RECOMMENDATION:
That the York Boulevard Gateway enhancement request for the installation of floral display beds and hanging floral baskets, and additional pavement sweeping services which result in an increase of 0.66 FTE at a total annual operating cost of $102,750; plus one time Capital costs of $71,000 (as outlined in Report PW07028), be received for consideration.

Chris Murray
Acting General Manager
Public Works

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:
As directed by Council (September 2006) a Program Enhancement has been included in the 2007 Budget submission (Operations & Maintenance Division) for consideration providing a range of potential improvements to the section of York Boulevard between Dundurn Street and the City limits to enhance its function as one of several key gateways to the City. This report provides background information to the program enhancement request and identifies alternative approaches for consideration.

BACKGROUND:
The information/recommendation contained within this report primarily affects Ward 1 with City wide implications.
At the September 27, 2006, Council meeting, staff was directed to prepare and submit a program enhancement and Capital funding request during the 2007 budget process that would provide for a variety of improvements along York Boulevard between the City limits and Dundurn Street to enhance its function as one of several key gateways to the city and the central downtown area. York Boulevard is uniquely situated separating the Hamilton Harbour and Cootes Paradise and serving as a link to a number of points of interests including historic Hamilton Cemetery, Dundurn Castle, entrances to the Royal Botanical Gardens and the T.B. McQuesten high level bridge over the Desjardin Canal.

The Program Enhancement identifies various improvement opportunities summarized in the following:

1. **Existing Program Service Level Enhancement**
   - Increasing street sweeping maintenance from once to twice per week

2. **New Program Services (Outlined in Report PW07028 as Appendix “A”)**
   - Implementation of twelve new floral beds along the west and east sides of York Boulevard between Dundurn Castle and the T.B. McQuesten high level bridge
   - Installation of hanging baskets and banners on existing concrete light poles between Dundurn Street and the City limits

3. **Existing Infrastructure Improvements & Replacements**
   - Replacement of the existing steel beam guide rail
   - Power wash roadway and traffic islands to remove weeds, followed up with crack sealing as a preventative measure
   - Replacing asphalt surface of existing boulevards between the T.B. McQuesten high level bridge and the City limits that are currently under a state of disrepair
   - Installation of trees along the east and west side of the road under the Street Tree Planting Program

   *These items in the third category may be achieved at no additional cost, but rather through a re prioritization of works within existing corresponding programs.*

The existing steel beam guide rails are tentatively scheduled for replacement in 2007 and will be funded through Road Operations and Maintenance’s “Annual Guiderail Upgrade and Replacement Capital Program”.

Existing traffic islands within this segment present inconsistent hard surface materials in deteriorating condition spawning weed growth in cracks, all of which contributing to a visually unappealing streetscape. The condition of the traffic islands will be re-assessed in the spring and undergo surface rehabilitation under the “Annual Major Road Maintenance Capital Program” to improve the consistency and overall appearance of the streetscape. Where necessary, crack maintenance (i.e. power washing and sealing) will be performed remove weeds and prevent future growth.

If desired, decorative Street Tree plantings could be undertaken along the existing boulevards on either side of the roadway using funding from the Street Tree Planting Program.
Worthy of note is the current York Boulevard Bike Lane project which the installation painted bicycle lanes and some vehicular lane reductions from Dundurn St. to the Burlington city limits. The environmental assessment for on-street bicycle lanes on York Boulevard has been completed. Although the project has been forwarded to the Minister’s office, staff are optimistic that approvals will be granted by spring 2007.

**ANALYSIS/RATIONALE:**

Despite the abundance of green open space and natural areas along York Boulevard, its immediate streetscape contains very few traditional gateway features. While the suggested use of existing roadway infrastructure maintenance and replacement programs will improve the general appearance of roadway, the enhancement features (planting beds, hanging baskets and banners) would significantly improve the impact of this key gateway and welcome visitors and residents to the City.

**ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION:**

(a) As an alternative or addition to the recommendations, Council may consider the removal of the existing 87 light poles and replacing them with decorative lighting from Dundurn Street to the City Limits which would provide:

- Aesthetically pleasing lighting features framing the length of York Boulevard
- Floral hanging baskets and decorative banners could easily be accommodated onto these features, further increasing the aesthetic appeal

The 87 existing poles would have to be replaced with 210 decorative light poles because of the closer spacing required between poles to meet illumination standards and the estimated capital and additional operating costs estimates are provided as follows:

- Capital $1,890,000 to install 210 decorative lighting poles
- Operating - $21,000

This alternative is not recommended given the significant capital and operating costs.

(b) As an alternative to the recommendations, Council may choose to maintain the current streetscape standards. Staff is not supportive of this recommendation as York Boulevard is a major gateway entrance to the west end of the City of Hamilton. The streetscape is lacking in aesthetic appeal and fails to denote this area as a key entry point to the City.

**FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:**

**Enhancement Cost Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>CAPITAL COSTS</th>
<th>ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hanging Baskets &amp; Banners Part A</td>
<td>$23,200.00</td>
<td>$20,500.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hanging Baskets &amp; Banners Part B</td>
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<td>$27,450.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Floral Planting Beds</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical Sweeping</td>
<td>$ -</td>
<td>$6,800.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$71,000.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$102,750.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hanging Baskets & Banners

Part A - Dundurn Street to the T.B. McQuesten High Level Bridge

There are 38 existing concrete poles between Dundurn Street and the T.B. McQuesten high level bridge which are suitable for the installation of bracket arms to display hanging floral baskets and decorative banners. The costs associated with this component are as follows:

**Capital**
- Supply and installation of 76 hanging basket brackets and 38 banners with support arms - $23,200.00

**Operating**
- Yearly purchase and maintenance of floral hanging baskets and maintenance of banners - $20,500.00

Hanging Baskets & Banners

Part B - T.B. McQuesten High Level Bridge to the City Limits

There are an additional 49 concrete poles between the high level bridge and the City limits which are suitable to display hanging floral baskets and decorative banners. The costs associated with this component are as follows:

**Capital**
- Supply and installation of 98 hanging basket brackets and 49 banners with support arms - $29,800.00.

**Operating**
- Yearly purchase and maintenance of floral hanging baskets and maintenance of banners - $27,450.00.

Installation of Flower Beds

The cost associated with the installation of 12 flower beds (12m x 2.5m) along the east and west side of York Boulevard between Dundurn Castle and the T.B. McQuesten high level bridge is as follows:

**Capital**
- Installation cost of the 12 flower beds - $18,000.

**Operating**
- Yearly planting and maintenance of 12 flower beds - $38,000.
- Cost for watering - $10,000.

Street Sweeping Enhancements

Pending approval of this report, mechanical sweeping of roadway asphalt will be increased from once per week to twice per week. The cost associated with this recommendation is as follows:
Operating
- Mechanical Street Sweeping Service increase from once a week service to twice weekly – $6,800.00.

Staffing Implications
Additional Staff Complement: 0.66 FTE
The enhancements to the horticultural features will be administered, coordinated, and maintained by staff requiring the addition of 0.66 FTE’s to the Forestry and Horticulture Section’s complement from May to September consisting of 2 x 0.33 FTE (students) for 17 weeks.

POLICIES AFFECTING PROPOSAL:
There are no policies in existence affected by this enhancement.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION:
The Forestry and Horticulture Section consulted with the Road Operations and Maintenance Section, Finance & Administration and the Traffic Engineering and Operations Section.

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
Public services and programs are delivered in an equitable manner, coordinated, efficient, effective and easily accessible to all citizens.
Arts, culture, archaeological and cultural heritage are supported and enhanced.
Partnerships are promoted.

Environmental Well-Being is enhanced. ☑ Yes ☐ No
Air quality and water quality and quantity are protected.
Climate-related risks are managed; Greenhouse Gas emissions are reduced.
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.
Hamilton’s high-quality environmental amenities are maintained and enhanced.

Does the option you are recommending create value across all three bottom lines? ☑ Yes ☐ No

Do the options you are recommending make Hamilton a City of choice for high performance public servants? ☑ Yes ☐ No
The creation of a respectful, desirable and supportive workplace.