To: Chair and Members Emergency & Community Services Committee

From: Councillor S. Merulla Chair, Emergency Medical Services Resource & Deployment Advisory Task Force (to be signed by the Chair)

Date: June 3, 2009

Re: Proposed Improvements to the Hospital Patient Offload System Report 09-001 (City Wide)

Recommendation:

(a) That the Mayor be authorized and directed to correspond with the Premier of Ontario and the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care requesting the following:

(i) That the Province provide legislation that would require St. Joseph’s hospital to allow ambulances to transport low acuity patients to the St. Joseph’s Urgent Care Centre.

(ii) That the Province establish a regulation that requires a receiving hospital to immediately assume full responsibility for patient(s), and complete the Transfer of Responsibility Patient Care without delay, in accordance with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care Emergency Health Services, Basic Life Support Standards, M, 1-17, upon the arrival of the land ambulance patient(s) at the emergency department.

(iii) That the Province of Ontario provide funding to Hamilton Emergency Services for the Emergency Medical Services - Hospital Transfer of Care Tracking System, as an interim alternative to the patient distribution system until that program is available province wide.

(iv) That the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care review the feasibility of linking the real-time data collected by the Hamilton Emergency Services Emergency Medical Services - Hospital Transfer of Care Tracking
System with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care’s Central Ambulance Communications Centre computer aided dispatch system in order to assist the ambulance communication officer to more effectively distribute ambulance patients between hospitals.

(v) That the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care review the feasibility of displaying the integrated, real-time information into the hospitals to assist them in planning for incoming ambulance patients.

(vi) That full provincial funding be provided to Hamilton Emergency Services – Emergency Medical Services to support the continuation of the offload-flow nurse at all four (4) Hamilton hospital sites, 12 hours a day, 7 days a week from April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010.

(b) That the General Manager/Chief of Hamilton Emergency Services be directed to correspond with the local hospitals inviting them to discuss a mechanism for the hospitals to reimburse the municipality for costs related to delays in the “Transfer of Care” process of ambulance patients in the hospital emergency department.

(c) That, as the mandate has now been completed, the Emergency Medical Services Resource and Deployment Advisory Task Force, be disbanded.

Background:

The intent of the Task Force was to provide community advice into aspects of paramedic services in the absence of Council direction. On July 11, 2007 Council did provide direction on resource levels and paramedic deployment by approving recommendations 7(b) Option 2, (i)(aa)(bb) that specifically addressed resource levels and 7(b)(i)(cc), and 7(b)(v), and 7(f) as it applies to paramedic deployment. The outstanding objective for the Task Force to consider was “additional Hospital off-load solutions”. Based on this submission the objective of the Community Advisory Task Force has been met in accordance with the July 11, 2007 Council approved Report HES06005(a), Appendix D (c) iii.

Analysis/Rationale:

During the eight (8) meetings of the Community Advisory Task Force they received presentations from Emergency Medical Services staff, hospital management and front-line nurses, the paramedic union representatives and the paramedic supervisor union representatives. Based on this information the Community Advisory Task Force established the recommendations that they deemed would have the potential to mitigate the elongation of the EMS-hospital offload time.