April 24, 2009

His Worship Fred Eisenberger
Mayor
City of Hamilton
Office of the Mayor
Hamilton City Centre
230-77 James Street North
Hamilton, Ontario
L8R 2K3

Dear Mayor Eisenberger:

Thank you for your letter and attachment of April 16 providing me with a copy of council’s resolution regarding plastic bag reduction and recycling. As always, it is a pleasure hearing from you, and I appreciate your keeping me informed of council’s activities.

Strong environmental protection is the foundation of the high quality of life and sustainable economic growth of our province. This is why it is one of the top priorities of our government. Ontarians deserve to live and work in clean, safe communities in which the environment contributes to our health and quality of life.

As you may know, our government has struck a deal with industry leaders to markedly reduce the number of plastic bags distributed in Ontario. The Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors, the Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers, the Recycling Council of Ontario, the Retail Council of Canada and the Canadian Plastics Industry Association have all agreed to the deal brokered by the Minister of the Environment.

The pact includes commitments to reduce the use of plastic bags by 50 per cent; consideration of in-store and Blue Box recycling programs for Ontario stores; and consumer education initiatives to promote the reduction, reuse and recycling of bags already in circulation. The program also includes annual monitoring and reporting to ensure progress is made.
Recognizing the need for increased responsibility among industry stewards, the partners have also agreed to the expansion of the use of reusable bags such as canvas and reusable plastic, and developing options for large items made available to customers as an alternative to single-use disposable plastic bags; committing to increase the amount of recycled content in plastic bags where possible; and developing appropriate and meaningful incentives to encourage consumers to reduce plastic bag demand and expand the use of reusable bags.

I note that you have sent a copy of council’s resolution to my colleague the Honourable John Gerretsen, Minister of the Environment. I trust that the minister will also take council’s views into consideration.

Thank you again for the information. Please accept my best wishes.

Yours truly,

[Signature]

Dalton McGuinty
Premier

C: The Honourable John Gerretsen
April 16, 2009

Premier Dalton McGuinty
Province of Ontario
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto ON
M7A 1A1

Dear Mr. Premier:

City Council, at its meeting held on April 15, 2009, approved Item 6 of Public Works Committee Report 09-006, which reads as follows:

6. **Plastic Shopping Bag Reduction and Recycling (PW07155(b)) (City Wide)**

   (a) That the Ministry of Environment be advised that their efforts on plastic shopping bag reduction are supported by the City of Hamilton as they are consistent with our position on increased extended producer responsibility;

   (b) That staff continue to monitor plastic film capture rates in the Recycling Program and ongoing private sector initiatives to reduce plastic shopping bag use, in light of the 2007 Provincial voluntary initiative calling for the 50% reduction of plastic shopping bags by 2012;

   (c) That the use of stronger policy tools such as bans or levies to achieve the necessary reduction in film plastic going to landfill be considered by the City of Hamilton if sufficient progress towards the 50% reduction goal is not reported by the end of 2012;

   (d) That plastic film including plastic shopping bags continue to be accepted and promoted in the City of Hamilton Recycling Program;
That staff promote the reduction in non-recyclable plastic bags through a reusable bag initiative and by educating area retailers on identifying recyclable and non-recyclable bags;

That a copy of this report be sent to local Members of Provincial Parliament and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO);

That the issue of plastic shopping bag reduction and recycling be referred to the Province for their consideration.

As noted in sub-section (g), it is respectfully requested that Council’s resolution be given consideration.

Attached for your information and reference is a copy of Report PW07155(b) which was presented to the Public Works Committee at their meeting held on April 6, 2009.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Beth Goodger, Director of Waste Management, at (905)546-2424, Ext. 4409, or by e-mail at Beth.Goodger@hamilton.ca.

Yours truly

Original signed by Mayor F. Eisenberger

Fred Eisenberger
Mayor

c.c. The Honourable J. Gerretsen, M.P.P.
    Minister of the Environment
    Andrea Horwath, M.P.P., Hamilton Centre
    Sophia Aggelonitis, M.P.P., Hamilton Mountain
    Ted McMeekin, M.P.P., Ancaster/Dundas/Flamborough/Aldershot
    Paul Miller, M.P.P., Hamilton East-Stoney Creek
    Tim Hudak, M.P.P., Niagara West/Glanbrook
    Association of Municipalities of Ontario