Council Direction:
Not Applicable.

Information:
Throughout 2009, Recreation Division staff applied for and received a number of grants from various funders to support the delivery of recreation services and active living for school age children and older adults in the City of Hamilton. Initiatives geared to children are consistent with the City’s vision – “to be the best place in Canada to raise a child.”

The four independent grants total $484,045 and support the following initiatives:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Funding Body</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Child and Youth Health and Wellness “After School Strategy”</td>
<td>Ministry of Health Promotion</td>
<td>$124,697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Canada Gets Active Pilot Project: “Everyone Gets to Play”</td>
<td>Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA)</td>
<td>$12,730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Elderly Persons Centre (EPC)</td>
<td>Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MHLTC)</td>
<td>$276,196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Falls Prevention for Seniors</td>
<td>Local Health Integration Network (LHIN)</td>
<td>$70,422</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
1. **After School Strategy**

The After School Strategy targets children and youth ages 5 to 18 years. It is designed to reduce the financial barriers to participate in recreation and active living activities outside of school hours.

The City is committed to address gaps and unmet recreation needs in after school programming that will deliver positive health outcomes to targeted children and youth.

Six recreation sites have been selected by the Ministry of Health Promotions in cooperation with the City, based on the criteria of highest economic need:

1. Beasley Community Centre
2. Bennetto Recreation Centre
3. Central Memorial Recreation Centre
4. Sir Winston Churchill Recreation Centre*
5. Dominic Agostino Riverdale Recreation Centre
6. Ryerson Recreation Centre

These sites mainly serve elementary school children; however, *Sir Winston Churchill Recreation Centre has targeted programming for high school students.

The six sites operate five days a week after school from December 2009 to the end of the June 2010 school year and are expected to serve 220 children. Funds cover direct operating costs for staff and program materials. The programs are free for children and youth to participate. The initiative strives to achieve outcomes including increased physical activity, making healthy food choices, improved knowledge of nutrition and building self-esteem and resiliency. Public Health will provide support, resources and consultation around physical activity, nutrition, injury prevention and tobacco-free living.

2. **Everybody Gets to Play**

“Everybody Gets to Play” is a national pilot program designed to enhance the quality of life for low-income families and their children by removing barriers to play. Hamilton is one of six municipalities selected in Canada and is the largest pilot site.

In Canada, close to two-thirds of children and youth do not meet the recommended guidelines for optimal growth and healthy development (Active Healthy Kids Canada Report, 2008). The physical activity levels of children are low, and more importantly, these levels decline dramatically from childhood through adolescence.

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Vision: To be the best place in Canada to raise a child, promote innovation, engage citizens and provide diverse economic opportunities.

Values: Honest, Accountability, Innovation, Leadership, Respect, Excellence, Teamwork
The “Everybody Gets to Play” Grade 5 “Get Active Pass” is strategically targeted to Grade 5 students based on the research findings that show that during the pre-teen ages of eleven and twelve, a decline in physical activity begins.

The “Get Active Pass” offers all students in Grade 5 (3,500) in the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) with an opportunity to further participate in recreation. The overall objective of the Grade 5 Action Pass is to reduce financial barriers to children and promote participation by providing no cost opportunities to be more active. By engaging children in Grade 5 in a fun physical activity, pre-teens are assisted in carrying on with physical activity through adolescence and into adulthood.

The “Get Active Pass” allow students to access City of Hamilton Recreation Centre public swims, gym and club drop-in programs and skating programs at no charge from December 2009 to March 31, 2010.

The Grade 5 “Get Active Pass” is based on a promising practice from the City of Kingston, Lennox and Addington Counties. The program in these areas has been successfully offered for the past three years and has recently been expanded to include Grade 10 students.

CPRA provided funding in the amount of $12,730 for the implementation of the Grade 5 Action Pass. Funds will be used for costs associated with the membership cards. The program will be evaluated after its completion.

### 3. Elderly Persons Centre (EPC)

Under the Elderly Persons Centres Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter E.4 (EPCA) and Regulation 314, the MHLTC provides annual grants and special (one-time) grants to municipalities and corporations that maintain and operate approved EPCs.

EPCs provide ongoing registered and drop-in programs or clubs for seniors and they support active living. EPCs include municipal senior centres and organizations such as seniors clubs, which receive support from the City in the form of city facilities at no cost, maintenance and financial assistance.

The City has six approved EPCs. The City has received annual maintenance and operating grants since 1980’s for the following senior facilities:

- Ancaster Senior Achievement Centre
- Ada Bland Senior’s Centre (Club 60)
- Winona Senior’s Centre
- Main Hess Senior’s Centre
- Hamilton Senior’s Active Living Centre (YWCA MacNab)
- Ottawa Street Senior’s Active Living Centre (YWCA)
In 2009, the MHLTC reopened the application process for annual maintenance and operating grants. The City submitted applications and the following new sites were successful:

- Sackville Hill Senior’s Recreation Centre
- Dundas Senior’s Club
- Rosedale Senior’s Club

Only one EPC grant application, Warden Park Senior’s Club, was denied funding.

Each of the above centres receives an annual maintenance and operating subsidy and the three new EPCs also received a one-time special grant to purchase programming equipment and supplies ($25,700). It is significant to note that the annual EPC funding for the staffed centres (Sackville, Rosedale and Dundas) is net-new revenue at $88,800.00 for 2009/2010; the other centres have received Elderly Person Grant funding in previous years and annually receive $187,396 collectively.

The funding benefits the operation of EPCs by offsetting costs and in turn ensures ongoing quality programming at an affordable cost to seniors. Senior centres play a critical role in keeping older adults physically active and socially engaged.

4. Falls Prevention for Seniors

The “Falls Prevention for Seniors” grant is provided through the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network (HNHB LHIN) under its Falls Prevention Program exercise initiative. The initiative involves many stakeholders, which include the City in the delivery of community based exercise programs targeted to at-risk seniors. One risk factor for falls is lack of physical exercise and municipal recreation centres qualify as congregate delivery service sites for the initiative. Through the Recreation Division’s efforts, the City of Hamilton is the only non-medical organization to receive the funding from the HNHB LHIN.

The City received a $70,422 grant to introduce and lead seniors through a free community-based exercise program in City-operated senior centres. The program will be free for seniors to participate. The program is to operate from January 2010 to September 2010. The goal is to prevent falls which could result in serious injury.

The good news is that most falls are predictable and preventable. By eliminating falls risk factors such as hazards in the home, misuse of medications, balance and gait problems, and blood pressure problems, seniors can remain independent and healthy longer.
Falls are a major threat to health and independence for seniors and account for 56% of accidental deaths in people over 65 and 80% of all injury admissions to hospitals. Hamilton has the highest number of falls in the HNHB LHIN at 4,207 emergency department visits for people 65 years and older in 2005/2006. Goals of the program include reducing the number of transfers to hospitals, due to falls and an increase in quality of life for seniors.

Conclusion

Staff will ensure the grants are managed in accordance with each agreement. The new funding will maintain and expand recreation programming for key groups including children, at-risk youth and older adults in Hamilton. In addition to reducing financial barriers to participation, the initiatives will strengthen community partnerships and help citizens become more active and engaged. The Recreation Division will continue to pursue funding from all sources in an effort to support recreation programming, which is vital to individual and community health and well-being.