

Report Back: Single-Use Item By-laws

City of Vancouver
Policy and Strategic Priorities Committee

November 27, 2019



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Background and Council Direction

Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy is an early priority action in the Zero Waste 2040 strategic plan, approved by Council on June 5, 2018.



Zero Waste 2040



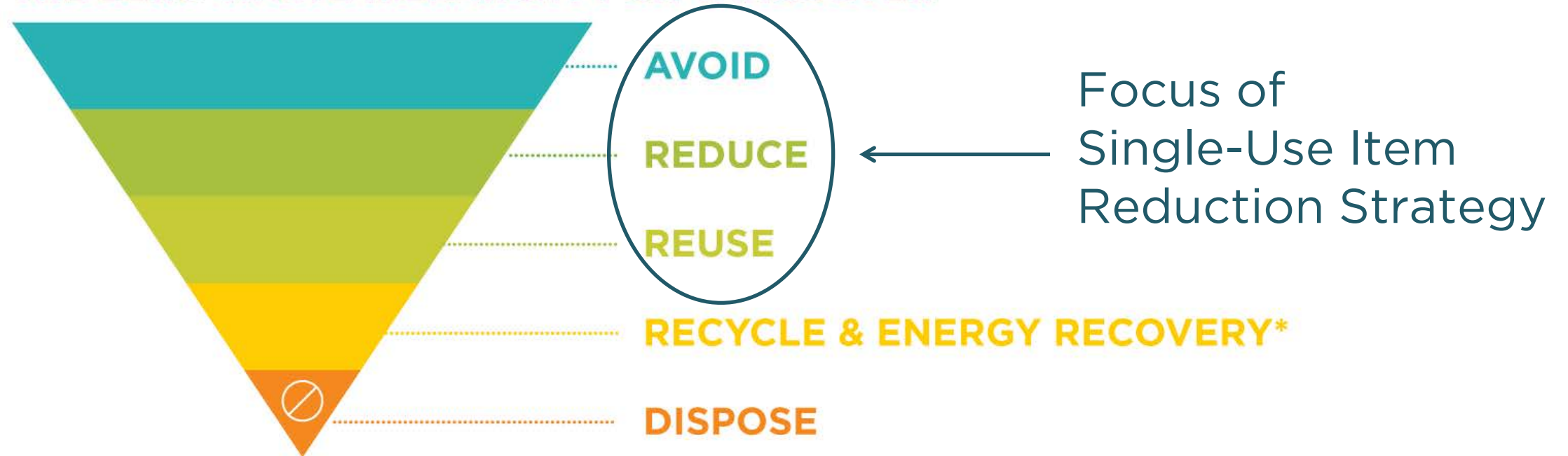
**Single-Use Item
Reduction Strategy**

Over 8,000 people and hundreds of businesses contributed to developing the strategy between October 2016 and April 2018.

Strategy Objective:

Maximize reduction of all single-use materials
(not just plastic)

THE ZERO WASTE HIERARCHY FOR VANCOUVER



**Recovering energy from organic materials such as food and, in the case of single-use items, compostable packaging*

Council Direction

Jun 5, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consult on by-laws in Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Foam ban– Plastic straw ban– Single-use utensils by-request– Shopping bags reduction plans– Disposable cups reduction plans
Sep 18, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Begin developing an Accessibility Strategy (Phase 1) in 2019

Council Direction – Apr 29, 2019

By-law	Council Direction
Foam cups and foam take-out containers	Ban enacted (effective Jan 1, 2020)
Plastic straws	Ban with provisions for ensuring accessibility (effective April 2020) approved in principle
Shopping bags	Report back with new options based on Victoria's approach
Disposable cups Single-use utensils	Report back with by-laws by Nov 30, 2019

Engagement for Developing By-laws

Food & Retail Sectors

Consultation conducted Jan-May 2019

Participation:

- 169 organizations, including:
 - 87 culturally-diverse organizations
 - 5 charitable food providers

Scope:

- Affected business license holders
- Large and small business & non-profits
- Interviews, group workshops, webinar for national brands
 - Interviews in English, Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese



Accessibility

Consultation conducted Jan-May 2019

Participation:

- 17 individuals and organizations

Scope:

- Individuals and organizations who rely on plastic straws for accessibility
- Interviews, group workshop



Talk Vancouver Survey on Shopping Bags

Conducted July 2019

Participation:

- 7332 participants
 - Including 213 affected businesses

Scope:

- Get feedback from members of the public and businesses on replicating Victoria's shopping bag by-law in Vancouver
 - Ban on plastic bags
 - Fees on paper and reusable bags

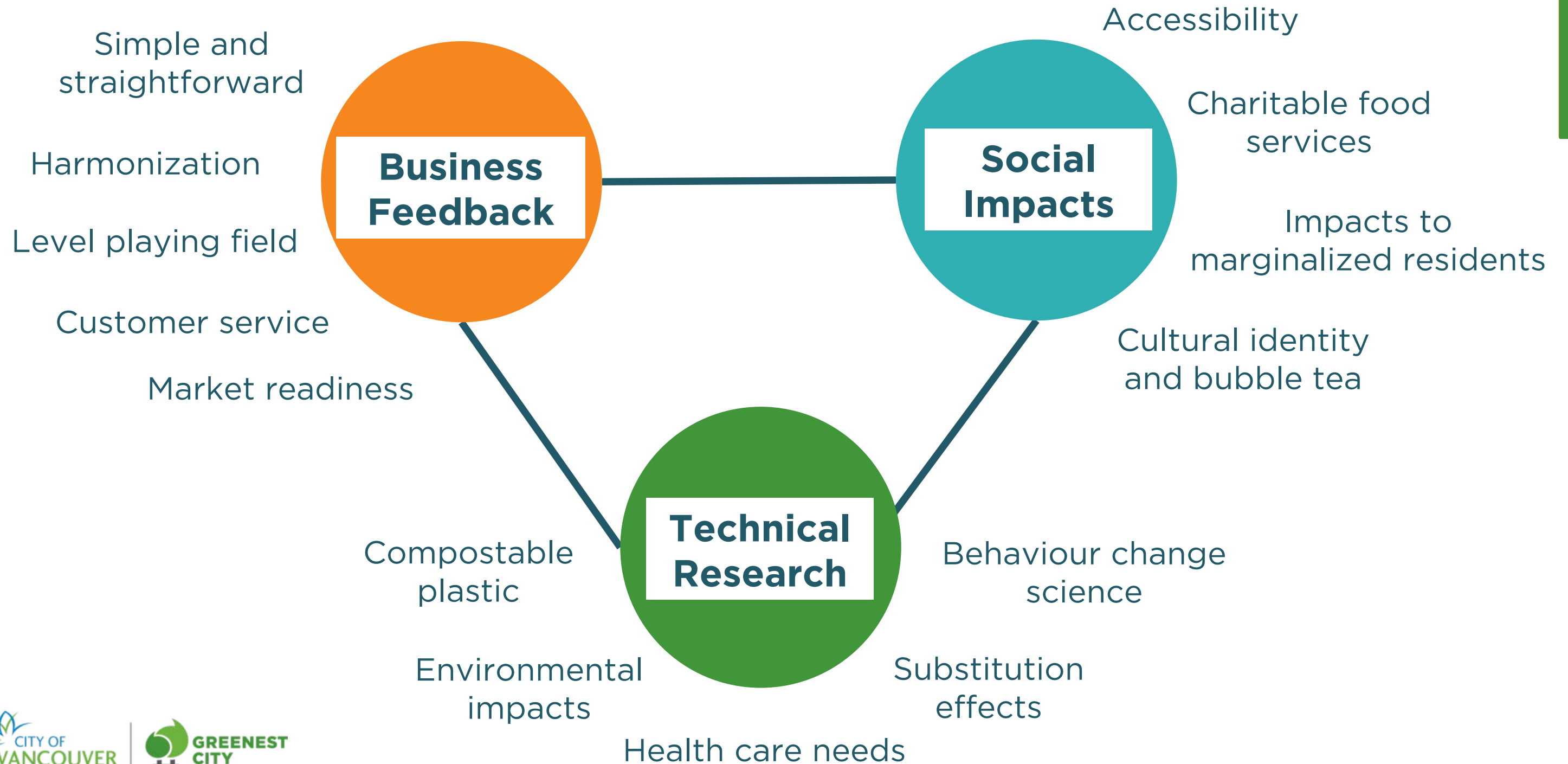


Engagement Feedback - Key Themes

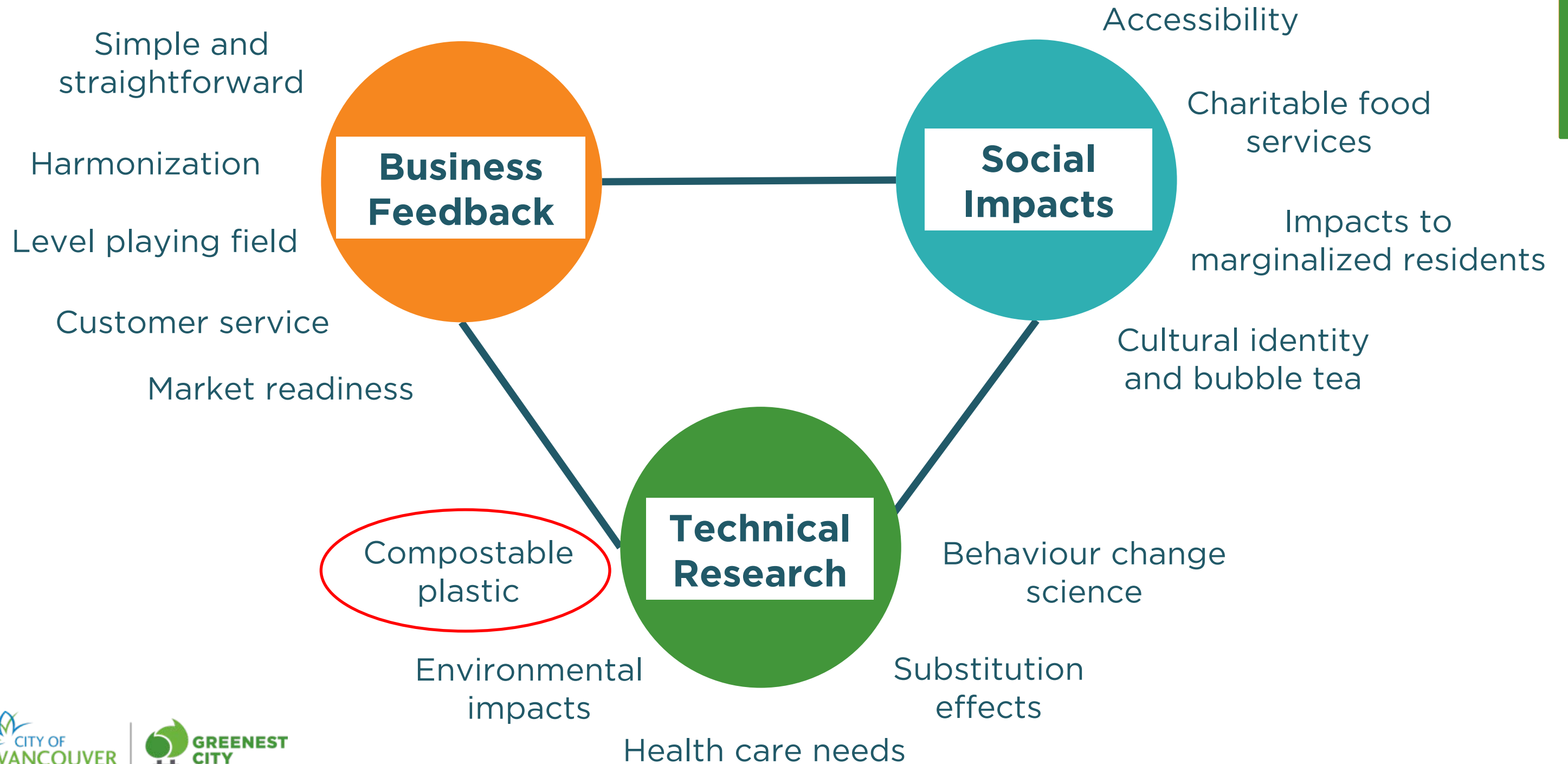
- Simple and straightforward
 - Most stakeholders found Reduction Plans, originally proposed as a way to provide flexibility and choice, to be overly complex
- Harmonization
- Level playing field
- Customer service
- Need for City support with Communications campaigns:
 - Public awareness
 - Behaviour change
 - Information for businesses

By-law Development

Considerations to Develop By-laws



Considerations to Develop By-laws



Investigation into Compostable Plastic

- Design standards for certified compostable plastic not aligned with local compost facilities
- Compost facilities governed by provincial regulation
- Provincial regulation does not consider any kind of plastic to be acceptable feedstock for composting, including:
 - Compostable plastic
 - Biodegradable plastic
 - Plant-based plastic
 - Oxo-degradable plastic
 - Photodegradable plastic
- Not accepted in the City's Green Bin program
- Does not biodegrade when littered in the natural environment

Recommended By-laws



Recommended By-law for Shopping Bags

Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ban plastic shopping bags (including compostable plastic)• Fees of at least 15¢ for paper shopping bags (25¢ after 1 year)• Fees of at least \$1 for reusable shopping bags (\$2 after 1 year)• At least 40% recycled content for paper shopping bags• Must report distribution for past 12 months upon City request
Exemptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Paper and reusable shopping bags if:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Used to provide charitable food services– Prescriptions from a pharmacy– Already used and returned for reuse• Small paper bags (less than 15 x 20 cm)• Shopping bags used to buy large bulky items (e.g. pillows)



Shopping Bag By-law Cont.

Rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public support & business support (Talk Vancouver survey)<ul style="list-style-type: none">– 72% of public opinion respondents– 64% of affected business respondents• Harmonization<ul style="list-style-type: none">– 14 BC municipalities pursuing same approach– 80% of affected business respondents say shopping bag regulations should be same everywhere (Talk Vancouver)• Simple and straightforward<ul style="list-style-type: none">– 64% of affected business respondents say it's easy to understand (Talk Vancouver)
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pending Council approval, staff will work with organizations representing the interests of marginalized residents to address potential negative impacts



Recommended By-law for Plastic Straws

Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ban plastic straws (including compostable plastic)• Accessible straws must be provided by-request<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Bendable plastic straws individually wrapped in paper
Exemptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opt-in for 1-year exemption for bubble tea drinks• Hospitals, community care facilities• Plastic straws attached to juice boxes/pouches• Packages of 20+ plastic straws sold for personal use
Rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eliminates majority of plastic straw waste• Improves accessibility<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Accessible straw meets widest range of accessibility needs– Persons with Disability Advisory Committee is in support• Gives time for bubble tea vendors to find alternatives



Recommended By-law for Disposable Cups

Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fees of at least 25 cents for every cup (all materials, fee retained by business)• Must report annual cup distribution• Do not have to report if participating in Reusable Cup Share
Exemptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Charitable food services• Packages of 6+ cups sold for personal use• Hospitals, community care facilities
Rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Simple and straightforward<ul style="list-style-type: none">– 74% chose fees, not customized plans, as their Reduction Plan• Even playing field<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Preference for City to set minimum fees• Fee amount consistent with others:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– UBC (25¢); Berkeley (25¢); Vancouver School Board (30¢)• Right conditions for Reusable Cup Share to expand



Recommended By-law for Single-Use Utensils

Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Single-use utensils by request only (all materials)
Exemptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Packages of 20+ utensils sold for personal use• Hospitals, community care facilities
Rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Changes the default behaviour<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Prevents distribution of unwanted utensils• Addresses environmental impacts of all single-use materials• Consistent with by-laws in other jurisdictions:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– San Francisco, Berkeley, Portland Oregon

Recommended Timeline

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- Respondents say staggered start dates help businesses to adjust and prepare
- Widespread public awareness before by-laws take effect will help to avoid negative impacts to business

Items	Communication Campaign Launches	By-law Takes Effect
Foam cups and containers	Underway now	Jan 1, 2020 (enacted April 29, 2019)
Plastic straws	February 2020	April 22, 2020 – Earth Day (month approved April 29, 2019)
Shopping bags Cups Utensils		Jan 1, 2021 Accounts for time stakeholders said they need to comply

Other Recommendations

Compostable Single-Use Items

Council Direction (June 5, 2018)

- Compostable single-use items to be tested and approved in local compost facilities

Steps taken to date

- Technical research on compostable plastic
- Staff and Council have requested action from provincial and federal government
 - Council resolution submitted and approved by UBCM
 - Staff comments on CleanBC Plastic Action Plan
 - Staff contributions to the CCME Canada-wide strategy on zero plastic waste

Recommendation

- Write to Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy to request that the Province develop standards for the use of these materials
- Restrict compostable single-use items as per recommended by-laws until provincial standards can be put in place

Paper Single-Use Items

Council Direction (June 5, 2018)

- Minimum 40% post-consumer recycled content for paper single-use items

Technical findings

- Paper shopping bags
 - Majority of recycled content is post-consumer
 - Same environmental benefits of post-consumer and post-industrial content
- Paper food serviceware
 - Recycled paper may not be suitable for food contact

Recommendation

- Paper shopping bags
 - Require 40% recycled content for paper shopping bags
- Paper food serviceware
 - No recycled content requirements for paper food serviceware

Reduction Targets and Distribution Bans

Council Direction (June 5, 2018)

- Ban plastic shopping bags and disposable cups if reduction targets set by the City are not met by 2021

Engagement findings

- Plastic shopping bags
 - Harmonization with other jurisdictions
 - High public and stakeholder support for a ban
- Disposable cups
 - Time needed for behaviour change
 - Lack of market readiness

Recommendation

- Plastic shopping bags
 - Ban beginning Jan 1, 2021
- Disposable cups
 - 25 cent fees beginning Jan 1, 2021
 - Monitor reduction progress and Reusable Cup Share participation

Questions?

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ZERO WASTE