

GREATER VANCOUVER SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE DISTRICT (GVS&DD)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BOARD MEETING

Friday, April 24, 2026

9:00 am

28th Floor Boardroom, 4515 Central Boulevard, Burnaby, British Columbia

ON TABLE

1. Delegation: Cheryl Maitland Muir, Restaurants Canada
Re: E1.4 Draft Solid Waste Management Plan
Executive Summary provided

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The voice of foodservice | La voix des services alimentaires

Summary Presentation to the Greater Vancouver Sewage and Drainage District Board Meeting regarding the Draft Solid Waste Management Plan Update

Restaurants Fuel B.C.'s Economy

Restaurants are a vital engine of the Canadian economy and the communities they serve. Restaurants showcase our cultural diversity and give a unique identity to each community. Across the country, more than 23 million visits are made by Canadians to restaurants every day, driving \$125B in national sales and more than \$26B in federal, provincial and municipal taxes paid by restaurants and their employees.

Key economic facts about British Columbia's restaurant sector:

- \$21.5B in sales in 2025.
- The industry purchases more than \$7B in food and beverages every year.
- Directly employ nearly 190,000 people, including over 63,000 youth and generates an additional 46,000 indirect jobs in sectors including agriculture, transportation, wholesale and retail trade.
- For every \$1 spent in the industry, an additional \$2.25 in total economic output is generated, significantly higher than the \$1.92 average across all industries.
- B.C. has the highest restaurant sales per capita in Canada at \$3,777.
- **While B.C. operators have the highest annual per location sales in the country, B.C. restaurants rank sixth among the 10 provinces in profitability before income tax as a percentage of sales.**

Restaurant Industry Impact of the Draft Solid Waste Management Plan Update

80% of restaurant operators believe environmental sustainability is an important part of their success. However, Restaurants Canada has several concerns with potential impacts of the updated Solid Waste Management Plan on restaurants across all municipalities and is seeking to work with Metro Vancouver to increase solid waste diversion from landfills in a way that is realistic for restaurants.

Areas of concerns include:

- **Creating a fragmented policy environment** that does not account for complex operating environments, patchwork approach to implementation, interpretations and duplicative reporting requirements
- **Targets being considered** and set without implementation details
- Implications for restaurants related to **reusable food service ware** requirements and changes to **organic food waste** management.

Key areas of concern include:

Reusable food service ware requirements

Strategy 3.1.1. calls for advocating for the phase in of reusable food service ware requirements for non-residential sectors.

Advancing reusable dishware across Metro Vancouver would create a patchwork of municipal requirements that increases both operational complexity and costs for small businesses.

Such mandates require significant upfront investments (e.g. dishwashers, plumbing modifications, dishware procurement, and replacement costs due to loss or breakage). Restaurants operate under diverse business models, sizes, and service types, meaning a one-size-fits-all mandate does not reflect operational realities. In some restaurant formats, reuse is simply not logistically feasible, particularly where equipment investments have been made to utilize existing packaging that is provided through a global or national supply chain.

For businesses operating across multiple locations, inconsistent rules or varying definitions of reusable dishware across 21 municipalities make it difficult to maintain operational consistency. Importantly, mandating reusable dishware is not the only effective way to divert waste from landfill.

Restaurants Canada recommends that the solid waste management plan remove its advocacy for scaling up reusable dishware for dine-in service and instead work collaboratively with industry to identify alternative, practical waste-reduction solutions.

Food waste:

Restaurants Canada supports efforts to reduce food loss and waste in the foodservice sector - we are already doing this in several ways (e.g. optimizing sourcing ingredients and partnering with food rescue organizations). However, the plan to pilot and scale food waste prevention initiatives does not target the largest sources of food waste. It does not account for the significant difference between back-of-house (prep) waste, and front-of-house (guest) waste.

Restaurants' business models create built-in incentives to focus on food waste prevention in the areas they can control - during food preparation in back-of-house.

We recommend the solid waste management plan considers the realities of food loss and waste in restaurants before advocating for new initiative that layer in operational complexity and potential new costs for restaurants.

At a time when the industry is facing shrinking margins, additional costs make a difference in restaurant operators' ability to maintain jobs, hours and operations in the communities they serve.

About Restaurants Canada

Restaurants Canada is a national, not-for-profit association advancing Canada's diverse and dynamic foodservice industry. Restaurants are a \$124 billion industry employing nearly 1.2 million Canadians and the number one source of first-time jobs in Canada. Based in Metro Vancouver, Cheryl Maitland Muir is our Vice President for Western Canada working on behalf of our members in B.C., Alberta and Saskatchewan. Visit restaurantscanada.org for more information.