

Media Release

October 25, 2002

COUNCILLOR CALLS FOR PLEBISCITE ON OLYMPICS

Councillor Michael Walker (Ward 22) yesterday released a Motion that calls for the holding of a city-wide plebiscite prior to the City of Toronto formalizing any bid on the hosting of the 2012 or 2016 Olympic Summer Games.

The plebiscite, which would constitute a question to the electorate on the November, 2003 municipal election ballot, follows a recent and similar strategy in Bern, Switzerland, where consent for an ongoing bid for the 2010 Olympic Games was soundly refused.

Said Councillor Walker; “ The last bid process in Toronto was hijacked by special corporate interest groups. It was elitist and secretive and would have subjected the people of Toronto to dramatic change about which they had absolutely no say. That’s both unfair and undemocratic.”

Councillor Walker noted that the Toronto bid for the 2008 Olympics ballooned from \$21 to \$46 million, an increase of 128 per cent. As successful bidding cities, both Sydney and Montreal are still struggling with their own Olympic debts.

“An informed and consenting electorate is the best defense against the kind of unaccountable over-spending we saw in the last bid, said Councillor Walker. “ I can think of no better issue on which to hold a city-wide plebiscite. It’s time that the people were heard.”

The motion is scheduled to be considered by the *Economic Development, Culture and Tourism Committee* on Thursday, November 7, 2002.

-30-

Contact: Councillor Michael Walker, 416-392-7906
Chris Sellors, Assistant, 416-338-5253