Council Direction:

In 2008/09, Council approved a capital budget allocation of $519,000, funded entirely from the Parking Reserve, for both a parking ticket management software system and handheld computerized issuance equipment.

Information:

The Hamilton Municipal Parking System issues approximately 180,000 parking infraction notices annually which generates approximately $4.3 million per year in parking fine revenues.

Staff, in co-operation with the Purchasing and Information System Divisions, worked to prepare a comprehensive Request for Proposal for a new software management system as well as handheld computerized parking ticket issuance equipment. The previous software system was outdated and had become unreliable. Parking tickets in Hamilton were previously issued by a manual handwritten process.

The contract to provide the new software management system and handheld computerized parking ticket issuance equipment (called OFFICER Parking) was awarded to Group Techna Inc.
Staff provided an information update to Council on January 31, 2011 announcing the launch of the new system on February 1, 2011. While there are some technical issues affecting system performance which continue to be addressed, there is now more than six months of statistical data and reporting which shows this enhanced system has realized a number of benefits such as:

**Increased Revenues:** automated features of the handheld equipment have reduced human error resulting in a decreased ticket cancellation rate. Further, with the use of photographic ticket evidence there have been less disputes and an increase in early payments.

**Improved Customer Service:** customer service has been improved as information is automatically loaded into the system at the end of each shift whereas previously, under the manual system, information was loaded manually taking up to two to three days. The result is that staff now have ticket information quicker and can respond to public inquiries in a much more timely manner.

**Improved Management Capabilities:** staff now has the ability to run extensive reports and acquire statistical data to enhance management decision making. Such information was not previously available with the manual system.

**Staffing Efficiencies:** there are a number of staff efficiencies due to automation including:

- as mail in payment envelopes are no longer available with the hand held parking ticket issuance equipment, on-line payments of parking fines have increased by approximately 1%, resulting in less staff time being applied to processing payments; and,

- as noted above, the error rate has been reduced such that less staff time is required to correct any errors made at the issuance, keypunch or cashiering stages of a ticket.

As a result, less staff resources are required to support parking ticket management, and any possible changes will be reported in conjunction with the 2012 budget process.

PC/dt