Council Direction:

At its meeting of January 14, 2008, the Public Works (PW) Committee supported in principle Report PW08006, Endorsement of Sports Field Management Strategy. This item was added to the PW Committee Outstanding Business list with staff requested to report back to the PW Committee following the receipt of comments from stakeholders.

On March 22, 2010, the PW Committee referred this matter (item (ii)) to the Emergency and Community Services (E&CS) Committee. Following stakeholder input, the Sports Field Management Strategy (now the Outdoor Recreation Facilities & Sports Field Provision Plan) was to be brought back to the E&CS Committee with a due date of June 2, 2010.

Information:

The purpose of the Outdoor Recreation Facilities & Sports Field Provision Plan (Outdoor Study) is to provide the City with a sustainable strategy for managing Hamilton’s portfolio of outdoor sports fields and other community-use recreational infrastructure. This is a long-range Study (to the year 2031), with the implementation plan focusing on projects that can be undertaken within the next ten years. Pressures on existing recreational facilities and the changing requirements of present user groups and the general public recreation use trends have led to the undertaking of this Study.

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

Values: Honesty, Accountability, Innovation, Leadership, Respect, Excellence, Teamwork
This Study is intended to be a companion document to the City of Hamilton’s Use, Renovation and Replacement Study for Hamilton Recreation and Public-Use (Indoor) Facilities (2008). Recreation services contribute directly to the City’s quality of life, as well as personal health and social cohesion. The study examines not only the physical and financial requirements associated with the City’s capital assets, but also the activity and service needs of the community and how these relate to meeting expectations into the future. Although extensive efforts have been taken to understand needs at a local community level, a primary objective of this Study is to develop a framework to be applied City-wide.

Monteith Brown Planning Consultants (MBPC), in association with The JF Group, STLA Inc., and the Guelph Turfgrass Institute, were retained in January 2009 by the City of Hamilton to complete this Study with the assistance of an inter-departmental team of municipal staff from Public Works, Planning and Economic Development, Corporate Services (Finance), and Community Services.

The purpose of the Study was to review outdoor recreation issues and needs and provide the City with a sustainable strategy for managing Hamilton’s portfolio of outdoor sports fields and other outdoor community-use recreation infrastructure. The Study would make recommendations to better meet the recreation needs of Hamilton’s residents over the next 20 years by improving operations, maintenance, planning, accessibility, and recreation administration. The study will identify the need for additional sports fields, better maintenance of sports fields, better distribution of other recreation amenities like spray pads, and improved accessibility of parks. The Outdoor Recreation Facilities & Sports Field Provision Plan will summarize major issues as identified through consultation with the public, user groups, staff members and Council with regard to the provision of outdoor recreation amenities.

In June 2009, the consultants completed Phase 1 and presented a progress report to the Emergency and Community Services Committee. In November 2009, a second study was requested by the General Managers and Directors of Community Services and Public Works, and, in January 2010, Monteith Brown started work on the Parkland Acquisition Strategy, a companion document. This Strategy was to include a detailed examination of Hamilton’s current parkland supply, including the location, classification, and size of parks, priority areas for future parkland acquisition, policies related to park planning, acquisition, design and financial implications.

The Outdoor Study report proposed recommendations have no financial impact but address service level delivery and operating improvements and will be implemented through Department and Division specific work plans. Long term recommendations will be addressed through future capital and operating budget requests. This will accelerate implementation of a number of the 160 recommendations from the Outdoor Study in
2011, not dependent on new or additional parkland development. The Outdoor Recreation Facilities & Sports Field Provision Plan Report will go to the Emergency and Community Services Committee in the fall of 2011.

The Parkland Acquisition Strategy requires additional internal consultation with Finance and Planning, the report is anticipated to go to SMT in October and the Emergency & Community Services Committee November 23, 2011.