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March 2, 2010

Councilmember Tom LaBonge  
Los Angeles City Hall, Room 480  
200 N. Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

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Dear Councilmember LaBonge,

Many residents of multi unit residential buildings leave their Department of Sanitation trash bins in the street or in the front yards. Not only does this practice create visual blight, but it aggravates our parking problems because the trash bins take up precious parking spaces. I have personally met with the owners of some buildings and discussed the problem with them.

What I found out was quite surprising. Most of these multi unit buildings, especially the courtyard style bungalows, have no room to store the required number of City bins on the property. These owners have tried to contract with private sanitation services which can provide a compact bin which will hold as much trash as many City bins. The compact bin can be placed out of sight and off of the street. The problem is that DWP and the Department of Sanitation insist that they have the right to continue to bill the tenants for City trash collection even though the City is no longer providing collection services.

DWP and Sanitation have no legal authority to continue to collect trash bin fees from multi unit buildings which are not serviced by the City of Los Angeles. Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 66.41(a)(1) provides, in pertinent part: "No charge shall be imposed on any multiple-family dwelling where the City does not collect refuse."

This provision exists to allow multi unit buildings to opt out of the City system. The only fee the City can collect from buildings not serviced by the City is the bulky item pick up fee.

Please arrange a meeting with the appropriate representatives from DWP and Sanitation so that we may clear this matter up.

Sincerely,

Ricardo Gomez, Vice-President



