

**Councillor Michael Walker**

**MIDTOWN CRIER – ARTICLE – July 2006**

**CURRENT VALUE ASSESSMENT LEADS TO UNFAIR TAXATION**

For the past 8 years, residents in St. Paul's have experienced sharp and steady increases in their property taxes. In fact, property taxes in St. Paul's have increased on average nearly 50% due to reassessments between 1998 and 2003 – the steepest in the city. If your assessment increase is greater than 11.93% in 2006 (city average) then your taxes will increase. The problem is that property assessment using Current Value Assessment (CVA) is nothing but a “location tax” that is punitive, volatile and malignant and bears no relationship to the consumption of municipal services. People need fairness, predictability and affordability restored to their municipal tax system.

This is and has been of concern to the people of St. Paul's since CVA was imposed by the Province of Ontario on all of us back in 1998. Another chance to reform the present system of Current Value Assessment has presented itself. Ontario's Ombudsman has condemned the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC), calling it “capricious” and “secretive” and he has made 22 recommendations to fix problems experienced by property owners all over the Province. In March, I tabled three resolutions at City Council requesting: (1) a 2-year moratorium on property assessments; (2) endorsement of the Ombudsman's recommendations; as well as (3) a package of suggestions to start a debate for a fairer property assessment system and if we must have a Market Value system, use the California-model of “Market Value Assessment At Point of Sale” only.

These motions arrived at the Mayor's Policy & Finance Committee but he and his team were not interested in finding a more equitable, fair and stable system to assess our properties. I feel it is the ideal time for this debate when MPAC is ‘under-fire’. It will be easier to make the extensive changes to the system when the system is being overhauled by the Province. I will be working over the next months to strike an Assessment Reform subcommittee to keep this issue alive so we can get fair, stable, and predictable property tax reform.

Please visit [www.MichaelWalker.ca](http://www.MichaelWalker.ca) for more information or contact my office at [councillor\\_walker@toronto.ca](mailto:councillor_walker@toronto.ca) or 416.392.7906. Also, visit [www.toronto.ca](http://www.toronto.ca) or call 416.338.0338 to find contacts for the Mayor and the rest of City Council to tell them what you think. If this is a priority for you, we need to hear it.