SUBJECT: Spray Pad Operations - Extension of Operating Season (PW08138) - (City Wide)

RECOMMENDATION:
That a program service level change extending the season of operation of spray pad facilities at Pier 4 Park, Gage Park, and Waterdown Memorial Park from nine to thirteen weeks and associated budget requirements of $3,360 be referred to the 2009 budget process for consideration.

Scott Stewart, C.E.T.
General Manager
Public Works

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:
This report seeks to extend the season of operation of 3 spray pad facilities in response to user demand. The recommendation proposes an extension of the current nine week operating season to thirteen weeks for three of fifty facilities (i.e. those situated at Pier 4 Park, Gage Park, and Waterdown Memorial Park), with the remainder of the facilities season of operation to remain unchanged at nine weeks. Additional budget resources required to implement the recommendation are estimated at $3,360 per annum.

BACKGROUND:
The information/recommendation contained within this report has City wide implications.

All City of Hamilton spray pad facilities presently operate on a nine week season commencing with the end of elementary school programs annually. Spray pad facility locations are listed as follows:
In recent years, demand has grown to extend the availability of spray pads over a longer season to respond to apparently warmer spring and late summer weather. The recommendation to extend the operating season at only three major park locations is provided as a means of addressing the concern while limiting cost implications. The recommended locations have been selected for their ease of access and availability of other supporting park amenities as well.
ANALYSIS/RATIONALE:

Weekly Cost to operate an individual Spray Pad:
On average the cost to run all spray pads (including Labour, Small Repairs, and Water/Sewer Charges) is $279.93.

Cost of Current Nine Week Operating Program at the three proposed sites:
The operating cost for the current nine week program, June 31st to September 1st (including Labour, Small Repairs, and Water/Sewer Charges) is $7,558.11.

Cost of Proposed Thirteen Week Operating Program at the three proposed sites:
The operating cost for the proposed thirteen week program, June 15th to September 15th (including Labour, Small Repairs, and Water/Sewer Charges) is $10,917.27.

Required Funding for Proposed Program:
In order to accommodate the expansion of the program, an annual enhancement of $3,359.16 is required.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION:
(a) Council may choose to reject the recommendation and make no change to the current nine week program length and confirm these service levels; maintaining an operating season parallel to the school summer vacation schedule.
(b) Council may choose to extend the program at all fifty sites by a specific number of weeks. With each additional week having an operating cost of $13,798.63.
(c) Council approve an increase of $55,986.50 to the Parks & Cemeteries operating budget in 2009 to fund an extension of the operating season to thirteen weeks in duration at fifty spray pads.

FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:
Financial implications are associated with the funding request of $3,359.16 for the proposed increase in operating costs to extend the operating season at three sites by four weeks.

POLICIES AFFECTING PROPOSAL:
This proposed service change will increase the opportunity for clean and safe recreation in the City of Hamilton. This is an important focus of the Corporate Strategic Plan as it fosters a healthy community.

This proposed program enhancement directly deals with the Public Works Strategic Plan. Parks & Cemeteries staff will be actively working towards servicing and connecting with communities, which is a Vision Driver.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION:
Finance & Administration
CITY STRATEGIC COMMITMENT: 

By evaluating the “Triple Bottom Line”, (community, environment, economic implications) we can make choices that create value across all three bottom lines, moving us closer to our vision for a sustainable community, and Provincial interests.

Community Well-Being is enhanced. ☑ Yes ☐ No
Public services and programs are delivered in an equitable manner, coordinated, efficient, effective and easily accessible to all citizens.

Environmental Well-Being is enhanced. ☑ Yes ☐ No
Human health and safety are protected.

Economic Well-Being is enhanced. ☐ Yes ☑ No

Does the option you are recommending create value across all three bottom lines? ☐ Yes ☑ No

Do the options you are recommending make Hamilton a City of choice for high performance public servants? ☐ Yes ☑ No