

October 16, 2002

TO: Mr. Barry Guttridge, Commissioner, Works & Emergency Services

FROM: Councillor Michael Walker

RE: Proposed “Pay-as-you-throw” Residential Waste Collection Policy

Dear Commissioner,

I am writing to strongly object to any new City Residential Waste Collection Policy that charges a user fee. This additional taxing of residents, in my opinion, is not called for.

On October 11, 2002, I received a copy of the undated City Notice with the heading: “We Want Your Input!”. The topic of this upcoming public consultation is one proposal for residential waste collection, the “pay-as-you-throw” program. This proposal would charge the resident per bag of waste put out for collection.

While I agree this proposal may encourage residential recycling, reuse, and reduction, I do not support its proposed introduction by charging an extra fee to residents who already pay taxes. Garbage collection is such a basic service, if a citizen does not pay taxes to get the garbage collected, what are the taxes for?

The City’s commercial businesses have recently been hit with a new tax called a ‘bag-fee’ for their waste collection. This so-called “Yellow Bag Program”, which is routinely cluttering our main streets with ‘apartment-above-store’ residential garbage, is giving the city’s businesses less for their tax dollar; it hurts the city’s entrepreneurs the most, those who should be getting more support from their local government.

For the record, I do not and will not give my support for this proposal, or any proposal that charges a user fee to the resident for the collection of waste and/or recycling, on top of his/her taxes. This proposal will encourage the growth of private waste collection companies and the City does not monitor their waste diversion levels. This proposal would only encourage privatization of our City’s waste collection facilities, among other negative outcomes.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Walker
Councillor – Ward 22

CJS