The intention of this report is to provide clarification on the outstanding questions raised at the March 26, 2008 City Council meeting.

Background

The following recommendations in Report PW08025 (attached herewith) were endorsed by Public Works Committee on March 26, 2008:

RECOMMENDATION:

(a) That staff be authorized and directed to establish a City of Hamilton Stakeholder Group Coordination Committee that will provide a local forum for coordination and information sharing for matters related to the Phase 1 Niagara to GTA Corridor Planning and Environmental Assessment Study;

(b) That the estimated cost of approximately $40,000 for the retention of an independent facilitator to manage the meetings of the Stakeholder Group Co-ordination Committee be funded from Project ID 40306555641, Niagara to GTA Corridor;

(c) That staff be directed to circulate all minutes of the City of Hamilton Stakeholder Group Coordination Committee for the Phase 1 Niagara to GTA Corridor Planning and Environmental Assessment Study to the Mayor, Members of Council and Senior Management Team.

At the March 26, 2008 Council Meeting, Council referred the report back to Public Works Committee for further discussion with respect to the composition of the Stakeholders Groups Co-ordination Committee. Specifically, the following concerns were raised:

1. The make up of the City of Hamilton Stakeholder Group Coordination Committee (does not reflect geography of Hamilton)

   The Province, being the proponent, has developed several community advisory groups consisting of municipal staff, elected officials and community members from affected municipalities, who will provide advice and information to MTO directly. There is concern that the advisory groups developed by the Province do not reflect all of Hamilton. The Province has confirmed that if there are concerns about possible gaps in
representation of geographic communities affected by project, they will be happy to extend membership for forthcoming meetings. To pursue membership, interested persons are asked to contact the Ministry directly through the Niagara to GTA Corridor EA Project Team. Please see the attached March 25, 2008 letter from Sally Leppard of the NGTA Project Team.

The Hamilton Stakeholder Group Coordination Committee membership will be open to any stakeholder group, individuals, City staff and Council members who are participating on a Provincial Community Advisory Group.

(2) We are not the proponents, therefore we should not be taking this role
The Province, being the proponent, will have the responsibility to seek input from the affected communities. It is not the intention of a Hamilton Stakeholder Group Coordination Committee (HCC) to duplicate or take on this responsibility. The HCC will perform a coordination role among Hamilton stakeholders related to the Phase 1 NGTA Study. Through this approach, the City will benefit from information sharing, a coordinated input to the proponent, where possible, and provide a forum to discuss local issues.

(3) Is there a role for Councillors?
In addition to any persons participating on a Provincial Community Advisory Group, City Councillors are welcomed into participate in the HCC membership.

Next Steps and Timeline
Report PW08025 has been referred back to the April 14 Public Works Committee for further discussion.

Please contact Christine Lee-Morrison, Manager, Environmental Planning, Capital Planning and Implementation, Public Works Department at extension 6390 or cleemorr@hamilton.ca should you have any questions, concerns or comments. In addition, further project information is available on the project web site at www.niagara-gta.com.

Gerry Davis, CMA
Senior Director of Capital Planning and Implementation
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