Council Direction:

On February 3, 2009, the Economic Development and Planning Committee approved, and Council subsequently approved on February 11, 2009, the following recommendation in conjunction with new Official Plan policies and zoning By-law regulations for Parkland Dedication/cash-in-Lieu of Parkland, proposed in Report PED09028:

“That staff be directed to work with the organizers of the Hamilton Trees and Parks Foundation in providing for flexibility in allowing parkland dedication funds to be used co-operatively with donated funds and donor gifts of lands to foster a larger parkland acquisition partnership for the City of Hamilton and its citizens, and that staff report back to Committee thereafter;”

On April 7, 2009, the Economic Development and Planning Committee referred the matter to the Public Works Department.

The purpose of this Information Report is to provide Council with a status update on findings to date.

Information:

Staff has commenced the investigation of possible opportunities to seek donor gifts of funds and land to supplement the Parkland Dedication/Cash-in-Lieu of Parkland generated through the development process.
At this time staff has explored this matter relative to other municipalities using donor funds to acquire additional parkland, but no examples have been found. Staff has found examples of municipal agencies or authorities that plant trees or raise funds for park and play ground equipment.

Although the concept that donated funds or land for parkland purposes could enhance the recreational opportunities for Hamilton residents is attractive, Public Works staff needs to continue to investigate legalities under the Planning and Municipal Acts with Legal Services staff and continue to seek ways of improving the amount and quality of the City’s parkland.

This will be the next step in the process with the goal to report back to the new Council early in 2011.