May 13, 2002

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

FROM: Councillor Michael Walker

RE: Continuing Waste Collection Problems

Dear Commissioner,

Further to my letter of March 8, 2002, I am writing to express my continued disappointment with the persisting low level of waste collection service. The public is extremely disconcerted because their waste, recycling, and yard-waste sits far too long at the curb -- sometimes completely missed altogether. Almost every week my office receives notices of incomplete collection (please see attached). I also speak from personal experience, since my waste and recycling collection has been intermittant as well.

Now, ***ten*** weeks into the new four-day, heavy overtime, 12-14 hours-per-day schedule, the wrinkles in the plan have not been ironed out, at least not in St. Paul's. Toronto is better than this; the City has operated at levels superior to these in the past: why is it not now? The public is asking why the City can not perform seemingly basic municipal tasks *such as collecting the garbage.* Every municipal representative and communication is reflective of the whole. As a whole, the City, in my opinion and in the opinion of many residents, is *not* honourably fulfilling its promise to the public.

Would you please clean up the ongoing completion problems with the execution of the weekly waste collection and the biweekly recycling collection schedules. Our streets cannot continue to be cluttered by uncollected newspapers on windy days. Recycling bins should not be left out long enough to be so tempting as to be used as dog-do-bag deposits. Residents should not have to resort to bungy-cords over the garbage can lid for lengthy raccoon-protection, when they are already willing to place their garbage out at 6:30 a.m. on collection day.

The public's patience cannot be taken for granted. Like any consumer, every resident is becoming more and more wary of where their tax dollars are going and how they're spent. When a citizen's garbage is missed again and again, it feeds the now too common negative attitude towards the City's ability to provide even a *basic* service. Public confidence lies within the everyday things.

To my dismay, the reply to my March 8, 2002 letter did not come from your office, but from the Director for the South District Operations, Mr. Richard Butts. I wrote my complaint to you as Commissioner and I expected to hear from you. In addition, the reply was quite inadequate in this circumstance (please see attached). The problems that I was concerned with then and the concerns I have now are in a different category than those answers; these concerns require real answers and action.

I look forward your personal reply.

Sincerely,

Michael Walker
Councillor – Ward 22

Encl.

CJS