TO: Chair and Members  
Public Works Committee  
WARD(S) AFFECTED: WARD 2

COMMITTEE DATE: October 4, 2010

SUBJECT/REPORT NO:  
North End Traffic Management Study (PW08094a) - (Ward 2)

SUBMITTED BY:  
Gerry Davis, CMA  
General Manager  
Public Works Department

PREPARED BY:  
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SIGNATURE:

RECOMMENDATION

(a) That the “North End Traffic Management Plan”, June 2008, attached to Report PW08094a as Appendix A be endorsed;

(b) That at an appropriate time following resolution of the North End Neighbourhood Associations’ appeal to the Setting Sail Secondary Plan for the West Harbour, the General Manager, Public Works, be authorized and directed to proceed with implementation of the recommended traffic calming and management components of the North End Traffic Management Plan (June 2008);

(c) That at such time as the recommended traffic management strategy is substantially constructed, the speed limit on all streets within the North End Neighbourhood, save James Street North and Burlington Street East, be set at 30 km/hr, as a Pilot Project for a duration of five (5) years, and that the appropriate by-law to amend the City of Hamilton Traffic By-law 01-215 be passed and enacted;

(d) That the General Manager, Public Works be directed to report back on the findings of the Pilot Project;

(e) That 30 km/h not be implemented within any other neighbourhood in Hamilton until the effects of this Pilot Project are analyzed and proven to be effective and be justified to continue;

Vision: To be the best place in Canada to raise a child, promote innovation, engage citizens and provide diverse economic opportunities.

Values: Honesty, Accountability, Innovation, Leadership, Respect, Excellence, Teamwork
(f) That staff be directed to report back to the committee with respect to improved transit services in the north end neighbourhood.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Please refer to the "Executive Summary" section of Report PW08094 for information up to January 2009.

The North End Neighbourhood Association has appealed the West Harbour Secondary Plan, known as Setting Sail, to the Ontario Municipal Board which the hearing is scheduled to commence on November 8, 2010. This report provides the recommendations of Public Works staff in respect to a number of traffic calming measures for the North End Neighbourhood.

Since there are no Schedule B or C projects identified, the City is not required to place the North End Traffic Management Study on public record for a minimum 30-day review period. In addition, there has been on going dialogue with the North End Neighbourhood Association. Therefore recommendation (a) from Report PW08094 has been deleted.

A five (5) year pilot project is now recommended by staff, rather than a two (2) year pilot project indicated in Report PW08094.

**Alternatives for Consideration - See Page 3**

**FINANCIAL / STAFFING / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Financial:** Please refer to the “Financial/Staffing/Legal implications” section of Report PW08094.

**Staffing:** Please refer to the “Financial/Staffing/Legal” implications section of Report PW08094.

**Legal:** Please refer to the “Financial/Staffing/Legal implications” section of Report PW08094.

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Please refer to the “Background” section in Report PW08094 for information up to January 2009.

Discussions have been ongoing between the City and North End Neighbourhood Association throughout 2009 and 2010 and a settlement proposal is expected to be presented at Economic Development and Planning Committee on October 5, 2010.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Please refer to the “Policies Affecting Proposal” section in Report PW08094.
RELEVANT CONSULTATION
Please refer to the “Relevant Consultation” section of Report PW08094.

ANALYSIS / RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION
Please refer to the “Analysis/Rationale” section of Report PW08094.
Staff have further reviewed the pilot project period and are recommending a longer monitoring period of five (5) years.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION
The preferred alternative solution has been identified using an evaluation and screening process that fulfills the requirements of the MEA Municipal Class EA document for Schedule ‘B’ projects; although not required due to changes to the Environmental Assessment Act and amendments to the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process. All specific projects within this study are either exempt from the Act or are categorized as Schedule ‘A’ or ‘A+’ projects. For ‘A+’ projects, public notice is required prior to implementation. The notice of completion for this study will satisfy the notification requirements.

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 are two alternatives for Council to consider with respect to the recommendations of this report:
(1) Endorse the plan without one or more of the components; or
(2) Not endorse the plan.

Staff does not recommend alternative (1) as the North End Traffic Management Plan (June 2008) is the preferred approach of Public Works Staff.

Staff does not recommend (2) as development would not be able to proceed on Piers 7 and 8 as per Setting Sail Policy A.6.3.5.1.18, which requires a traffic management plan to be developed and implemented in order to proceed with the Setting Sail plan.

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN

Skilled, Innovative & Respectful Organization
• The North End Traffic Management Plan has met the desired end result of more innovation, greater teamwork, better client focus through cross departmental collaboration to create a traffic management plan for the area.
The North End Traffic Management Plan and associated pilot project are innovative and the monitoring will provide results that will be useful to the City of Hamilton and other North American communities.

**Financial Sustainability**

- The implementation of the North End Traffic Management Plan will help to make the North End Neighbourhood a more liveable community and will allow for the redevelopment of Piers 7 and 8.

**Growing Our Economy**

- The implementation of the North End Traffic Management Plan will allow for new commercial and residential development on Piers 7 and 8.

**Environmental Stewardship**

- The North End Traffic Management Plan will promote residents and visitors to use active transportation modes within the neighbourhood through calmed traffic.

**Healthy Community**

- Stakeholders were actively engaged throughout the study process.

**APPENDICES / SCHEDULES**

Please refer to Appendix A and B of Report PW08094.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hamilton’s North End Neighbourhood - An Opportunity in the Making

Hamilton’s North End Neighbourhood has been evolving since its creation more than 100 years ago, but one thing that has remained constant is its rich sense of community. This community spirit can be explained to a large degree by the characteristics that are present in the neighbourhood including:

- A mix of housing types and commercial uses;
- A connection to the waterfront and associated recreation activities;
- Presence of two schools embedded within the neighbourhood;
- A wide diversity of people, both in terms of age and ethnicity;
- Transit within walking distance of most residents; and
- A highly walkable street and block pattern.

At the same time, the North End is home to approximately 5,250 people, all of whom live within walking distance of the downtown and its 25,000 jobs. The study area is shown on Exhibit ES 1-1 below.
All of the above characteristics typify those of a sustainable neighbourhood. According to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation:

"A neighbourhood with sustainable features is one that meets your needs while protecting the environment and leaving an affordable legacy. This type of neighbourhood offers homes that are located near shops, schools, recreation, work and other daily destinations. Like a village, these places are a pleasant, convenient and safe walk, cycle or bus ride from home. This helps you reduce driving costs and enjoy the health benefits of walking and cycling. Land and services, like roads, are used efficiently. Old or new, they also feature a choice of homes that you can afford."

The fact that the North End embodies the characteristics of a sustainable neighbourhood should be seen as an opportunity to be protected and fostered. Many of these characteristics are related to the transportation system, and its relationship with a neighbourhood. Transportation issues such as speed, volume of traffic and perceptions of pedestrian safety are integral to a neighbourhood’s

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liveability and sustainability. It is these transportation system attributes that are the focus of the North End Neighbourhood Traffic Management Plan, both for the present situation as well as for the future.

Rationale for Change

During the course of this study, several landmark events and studies were observed:

- The Hamilton Pedestrian Workshop was held in November 2006 and Council approved the establishment of a Hamilton Pedestrian Committee;
- The 8th annual Walk21 conference was held in Toronto, an international event aimed to promote healthy sustainable and efficient communities where people choose to walk as a way to travel, to be healthy and to relax;
- A study published in the Canadian Medical Association Journal showed that in the past 15 years, the incidence of obesity has grown by more than 50 per cent in children aged 6 to 11 and by 40 per cent in those aged 12 to 17; and
- Canada’s greenhouse gas emissions were found to be 35% higher in 2006 than in 1990, and transportation’s role in the production of greenhouse gas emissions was rising.

The North End Neighbourhood Traffic Study initially started out as straightforward study to examine local traffic issues and identify potential solutions. However, largely through the efforts of the community representatives, it was realized that there is potential for the North End study to help the entire City achieve its goals for sustainability, and to become a case study for other communities. It was also concluded that a traditional street by street approach to solving traffic issues was appropriate, and that the solutions would need to be community-wide and comprehensive.

Guiding Principles

The North End Traffic Management Study is about improving existing conditions as well as protecting the integrity of the neighbourhood in the future, as growth and change occurs. The study was initiated largely in response to concerns about the redevelopment of Pier 8, which is planned to be developed for mixed-use residential and commercial uses. A major concern, as expressed by several residents at the start of the study, was that roads such as Bay Street and Ferguson Avenue would be expanded in order to accommodate new development, and that the existing community would simply become a conduit between the waterfront and the rest of the city.

Concerns expressed by residents helped to shape the direction of the study and its recommendations. First and foremost, the study put to rest very quickly the notion that expanding road capacity to accommodate future development would be an appropriate solution. More appropriate solutions would be to reduce non-neighbourhood destined through traffic (i.e. cut-through traffic) on streets other than Primary Mobility Streets (traffic not destined to destinations in the neighbourhood accounts for about 25% of the traffic on Bay Street and Burlington Street), and to increase the reliance on walking, cycling and transit for existing and future residents.

Residents also helped to craft a Vision for the plan that is based on creating a child and family-friendly community near downtown Hamilton. One of the key elements of the Vision is to create pedestrian-friendly streets by, among other things, slowing down traffic. An important clarification is that the intent is not to penalize traffic such that it impacts the viability of businesses in the neighbourhood, but rather to create an environment where all drivers, including residents, respect
the fact that they are travelling through a residential community. As one resident summed it up — "it takes about 3 minutes to drive from one side of the North End to the other, adding another 30 seconds is not going to make or break someone’s trip."

A final point about the study is that many of the discussions focused on anticipating future traffic problems, and proactively implementing solutions in advance so that problems do not occur. All too often when new developments are proposed adjacent to existing communities, the only considerations are “should the development occur or not.” The North End Traffic Management Study is somewhat unique in that one of the objectives is to provide directions on the Pier 8 development and how its transportation system can be integrated with the existing community in a manner that creates a positive outcome for both existing and new residents.

Alternative Solutions Considered and Preferred Solution

The study followed an iterative process whereby a number of potential alternatives were identified, discussed, refined and combined to form the final recommended plan. Solutions included:

- Do Nothing;
- Signage, Education and Enforcement;
- Traffic Management/Diversion;
- Traffic Calming;
- Pedestrian Streets; and
- A combination solution focused on traffic calming features with speed limit reductions, including a blanket 30 km/h speed limit, except on primary mobility streets.

A total of three formal public information centres were held to 1) review existing problems and potential responses 2) present alternative solutions and their implications and 3) present the proposed solution and draft plan. Throughout these public events, there was strong support for any measure that improved the pedestrian environment and reduced traffic speeds. There was also a recognition that no one single measure or approach would achieve the objectives of creating a child and family friendly neighbourhood, and that the solution would need to consist of physical measures, regulatory measures (i.e. signage) and community-based initiatives. Accordingly, the preferred solution includes extensive physical traffic calming and speed limit reductions, as well as broader policy recommendations. Opportunities to include public art and streetscaping features into the neighbourhood are also recognized.

Proposed Changes to Transportation System

Exhibit ES-1-2 illustrates the proposed physical traffic calming and traffic management components of the plan. The preferred plan incorporates the following proposed changes to the neighbourhood:

- A blanket speed limit reduction for the neighbourhood, with the exception of Primary Mobility Streets;
- Two way conversion of MacNab Street and John Street;
- Westbound road closure on Burlington Street West, west of James Street;
- Westbound road closure on Simcoe Street East, west of Wellington Street;
- Roundabouts at James Street North and Strachan, and James Street North and Guise; and
- Traffic calming and pedestrian improvements on various streets within the neighbourhood

The following measures are recommended to address expected traffic issues arising from development of the Pier 8 lands, and as such should be implemented in conjunction with development of those areas:

- Southbound road closure on Ferguson Avenue North, south of Burlington Street;
- Northbound road closure on Bay Street, north of Burlington Street; and
- Full road closure on Hughson Street North, South of Guise Street;

**Exhibit ES-1-2: Recommended Traffic Calming and Management Plan**
In addition, several related recommendations are proposed including:

- Improving transit service levels to the North End and to the waterfront;
- Implementing area-wide directional signage indicating appropriate routes for waterfront destinations;
- Ensuring that connections to the Pier 8 development are designed to direct automobile traffic to arterial streets and are designed to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists, as a key priority; and
- Developing neighbourhood specific signage to emphasise a child and family friendly theme and incorporating public art into the transportation system.

Making It Happen

Implementing all of the recommendations of the North End Traffic Management Plan will be a significant undertaking, both in terms of financial resources as well as in the staff resources required to design, implement and monitor the proposed improvements. The total cost of the proposed physical improvements is estimated at $1.6 million, not including a public art and signage program. The improvements will likely need to be implemented in a phased approach, given resource limitations.

Implementing ‘quick wins’ is one way to kick-start the implementation of the plan while maintaining public support for the overall plan. Recommended priorities for quick wins includes:

- Constructing the bike path along the north side of the railway tracks, south of Strachan Street;
- Implementing the two-way conversion on MacNab Street;
- Implementing the westbound closure on Burlington Street at James Street, and
- Implementing the proposed speed limit reductions.

The potential for the North End Neighbourhood to help with the implementation of the plan should also be recognized. Residents should have input in the design of traffic calming features, their location and issues such as whether landscaping should be included. Residents, including children, can also participate in the design of public art and other streetscaping features. Finally, though there are few precedents in the city, some residents or businesses may also be able to help fund components of the plan, as there have been a number of prominent civic leaders raised in the North End who may be willing to give something back to the neighbourhood. City staff will also undertake to monitor potential funding programs that may be available from senior levels of government, particularly those aimed at creating more sustainable communities.