SUBJECT: Arvin Avenue Extension Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (PW09002) - (Ward 11)

RECOMMENDATION:

(a) That the General Manager, Public Works, be authorized and directed to file the Arvin Avenue Extension Environmental Study Report with the Municipal Clerk for a minimum thirty day public review period;

(b) That the General Manager, Public Works, be authorized and directed to proceed with implementation of the preferred alternatives to be funded through Capital Project Nos. 3620407101 and 3620374100.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Arvin Avenue presently exists in segments of the Stoney Creek Industrial Park. (See study area, Appendix A) The extension and connection of this road would contribute to the completion of the transportation network and allow for additional serviced industrial land within the Stoney Creek Industrial Park, as well as throughout the City of Hamilton.

The Arvin Avenue Extension project has followed the Municipal Engineers Association Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) process for Schedule C projects.

Several alternatives (ten) were evaluated for the different segments of this roadway extension and three alternatives were determined to be the preferred alternatives. This study includes a review of drainage and traffic conditions that would be affected by the roadway extension.
BACKGROUND:

The Municipal Engineers Association (MEA) Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) process for Schedule C projects applies to the construction of new roads. Due to increasing pressure to open up employment lands in the Stoney Creek Industrial Park area, a comprehensive study of the extension of Arvin Avenue, drainage and traffic conditions was undertaken in order to determine the construction needed. A Municipal Class EA must be undertaken in order to determine the location and design alternatives for the road.

Arvin Avenue presently exists in segments of the Stoney Creek Industrial Park. With the extension of this road it would allow for the Industrial Park to develop further. This EA has looked at the extension of Arvin Avenue as follows (See Appendix B):

- **Block 1** - Jones Road easterly connecting to the portion of Arvin Avenue that connects with Glover Road
- **Block 2** - East of Glover Road continuing from the existing leg of Arvin Avenue to McNeilly Road
- **Blocks 2/3** – McNeilly Road to mid-block Lewis/Winona

During the Arvin Avenue EA process, it was determined that the Arvin Avenue extension would impact plans for Lewis Road which was undergoing an EA as well. It became necessary to make minor changes to the design solution for Lewis Road EA that was being finalized. Those changes were provided to the public at the same Public Information Centre as the Arvin Avenue Class EA.

As part of the public consultation staff worked with Lafarge, an affected property owner, with respect to the construction of the Arvin Avenue extension and the impact on their operations located on Jones Road. It was determined and agreed upon that minor modifications to the road alignment as they impact the Lafarge operation at 360 Jones Road could be dealt with further during the detail design process.

Municipal Class Environmental Assessment

The study has been conducted in accordance with the Municipal Class EA process with the intent to determine road location and design. As a result, the study has fulfilled the Class EA requirements for any Schedule C projects. Class EA requirements for Schedule C projects include the following four phases:

- **Phase 1** - problem identification
- **Phase 2** - review alternative solutions
- **Phase 3** - provide alternative design concepts for preferred solutions
- **Phase 4** - provide a detailed environmental study report

ANALYSIS/RATIONALE:

The Class EA study follows the planning and design process of the Municipal Engineers Association Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (October 2000, as amended in 2007) for roads, water, wastewater projects and transit. The City is completing the Municipal Class EA planning process applicable to Schedule C projects. Schedule ‘C’ projects include improvements to existing facilities and other undertakings that are considered to have the potential for significant environmental effects and must proceed under the full planning and documentation procedures of the Municipal Class EA. These
projects are considered approved under the Environmental Assessment Act once the required phases are complete and subject to the review period.

**Alternative Planning Solutions (Phase 2)**

The following long list of alternative solutions was developed to address the problems and opportunities:

**Do Nothing** - this alternative does not address the identified need to expand the Stoney Creek Industrial Park

**Operational Improvements** - this would include non-structural improvements such as: computerized signal systems, motorist information systems, overall intersection interchange improvements, traffic surveillance and control equipment. These operational improvements do not open access to new industrial lands.

**Expansion of Transit** - this alternative involves expanding current bus and rail transportation into the study area to eliminate the need for a new road. This alternative, in part, would address the need for increased development opportunities with the Industrial Park, but would not open access to employment lands.

**Road Widening of Existing Roads** - this includes widening the roads to two lanes in each direction to allow for a greater movement of vehicles within the study area. This would allow vehicles to move more efficiently but does not open access to new industrial lands.

**New Roads** - this alternative includes the addition of new roads running parallel to Jones Road, Glover Road, Lewis Road and Fifty Road. These roads would be mid-block roadways from the rail line south to Barton Street. The new roads would increase development opportunities in the Stoney Creek Industrial Park in a direction perpendicular to the current Arvin Avenue. The new roads would be located between Jones Road and Glover Road, as well as between Glover Road and Lewis Road.

**Extend Arvin Avenue** - This would include looking at the opportunity to extend Arvin Avenue west to Jones Road and east, connecting up with either Barton Street (to the south) or Fifty Road to the east.

Based on the preliminary evaluation of the alternative solutions, it was concluded that extending Arvin Avenue is the preferred alternative based on the following rationale:

- The ability to provide service to adjacent lands
- Ability to improve network connectivity
- Potential impact on air quality (network connectivity - throughway traffic)
- Minimal impact to local residents
- Ability to improve socio-economic environment by reducing truck traffic in residential enclaves

**Alternative Alignment/Design Concepts (Phase 3)**

The following alternatives (See Appendix C) were developed to address Phase 3 of the Municipal Class EA:

**Block 1 - Jones Road to Glover Road**

Alternative 1 - Extend Arvin Avenue west from existing terminus to align with existing Arvin Avenue west of Jones Road
Alternative 2 - Extend Arvin Avenue west from existing terminus to align with terminus of Cornell Avenue

Alternative 3 - Extend Arvin Avenue west from existing terminus to approximately mid-block, then south to intersect Barton Street

**Block 2 - Glover Road to McNeilly Road**

Alternative 4 - Extend Arvin Avenue east to approximately mid-block, then south to intersect Barton Street

**Block 2/3 - McNeilly Road to mid-block Lewis/Winona**

Alternative 5 - Extend Arvin Avenue east to intersect Lewis Road

Alternative 5A - Extend Arvin Avenue north-east to intersect McNeilly Road, south of rail line (to avoid existing residential properties on McNeilly Road)

Alternative 6 - Arvin Avenue extends south to connect with Tuscany Drive, intersecting Barton Street

Alternative 7 - Arvin Avenue extends east to West Avenue

Alternative 8 - Arvin Avenue extends north-east to Petit Street

**Preferred Corridor Alternatives**

The following are the preferred design alternatives that address Phase 3 and 4 of the Municipal Class EA.

**Block 1: Alternative 1** is the preferred alignment alternative. This option provides for best network connectivity. It will redirect traffic from surrounding roads, provide for the greatest amount of developable land and minimize impacts to the surrounding social environment.

**Block 2: Alternative 5** is the preferred alignment alternative. Alternative 5 and alternative 5A are very similar, however the main difference is that Alternative 5A involves construction near the train tracks located to the north of the study area. As a result, alternative 5 is the preferred alternative since it has the greatest ability to provide for industrial land. With the proximity of alternative 5A to the train tracks, there is limited developable land opportunity and there is increased safety concerns associated with the intersection at McNeilly Road near to the train tracks.

**Block 3: Alternative 6A** is the preferred alignment alternative as a result of its minimal impacts on residential properties, as well as minimal disruption during construction. This alternative provides for improved safety, acceptable emergency access, although it does reduce the level of network connectivity. This alternative provides good transit operations and provides the greatest amount of industrial developable land for future industries.

**ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION:**

The preferred alternative solutions have been identified using an evaluation and screening process that fulfils the requirements of the Municipal Engineers Association (MEA) Municipal Class EA document for Schedule C projects. Municipal projects processed under the Schedule C provisions are considered to be approved under the
Environmental Assessment Act provided the projects follow the appropriate planning and design process outlined in the MEA Municipal Class EA document.

The MEA Municipal Class EA document was approved under the Environmental Assessment Act. If the City does not follow the process outlined in the Municipal Class EA document, the City would be in violation of the document and as a result would have contravened the EA Act. The Minister of the Environment could revisit the approval of a project or take away the City’s right to use the Municipal Class EA document.

The preferred alternative solution is to proceed with Alternatives 1, 5 and 6A as the preferred options. There are two alternatives for Council to consider with respect to the recommendations of this report:

To file the Arvin Avenue Extension Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Schedule C project with the City Clerk for a minimum 30 day public review period and proceed with implementation, subject to comments received and funding approval.

To not file the Arvin Avenue Extension Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Schedule C project with the City Clerk for a minimum 30 day public review period and, as a consequence, not proceed with implementation.

Should Council not wish to approve the filing of the Arvin Avenue Extension Municipal Environmental Assessment Master Plan Class EA Schedule C project, the Municipal Class EA process would be considered by the provincial government as incomplete and the City will not have approval under provincial environmental legislation to implement the Schedule C improvements required to address transportation issues in the study area. The outcome would be equivalent to the do nothing alternative, which would result in the inability to effectively address both the short-term and the long-term transportation infrastructure needs for the study area. Eventually the City would have to repeat the Class EA process, which would likely result in the same recommendations.

**FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:**

**Financial**

The estimated construction costs for the road are:

**Alternative 1** - Extend Arvin Avenue west from existing terminus to align with existing Arvin Avenue west of Jones Road - $1.4 million

**Alternative 5** - Extend Arvin Avenue east to intersect McNeilly Road - $5 million

**Alternative 6A** - Arvin Avenue extends to a cul-de-sac - $600,000

The Planning and Economic Development Department is managing the coordination of “shovel ready” lands in the City's industrial parks. Alternative 5 and 6A are anticipated to be the first segments of road to be constructed, pending property acquisitions and developer initiated proposals, in Fall 2009 or Spring 2010. Funds for these works are allocated within the following accounts (Project ID No. 3620407101 and 3620374100). The preferred alternatives will be funded partially through Development Charges (95%). In addition, a portion of the costs may be recovered from development as it occurs.

**Staffing**

There are no staffing implications.
Legal

Municipal undertakings such as road improvements, water and wastewater and transit projects are subject to Ontario’s Environmental Assessment Act. The Act allows for the approval of Class Environmental Assessments and the municipality has the option of following the planning process set out in the Municipal Engineers Association Class Environmental Assessment (October 2000, as amended in 2007). This study has followed the Schedule C Planning and Design Process and will fulfill phase 1 to 4 of the Class EA process. The City is required to file the Environmental Study report on the public record for a minimum 30-day review period.

POLICIES AFFECTING PROPOSAL:

The recommendations of this report are consistent with the City Wide Transportation Master Plan, Stormwater Water Quality Management Strategy, Community of Stoney Creek, Lewis Road Improvements Class EA, Watercourse 5&6 Class EA, Watercourse No. 7 Creek System Improvements Class EA, Watercourse No. 7 Creek System Improvements Class EA, Citywide Stormwater Quality Master Plan, Stoney Creek Stormwater Master Plan, McNeilly Road Class EA, Winona Urban Area Master Drainage Plan that have been completed in the affected study area.

The Public Works Strategic Plan has four vision drivers within the Plan being, Communities, People, Processes and Finances. The extension of Arvin Avenue will address Communities as the road will allow for improving the neighbourhood by connecting the industrial business community. In addition, through the development of this project we have addressed a smart Process in order to align with the objectives that the Planning and Economic Development Department have been trying to achieve in the development of the Stoney Creek Business Park and the expansion of industrial land.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION:

Public consultation is a key component of the Class EA process. Public comments and input on this project were solicited through the Notice of Study Commencement/Public Information Centre (PIC) published twice in the Hamilton Spectator, At Your Service and Stoney Creek News on April 20, 2007 and May 3, 2007. Twenty people attended the PIC.

A second PIC was held on September 11, 2008 which was published twice in the Hamilton Spectator, At Your Service and Stoney Creek News on August 29 and September 5, 2008 where 26 people attended. This Public Information Centre (PIC) was held to present the findings of the Arvin Avenue Extension and the preferred design alternative. As a result of the preferred design alternative for the Arvin Avenue Extension, it became necessary to make minor changes to the design solution for Lewis Road EA that was being finalized. Those changes were provided to the public at the same Public Information Centre.

Consultation occurred through meetings and/or mail outs with the following agencies. All comments that have been received have been addressed.
CITY STRATEGIC COMMITMENT:

By evaluating the “Triple Bottom Line”, (community, environment, economic implications) we can make choices that create value across all three bottom lines, moving us closer to our vision for a sustainable community, and Provincial interests.

Community Well-Being is enhanced. ☑ Yes ☐ No
Participation in community life is accessible to all Hamiltonians.

Environmental Well-Being is enhanced. ☑ Yes ☐ No
A sustainable transportation network provides many options for people and goods movement; vehicle-dependency is reduced.

Economic Well-Being is enhanced. ☑ Yes ☐ No
Investment in Hamilton is enhanced and supported.

Does the option you are recommending create value across all three bottom lines?
The preferred alternative addresses the present road deficiencies for the area and improves stormwater management and minimizes the impact on all three bottom lines. It also addresses improvements to the City's economic tax base.

Do the options you are recommending make Hamilton a City of choice for high performance public servants?

☑ Yes  ☐ No

The recommendations in this report have no impact on the desired results for this commitment (e.g. lifelong learning, supportive workplace)