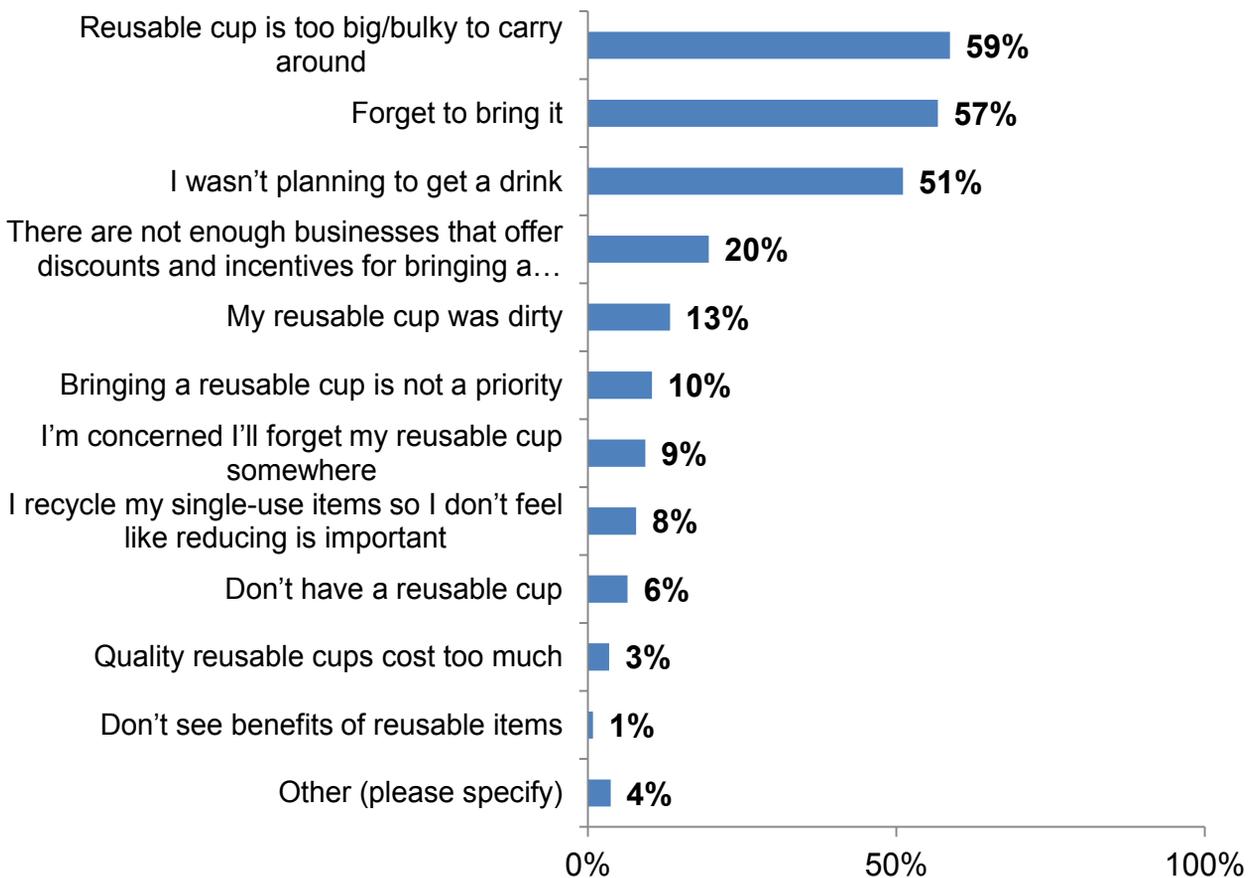




*[If previously indicated preferring a disposable cup rarely or more]*

## **4b[ii]. What are the *main* things that make it difficult to bring a reusable cup?**

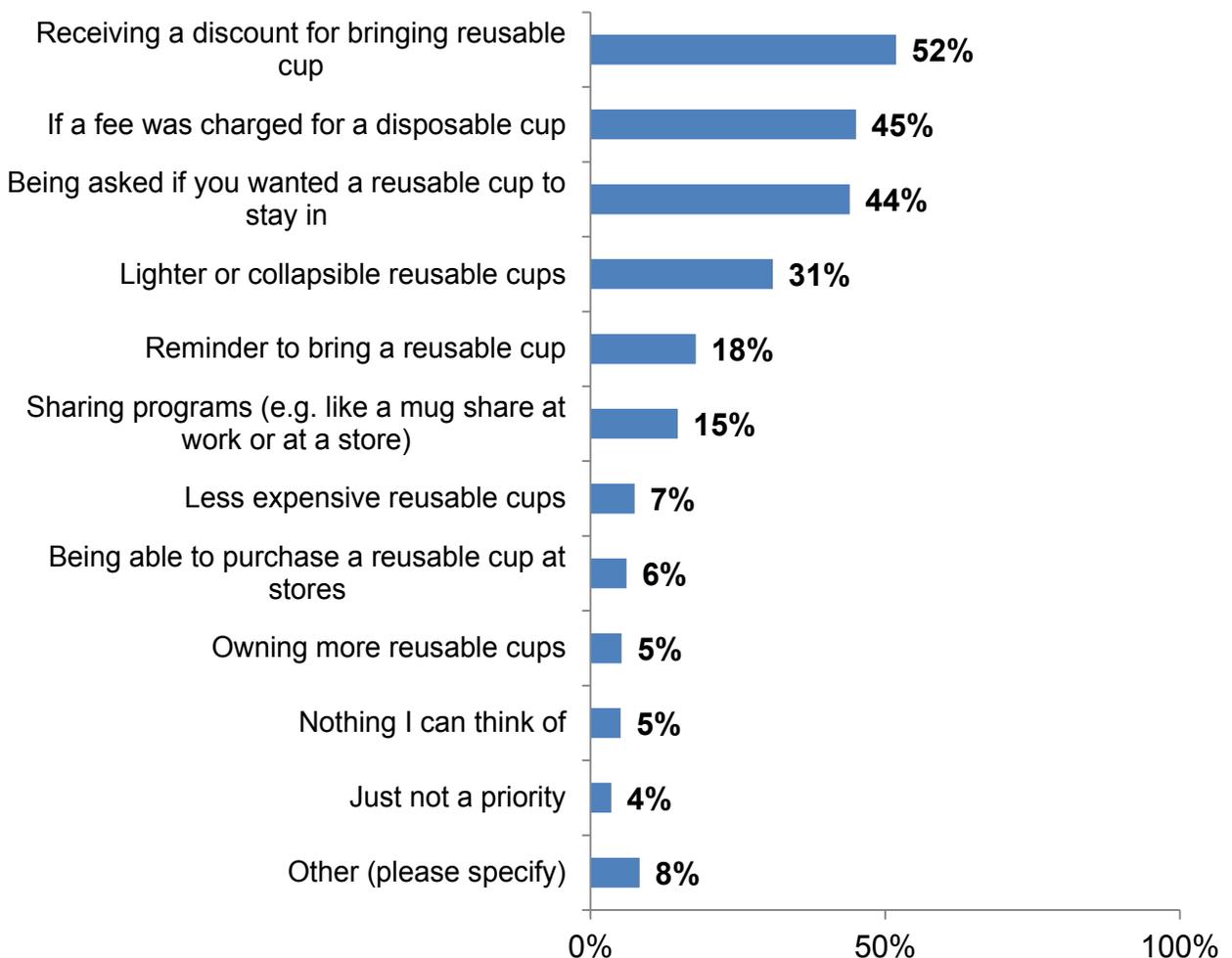
*Select up to 3.*





## 4b[iii]. What are the *key* things that would help you use a reusable cup more often?

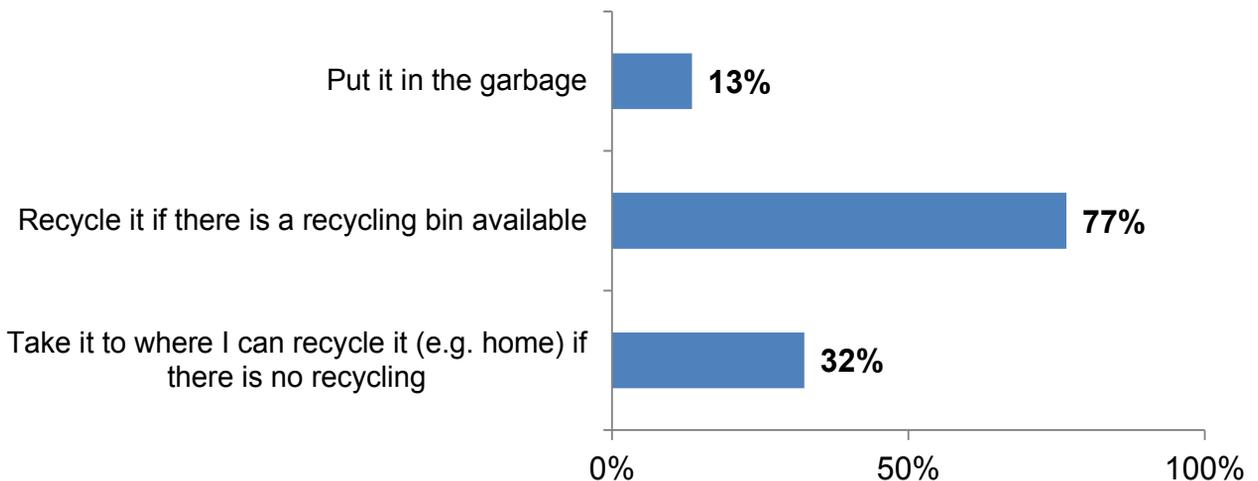
*Select up to 3.*





*[If previously indicated preferring a disposable cup sometimes]*

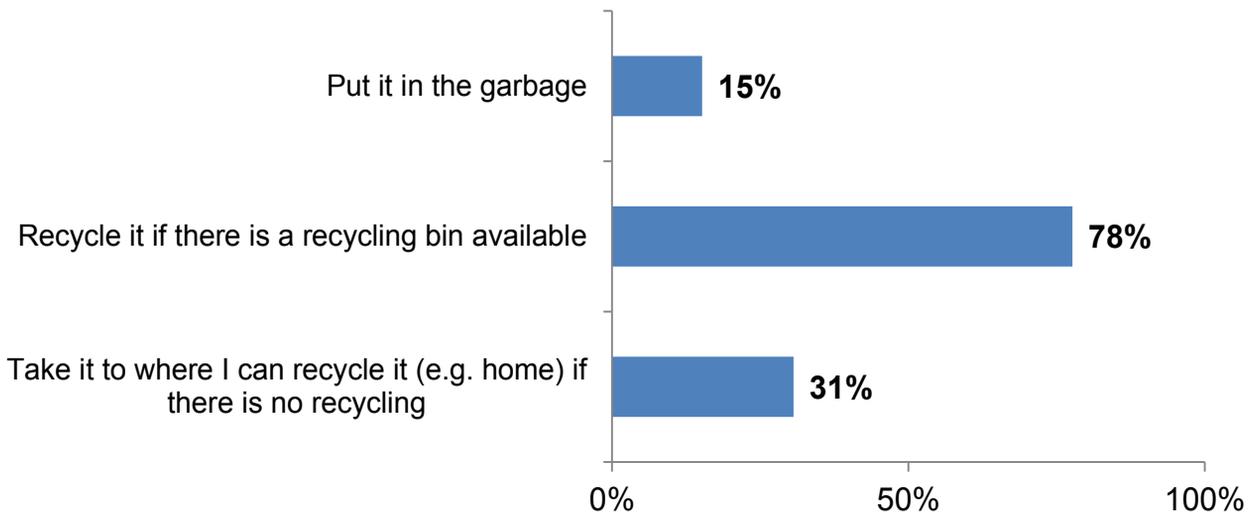
## **4c[i]. Now you've finished your drink... what do you normally do with your disposable plastic to-go cup?**





*[If previously indicated preferring a disposable cup sometimes]*

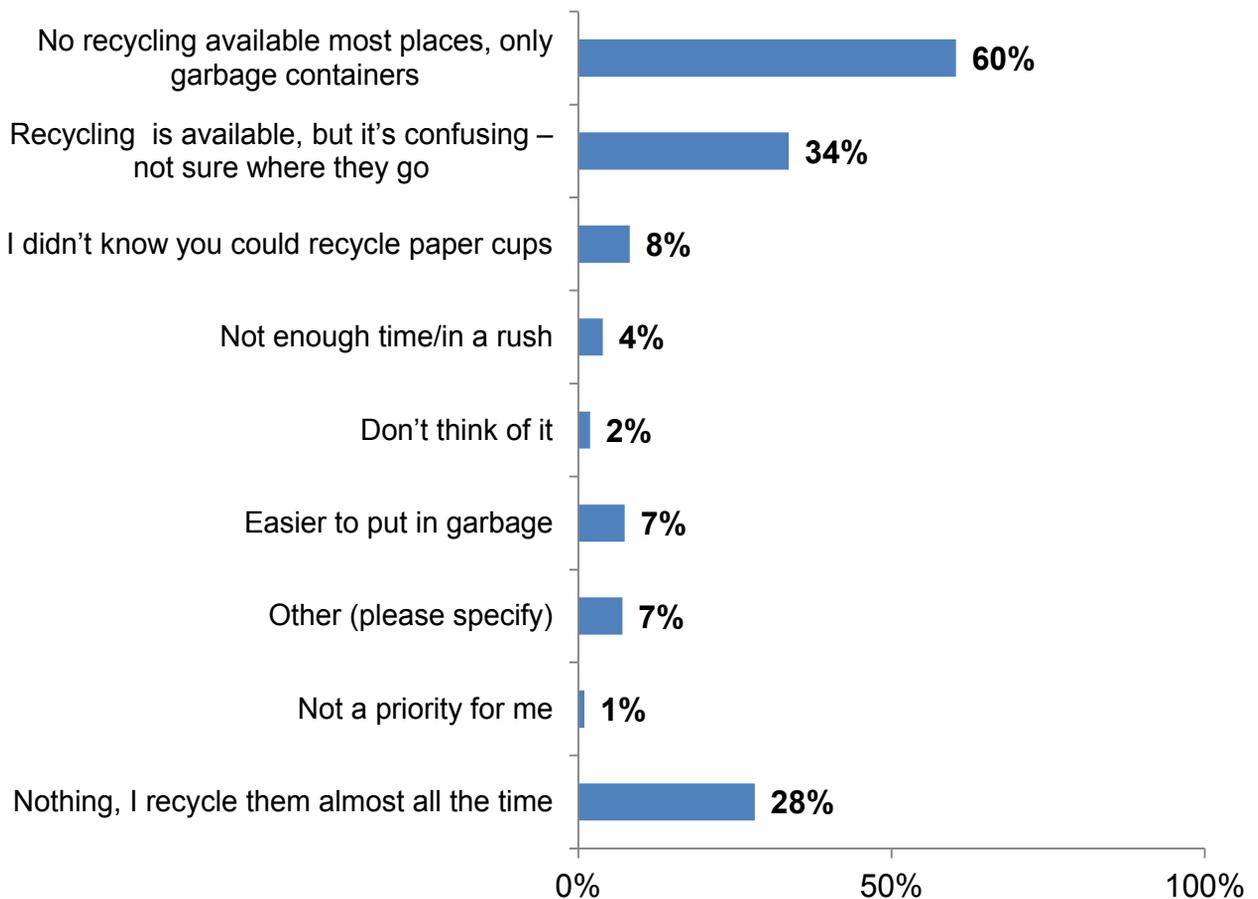
## 4c[ii]. Now you've finished your drink... what do you normally do with your disposable paper to-go cup?





## 4d. What makes it difficult to recycle your plastic or paper to-go cup?

Select up to 3.

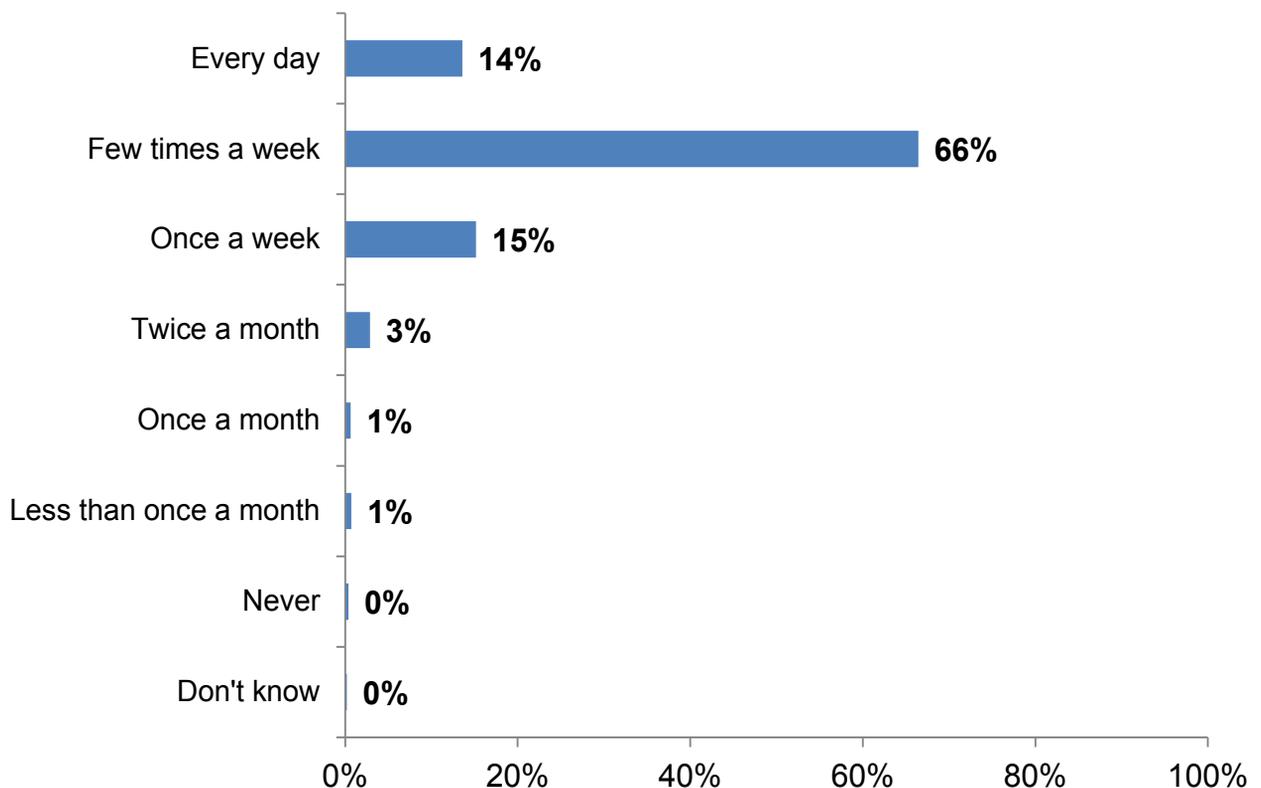


# Tell Us About Your Habits – Plastic and Paper Bags



## 1. On average, how often do you shop at stores that offer paper or plastic bags for you to carry purchased items?

*Please select one response only.*



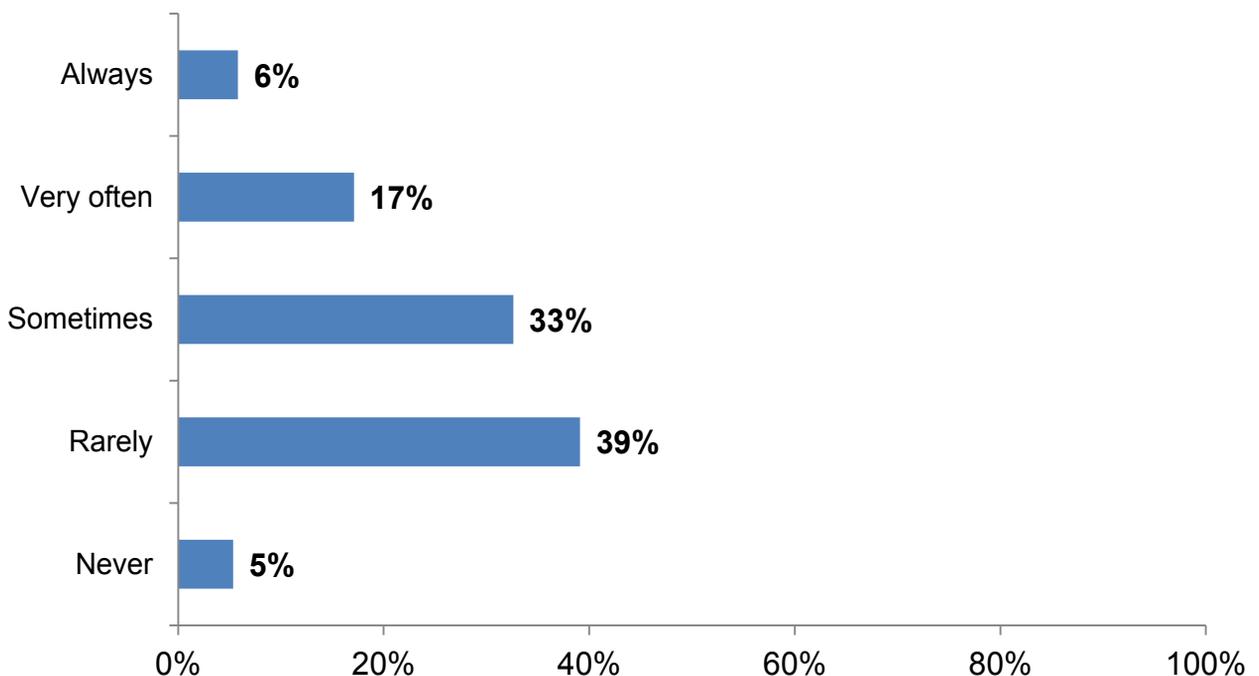
# Tell Us About Your Habits – Plastic and Paper Bags



*[If previously answered yes to shopping at stores that provide bags]*

## **1a. And how often do you get and use a paper or plastic bag to carry items you've bought ?**

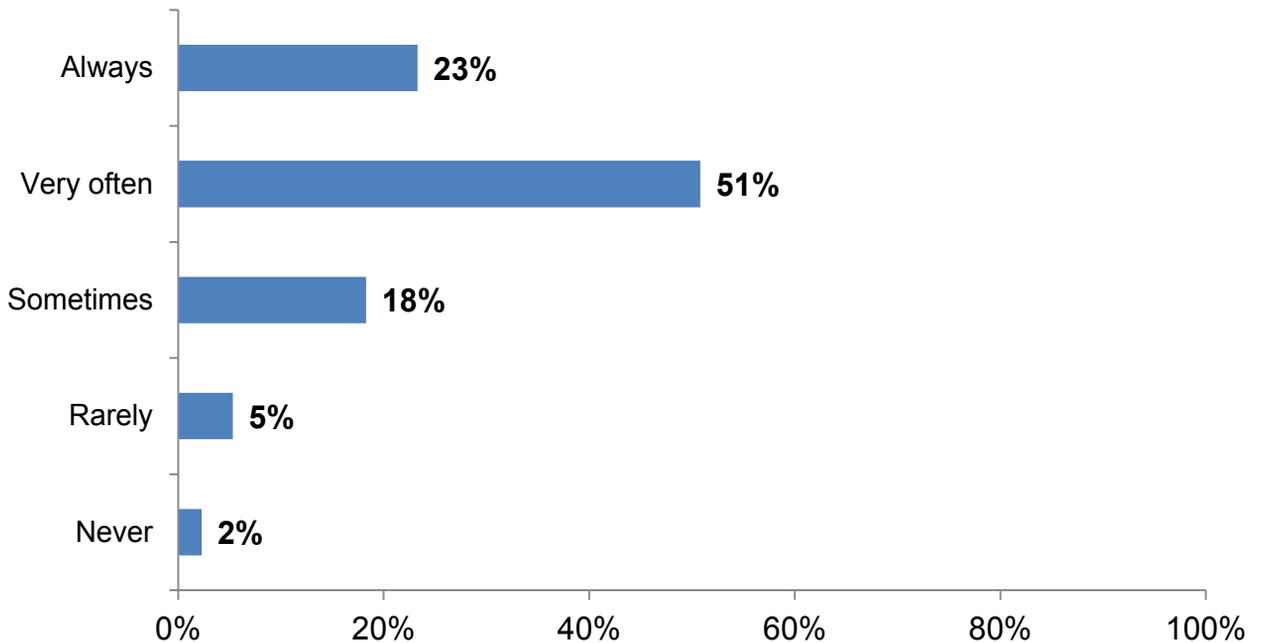
*Please select one response only.*





## 2. Do you bring a reusable bag when you're shopping? If you do, how often?

*Please select one response only.*

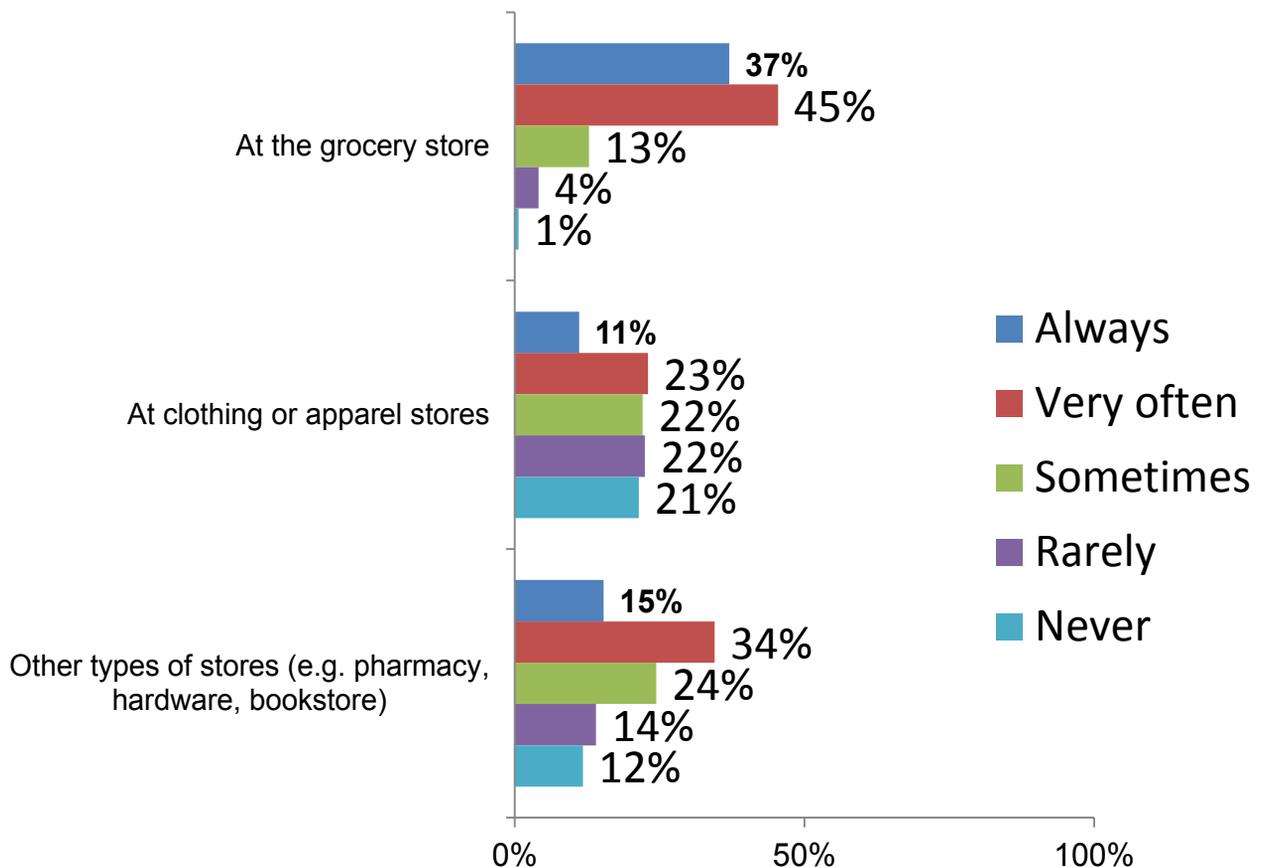


# Tell Us About Your Habits – Plastic and Paper Bags



*[If previously answered yes to bringing a reusable bag when shopping]*

## 2a(i). Where do you normally use your reusable bags?





## **2a[ii]. How do you manage to bring your reusable bag so regularly? What’s working for you?**

*Please be as specific as possible.*

**This open-ended question received 2177 responses.**

**Analysis of the responses revealed several major themes, including:**

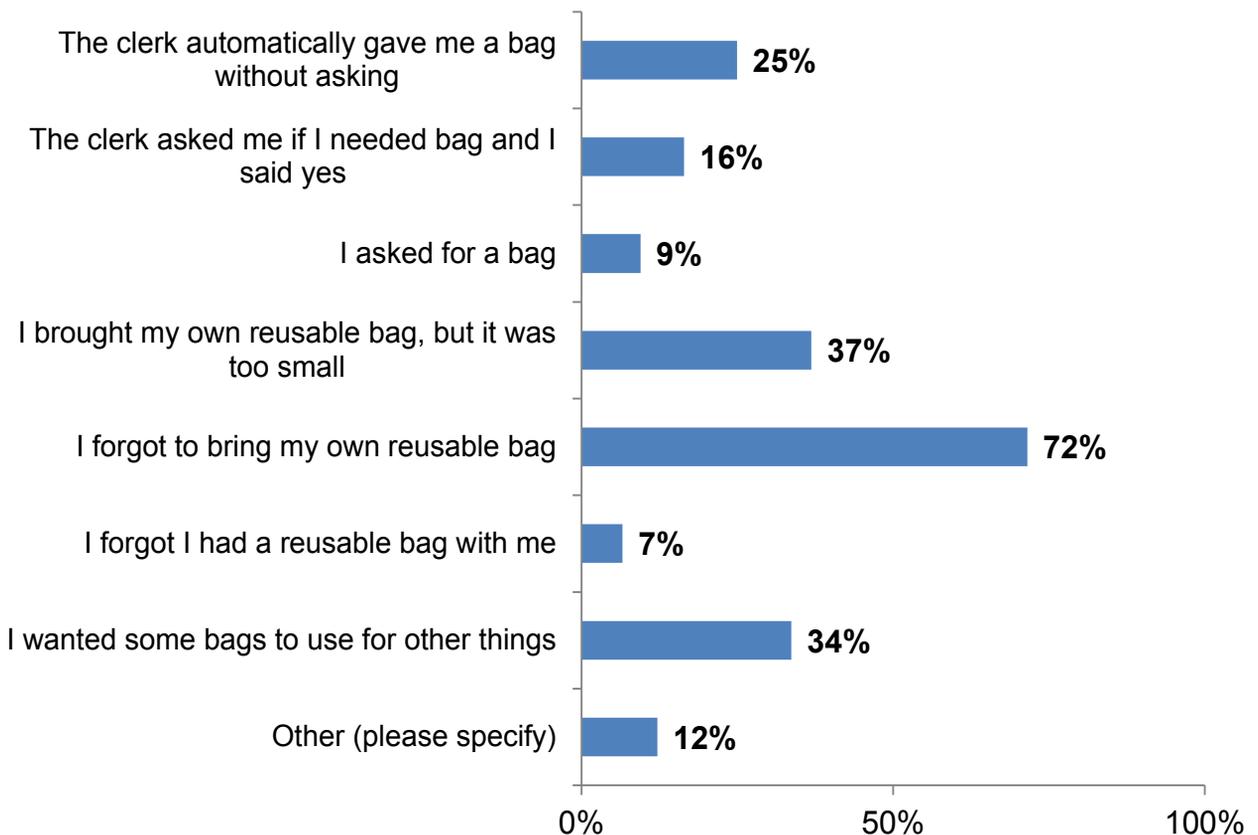
- **Always keeping one or more light and compact bags in a backpack or purse so they are handy for regular use, or using a backpack or purse to carry additional items instead of asking for a single-use bag.**
- **Keeping multiple bags handy in the car for shopping.**
- **Planning ahead, and keeping reusable bags near the door at home to help remember them.**
- **Making a conscious effort to develop a habit of bringing bags when shopping.**

# Tell Us About Your Habits – Plastic and Paper Bags



## 3. When you get a paper or plastic bag it's usually because...

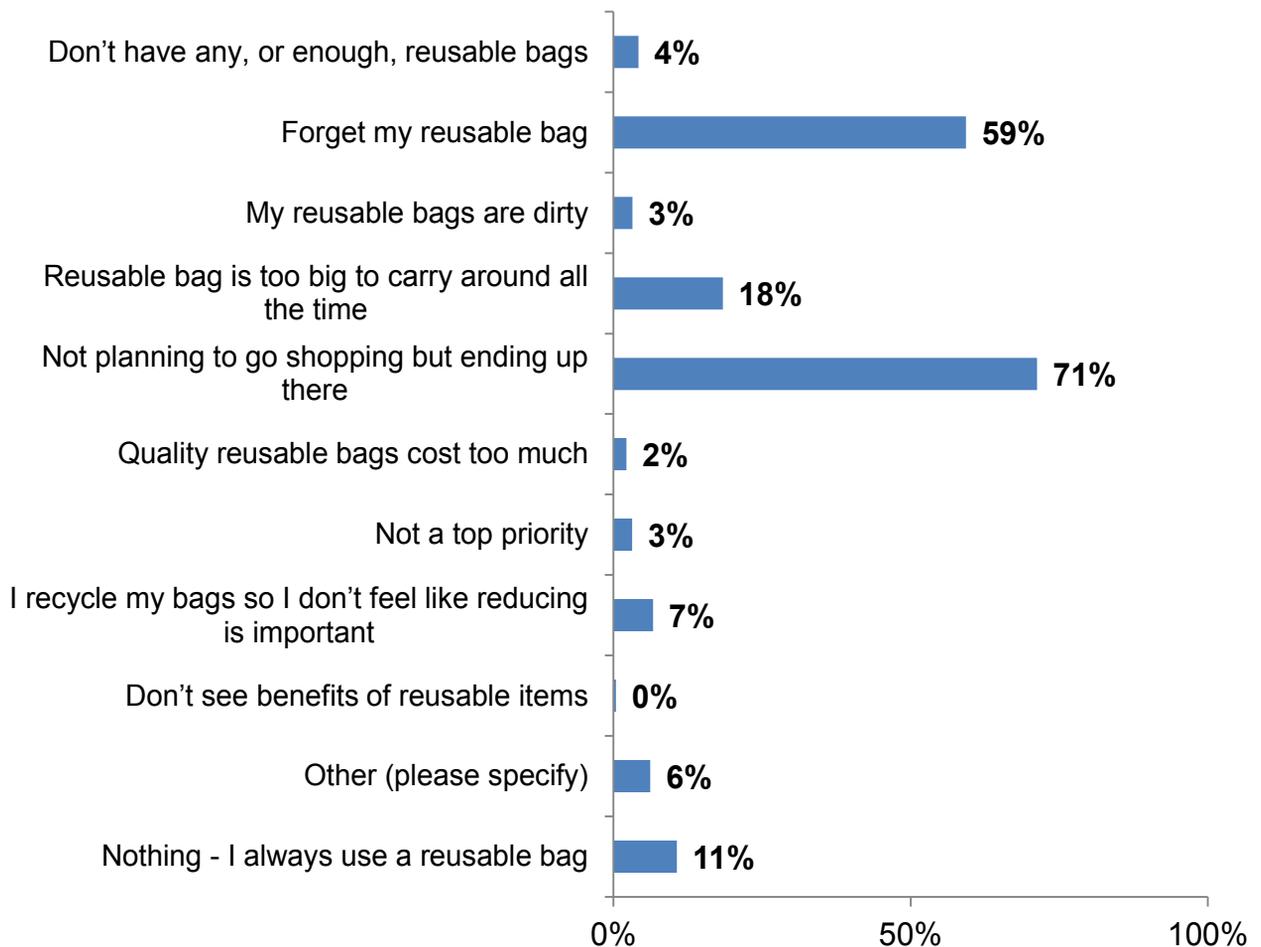
*Select up to 3.*





## 4. What are the *main* things that make it difficult to bring your own reusable bag?

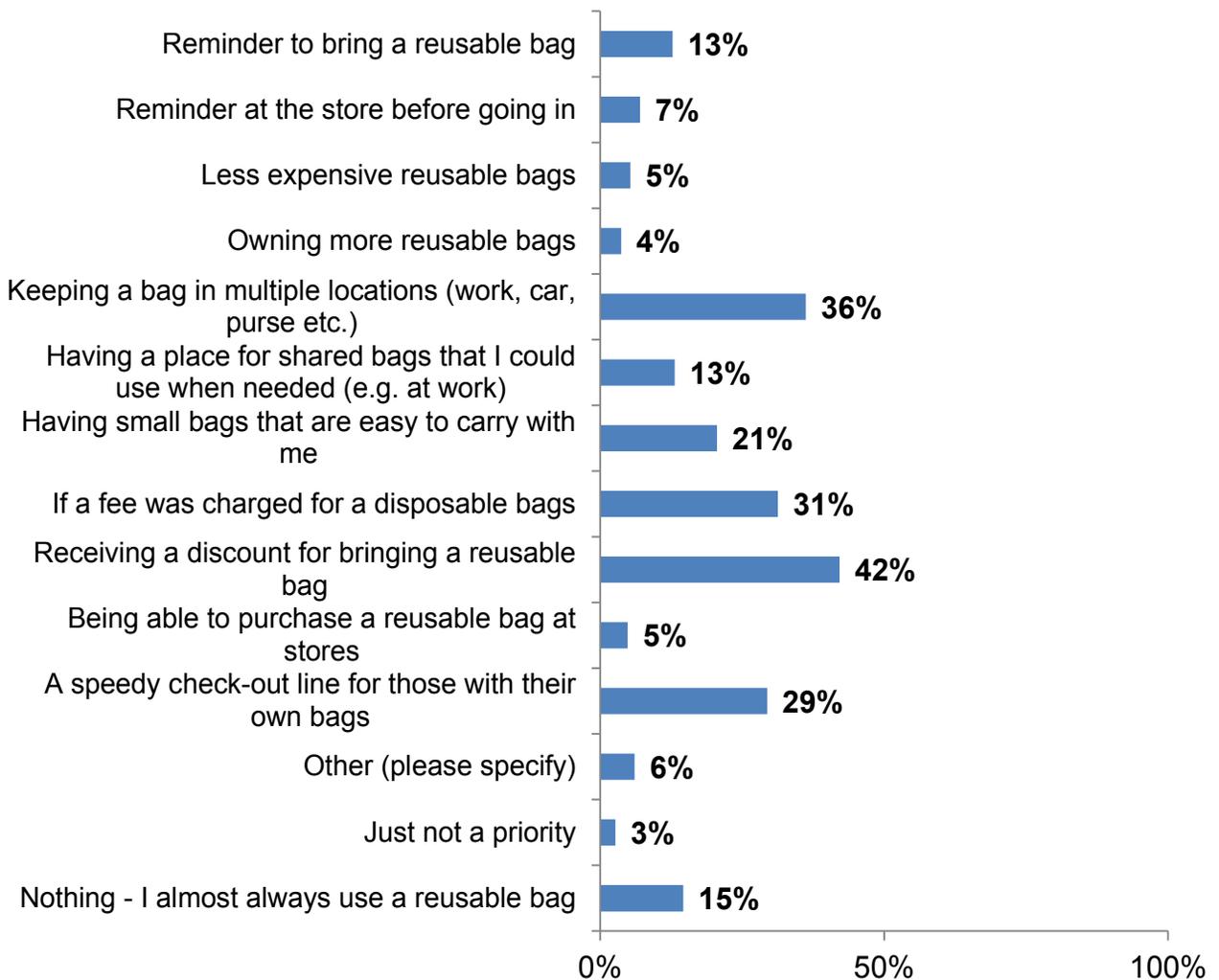
Select up to 3.





## 5. What are the *key* things that would help you use a reusable bag more often?

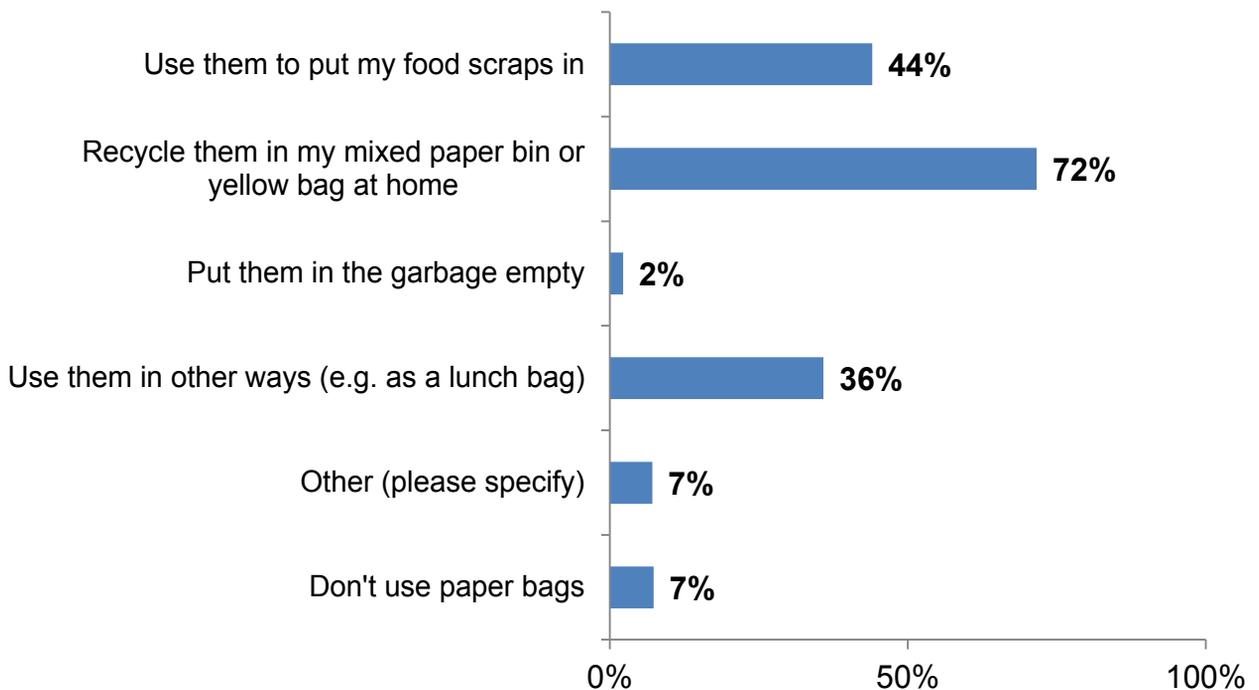
*Select up to 3.*





## 6. What do you usually do with your paper bags once you're finished carrying the items you bought?

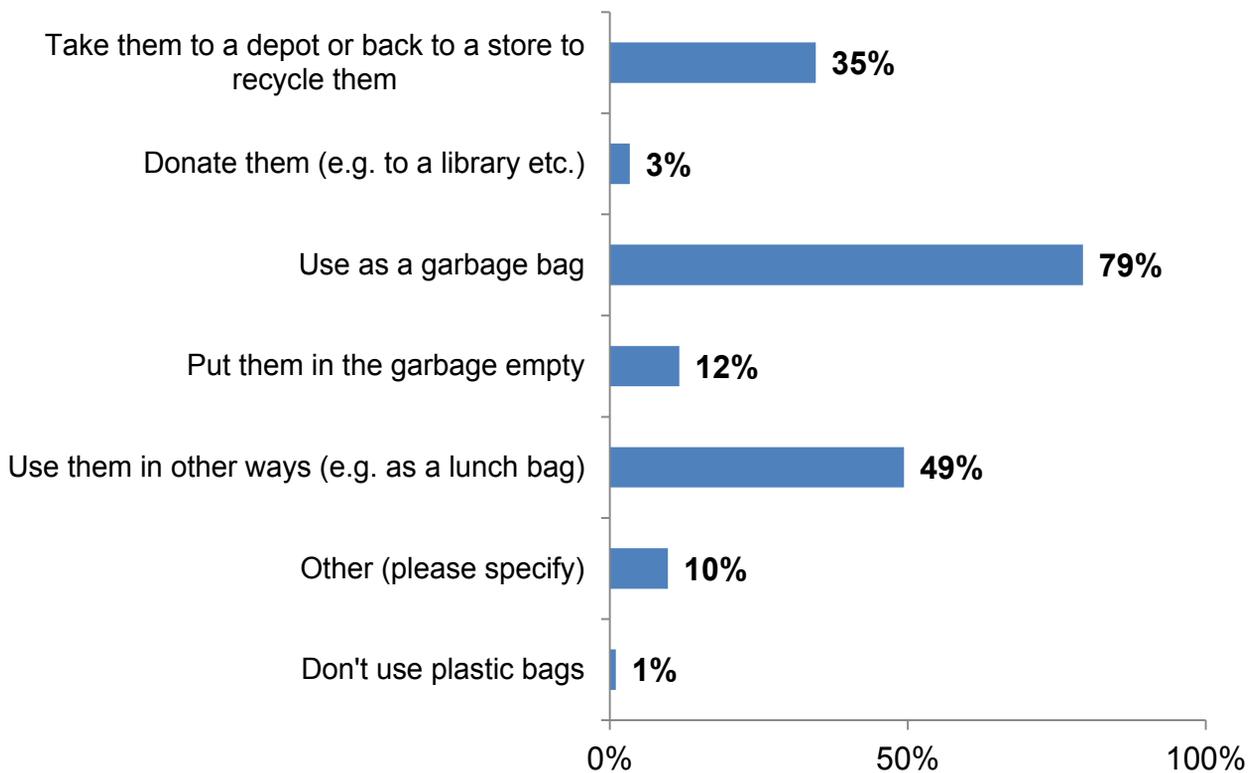
*Select up to 3.*





## 7. What do you normally do with your plastic bags once you're finished carrying the items you bought?

*Select up to 3.*



# Tell Us About Your Habits – Plastic and Paper Bags



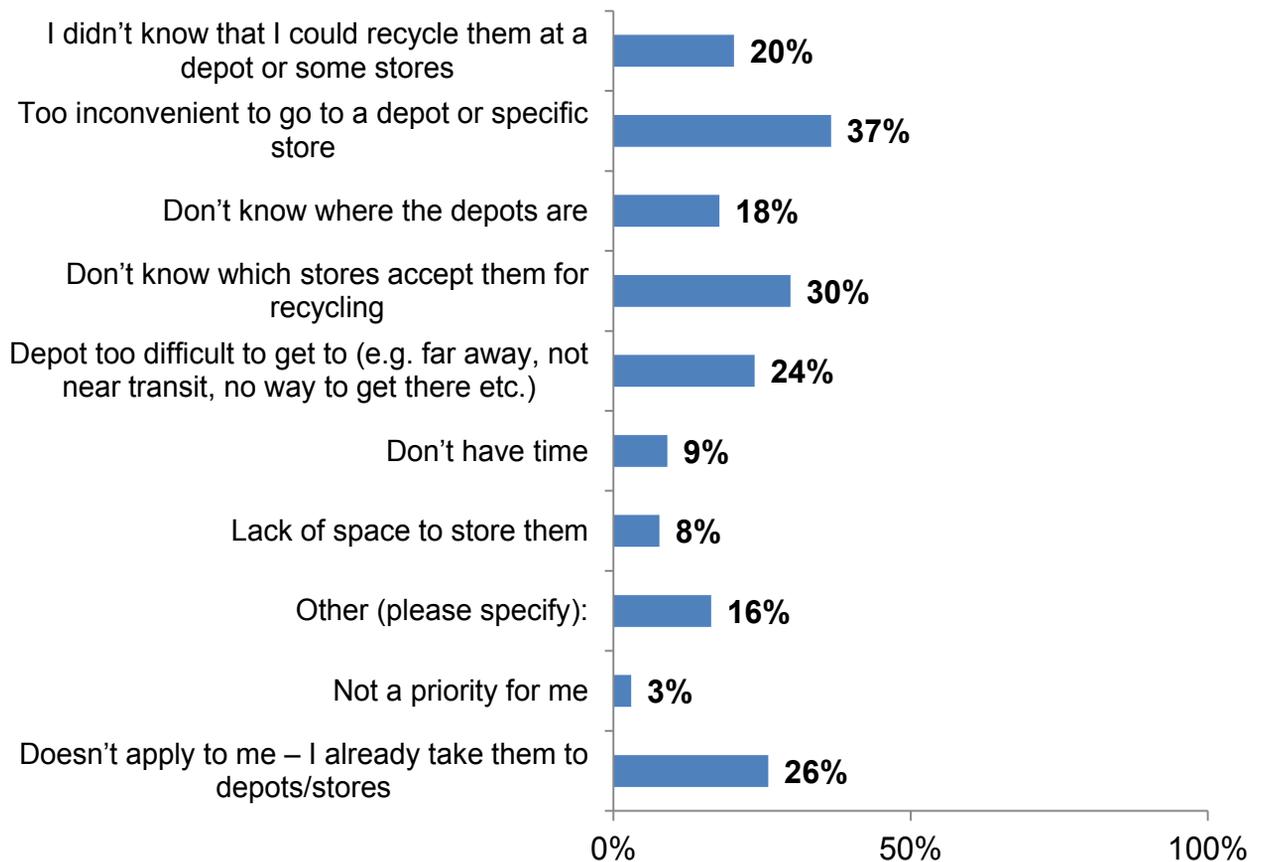
**As you may know, plastic bags can be recycled at recycling depots or some stores, but not in residential curbside or apartment building recycling in Vancouver.** Many people reuse plastic bags as garbage bags at home, and some plastic bags are also thrown away empty in the garage as well.

**We understand there are things that make it more difficult for people to visit depots or stores to drop off their plastic bags for recycling.**



## 8. If you sometimes dispose of empty plastic bags in the garbage instead of dropping them off for recycling, can you tell us the main reasons why?

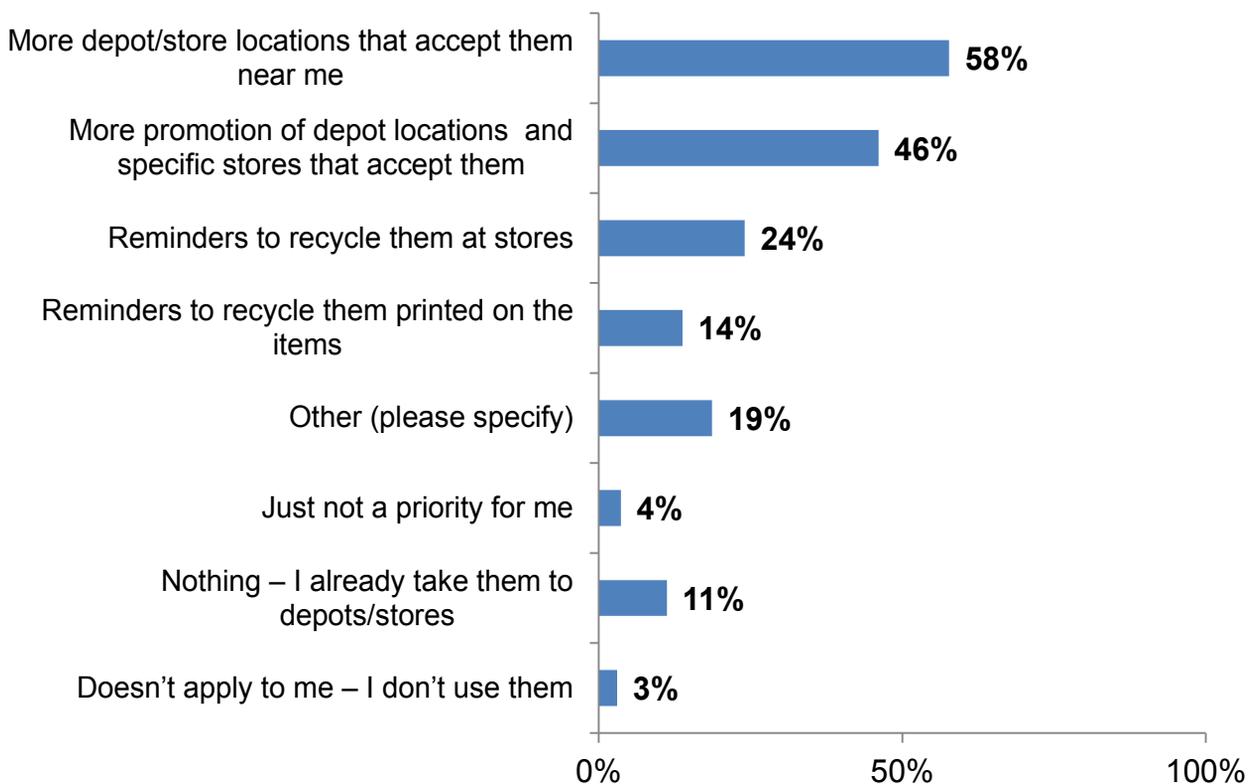
*Select up to 3.*





## 9. What are the key things that would make it easier for you to recycle your plastic bags at depots or specific stores for recycling?

*Select up to 3.*



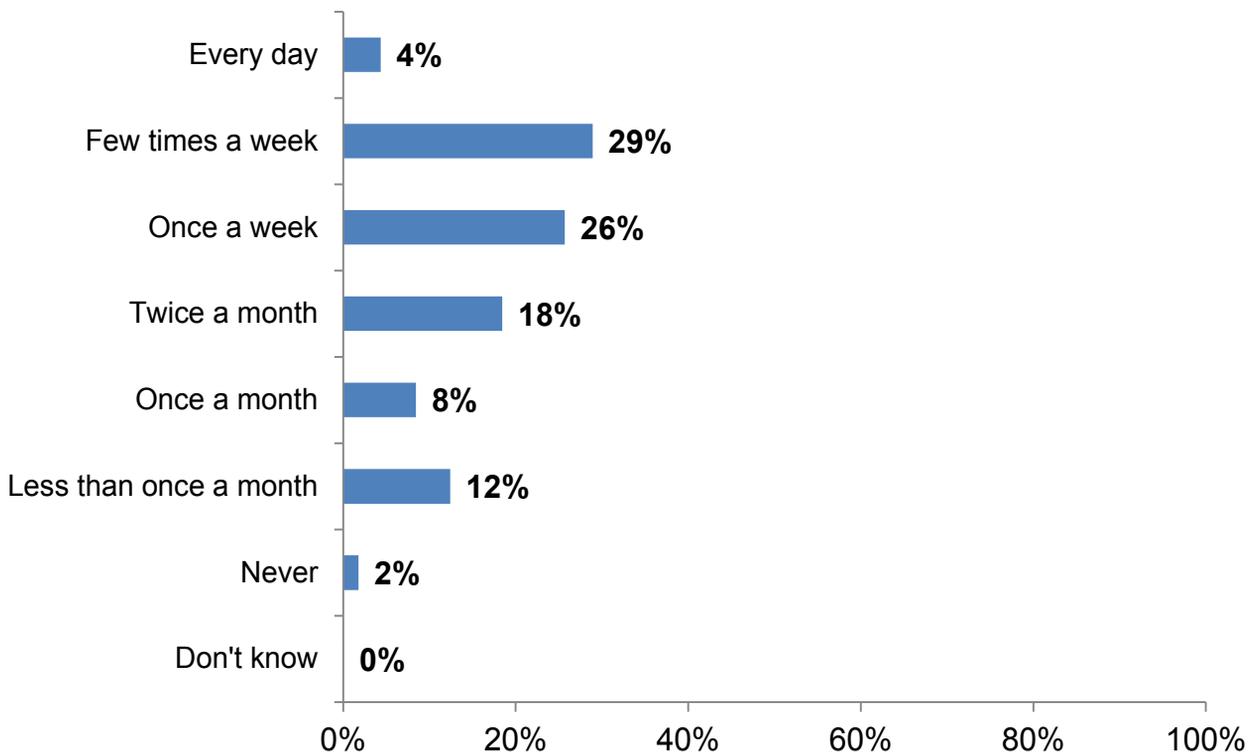
# Tell Us About Your Habits – Disposable Containers



## 1. On average, how often do you purchase food from a café, coffee shop or “quick-serve” restaurant?

*“Quick-serve” restaurant: a restaurant that typically serves fast-food and has counter-service instead of table service.*

*Please select one response only.*

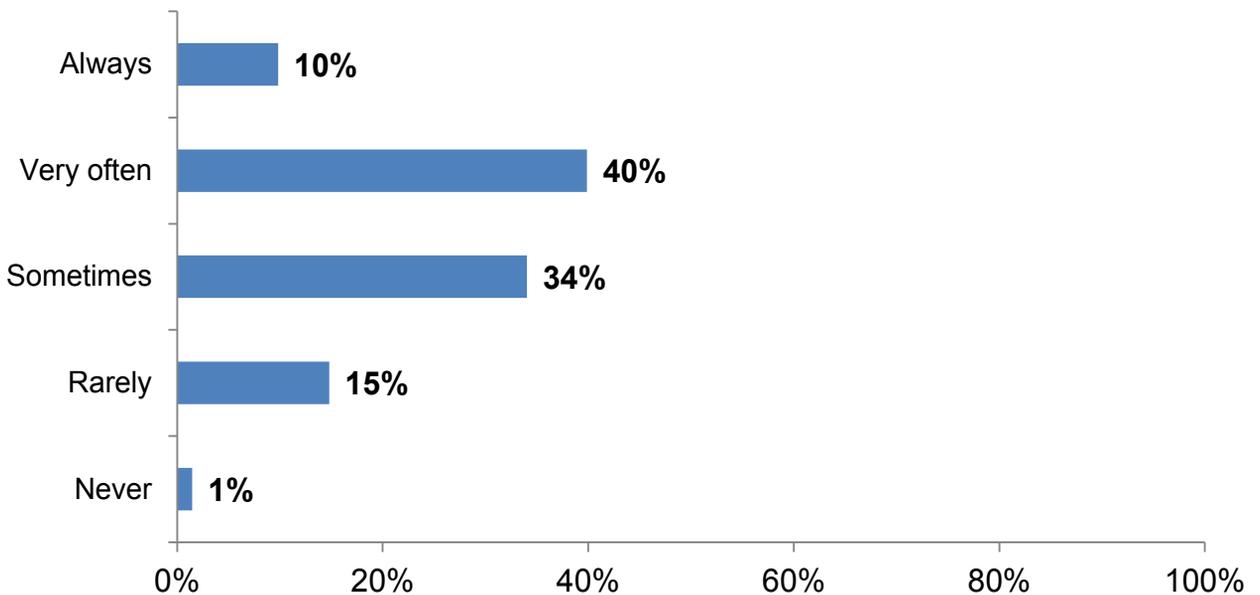


# Tell Us About Your Habits – Disposable Containers



## 2. And when you order food from a café, coffee shop or quick-serve restaurant, how often do you want your food to-go?

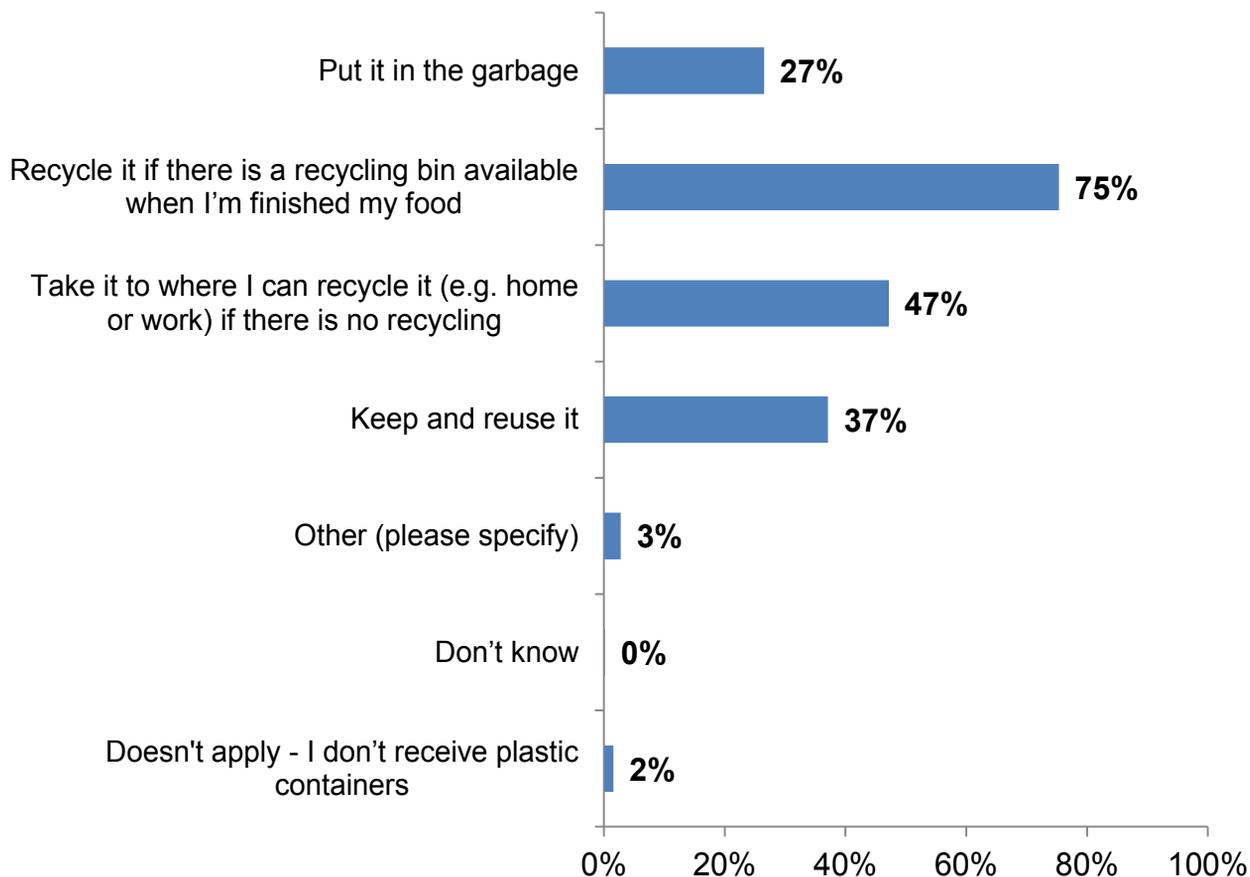
*Please select one response only.*





## 3. What do you usually do with your plastic take-out containers once you've finished your food?

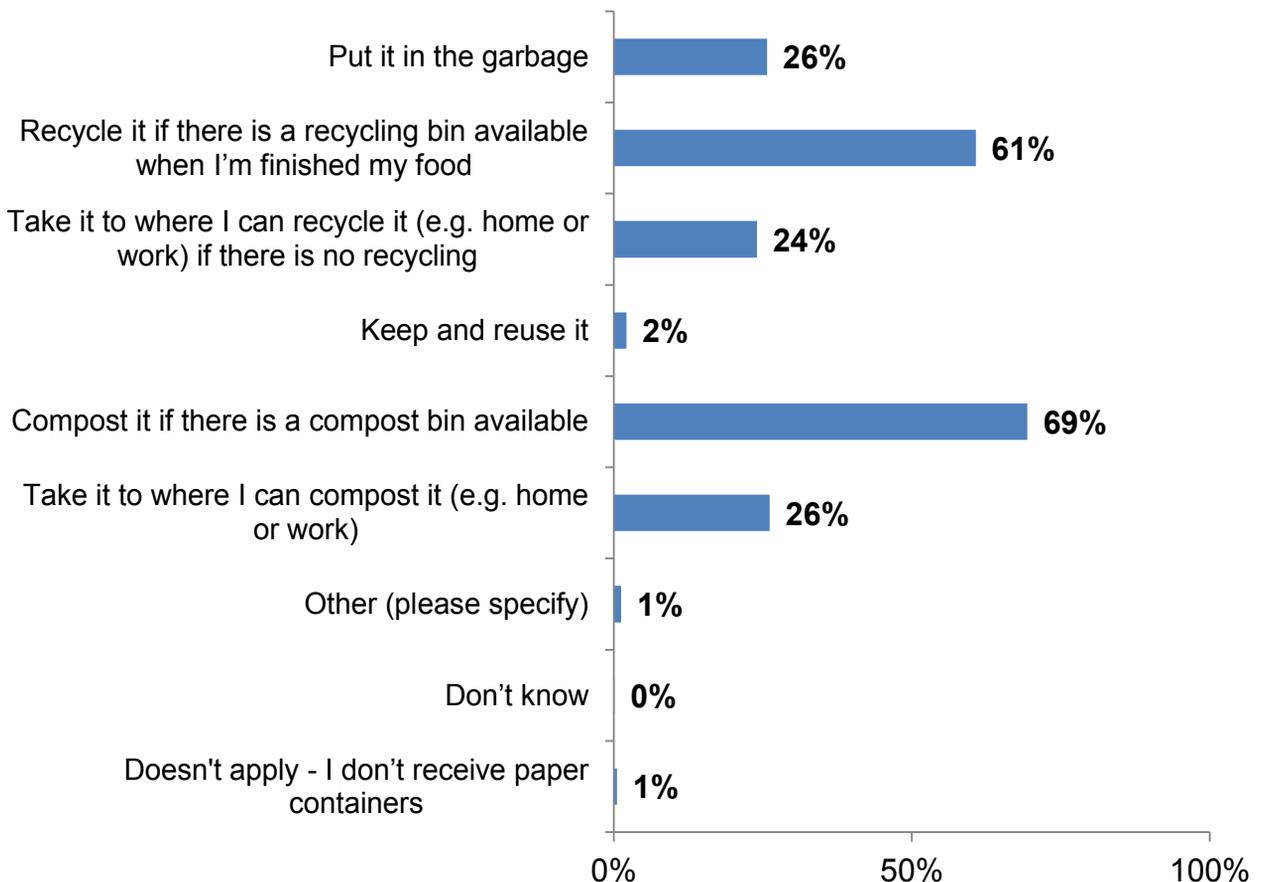
Select up to 3.





## 4. What do you usually do with your paper take-out containers once you've finished your food?

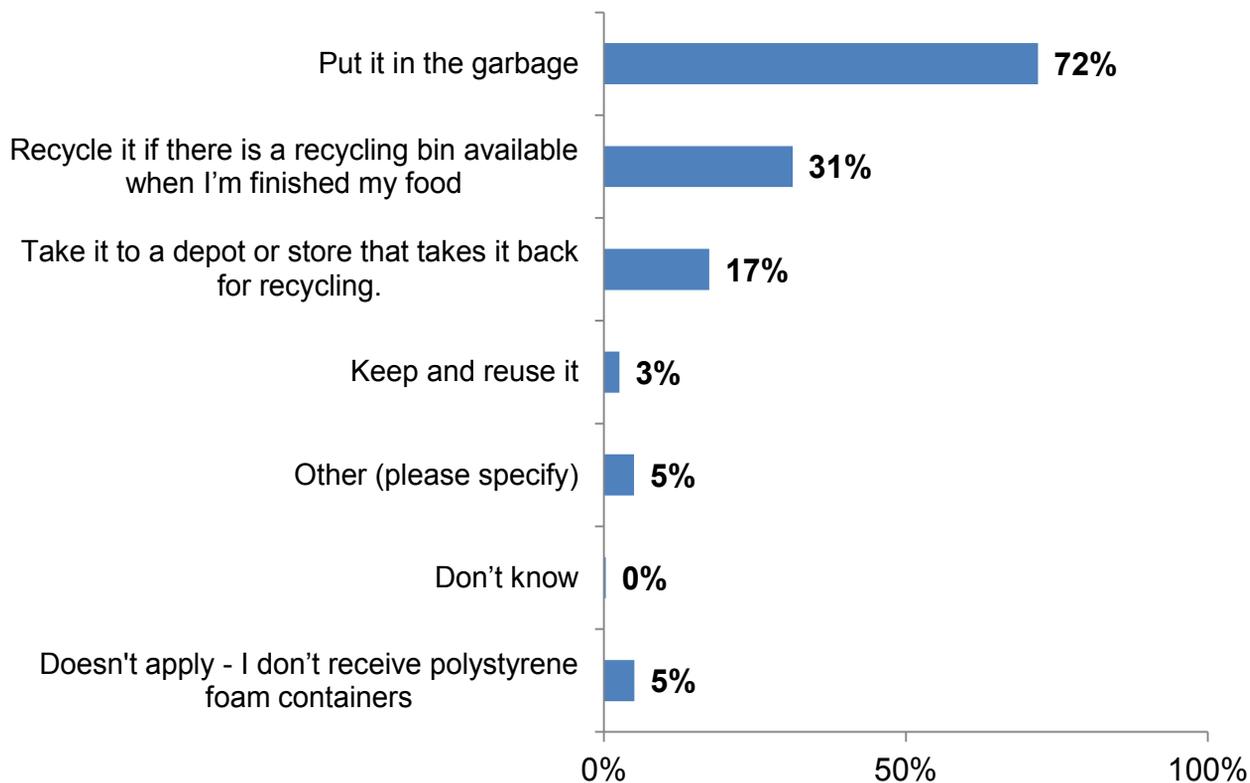
*Select up to 3.*





## 5. What do you usually do with your polystyrene foam take-out containers once you've finished your food (polystyrene foam is what people commonly call “Styrofoam”)?

*Select up to 3.*



## Tell Us About Your Habits – Disposable Containers



**Did you know that clean plastic, aluminum and paper containers with a plastic lining can go in your mixed container recycling? Unlined paper containers can go in your Green Bin, but polystyrene foam needs to be taken to a depot or participating store for recycling.**

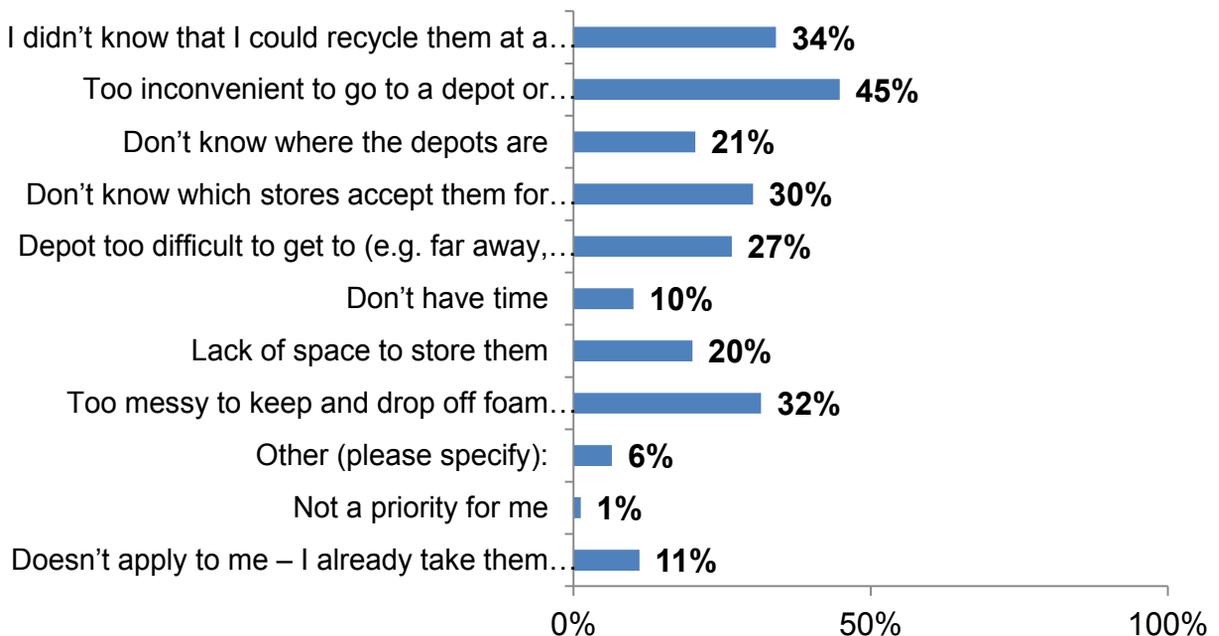
# Tell Us About Your Habits – Disposable Containers (Part 2)



As you may know, polystyrene foam containers and cups can be recycled at recycling depots or some stores, but not in residential curbside or apartment building recycling in Vancouver. We understand there are things that make it more difficult for people to visit depots or stores to drop off their polystyrene foam containers and cups for recycling.

## 1. If you sometimes dispose of foam containers/cups in the garbage instead of dropping them off for recycling, can you tell us the main reasons why?

*Select up to 3.*

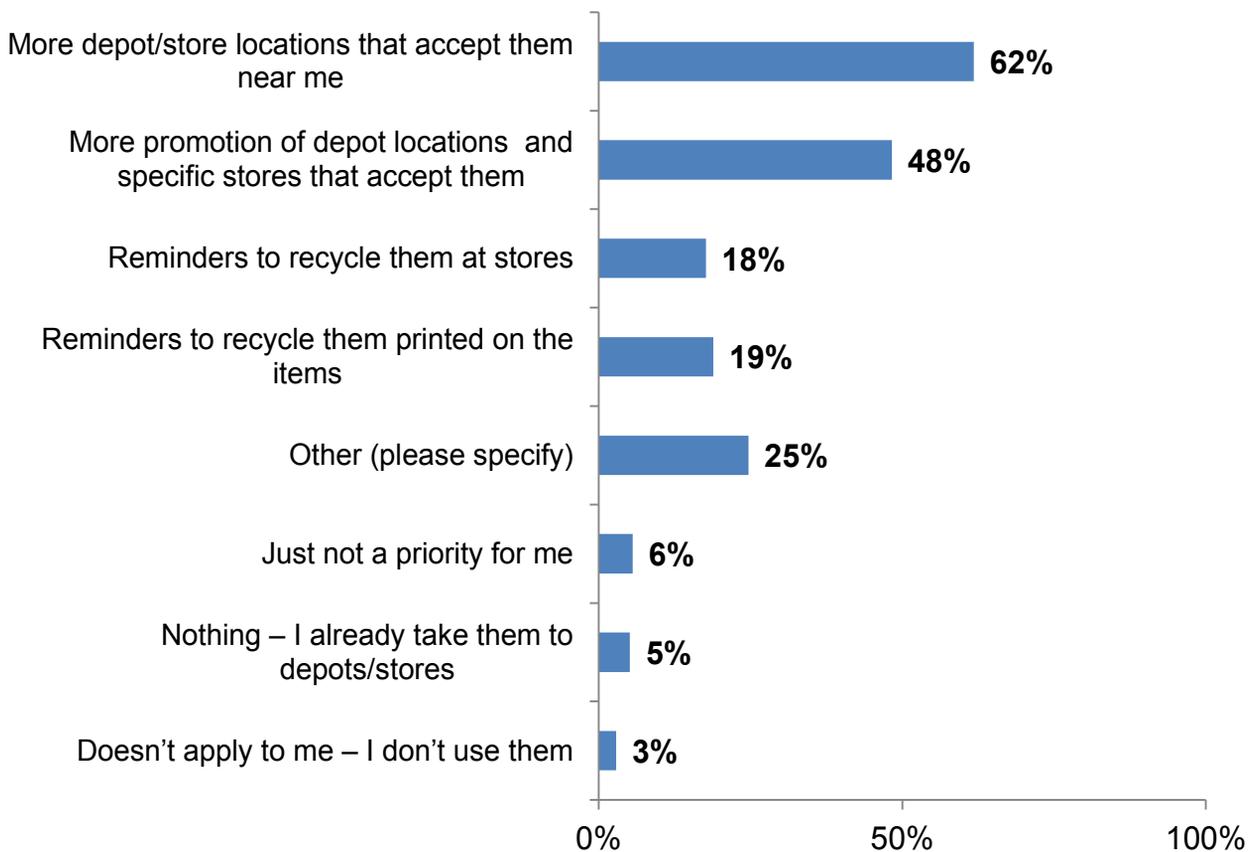


# Tell Us About Your Habits – Disposable Containers (Part 2)



## 2. What are the key things that would make it easier for you to recycle your polystyrene foam containers and cups?

Select up to 3.



# Options Being Considered To Address Single-Use Items



We want to hear your thoughts on options to reduce the use of disposable cups, bags and containers, as well as options to increase the recycling of them. Some options could be applied more broadly while others apply to specific types of single-use items.

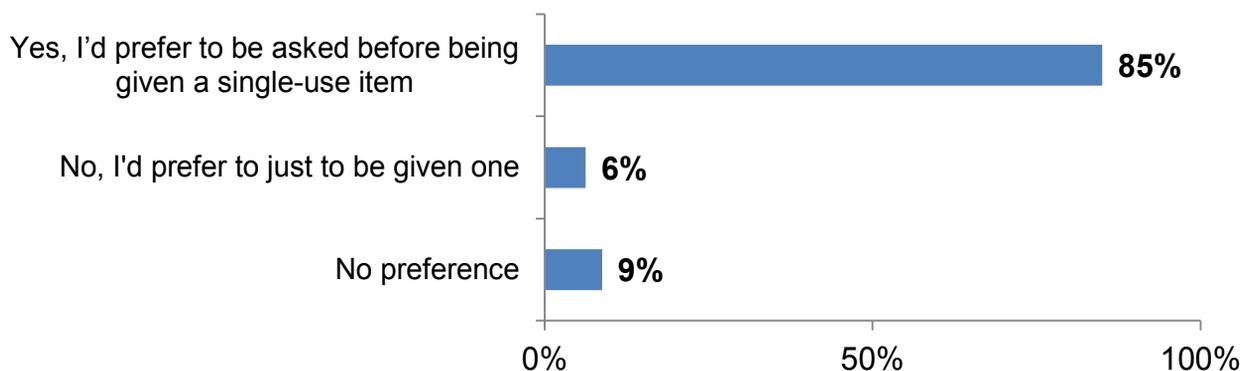
**Disposables By Request:** Asking a customer if they want a single-use item instead of defaulting to giving it out, could affect how often these items are used.

# Options Being Considered To Address Single-Use Items



**1[a]. Do you have any preference for whether you're asked if you want a single-use item before being given one (e.g. bag, to-go cup, take-out containers)? This practice could also be applied to other single-use items such as straws and plastic utensils.**

*Please select one response only.*

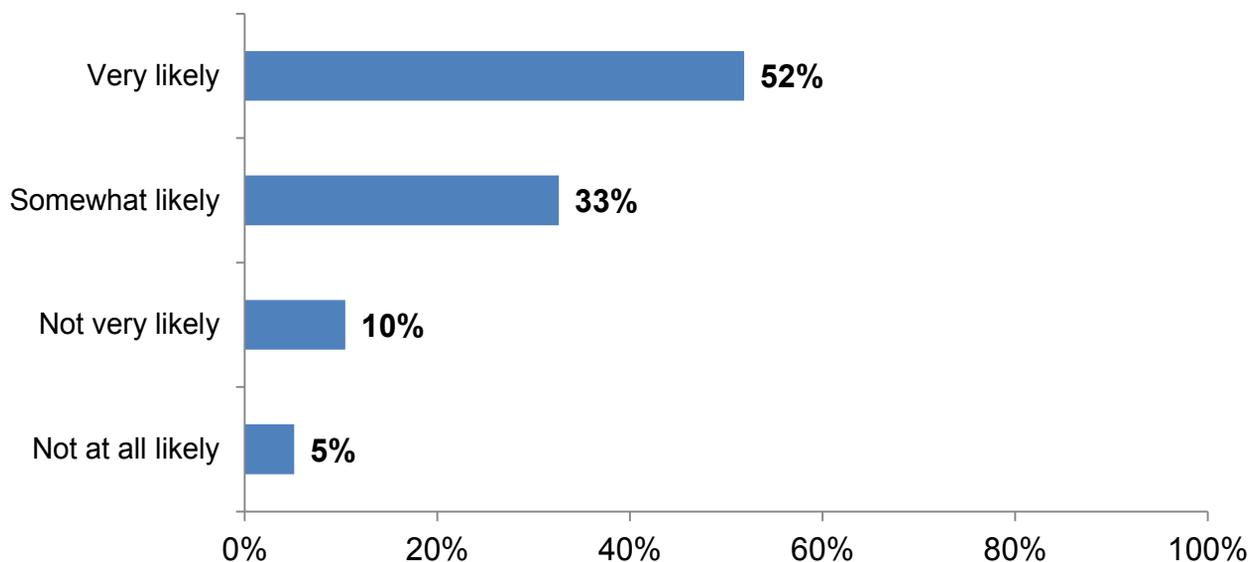


# Options Being Considered To Address Single-Use Items



**[1b.] If you were asked whether you wanted one of these items (instead of just being given one), would it have an impact? In other words, would it reduce how often you took them?**

*Please select one response only.*



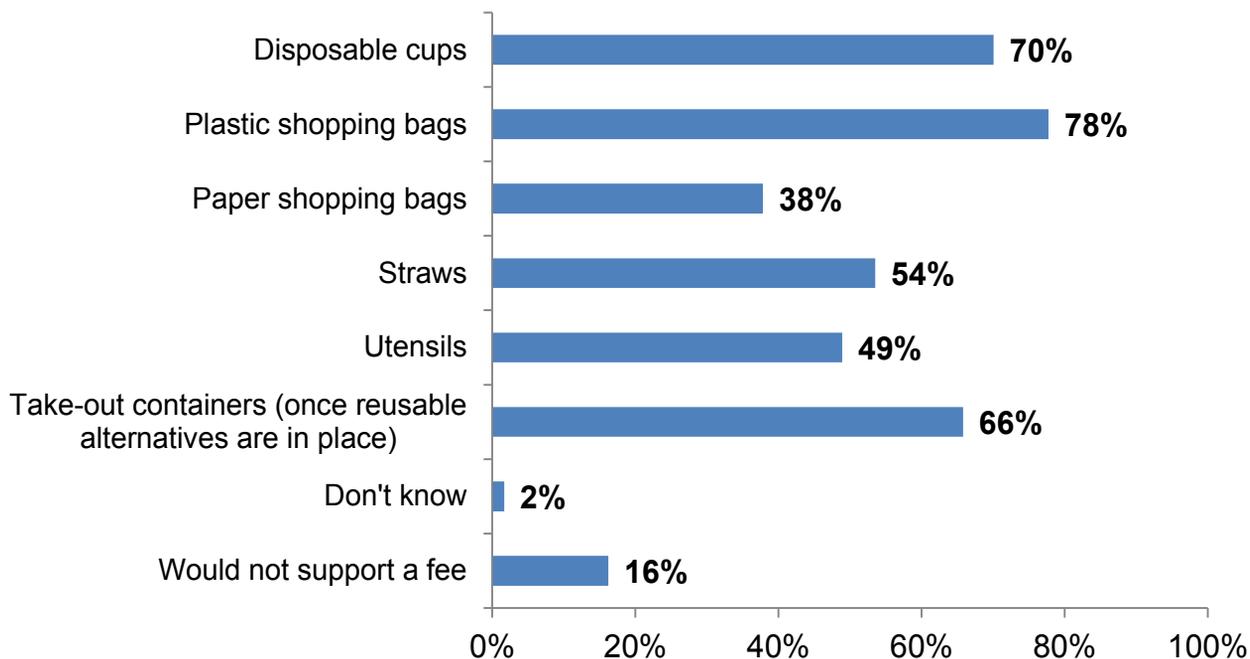
# Options Being Considered To Address Single-Use Items



**Fees for Single-Use Items:** Fees for single-use items have been shown to reduce their use. Fees put a value on these items, and can motivate consumers to use reusable options instead, like bringing a reusable shopping bag. Fees can be avoided if you bring your own bag or cup.

## 2[i]. Which of the following single-use items would you support fees for?

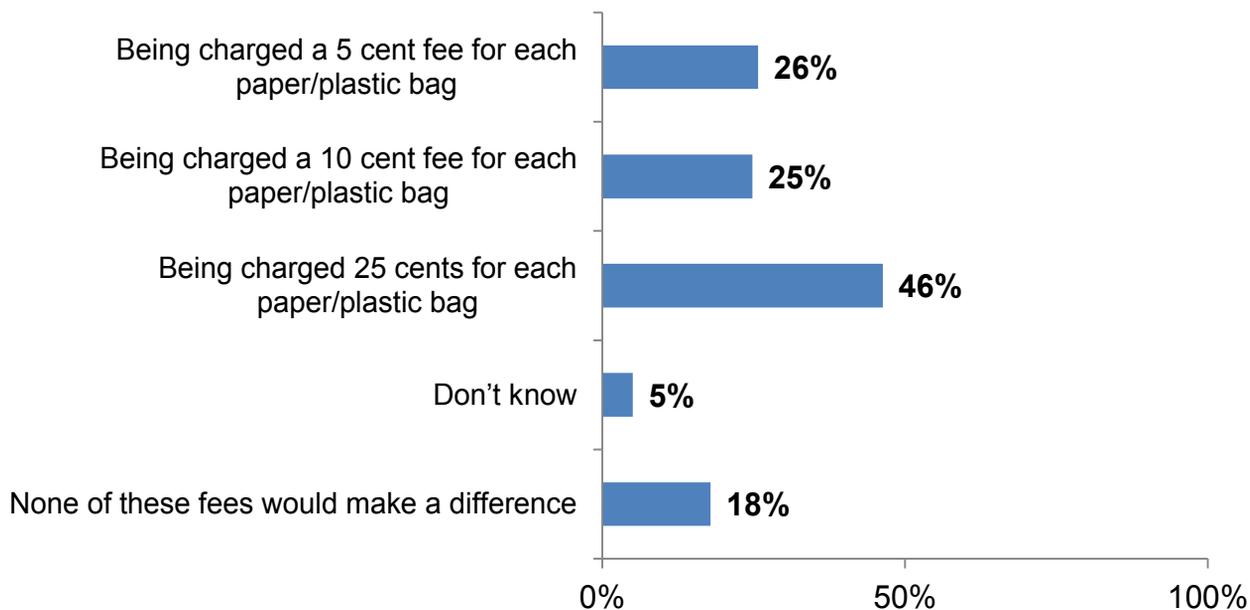
*Please select all that apply.*





## 2[ii]. For paper and plastic bags specifically, how much of a fee/charge on these bags would motivate you to bring a reusable bag?

*Please select all that apply.*

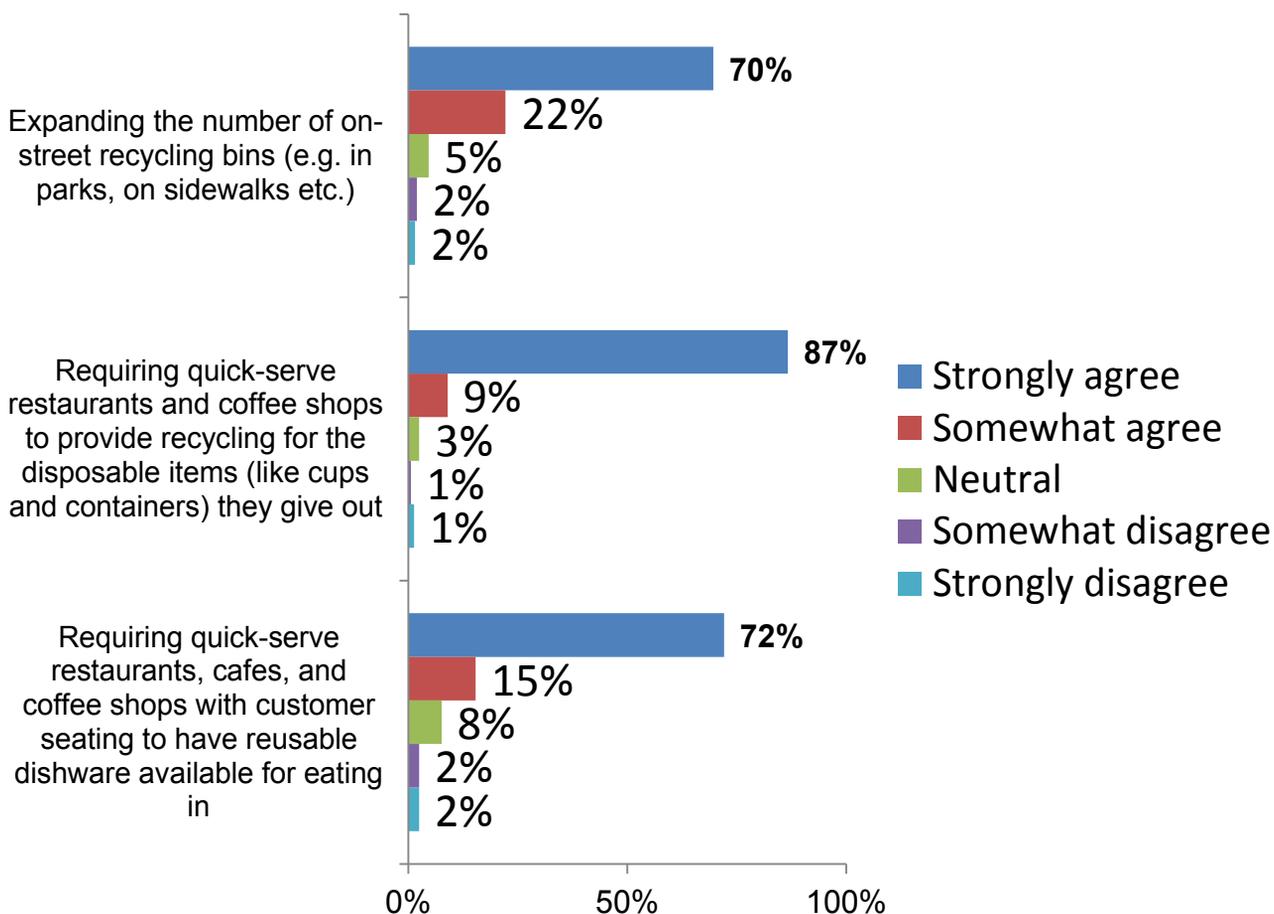


# Options Being Considered To Address Single-Use Items



**Availability of Reusable and Recycling Options for Single-Use Items:** Making recycling and reusable options more available can impact how frequently single-use items are recycled and used.

## 3. Do you agree or disagree with these possible actions?



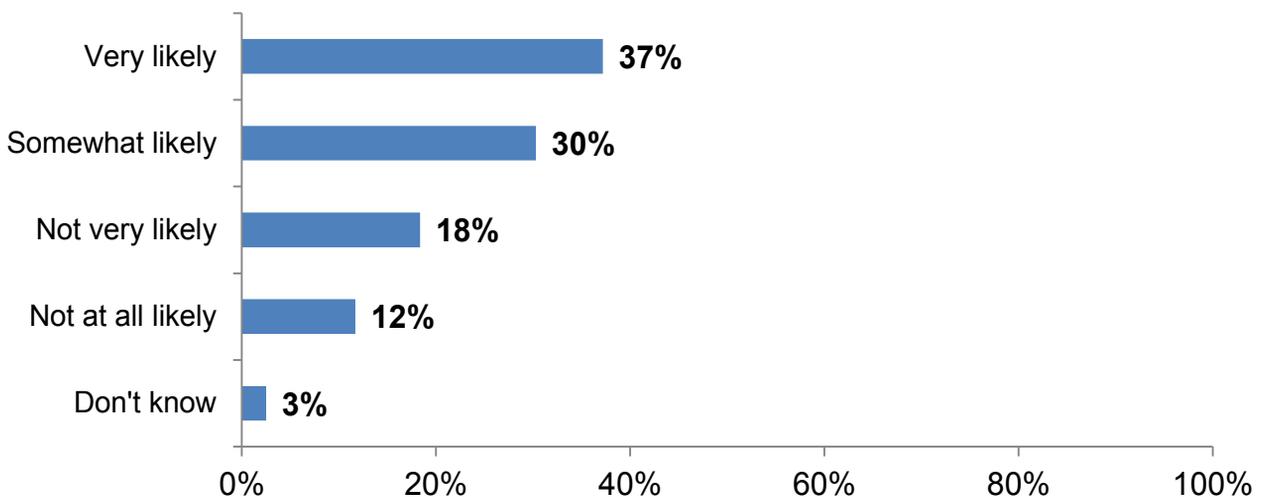
# Options Being Considered To Address Single-Use Items



**Public Health Guidelines for Reusable Containers:** Using your own travel mug is quite common at coffee shops, but coffee shops are required to follow specific health guidelines when handling customer's cups to ensure that the food preparation areas are kept clean and the chances of food-borne illnesses is minimized. There are not yet similar guidelines which allow quick-serve restaurants to fill containers that customers bring with take-out food.

## 4. If health guidelines allowed businesses to do this (while still maintaining food safety), how likely are you to bring your own container for take-out food?

*Please select one response only.*



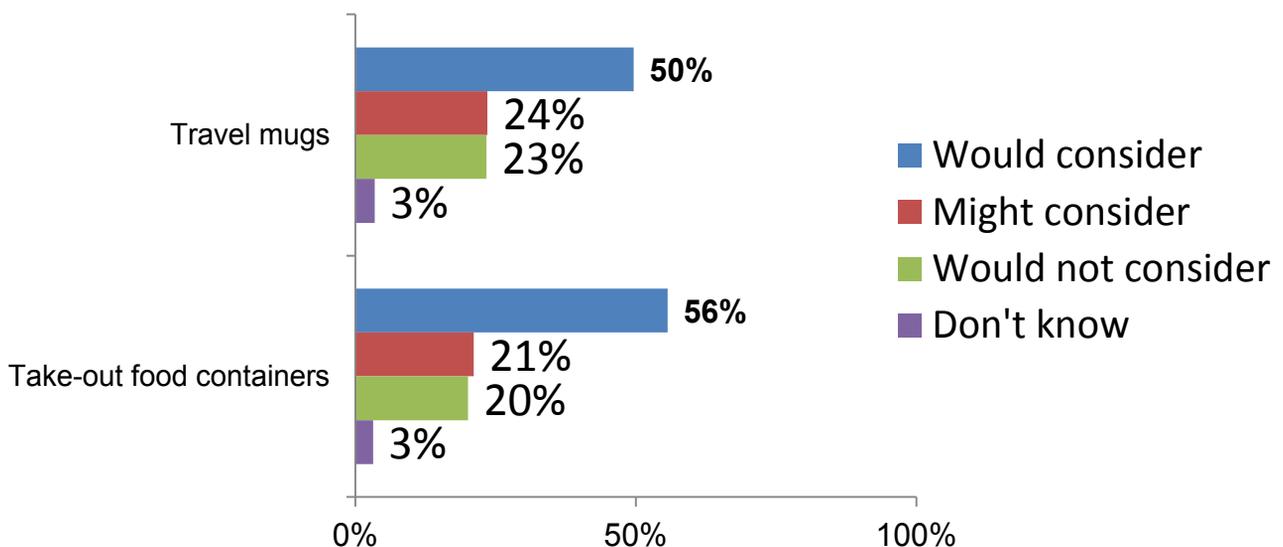
# Options Being Considered To Address Single-Use Items



**Reusable Sharing Program for Single-Use Cups and Containers:** In some cities like Freiberg, Germany and Portland, Oregon, there are reusable cup and take-out container programs, similar to car-share or bike-share programs. Consumers can take reusable cups and containers from participating restaurants to-go and later return them to a network of participating restaurants or collection points across the City. The cups and containers are cleaned and sanitized after each use, just like other reusable dishes used in restaurants.

## 5. Would you consider using this option for...?

*Please select one response for each item.*



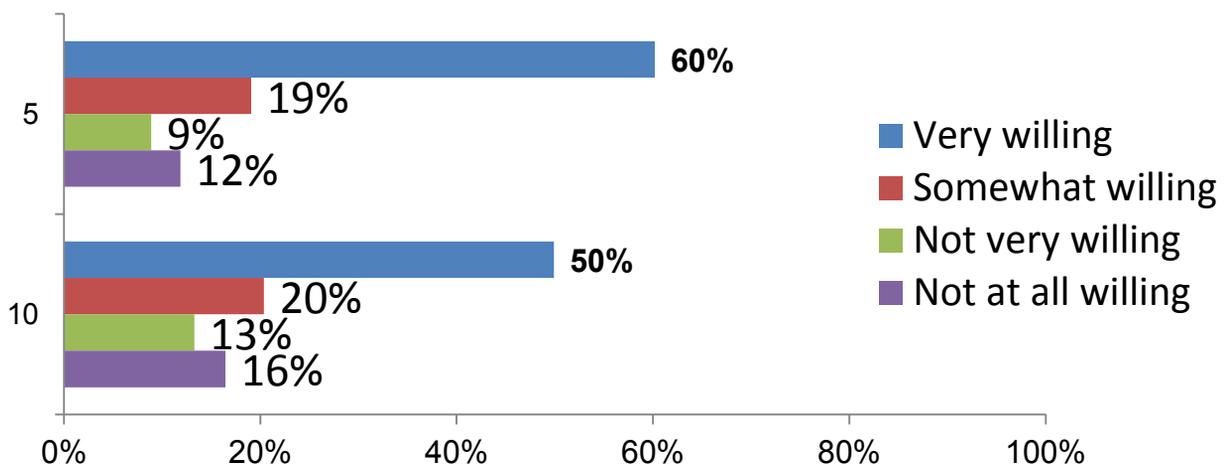
# Options Being Considered To Address Single-Use Items



**Deposit-refund System for Single-Use Cups:** In BC, the deposit-refund system for beverage containers like pop cans, beer bottles, juice boxes, etc. ensure that over 75% of these containers are returned and recycled, and greatly reduces the amount of these items found as litter. As you may know, there's an automatic charge of 5 cents, 10 cents or 20 cents that's included in the purchase of these beverages, depending on the size. When the beverage containers are returned to refund depots you receive the money back. If a deposit were put on disposable cups, it would be refunded when the cup is returned to a depot.

## 6[i]. Would you be willing to pay a refundable 5-cent or 10-cent deposit on beverages served in disposable cups?

*Please select one response for each item.*

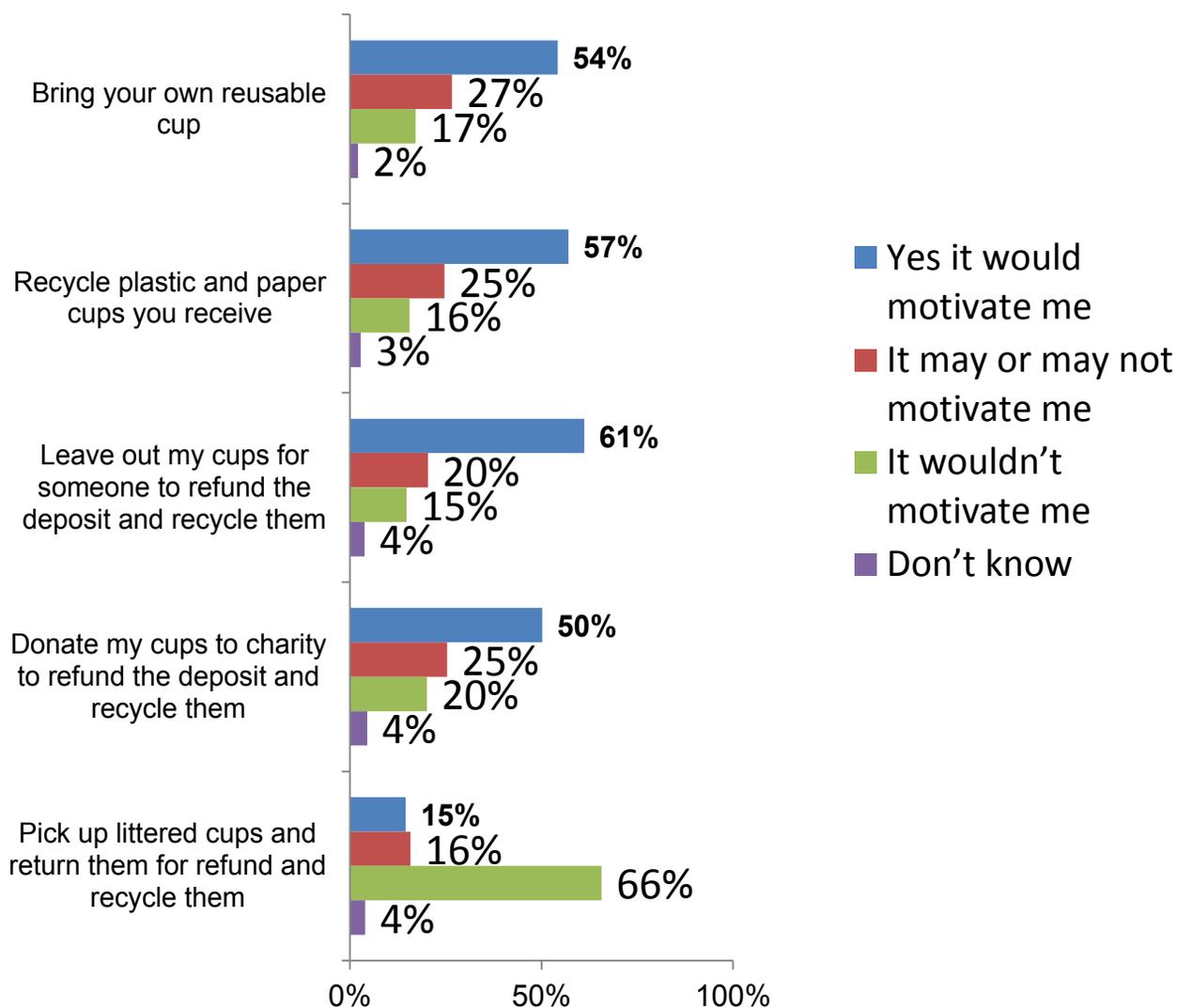


# Options Being Considered To Address Single-Use Items



## 6[ii]. If such a system was in place, would it motivate you to...?

*Please select one response for each item.*



# Options Being Considered To Address Single-Use Items



**Ban of Single-Use Plastic and Paper Bags:** Did you know that both single-use plastic and paper bags have environmental impacts due to their production, transportation, use and disposal?

Plastic bags can be particularly harmful as litter as they are easily transported by wind and can end up in the ocean. But, paper bags have a higher environmental impact than plastic bags in other ways, such as the amount of non-renewable energy and water used to make them and they have a higher potential to impact global warming.

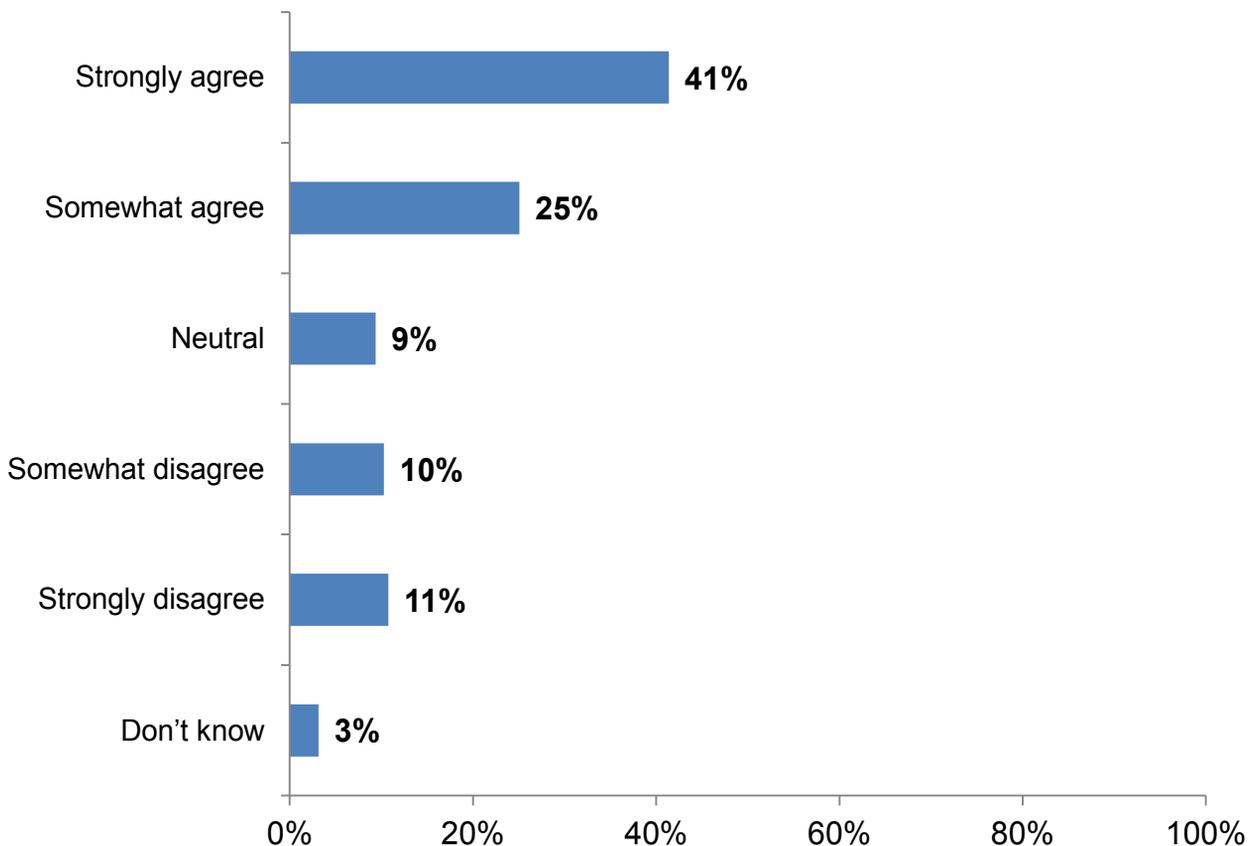
When plastic bags are “banned” the bans usually only stop retailers from distributing thin (single-use) plastic bags, which are considered single-use. This often results in the unintended consequences like increasing the use of paper bags. Retailers can also work around the bans by switching to thicker “reusable” plastic bags, which often are not reused very many times by consumers. So while plastic bans reduce the number of thin plastic bags used, they may shift the problem to paper bags or thicker plastic bags.

# Options Being Considered To Address Single-Use Items



## 7[i]. With this information, do you agree or disagree with banning the distribution of disposable (thin) single-use plastic bags?

*Please select one response only.*



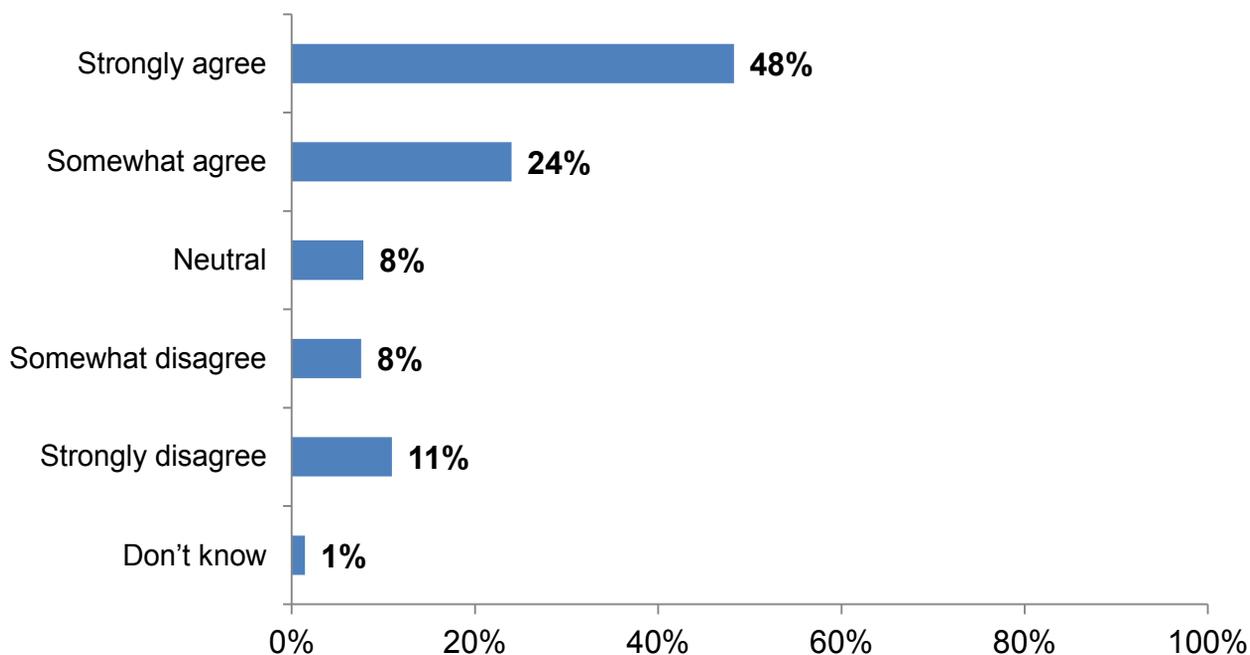
# Options Being Considered To Address Single-Use Items



Typically, plastic bag bans are accompanied by a fee on paper bags so that consumers don't just switch from one type of bag to another – instead, a fee typically motivates consumers to reduce the amount of bags they take.

## **7[ii]. Would you agree or disagree with a fee on alternative bags such as paper (if a plastic bag ban was in place?)**

*Please select one response only.*

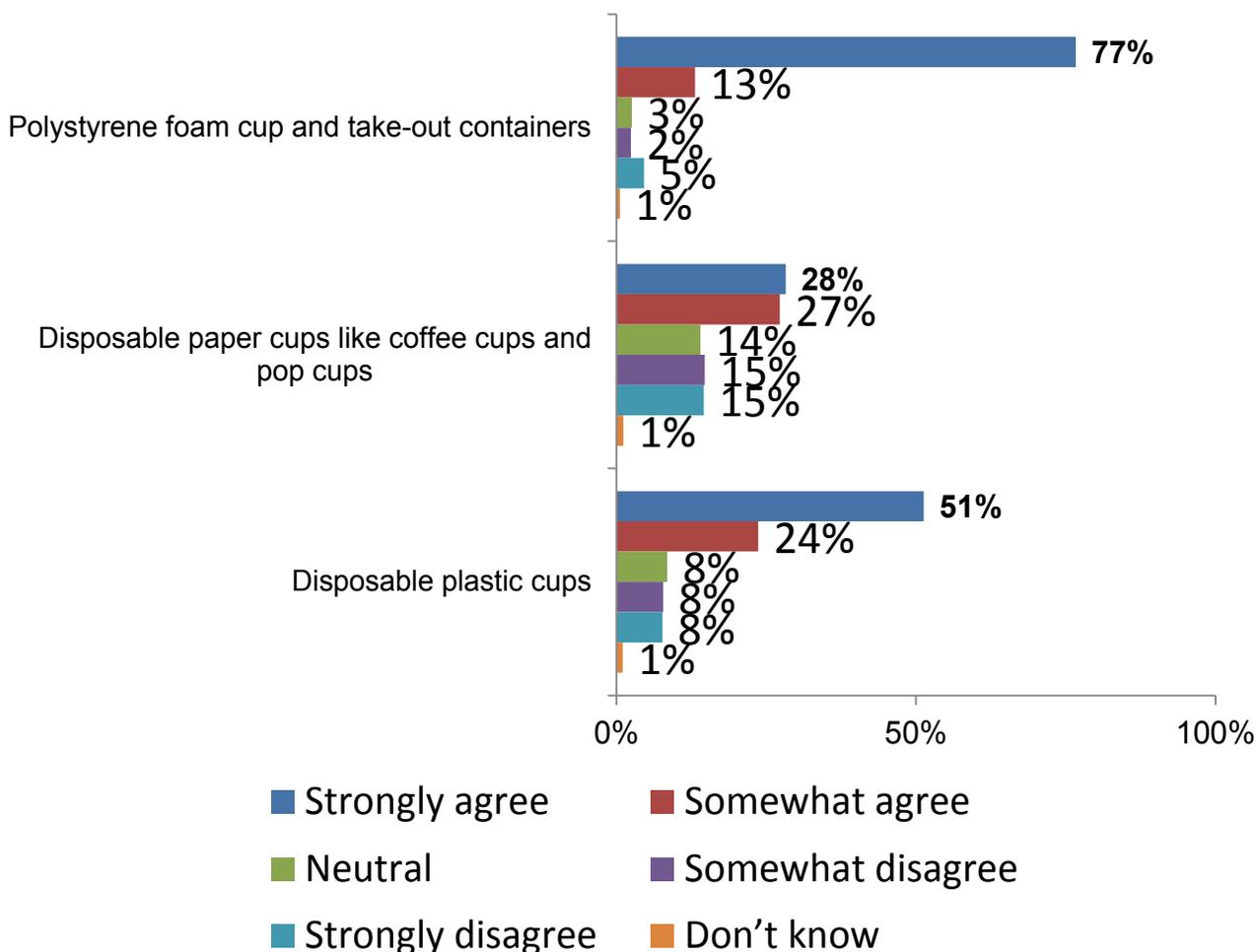


# Options Being Considered To Address Single-Use Items



## 8. Do you agree or disagree with a ban on the distribution of these single-use items below?

*Please indicate one response for each item.*



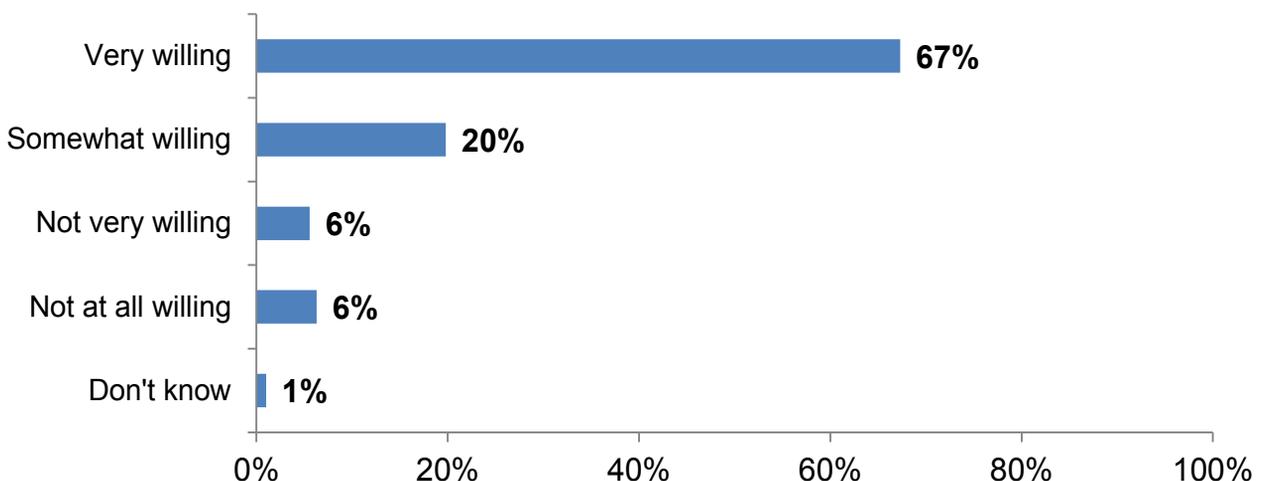
# Options Being Considered To Address Single-Use Items



If a single-use item ban was in place, your local restaurant/coffee [shop] may need to switch from an inexpensive disposable item (e.g. polystyrene foam containers) to a slightly more expensive option that was reusable or could be recycled within curbside or apartment building recycling programs.

## 8a. Would you be willing to pay slightly more in price because of this change (e.g. 5 cents)?

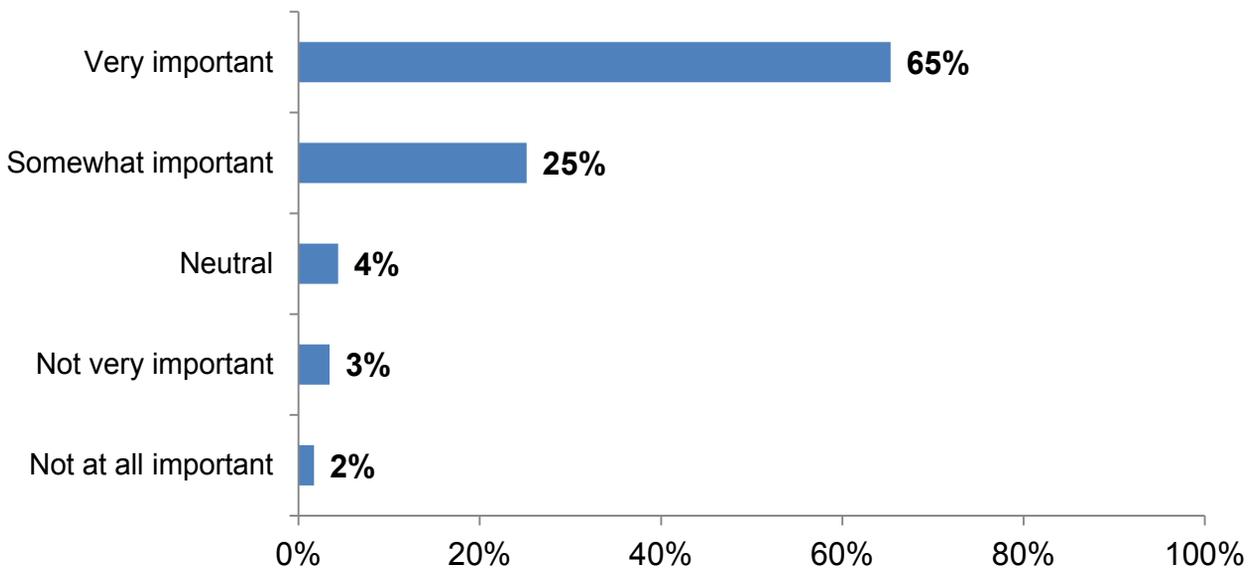
*Please select one response only.*





## 1[i]. For you personally, is it important to reduce how often you use single-use items (cups, bags, take-out containers)?

*Please select one response only.*





## 1[ii]. What motivates you to use fewer single-use items?

*Please be as specific as possible.*

**This open-ended question received 2382 responses.**

**Analysis of the responses revealed several major themes, including:**

- **Concern for environmental impacts:** carbon footprint, plastic pollution in waterways, wellbeing of future generations, and/or climate change.
- **Striving to create less garbage:** concern for garbage disposal limits and costs, concern for litter, concern for resource use to produce single-use items, and/or disapproval of waste production in general.
- **Prevalence of alternatives:** the ease of using user-friendly alternatives to single-use items, and/or making choices such as to stay in a cafe to consume a drink in a reusable cup.
- **Sense of personal responsibility:** feelings of guilt, peer pressure, personal agency, and accomplishment.
- **Voluntary measures by businesses:** discounts, fees, and other incentives.



**1[iii]. Share with us how you're reducing and recycling when it comes to single-use items. We'd love to hear your stories.**

*Please be as specific as possible.*

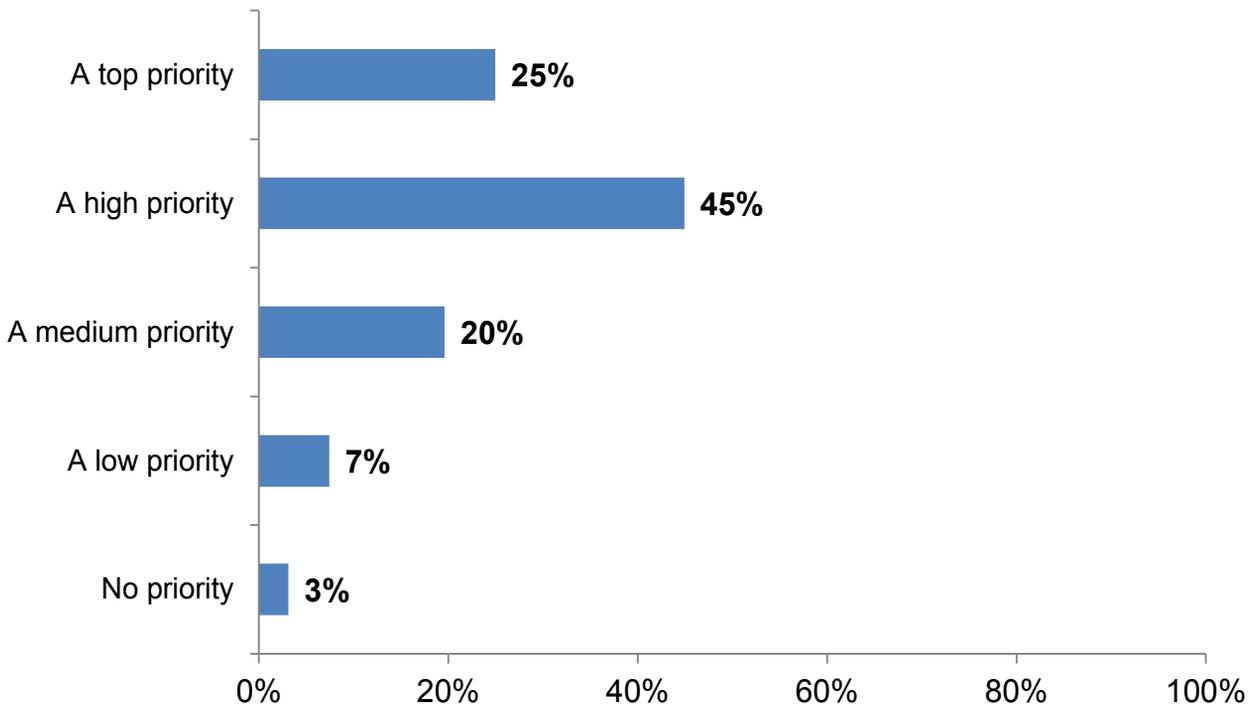
**This open-ended question received 1524 responses.**

**The subject matter of the responses varied widely, and the analysis of the responses did not yield clear and cohesive themes for sake of reporting in this summary report.**



## 1[iv]. How much of a priority do you think the City should place on creating a Single-Use Strategy for Vancouver?

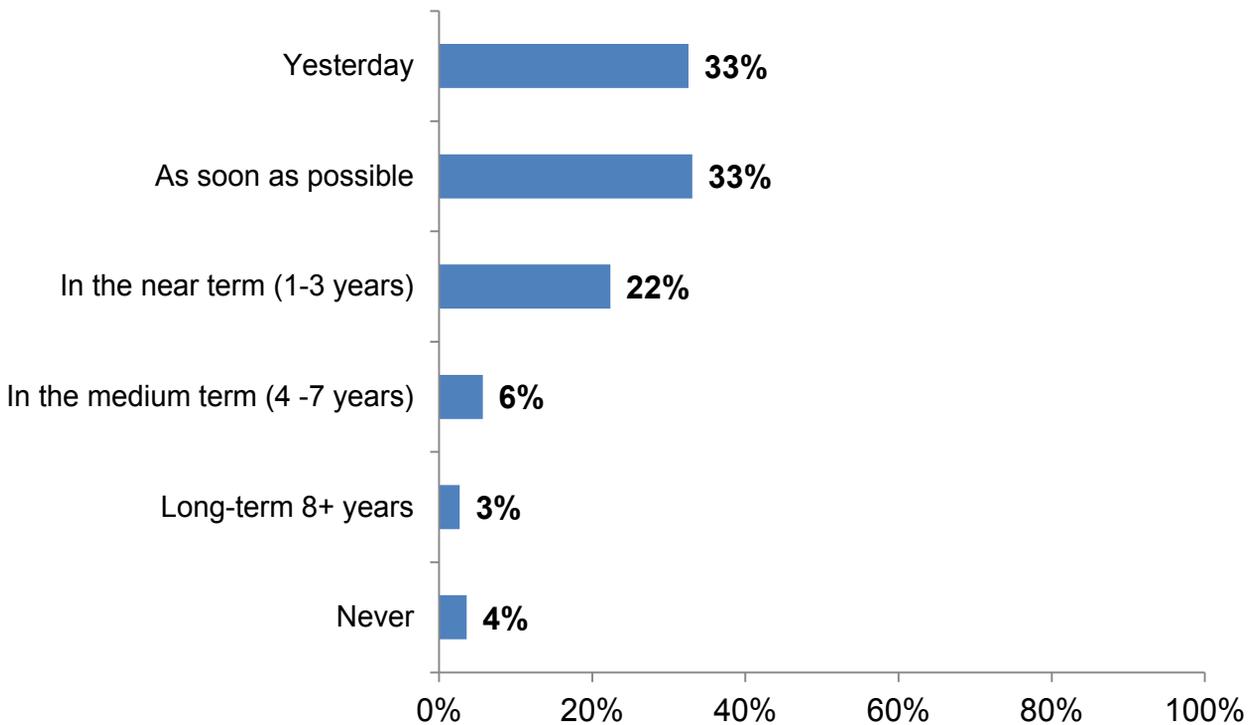
*Please select one response only.*





## 1[v]. In your opinion, when should the City take action to reduce single-use items?

*Please select one response only.*

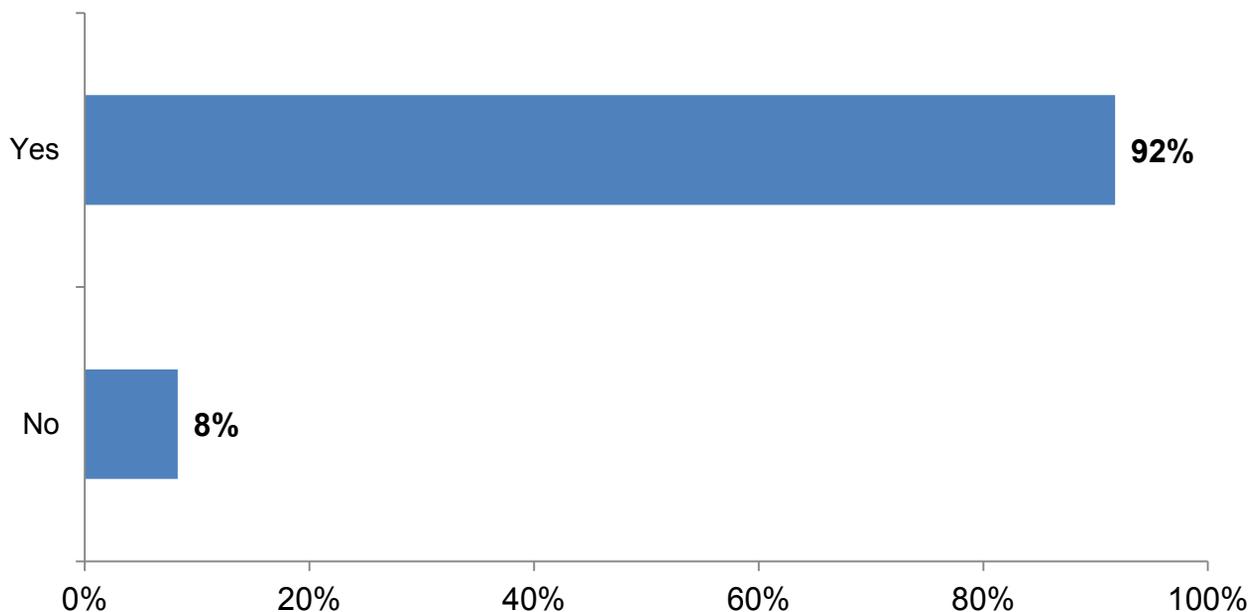




It's important to us that we hear from a diverse group of people and perspectives. The following questions help us determine how the feedback we receive represents the community.

## [1.] Are you a resident of Vancouver?

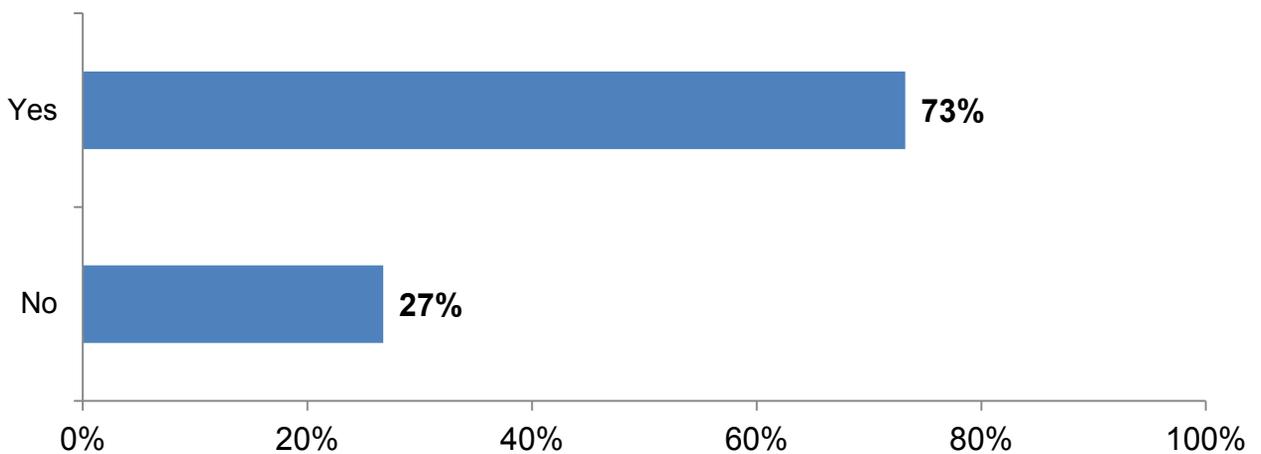
*Please select one response only.*





## [2.] Do you work in Vancouver?

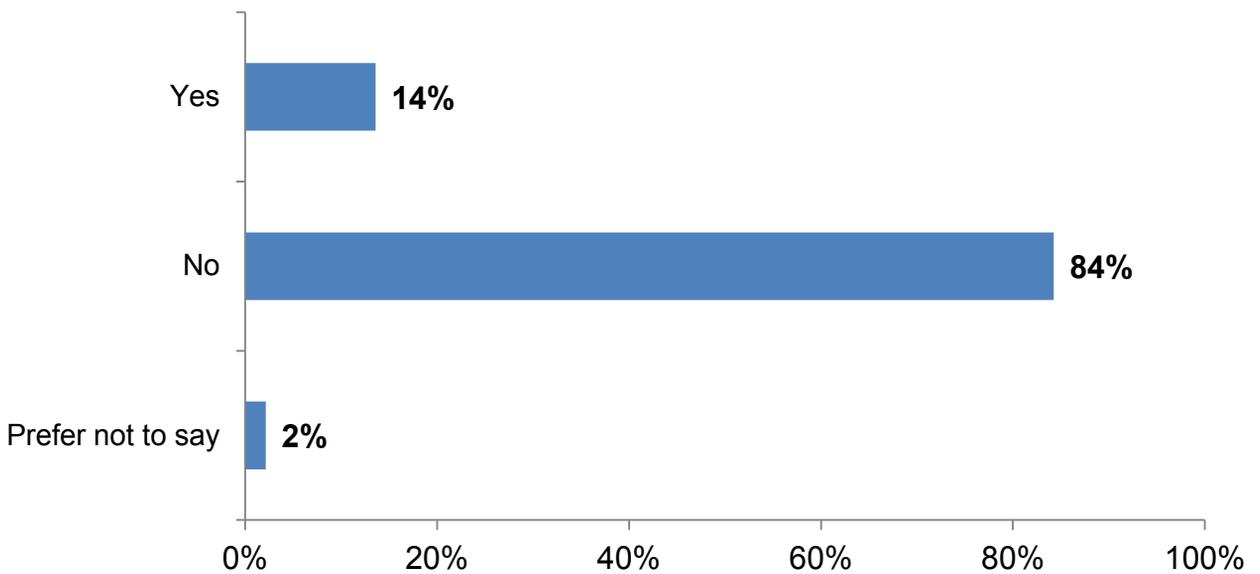
*Please select one response only.*





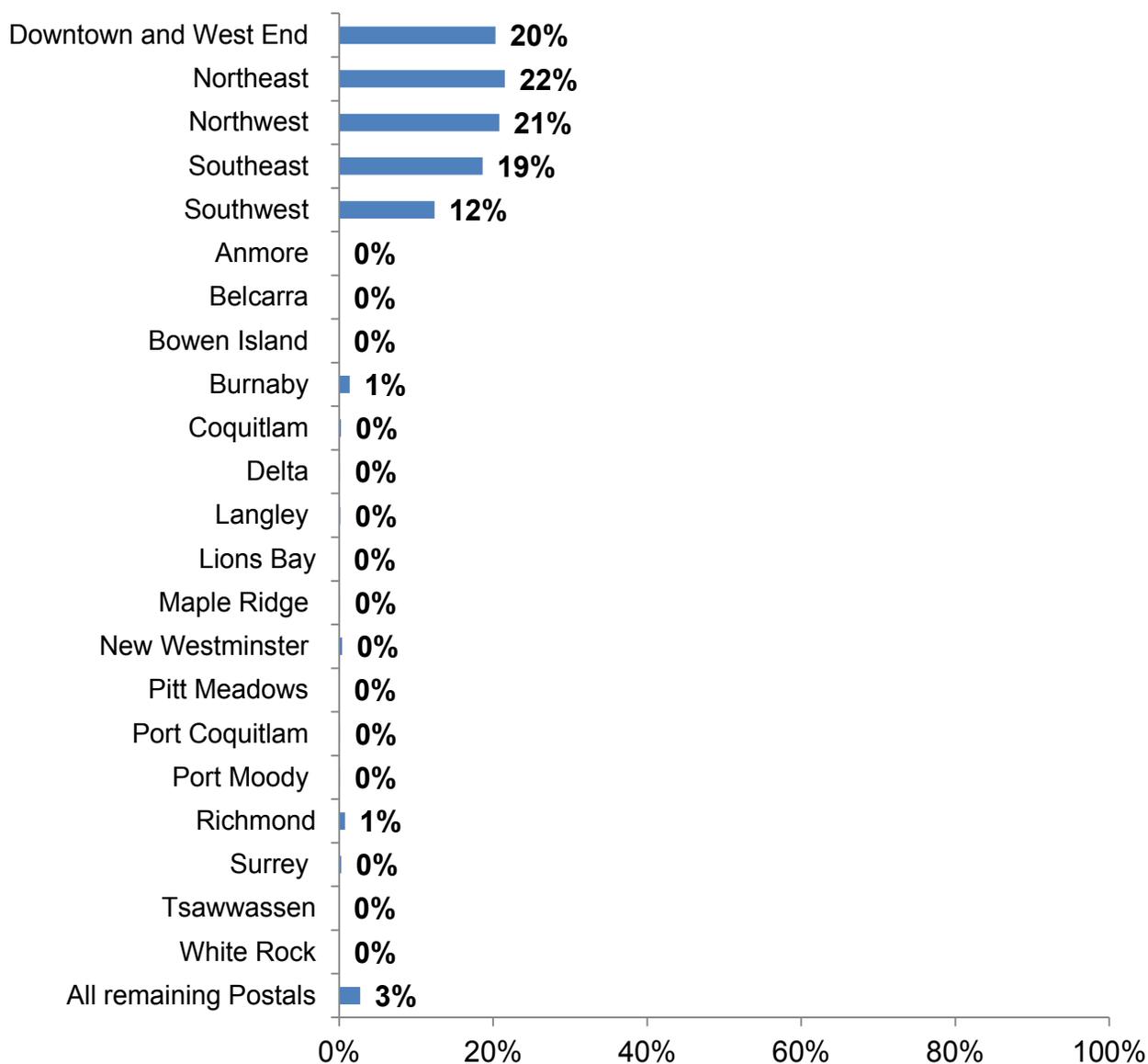
## [3.] Are you the owner/operator of a business in the City of Vancouver?

*Please select one response only.*





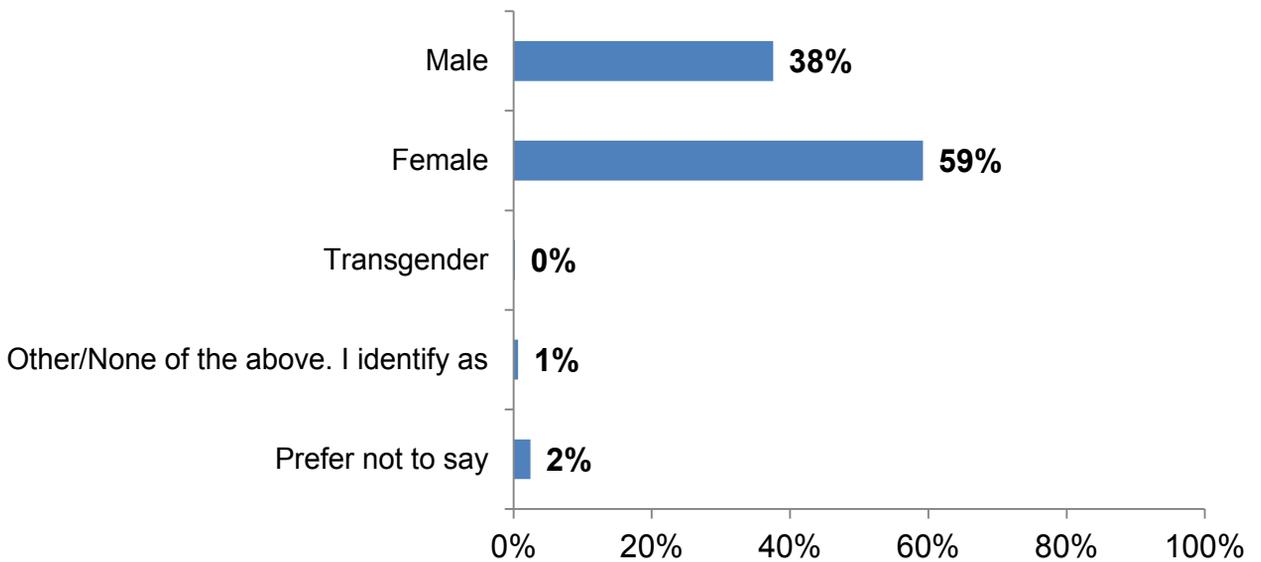
## [4.] What is your home postal code?





## [5.] Do you identify as...?

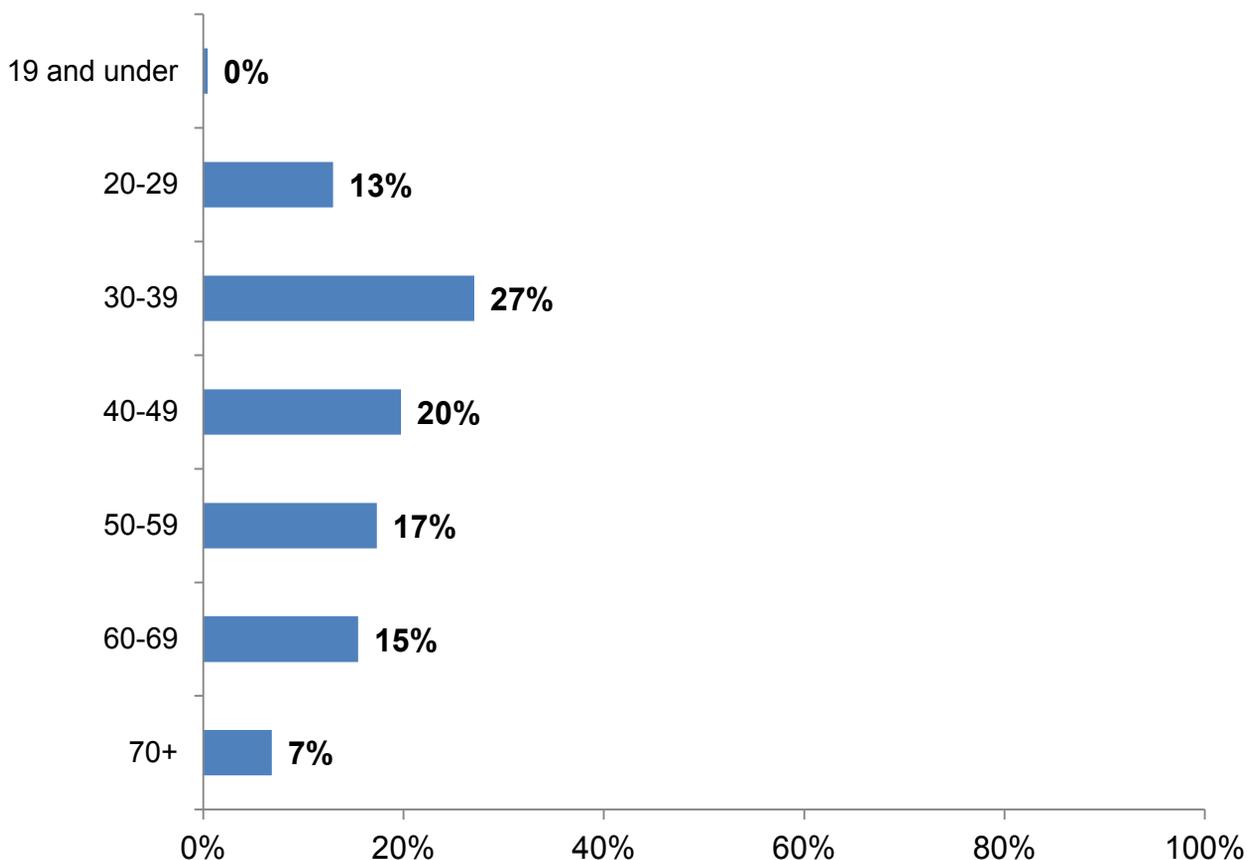
*Please select one response only.*





## [6.] Which of the following age groups do you fall into?

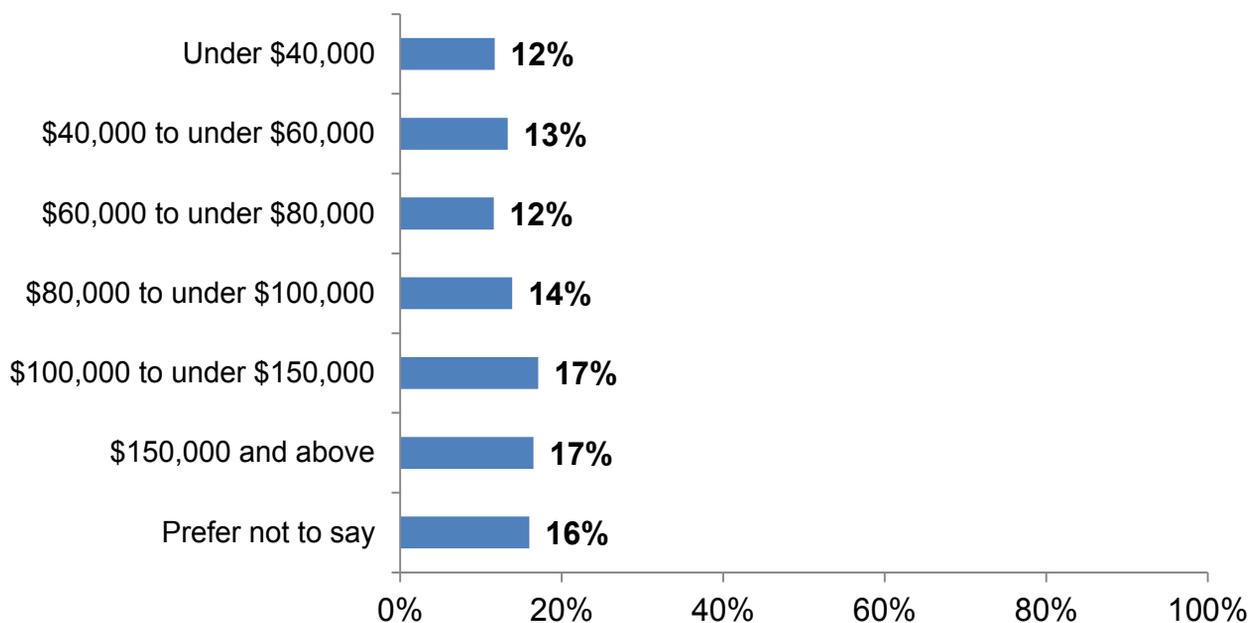
*Please select one response only.*





## [7.] Which of the following categories best describes your total household income per year before taxes?

*Please select one response only.*





## [8.] How Did You Hear About This Survey?

*Please select all that apply.*

