At its meeting of April 9, 2008, Council received Item 5.15, correspondence from the President of Parks and Recreation Ontario respecting A Call for Action – Recreation, Parks and Sport Infrastructure Funding; and, referred it to the General Manager of Community Services for a report to the Emergency and Community Services Committee.

**Information:**

On April 9, 2008, Council received correspondence and background material from Parks and Recreation Ontario (PRO) to draw attention and identify the need for additional funding to support aging sports, recreation and park infrastructure throughout Ontario.

At that time, PRO had released a report entitled *Investing in Healthy and Active Ontarians through Recreation and Parks Infrastructure*, which identified that, in 2006, Ontario municipalities reported a $5 billion dollar infrastructure deficit in arenas, community centres, and swimming pools alone. Further, the report provided compelling data and recommendations that support an increase investment in parks, recreation and sport infrastructure to address the growing problem of inactivity and obesity among Ontario residents.

The correspondence encouraged the City of Hamilton to review the report and consider how our community could benefit from improved recreation and parks infrastructure as
well as take steps to improve the community sport and recreation infrastructure in the city.

When this correspondence was received, the Community Services Department was in the process of completing the *Use, Renovation and Replacement Study of Hamilton Recreation and Public-Use Facilities* (ECS07068(b)) (City Wide), which was later presented and approved by Council on September 10, 2008. Report ECS07068(b) outlined a long-range strategy for managing Hamilton’s portfolio of indoor community-use recreational infrastructure. In addition, it demonstrated the need for capital repairs and improvements in order to maintain the assets, gaps in the City’s provision of recreation facilities as well as additional facilities that will be required in future years, due to population group and an increase in the number of active seniors. Of significance in Report ECS07068(b), was the need to invest in capital recreation infrastructure to avoid the risk of potential closures of over half of the City’s recreation facilities within the next 5-10 years.

The City’s study was a key building block to drawing attention to the recreation infrastructure issues and the corresponding documentation that we received on the *Call for Action – Recreation, Parks and Sport Infrastructure* report prepared by PRO.

As suggested by PRO’s correspondence, the City of Hamilton took steps to contact key officials (municipal, provincial, and federal) to draw attention to the local recreation infrastructure issues through the City’s Use, Renovation and Replacement study, the annual capital infrastructure budget planning process and general updates with municipal elected officials.