EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Setting Sail Secondary Plan for the West Harbour identifies a future potential pedestrian linkage between Dundurn Park and the Waterfront Trail. Upon commencement of the Environmental Assessment it was determined that there are limitations on linking Dundurn Park due to its designation as a National Historic Site, including its landscape. The project followed the Municipal Engineers Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process for Schedule ‘C’ projects. Seven alternative locations, including...
the “Do Nothing” alternative were evaluated against a list of environmental criteria. The preferred location is at the foot of Locke Street.

As the estimated cost of the crossing is greater than $2.2 Million, alternative bridge designs were evaluated against a list of environmental criteria. The preferred bridge design is a composite material spans on fixed piers.

Funding for the implementation of the preferred design is subject to budget approval through the Capital Budget Process.

**BACKGROUND:**

The information/recommendations contained within this report affect Ward 1 and was initiated in response to Setting Sail Secondary Plan policy A.6.3.2.5:

> The grid network of streets across most of West harbour provides for efficient movement in each of the neighbourhoods and links the area to Downtown. Significant physical barriers, however, restrict easy access to the area generally and the waterfront in particular, especially for pedestrians and cyclists. These barriers include the Stuart Street Rail Yard, the main CN line and the bluffs south of the rail yard and east of Macassa Bay. They also include busy streets like York Boulevard, Cannon Street and Barton Street that can be difficult to cross. Physical and operational improvements in West Harbour, particularly to the public realm of streets, parks and open spaces, should strive to achieve the following: vi) Establish a pedestrian connection between Dundurn Park and the Waterfront Trail.

*The Dundurn National Historic Site Commemorative Integrity Statement* was developed with Parks Canada and the National Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada and outlines the official designation of the Dundurn National Historic Site and its landscape as a site of national historic significance. This document directs the preservation and interpretation work both of the buildings and the landscape (which is contiguous with the park but not completely).

The designation of the property allows little flexibility with alterations to the site’s landscape. This resulted in the review of other locations within the vicinity of Dundurn National Historic Site that would provide similar objectives as to the intent of the pedestrian connection (See Appendix A for the broad study area).

**Municipal Class Environmental Assessment**

This project followed the Schedule ‘C’ planning and design process of the Municipal Engineers Association (MEA) Municipal Class Environmental Assessment document (October 2000, as amended in 2007) for roads, water and wastewater, and transit projects. Phases 1 (Problem Definition), 2 (Identification and Evaluation of Alternative Solutions to determine a preferred solution), 3 (Identification and Evaluation of Alternative Design Concepts for the Preferred Solution) and 4 (Documentation in an Environmental Study Report) were completed.
ANALYSIS/RATIONALE:

Alternative Bridge Locations

Potential locations for the bridge crossing needed to take the following into consideration:

- A location to service the Strathcona Neighbourhood and provide a connection from Dundurn Park to the waterfront;
- A location that will be able to meet the required clearance over the CN Rail Tracks;
- A location that will be able to maintain a grade of 5% or less;
- A location in which the width of the area at the top of the escarpment will allow for the construction of a fully accessible, barrier-free connection; and,
- A location in which the width of the Waterfront Trail will allow for the construction of a fully accessible, barrier-free connection with minimal impact to the Harbour.

As a result of the initial screening of potential locations based on the criteria above, seven (7) alternative locations were identified (see Appendix B), as follows:

1. Do nothing (as required per the Municipal Class EA process);
2. Alternative Location A: Within Harvey Park extending over the CN Rail Tracks and connect to the Waterfront Trail at an existing rest area.
3. Alternative Location B: Within Harvey Park extending over the CN Rail Tracks and connect to the Waterfront Trail at an existing treeed area.
4. Alternative Location C: Within Harvey Park at the existing stair location extending over the CN Rail Tracks and connect to the Waterfront Trail.
5. Alternative Location D: Located at the end of Locke Street, extending over the CN Rail Tracks and connect to the Waterfront Trail.
6. Alternative Location E: Located at the end of Crooks Street extending over the CN Rail Tracks and connect to the Waterfront Trail.
7. Alternative Location F: Undeveloped land on the north side of Barton Street West, between Crooks Street and Ray Street North, extending over the CN Rail Tracks and connect to the Waterfront Trail.

As a result of the screening process the preferred location is Alternative Location D (located at the foot of Locke Street, see Appendix B) for the following reasons:

- There would be minimal impact to vegetation in this area;
- Locke Street is a cycling route and connects with Chedoke Radial Recreational Trail and commercial/residential areas along Locke Street South;
- Would not disrupt the look and feel of Harvey Park;
- Recognizes the historical connection to the harbour; and,
- Provides access to neighbourhoods adjacent to the Stratchona Neighbourhood.

Alternative Design Options

As part of the assessment process, two design options for the pedestrian connection were identified, a bridge connection or a tunnel connection. The bridge connection would require a platform at the top of the escarpment, maintain a 7.0 m above top of rail minimum clearance over the rail tracks and require a ramp system to connect to the Waterfront Trail. The tunnel connection would require a deep shaft at the top of the
escarpment, a tunnel under the CN Rail Tracks in fill, and an elevator type system would be required to ensure a barrier-free access. The two design options were assessed against the relevant criteria and the bridge connection option was preferred for the following reasons:

- The bridge would be more technically feasible, as the Tunnel Connection would be constructed through fill which is of unknown quality;
- The bridge connection would have a lower operational/maintenance requirement and lower capital/operational cost; and,
- Safety and security concerns for pedestrians and cyclists for a tunnel connection include remote location, limited accessibility, impact of groundwater and electrical disruption.

**Alternative Bridge Designs**

Four alternative bridge options were developed and presented to the public at the third Public Information Centre, as follows:

- Alternative 1: Conventional Truss Spans on fixed piers
- Alternative 2: Cable Stay with Truss Spans
- Alternative 3: Composite Material Spans on fixed piers
- Alternative 4: Cable Stay with Composite Material Spans

As a result of consultation with public and discussions with the Project Team, the preferred bridge option is Alternative 3: Composite Material Span on fixed piers for the following reasons:

- Lower capital cost compared to the other three alternatives;
- Minimal disruption to sight lines and would not impact the view from or to Dundurn Park; and,
- All other evaluation criteria were equal.

**ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION:**

The preferred alternative solution has been identified using an evaluation and screening process that fulfils the requirements of the MEA Municipal Class EA document for Schedule ‘C’ projects. Municipal projects of this category are considered to be approved under the Environmental Assessment Act provided that the project follows the Schedule ‘C’ 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 Ministry of 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 not normally reconsidered at the end of the process unless there is an issue that is proven to affect the outcome of the evaluation process. There is one alternative for Council to consider with respect to the recommendations of this report:
(1) To not file the Strathcona Neighbourhood – Waterfront Trail Pedestrian Bridge Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Environmental Study Report 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 environmental study report, the Municipal Class EA process will be considered by the provincial government as incomplete and the City will not have approval under provincial environmental legislation to implement the construction of the pedestrian bridge. The outcome would be equivalent to the do nothing alternative. Eventually the City would have to repeat the Class EA process, which would likely result in the same recommendation.

FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

Financial: Funding for detailed design and project construction will be brought forward to Council as part of the 2009-2018 10 Year Capital Budget Program. The estimated cost (including engineering ($260,000) and contingency ($371,000)) for the pedestrian bridge is $4.391 million.

Staffing: There are no staffing implications.

Legal: Municipal undertakings such as road improvements, water and wastewater 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 phases 1 through 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 in the Strathcona Neighbourhood - Waterfront Trail Pedestrian Connection Environmental Study Report are consistent with the Public Works Strategic Plan. The study highlights the goals of the Public Works Strategic Plan in “greening” and “stewardship” of the City. The pedestrian connection will continue Hamilton’s strength in creating a walkable city and reducing automobile dependency.

The recommendations of this report will not bind the corporation or alter or contravene any established City Policy.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION:

Public consultation is a key component of the Class Environmental Assessment process. Three formal Public Information Centres (PICs) were held to consult with the neighbourhood:

- An initial PIC on April 18, 2007 was held to introduce the study to residents and to present the need for a pedestrian connection; information on the connection; the problem/opportunity statement; and the draft evaluation criteria. A special notice of this meeting was delivered to households north of York Boulevard through a bulk
mailing, along with two notices in the Hamilton Spectator on April 5th and April 13th, 2006, and an agency mail out. Twenty four (24) people signed in at this meeting.

- A second PIC on June 19, 2007 (repeated on July 26, 2007), held to present an evaluation of the alternative crossing locations and to present a preferred location for the crossing. This meeting was advertised in the Hamilton Spectator on June 8th and June 15th, 2007, and on the City of Hamilton Website. Notices were also sent to individuals who had attended the first PIC or who had otherwise expressed interest in the study, through bulk mailing to residents North of York Boulevard, and an agency mail out. Thirty one (31) and eleven (11) people signed in at these meetings, respectively.

- A third PIC on March 19, 2008 was arranged to present an evaluation of the various bridge design options for the preferred crossing location and preferred alternative bridge design. This meeting was advertised in two issues of the Hamilton Spectator (March 7 and 14, 2008) and on the City of Hamilton Website. The notice was mailed to all registered mailing addresses north of York Boulevard, along with any addresses that were on the study mailing list and agencies. Thirty five (35) people signed in at this meeting.

Staff was approached by a neighbouring property owner and was requested to purchase their undeveloped property. The design of the pedestrian connection does not require acquisition of this property as the plot is irregularly shaped and is sloping. Therefore it would not easily accommodate a parking/drop off area. If purchased by the City, through another avenue, the site would most likely be suitable for naturalization.

Staff/Agency Consultation

The following City of Hamilton departments were contacted for this project:

- Hamilton Emergency Services
- Planning and Economic Development (Economic Development and Real Estate, Community Planning and Design, Downtown and Community Renewal)
- Public Works (Operations & Maintenance, Traffic Engineering & Operations, Capital Planning and Implementation, Parking and By-Law Services, Open Space Development)
- Community Services (Culture and Recreation)
- Corporate Services (Legal Services)

During project team discussions staff decided it would be appropriate to request a presentation to the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities. Project staff attended the July 8, 2008 meeting and updated the committee on the project. Following that meeting staff was requested to report back to the Committee of the Whole:

(g)(i) Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities Report 08-005 July 8, 2008 (Item 7.16)

Locke Street North Pedestrian Bridge

The Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities respectfully requests that staff be directed to include the following in the plans for the Strathcona Neighbourhood-Waterfront Trail pedestrian bridge located on Locke Street North:

(i) A vehicle drop-off zone and a vehicle parking area that can be utilized by persons with disabilities, as well as parents with children.
(ii) An accessible washroom located on the waterfront side of the bridge, along the waterfront trail.

Staff have considered these items and cannot accommodate item (i) as the land surrounding the road right-of-way is privately owned and would require expropriation to obtain. The intent of this connection is not to provide vehicular drop off to access the Waterfront Trail. Vehicular drop off/parking is to be done at existing parking lots at Bayfront Park or Cootes Paradise for persons wishing to access waterfront amenities. The intent of this connection is to provide a fully accessible pedestrian/cycling crossing for residents of the Strathcona Neighbourhood to the Waterfront and to reduce dependency on automobile use. This is not a destination point; however, it forms part of the alternative transportation network for the City of Hamilton. The bridge design will be barrier free and fully accessible.

With respect to item (ii), an accessible portable washroom is provided on the waterfront trail west of the proposed pedestrian crossing. Due to limited land availability this washroom cannot be moved closer to the pedestrian bridge. There are also accessible washrooms located within the West Harbour Waterfront Recreation area. The West Harbour Waterfront Recreation Master Plan will also be recommending additional accessible washrooms at Bayfront Park.

Local First Nations and Aboriginal Organizations were contacted throughout the study and did not provide any objections.

The following agencies were contacted for this project:
- Ministry of the Environment
- Ministry of Natural Resources
- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Community and Social Services
- Ontario Native Affairs Secretariat
- Ministry of Transportation
- Ministry of Natural Resources
- Municipal Affairs and Housing
- Ontario Provincial Police
- Department of Fisheries & Oceans
- Environment Canada
- Hamilton Port Authority
- Transport Canada
- Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
- Canadian Environment and Assessment Agency
- Bell Canada
- CN Rail
- Southern Ontario Rail
- Union Gas Ltd.
- Horizon Utilities Corporation
- Hamilton Conservation Authority
- Sun Canadian Pipeline
- Trans Canada Pipelines
- Enbridge Pipelines Inc.
The following agencies provided comments:

- Ministry of Environment
- Hamilton Conservation Authority
- Transport Canada
- Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
- Six Nations Lands and Resources
- CN Rail
- Southern Ontario Rail
- Horizon Utilities Corporation
- Canadian Environment and Assessment Agency

All comments were addressed where appropriate.

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
Opportunities for physical activity are supported and enhanced.
The preferred alternative allows for the provision of a fully accessible pedestrian/cycling crossing from the Strathcona Neighbourhood to the waterfront trail.

Environmental Well-Being is enhanced. ☑ Yes ☐ No
A sustainable transportation network provides many options for people and goods movement; vehicle dependency is reduced. The preferred plan promotes walking and cycling and reduces automobile dependency. This connection may also reduce parking demand at Bayfront Park/Cootes Paradise by providing a direct connection to the waterfront for residents within the Strathcona Neighbourhood.

Economic Well-Being is enhanced. ☑ Yes ☐ No
Local Economy, to promote the Strathcona as a desirable place to live by fostering a walkable community.
Land Use in the Urban Area, to use alternative modes of movement, such as walking and cycling.

Does the option you are recommending create value across all three bottom lines? ☑ Yes ☐ No
The preferred alternative improves walkability of the neighbourhood and connects residents to the waterfront trail.

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. life long learning, supportive workplace).