Subject:	Single-Use Plastics Reduction Strategy – Update Report 1
To:	Committee of the Whole – Community Services & Infrastructure
From:	Public Works Department

Report Number:	PW-28-21
Wards Affected:	All
Date to Committee:	November 8, 2021
Date to Council:	November 15, 2021

Recommendation:

Receive and file Report PW-28-21 Single-Use Plastics Reduction Strategy – Update Report 1; and

Direct staff to conduct a pilot study in the Moses F. Rittenhouse Library Branch and waste audits in the Fleming Centre and Town Hall.

Purpose:

The Town of Lincoln's Corporate Climate Adaptation Plan identifies in the workplan, the development of a Single-Use Plastics Reduction Strategy. This report provides an update to Council on the Town of Lincoln's Single-Use Plastics Reduction Strategy development, consultation, and implementation process including and upcoming staff survey and next steps.

Background:

Environment and Climate Change Canada estimates that 1% of plastic waste enters the environment. In 2016, this amounted to 29,000 tonnes of plastic pollution. Since plastic degrades very slowly and is persistent in the environment, the amount of plastic pollution is anticipated to continue to increase over time. There are growing concerns that plastic pollution may adversely impact the health of the environment and humans. Additionally, single-use plastics make up the bulk of plastics found on shorelines.

Single-use plastics have been be defined as "designed to be thrown away after being used only once". These items include, among others:

- Packaging: primary packaging (ex: food wrappers, retail product packaging, beverage and shampoo bottles)
- Secondary or short-lived packaging (ex: shopping bags, fruit & vegetable bags, containers), and sanitary packaging for sterile items (ex: syringes)
- Convenience items: utensils, hot and cold drink cups and lids, straws, stir sticks, disposable wipes, and quick-serve containers, and essential items masks and latex gloves in the dental and medical field, sterile packaging

On January 18, 2021 Council directed staff to investigate and work towards implementing a single-use plastic ban in all municipal facilities and provide an interim report by July 2021.

On March 22, 2021, Council adopted the Corporate Climate Adaptation Plan, which includes Action 1.10 – Develop and implement a Single-Use Plastics Ban.

Lastly, on June 14, 2021, Council directed staff to investigate and work toward implementing a single-use plastic ban in all Town facilities and provide an interim report in Fall 2021 outlining the steps and timelines.

Report:

Survey:

In order to design and implement a pilot study and waste audit, a staff survey has been developed and will be live from approx. Oct 29, 2021 to Dec 10, 2021. The purpose of the survey is to gather data on single-use plastics usage in municipal departments, facilities, and events and includes: frequency and type of single-use plastics used by staff for personal (ex. lunch) and professional (ex. craft materials) purposes; current single-use plastic reduction strategies; barriers to reducing usage; and the impact of COVID-19 on usage patterns.

The survey will inform the pilot study by, for example, identifying which single-use plastic item(s) the study should addressed, the implementation approach (ex. reduction, replacement, ban), and the development of education/awareness materials.

Pilot Study and Waste Audit:

In order to develop a Corporate Single-Use Plastics Reduction Strategy the Steering Committee will conduct a pilot study at Lincoln Public Library Moses F. Rittenhouse Branch and a waste audit at the Fleming Centre and Town Hall. The pilot and waste audit are anticipated to run from February 1, 2022 to April 30, 2022.

Corporate Single-Use Plastics Reduction Strategy:
The results of the survey, pilot study, and waste audit will inform the design of the Corporate Single-Use Plastics Reduction Strategy. It is expected that the strategy will take a phased approach to implementation. Additionally, the results will provide a baseline to inform goal setting and benchmarking.

Community Single-Use Plastics Reduction Strategy:
To ensure that a Community Single-Use Plastics Reduction Strategy reflects Lincoln's needs consultation with several stakeholders will be required including: Niagara Region Public Health, Regional Waste Management, residents, business owners, etc. A public survey, hosted on Speak Up Lincoln, will be developed in order to gather data on community single-use plastics usage and includes frequency and type of single-use plastics used by residents and organizations; current residential and organizational single-use plastic reduction strategies; barriers to reducing usage; and the impact of COVID-19 on usage patterns.

It is anticipated that the survey will be released in May/June 2022. The results of this survey will inform the design of the Community Single-Use Plastics Reduction Strategy. It is expected that the strategy will take a phased approach to implementation. Additionally, the results will provide a baseline to inform goal setting and benchmarking.

Update Report 2:
The Steering Committee will provide Council with an Update 2 report in March/April 2022, outlining: the results of the staff survey; the progress of the pilot study and waste audit; and revised timelines and upcoming activities for the development of the Corporate and Community Single-Use Plastics Reduction Strategies.

Anticipated Timeline:
Please see Figure 1, below, for a list of key project tasks and anticipated timelines.

Financial, Legal, Staff Considerations:

Financial: N/A

Staffing:

An inter-departmental Steering Committee representing Community Services, Economic Development and Communication, By-law, and Public Works will continue to support this project. Support will also be provided by other departments and staff from across the organization, especially communications to prepare materials for public engagement initiatives and project notifications. In addition to the all-staff survey, anticipated touchpoints may include meetings, and facilitated workshops.

Legal: N/A

Public Engagement Matters:

As noted above, ongoing community engagement with Council, residents, stakeholders, and staff is vital to the development of the Corporate and Community Single-Use Plastic Reduction Strategies. Engagement will include: engage, educate, encourage, execute, and enforce. Speak Up Lincoln will be utilized to provide project information and updates as well as public engagement (surveys, questions, polls). Additional community touchpoints may include information booths, and workshops.

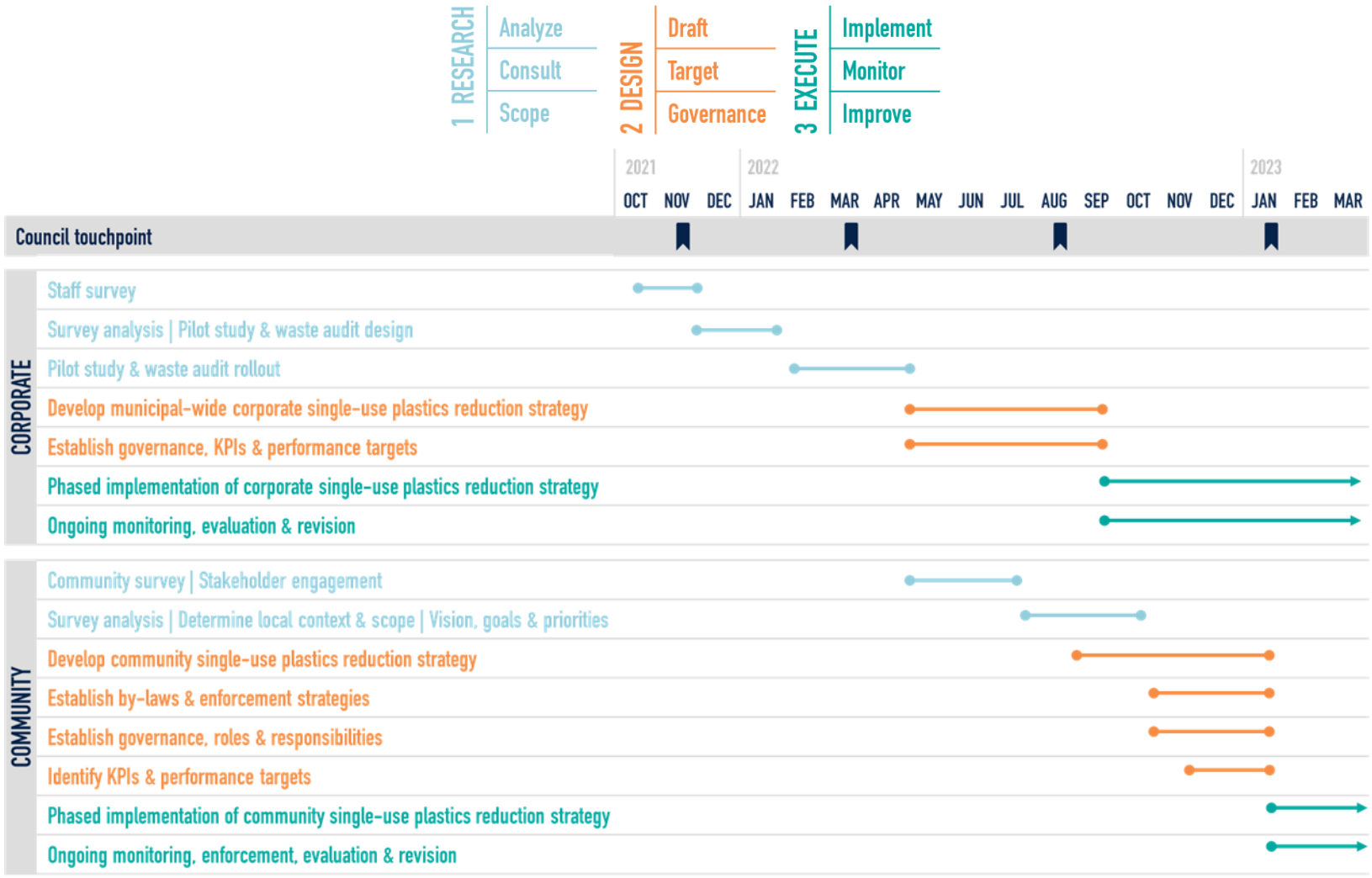


Figure 1 Single-Use Plastics Reduction Strategy - Anticipated Timeline

Conclusion:

In alignment with the Climate Adaptation Plan and Council direction, Corporate and Community Single-Use Plastics Reduction Strategies are being developed. Council and the community will be engaged in the evidence-based planning, consultation, implementation, and decision-making processes outlined in this report.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Graham
Director of Public Works
905-563-2799 ext. 275

Shannon McKay
Director of Community Services
905-563-2799 ext. 287

Paul Di Ianni
Director, Economic Development and Communications
905-563-2799 ext. 272

Julie Andrews
Chief Executive Officer, Lincoln Public Library
905-563-2799 ext. 208

David Warden
Manager, Public and Open Spaces
905-563-2799 ext. 282

Mike Barkway
Manager, Municipal Law Enforcement
905-563-2799 ext. 280

Gillian Harris, P.Eng., PMP
Associate Director, Public Works
905-563-2799 ext. 286

Shannon Fernandes
Climate Change Coordinator
905-563-2799 ext.281

Report Approval:

Report has been reviewed by the Director of Public Works, Director of Community Services, and the Director of Economic Development and Communications. Final approval is by the Chief Administrative Officer.