

## NEWS RELEASE

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### Council adopts Nanaimo's checkout bag regulation bylaw

#### Summary

On February 22, 2021 Nanaimo City Council unanimously adopted Checkout Bag Regulation Bylaw 2020 No. 7283. Council was able to take this step after Honourable George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy announced approval of Nanaimo's Checkout Bag Regulation Bylaw on February 12, 2021. The bylaw is effective July 1, 2021, allowing time for residents to adjust habits and retailers to work through any existing stocks.

The Checkout Bag Regulation Bylaw encourages the use of reusable bags by eliminating use of plastic bags and sets fees for paper bags and new reusable bags. Paper bags need to contain at least 40% post-consumer recycled content and be labelled as recyclable. Reusable bags for sale should be washable and capable of at least 100 uses. The regulation lists exemptions, including but not limited to small paper bags, bags for bulk foods and produce, wrap for flowers, and multi-packs of plastic bags. The regulation prohibits the distribution of compostable and biodegradable checkout bags as some form harmful micro-plastics as they degrade.

The City has started an education and awareness campaign supporting residents and businesses for a successful transition. For more information, visit [www.nanaimo.ca/goto/BYOBag](http://www.nanaimo.ca/goto/BYOBag).

*Strategic Link:* Taking a leadership role in protecting our natural environment and our municipal infrastructure.

#### Key Points

- On October 19, 2020 Nanaimo City Council unanimously gave three readings to Checkout Bag Regulation Bylaw 2020 No. 7283, and adopted the Bylaw on February 22, 2021.
- The Checkout Bag Regulation Bylaw encourages use of reusable bags by regulating the distribution of plastic bags, paper bags and new reusable bags. Checkout bags labelled 'compostable' or 'biodegradable' are prohibited.
- The Honourable George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy announced approval of Nanaimo's Checkout Bag Regulation Bylaw on February 12, 2021.
- The bylaw comes into effect on July 1, 2021.

#### Quotes

"We are ready to make real one of our four Strategic Themes, namely, Environmental Responsibility by individually reducing our collective carbon footprint."

Leonard Krog  
Mayor  
City of Nanaimo

"The City of Nanaimo is dedicated to protecting our environment and infrastructure. We are keen to reduce the impact that single-use checkout bags have in our community and beyond. "

Ben Geselbracht  
Chair of Regional District of Nanaimo's Solid Waste Management Select Committee  
City of Nanaimo Councillor

"Thank you to the residents and businesses who have been leaders in saying no to plastic checkout bags and other avoidable waste. We are here to support the community with taking this unified step in reaching our Zero Waste goals."

Kirsten Gellein  
Zero Waste Coordinator  
City of Nanaimo

## Quick Facts

- Nanaimo's Checkout Bag Regulation Bylaw compliments the Federal and Provincial governments movements to reduce harmful single-use plastics.
- Bylaw No. 7283 supports the waste reduction goals set out in the Regional District of Nanaimo's Solid Waste Management Plan.

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