Council Direction:

At the November 23, 2005 Community Services Committee meeting, staff was directed to investigate the feasibility of twinning the Morgan Firestone Arena and the Valley Park Arena and of finding a replacement (with no budget impact) for the North Wentworth Arena.

Information:

Morgan Firestone and Valley Park Arena Twinning Study

The consulting firm, Jacques Whitford, was hired by the Public Works Department, Capital Planning and Implementation Division to conduct feasibility studies for the Morgan Firestone Arena, 385 Jerseyville Road, and the Valley Park Arena, 970 Paramount Drive. The main objectives of the feasibility studies were:

- To investigate the feasibility of twinning both of the existing arenas (Valley Park Arena and Morgan Firestone Arena).
- To identify the factors affecting the space planning and performance of the proposed arenas.
- To estimate the cost associated with such a plan.

The completed studies concluded that it is feasible to twin both arenas, at an estimated cost of $10,230,128 for Morgan Firestone and $10,143,787 for Valley Park.

These costs include retrofits to the current facilities, new construction, provincial sales tax, design and management and a 15% contingency.

Staff are working on business plans to twin these arenas. These business plans will include, the use of development charges; pending what is available in the current fund,
as well as what is available for future collections, debt service charges, additional operating costs, additional revenues, discussions with local user groups to identify needs and to gauge support for a new Capital Levy, and a discussion with local groups regarding fundraising, sponsorships, partnerships and financial contributions.

Replacement of the North Wentworth Arena

This facility is located at 27 Highway #5 and is in poor condition according to the recently conducted conditional assessment. It is the only arena in the City of Hamilton that operates the ice plant on a direct expansion ammonia system. Although this type of system is allowed by the provincial ministry, it does put the City at risk from a current standard of public safety perspective. If there is a leak, the escaping ammonia would put both staff and the public in a dangerous situation.

Through the direction of City Council on November 23, 2005, staff from the Culture and Recreation Division have been meeting with a volunteer organization called Flamborough I. C. E.. This organization has been assisting in the gathering of information on the ice needs, demographics, fundraising opportunities and preferred site location for the construction of a Twin Pad Arena that would replace the single pad arena at the North Wentworth site. There is an identified need for more ice in the Flamborough area. Currently the Flamborough Girls and the Flamborough Minor Hockey Associations have a shortage of core ice. They have requested a total combination of 25 extra hours per week to meet their core ice requirements. Also, individual teams within these Associations are renting ice at Scott Park, Lawfield, Eastwood, Coronation and Chedoke Arenas. The Flamborough area has seen a 28.9% increase in population growth since 1996.

Staff continues to meet with the Flamborough I.C.E. Committee to develop a business plan for the replacement of the North Wentworth Arena.

In summary:

With our current resources staff can not commit to completing the business plans, prior to September 1, 2006, for the Valley Park, Morgan Firestone, and North Wentworth Arena projects. Staff will report back to the Community Services Committee as plans are completed.

Joe-Anne Priel
General Manager
Community Services Department