



COMMUNITY SERVICES DIVISION
Environment – Healthy Green Spaces

TO: Chair and Members of the Community and Corporate Services Committee
SUBJECT: Healthy Green Spaces Strategy and Regulatory Options

Report Number: COMSERV5/02 Report Date: September 27, 2002
Authors: Tim Commisso Date to Committee: October 8, 2002
Lynn Robichaud
Telephone: 905-335-7600 Ext. 7747 Date to Council: October 21, 2002
7931
Ward(s) Affected: 1 2 3 4 5 6 All File Number(s): 210-06

APPROVALS: Department Head General Manager City Manager
To be completed by the Clerks Department

Committee Disposition & Comments
Council Disposition & Comments
01- Approved 02 - Not Approved 03 - As Amended 04 - Referred 05 - Deferred 06 - Received & Filed 07 - Withdrawn

1.0 RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the proposed City of Burlington Healthy Green Spaces Strategy for Public Lands, dated September 2002, as amended based on the public consultation process, be approved;

THAT staff proceed with the implementation of Option #1 – Outreach and Education, as per the Council approved Public Outreach and Education Program (CC-96-02);

THAT the General Manager of Community Services and the Healthy Green Spaces Committee be directed to revisit and report back on the regulatory options for reducing the use of pesticides on private lands based on the occurrence of any of the specific situations outlined in the conclusion of this report; and,

**THAT any future report on regulatory options address the requirement for full public consultation on the issue including the need for a comprehensive community wide survey.**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The *Healthy Green Spaces Strategy for Public Lands* has been developed to guide staff in the protection, restoration, and enhancement of City owned green spaces. The strategy speaks to the benefits as well as the challenges of naturalization. Specifically, it outlines a number of proposed initiatives, including the development of best practices for naturalization, pilot projects for naturalization, as well as outreach and education to raise awareness of the importance of green spaces in the City.

The strategy was available during the past summer for public review and comment. The majority of submissions were supportive with Halton Conservation and the Bay Area Restoration Council offering assistance to the Healthy Green Spaces Committee particularly on the naturalization initiative. Some residents raised concerns regarding the condition of specific parks within the City. Appendices B and C include the comments submitted with responses to the issues raised.

The strategy is presented to Committee for approval. It is intended that this strategy will help to raise community awareness on the importance of our green spaces, particularly natural areas, and how they are integral to our environment and quality of life.

The second part of the report deals with regulatory options to reduce the non-essential use of pesticides on private property. Staff have been researching this issue for a number of months, consulting with the public and the lawn care/pest control industry, and attending various information forums/seminars. Essentially, six different options are addressed in this report, including:

1. No By-law – Outreach and Education only;
2. By-law to Restrict the Use of Pesticides with Some Exceptions;
3. Phase-in By-law to Restrict the Use of Pesticides;
4. By-law to Regulate the Lawn Care Industry – Require IPM Accreditation;
5. Summer Restrictions (July & August &/or During Smog & Heat Advisory Days); and,
6. Require “do-it-yourself” Applicators (homeowners) to Post Warning Signs.

Each option is discussed further in the report. After careful consideration, the Healthy Green Spaces Committee is recommending that the City implement Option #1 - Outreach and Education and not proceed with a regulatory by-law at this time. However, it is anticipated that the issue of regulating pesticides on private property will remain at the municipal level and there are certain situations that Council should expect to revisit the issue. In summary, they include changes to the provincial regulatory framework; or, a change in position by the Region of Halton’s Medical Officer of Health; or, passage of time (e.g. such as one council cycle).

Various initiatives are under development for the Public Outreach and Education Program, previously approved by Council, including information pamphlets based on the federal Healthy

## **Pg 3 of Report**

Lawns Strategy, pesticide free signs, as well as information seminars for “Tips for a Healthy Lawn”. Through the development of the *Healthy Green Spaces Strategy for Public Lands* and our involvement in numerous activities to encourage a reduction in the use of pesticides, the City continues to be a leader in this area.

### **2.0 PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to:

- a) present the City of Burlington *Healthy Green Spaces Strategy for Public Lands* for approval incorporating proposed amendments based on the public consultation process. The revised strategy dated September 2002 is being distributed separately with this report;
- b) provide an update and assessment with respect to regulatory options available to reduce the non-essential use of pesticides on private property;
- c) provide a recommendation to the Community & Corporate Services Committee on the regulatory option; and,
- d) provide an update on the Public Outreach and Education Program to encourage the responsible use and reduction of pesticides within the community in keeping with the Health Canada Healthy Lawns Strategy.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND:**

On February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2002, the Healthy Green Spaces Committee presented “An Update on the Pesticides Issue: Options to Reduce the Non-essential Use of Pesticides on Private Property” (CC-50-02) to Council. Options presented to Council included regulation, outreach and education, and lobbying the provincial and federal governments for tighter controls.

Staff were directed to report back in September 2002 on regulatory options to reduce the non-essential use of pesticides on private property following a public consultation process. Furthermore, staff committed to developing a *Healthy Green Spaces Strategy for Public Lands*, to determine ways to protect, restore, and/or enhance the ecological health of City owned green spaces.

On May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2002, a Public Outreach & Education Program to Reduce the Use of Pesticides (Phase 1 of the Healthy Green Spaces Strategy – CC-96-02) was approved by Council. Staff were directed to report back, prior to 2003 budget deliberations, with an evaluation of Phase 1 (including the results of the follow-up consultation with the representatives of the lawn care industry and the public) and make preliminary recommendations to implement Phase 2 of the Healthy Green Spaces Strategy. Staff directions in both reports are outline in Appendix A along with the Regional Council Resolutions.

### **4.0 DISCUSSION:**

#### **4.1 The Healthy Green Spaces Strategy for Public Lands**

Council members have received under separate cover a copy of the draft *Healthy Green Spaces Strategy for Public Lands* dated September 2002. The strategy was developed in response to a

## Pg 4 of Report

broader environmental need identified by staff and members of our community. The focus of the strategy is intended to be on City owned green spaces including those areas which are natural or have the potential to be naturalized, to educate the community on their importance, and to raise awareness on how they are integral to our environment and quality of life.

Draft copies of the strategy were circulated to various agencies, community groups, and neighbouring municipalities for review. The document was also made available to the public for a period of four weeks, from July 23<sup>rd</sup> to August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2002 and was available on the City's website allowing for comments to be submitted via email. Notices regarding the strategy were posted in the City Update section of the *Burlington Post*. Articles were also published in both the *Burlington Post* and the *Hamilton Spectator* with a focus on the strategy. Although the comments received were limited, the majority were favourable and supportive of the City's proposed strategic directions.

Specifically, the Bay Area Restoration Council, a confederation of community stakeholders devoted to revitalizing Hamilton Harbour and its watershed, wrote:

*"The Bay Area Restoration Council commends the City for taking a leadership role in demonstrating on public green spaces techniques that residents can use on their own property. A win win situation is being created for both the City and its residents to reduce the use of toxins and create a healthier harbour."*

As well, Conservation Halton offered to assist staff with the proposed naturalization initiative given their experience in this area and also provided the following comments:

*"The proposed strategy is very positive and in keeping with the recommendation of our Bronte and Grindstone Creek Watershed Studies. It is also the direction that we are promoting as we meet with watershed landowners through our landowner contact and stewardship work being undertaken as part of the 'Hamilton Halton Watershed Stewardship Program'. The City's approach to lead by example is a good one."*

Residents expressed support for the initiative, as well as the City's turf management program in regards to reducing the use of pesticides on City property. However, there were some members of the community who raised concern with the presence of weeds in City parks and requested that the City increase its use of pesticides. It is noted that a comprehensive staff report providing an update of the City's turf management program, including recommendations for 2003, will be forthcoming.

Other residents took the opportunity to raise various concerns regarding City parks, such as recreational facilities and development issues. These comments have been forwarded to the appropriate departments for review and response.

A complete summary of the issues raised is provided in Appendix B including whether or not a revision is being recommended in the draft strategy document dated September 2002. The comments received through the public consultation process can be viewed in their entirety in Appendix C.

## **Pg 5 of Report**

One issue raised during the development of the strategy was to ensure that areas identified for naturalization are appropriate and that these areas receive some level of maintenance by the Roads & Parks Maintenance Department. Naturalization does not necessarily mean letting these areas grow wild with little or no attention. Staff will work with other municipalities, agencies, and groups to compile a list of best practices for this initiative. Communications will be a key component to ensure community awareness and acceptance.

Overall, the HGS Committee is satisfied with the positive comments received on the strategy. It is acknowledged that the strategy will continue to be a work in progress over the next few years. Staff recommend that the *Healthy Green Spaces Strategy for Public Lands* be approved, based on the revised document dated September 2002.

### **4.2 Options to Regulate**

Regulatory options to reduce the non-essential use of pesticides on private property was the second key issue that the HGS Committee was required to report back to the Community & Corporate Services Committee. Staff have continued to research the issue of pesticides since February, consulting with the public and the lawn care industry. Staff attended various seminars and symposiums, such as the Town of Caledon's Symposium on Pesticides, a seminar on 2,4-D Research Data hosted by the pest control industry, the Ontario Turfgrass Symposium, Landscape Ontario's Pest Management Symposium, the Federal Plant Health Care Forum, and the Sports Turf Association IPM Seminar.

A public meeting was held on May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2002 at the Burlington Convention Centre where members of the community were invited to speak on their position related to the use of pesticides and whether the non-essential use should be regulated. Meetings have also been held with representatives of the lawn care and pest control industry. As well, a representative of the local lawn care industry is currently participating on the Healthy Green Spaces Committee.

The services of the Guelph Turfgrass Institute have been retained, a world renowned research facility associated with the University of Guelph, to provide expert guidance and advice regarding the City's turf management, and public outreach and education programs. In addition, a comprehensive legal opinion has been obtained in partnership with the Regional Municipality of Waterloo and the City of Ottawa regarding the regulatory framework for municipal pesticide by-laws in Ontario. Similar to the previous report (CC-50-02), a separate report has been provided by the Assistant City Solicitor providing a detailed update on the legal considerations related to this issue.

Staff continue to participate in the Halton Inter-municipal Pesticide Review Committee, of which a representative of Landscape Ontario (an industry trade group) participates. Staff have also been meeting regularly with the Ontario Parks Association regarding an initiative to develop an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) accreditation program for municipal parks.

The next section of the report will discuss the status of pesticide initiatives, including the regulatory framework, across the various sectors involved in this issue.

***The Federal Government – Health Canada and the Pest Management Regulatory Agency***

The Pest Management Regulatory Agency administers the *Pest Control Products Act* (PCPA) for the federal Minister of Health. The PCPA regulates the use of substances that claim to have a pest control use as well as other substances contained in pest control products.

Health Canada has introduced a new PCPA which is currently before the Senate for final approval (at the time of writing this report). The legislative changes are intended to provide:

- Clear requirements for the Minister to give special consideration to children and to assess aggregate exposure and cumulative effects;
- Clear authority for the Minister to refuse to consider an application or to maintain a registration if the applicant or registrant does not provide the information necessary to substantiate claims that the risks and value of the product are acceptable;
- Mandatory reporting of adverse effects of registered pesticides;
- New opportunities for informed public participation in pest management regulation; and,
- Strengthened measures to encourage compliance.

Health Canada has also launched the Healthy Lawns Strategy, a partnership effort between the Pest Management Regulatory Agency and the provincial and territorial governments. In approving the City's Public Outreach and Education Program, Council directed staff to ensure the key messages are consistent with the federal Healthy Lawns Strategy.

A Healthy Lawns Working Group has been established through the Federal / Provincial / Territorial (FPT) Committee on Pest Management and Pesticides to implement the strategy. The goal of the Healthy Lawns Strategy is to help reduce Canadians' reliance on pesticide use for lawn care through the application of Integrated Pest Management principles (IPM), with particular emphasis on pest prevention, use of reduced risk products, and application of pesticides only when necessary.

***The Provincial Government - Ontario Ministry of the Environment***

The provincial *Pesticides Act* is administered by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, which regulates the sale of pesticide products in the province as well as the lawn care/pest control operators.

To date, the Ministry has not given any formal indication of amending the legislative requirements for the sale of pesticides or licensing control of lawn care/pest control operators. However, in recent months, there has been some interest by Ministry staff on how municipalities are dealing with this issue through informal surveys.

***Municipalities***

There are presently a number of municipalities in Ontario which are examining the issue of regulating the non-essential use of pesticides on private property. The Town of Cobalt is the first and only municipality in Ontario which has adopted such a by-law and there have been no court challenges to date. It is our understanding that the Town of Caledon is considering regulating

## **Pg 7 of Report**

the lawn care industry and the Cities of Toronto, Hamilton, and Ottawa are continuing to consult on this issue with reports pending regarding any recommendations on regulatory options.

### ***The Regulatory Framework***

The Supreme Court of Canada decision to uphold the Town of Hudson, Quebec by-law to restrict the non-essential use of pesticides on private property illustrates that Canadian municipalities have a role to play in this area, however, the provincial legislation differs between jurisdictions. As an example, the Province of Quebec appears to be moving towards regulating the non-essential use of pesticides over the next three years on a province-wide basis. The Province of Nova Scotia passed enabling legislation for the Region of Halifax to adopt a restrictive by-law which does not apply to other municipalities in the province.

The adoption of a regulatory by-law is a complex issue as there are a number of elements which must be considered, such as the enabling legislation. The legal advice provided to date suggests that while the emerging legal landscape looks relatively suited to the adoption of a by-law, there are fundamental questions that should be answered with respect to existing federal and provincial environmental legislation and their potential to overlap with a proposed by-law. A conflict between the federal or provincial legislation and a by-law could result in the by-law being declared invalid.

The Assistant City Solicitor has provided a confidential report updating an opinion provided earlier this year on this subject.

### ***The Region of Halton Health Department***

Earlier this year, the Region of Halton's Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Bob Nosal, presented a report to Regional Council (MO-24-02) with recommendations related to reducing the use of pesticides. The MOH concluded that "*Prudent avoidance continues to be the recommended strategy*" and made several other recommendations (see Appendix A for the full resolution approved by Regional Council), including:

- *THAT area municipalities consider the viability of enacting local by-laws, which place conditions on the use of pesticides as an adjunct to local education and awareness programs.*
- *THAT at least once in their term of office, future area municipal councils revisit the issue of cosmetic pesticide use on private property in light of emerging research data on the health effects of pesticides.*

### ***The Lawn Care and Pest Control Industry***

The industry has developed an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) accreditation program for lawn care operators in Ontario. There is also a movement to develop similar programs for golf courses and municipal parks. Currently the IPM program is voluntary for operators but the industry has approached the province requesting that the *Pesticides Act* be amended to require operators licensed under the Act be IPM accredited. The accreditation program is intended to

## **Pg 8 of Report**

operate similar to an environmental management system (EMS) where operators would be required to submit to an audit of their operations every three years.

### ***Public Consultation***

A public meeting was hosted by the Healthy Green Spaces Committee on Wednesday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2002 at the Burlington Convention Centre. Members of the community were invited to attend and to present their position on options to reduce the use of pesticides on private property. There were a total of 94 attendees at the public meeting as well as additional staff and members of Council. The evening began with brief presentations from the Mayor, the Senior Environmental Co-ordinator, Aline Tso of the Sustainable Development Committee, and Peter Willmott of the Region of Halton Health Department to provide an overview of the status of the pesticide issue in Burlington and the Region of Halton.

A broad range of positions were presented to the Healthy Green Spaces Committee by 32 participants. Many were residents with an interest in the issue, some represented specific organizations such as the Sierra Club, the Ontario Parks Association, and the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment, while others represented the lawn care/pest control industry. For a summary of the presentations, please refer to Appendix D.

Community members were also invited to submit a comment form to staff with a selection of their preferred option(s) for reducing the non-essential use of pesticides on private property with written comments on their position. A total of 79 comment sheets were received. The majority of respondents supported some type of regulatory by-law and many wrote that it should be supported with a public outreach and education program. A breakdown of the options selected by the respondents is provided in Table #1 of Appendix E. As well, a summary of the written comments provided can also be found in Appendix E. Staff also received 93 signed form letters from members of the Burlington Golf & Country Club stating opposition to a by-law. A sample copy of the letter can be found in Appendix E.

It should be noted that the results from the comment form are only based on those members of the public who chose to participate in the consultation process associated with the public meeting and have no statistical validity as a representation of the overall general public's view of the issue. Comment sheets were provided to the public as another option for people to submit their position to staff on this issue.

The Region of Halton Health Department also commissioned a public opinion survey which consists of 100 Halton Region residents randomly telephoned on a monthly basis for information on their use of pesticides as well as their opinion of pesticides. The Region was able to separate the Burlington responses (285 respondents) from the total number of Halton Region respondents. The results were collected between November 2001 and April 2002. A summary is provided below with a more detailed breakdown provided in Appendix F.

Approximately 62% of survey respondents who look after their own lawn indicated that they never use pesticides on their lawns or used them only once; a larger majority (83%) advised that they don't use pesticides on their garden and 75% do not use them to treat hard surfaces (eg. patios, walkways, etc.). As indicated in the Region of Halton's report earlier this year (*Report of*

## **Pg 9 of Report**

*the Halton Intermunicipal Review Committee on the Use of Pesticides on Public and Private Property*, April 2002), some of these respondents may have hired a lawn care company that used pesticides. Out of the total number of respondents, 73% indicated that they don't use pesticide alternatives.

Approximately 26% of survey respondents hired a lawn care company to treat their lawn or garden. Of this number, 91% indicated that the lawn care company used pesticides on their lawn or garden to kill weeds or insects.

The survey indicates that there is some indication of support for a by-law affecting private property among the Burlington residents surveyed. Approximately 29% indicated strong support for such a by-law and 34% advised that they were somewhat supportive of a by-law. The numbers were slightly higher regarding commercial and industrial property, as well as municipal property. It is noted that the Halton survey did not provide information to respondents on the various regulatory options being considered, other than a general by-law restricting the use of pesticides.

According to Halton Region staff, the responses by Burlington residents do not differ significantly from the results for Halton residents overall.

### ***Regulatory Options & Issues***

#### **Option 1: No By-law – Outreach & Education Only**

Regardless of a by-law, it is generally acknowledged that a public outreach and education program is required to raise awareness of the reasons for reducing the non-essential use of pesticides and the preventative lawn care measures available as outlined in the federal Healthy Lawns Strategy. It is recognized that this option requires time, staff resources, and financial support to achieve. Council approved the Public Outreach and Education Program for pesticide reduction earlier this year.

#### **Option 2: By-law to Restrict the Use of Pesticides with Some Exceptions (agricultural, pest infestations, indoor use, etc.)**

Following the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada last year to uphold a municipal by-law restricting the non-essential use of pesticides on private property in the Town of Hudson, Quebec, there were increased expectations by members of the community for Council to consider a similar approach.

A significant issue with respect to this option is whether or not the City has clear legislative authority under the *Municipal Act* to adopt such a by-law that would withstand any court challenges. The provincial legislation in this area is not explicit and, therefore, uncertainty still exists regarding the fundamental requirements for enacting a by-law. As noted, the Town of Cobalt is the first and only Ontario municipality to adopt a by-law restricting the non-essential use of pesticides on private property. However, it does not appear that there has been a court challenge to date regarding this particular by-law.

## **Pg 10 of Report**

Other issues to be considered are the resources required for enforcement and the need to define the specific parameters for the restrictions (eg. identification of exceptions). It is also recognized that the City could not prohibit or restrict the sale of pesticide products, which are approved by the federal government, and regulated for retail purposes by the province under the *Pesticides Act*.

### **Option 3: Phase-in By-law to Restrict the Use of Pesticides**

The issues for Option 3 are similar to Option 2 above. The purpose of this option is to allow the public time to accept and understand the restrictions, similar to the Region of Halifax's approach (eg. four years to phase in by-law). It also allows the City time to allocate the resources required to enforce the by-law as well as raise awareness through the Public Outreach and Education Program.

### **Option 4: By-law to Regulate Lawn Care Industry – Require IPM Accreditation**

The purpose of this by-law is to target a specific sector by requiring that lawn care companies operating within the City be accredited in Integrated Pest Management (IPM). It is anticipated that the adoption of IPM standards would reduce the use of pesticides by requiring the industry to promote preventative turf maintenance measures rather than programs which include scheduled applications of pesticides whether or not they are necessary.

Although it is acknowledged that this option would not apply to “do-it-yourself” homeowners, it is considered a stepping stone approach which may lead to expanded restrictions in the future. There is concern, however, that this approach may conflict with the licensing provisions for lawn care operators under the *Pesticides Act*.

### **Option 5: Summer Restrictions (July & August &/Or During Smog & Heat Advisory Days)**

Option 5 is considered another “stepping stone” approach in that it proposes limited restrictions. A by-law could prohibit the non-essential use of pesticides during July and August or during Smog and/or Heat Advisory days. The rationale for applying such a by-law during July and August is to restrict the use of pesticides while children are not in school. Restricting the application of pesticides during Smog days is intended to lessen the impact on air quality. As well, it is recommended that many pesticides not be applied over a certain temperature, thus the consideration of restricting the use of pesticides during Heat Advisory days.

Although it is acknowledged that this approach only deals with part of the problem, it is intended to help raise awareness of the issue and may lead to expanded restrictions in the future. However, one concern raised regarding restricting the use of pesticides during the summer season is that it may lead to over spraying prior to or following this period.

**Option 6: Require “do-it-yourself” Applicators (homeowners) to Post Warning Signs**

This option would not necessarily lead to a reduction in the use of pesticides but is intended to fill in a gap with provincial legislative requirements where only lawn care operators must post notification signs on private property when pesticides have been applied. These requirements currently do not apply to “do-it-yourself” homeowners. Again, by-law enforcement will be an issue.

After carefully considering the information available, consulting with the public, the lawn care and pest control industry, the Healthy Green Spaces Committee is recommending Option #1, No By-law – Outreach and Education, be implemented at this time. There are a number of reasons for this conclusion:

- The federal government approves pesticide products for use by the public and the lawn care industry. As well, the provincial government regulates the use and sale of these products. It is the committee’s position that these senior levels of government should be taking a greater responsibility through legislation to restrict the non-essential use of these products.
- Secondly, it is still not clear whether or not municipalities in Ontario have the full authority to adopt such a by-law. There is one example of a municipal by-law enacted in Ontario and there have been no apparent court challenges to date.
- Third, the lawn care industry appears to be working to implement an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) accreditation program, which is expected to reduce the use of pesticides by lawn care companies. The industry is presently in discussion with the Ontario Ministry of the Environment to make IPM accreditation a requirement under the *Pesticides Act*.
- Finally, staff are in the development stages of implementing the Public Outreach and Education Program, in coordination with the Region of Halton, as approved by Council earlier this year. It is the Healthy Green Spaces Committee’s position that the City’s limited resources would be more effectively spent on raising awareness and promoting preventative turf management practices than the implementation of a by-law at this time. As well, the *Healthy Green Spaces Strategy for Public Lands* will require ongoing resources to ensure it is effectively implemented.

Communications for these programs will be key, as it is for a number of different City information/education initiatives. The committee sees these initiatives as an extension to the City’s ongoing responsibility to provide important and relevant information to the community.

Outreach materials are in the development stages and have been posted on the City’s website. Next steps involve developing signage for City parks regarding pesticide reduction and naturalization initiatives. It is also the Healthy Green Spaces Committee’s intention to utilize resources from the Guelph Turfgrass Institute for various outreach initiatives, such as evening

## **Pg 12 of Report**

seminars and talks. Particular attention will be given to the use of pesticides in keeping with the federal Healthy Lawns Strategy, preventative lawn care measures, and encouraging residents and lawn care companies to avoid using pesticides during Smog Advisory Days.

### **5.0 FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

Staff are currently developing the 2003 proposed current budget to ensure that adequate financial and human resources are currently in place to allow for the implementation of both the Public Education and Outreach Program and *Healthy Green Spaces Strategy for Public Lands*. The General Manager of Community Services will ensure that these initiatives are built-into the ongoing corporate and department work plans.

Given the recommendation to focus on the Public Outreach and Education Program, the financial implication for the other potential regulatory options have not been fully assessed. As well, staff anticipate that a comprehensive community survey would be required prior to approval of any future by-law with a cost estimated between \$15,000 - \$20,000.

### **6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS:**

Raising awareness of the importance of natural areas within the City and how to live in harmony with them, as well as reducing the use of pesticides, are key initiatives in ensuring that the natural environment is preserved and enhanced. Many residents have a keen appreciation for our parks, open spaces and natural areas and an understanding of the stress they endure from urban pressures. However, others appear to be unaware of the impact of their actions when they use these areas as dumping grounds or attempt to keep them manicured similar to a lawn. The Healthy Green Spaces Committee is committed to working with our community partners to continue to raise awareness of these issues, and protect and enhance our local natural environment.

### **7.0 COMMUNICATION MATTERS:**

The Healthy Green Spaces Community will continue to work closely with Corporate Communications regarding the implementation of the Public Outreach and Education Program and the Healthy Green Spaces Strategy for Public Lands.

### **8.0 CONCLUSION:**

The *Healthy Green Spaces Strategy for Public Lands* has been developed to guide staff and the community in the protection, enhancement, and restoration of City owned green spaces. The strategy speaks to the benefits as well as the challenges of naturalization. It outlines a number of proposed initiatives, including the development of best practices and pilot projects for naturalization, as well as outreach and education to raise awareness of the importance of green spaces in the City. The strategy, as amended based on the public consultation process, is presented to Committee for approval.

Furthermore, the Healthy Green Spaces Committee recommends that Option #1 – Public Outreach and Education be fully implemented to achieve a reduction in the use and responsible

## Pg 13 of Report

use of pesticides in the community. Although the Committee does not recommend proceeding with a regulatory by-law at this time, it is recognized that this issue will be an ongoing consideration for Council. New research and information is available on a constant basis and it is anticipated that “top of mind” awareness by the community on this issue will also continue to increase.

As a result, there will be certain situations in which Council should expect this issue will be brought back for further consideration, including:

- Changes in provincial legislation providing a specific and clear legislative framework for municipal regulation of non-essential use of pesticides on private property; or,
- Support by the Region of Halton’s Medical Officer of Health for a local regulatory approach; or,
- Passage of time (ie. three years to reflect a council cycle in keeping with the previous recommendation approved by Regional Council).

Should any of these situations occur, the Healthy Green Spaces Committee will report back to Council. This report will also address the need for full public consultation, including a comprehensive community wide survey to determine levels of awareness and views on the issue of regulating the use of pesticides on private property. The estimated cost of a survey is \$15,000 - \$20,000.

The Healthy Green Spaces Committee will continue to closely monitor this issue as information becomes available and will advise Council accordingly. Staff will work closely with established networks, including the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, to lobby senior levels of government to tighten controls and requirements for the approval, sale, and use of pesticides, as previously directed by Council.

Staff are committed to implementing the Public Outreach and Education Program to reduce the use of pesticides. Through the approval of the *Healthy Green Spaces Strategy for Public Lands*, a renewed priority will exist to protect and restore where necessary the City’s green spaces, especially sensitive natural areas. As well, it will guide staff in educating the community on the ecological and social importance of these areas. Achieving these goals will not occur overnight but will be a work in progress in partnership with the community.

**Pg 14 of Report**

Overall, the City of Burlington continues to be a leader in this area with the development of the *Healthy Green Spaces Strategy for Public Lands* and our involvement in numerous activities to encourage a reduction in the use of pesticides.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Commisso  
General Manager, Community Services Division  
& Chair of the Healthy Green Spaces Committee  
905-335-7600 x7747

Lynn Robichaud  
Sr. Environmental Co-ordinator  
905-335-7600 x7931

**Appendices:**

- |  |
|--|
| A. 2002 HGS Council Directions   |
| B. Response to Comments on the HGS Strategy for Public Lands                 |
| C. Written Comments Submitted on the HGS Strategy for Public Lands           |
| D. May 8 <sup>th</sup> Public Meeting – Summary of Delegations               |
| E. May 8 <sup>th</sup> Public Meeting – Written Comments Submitted           |
| F. Halton Region Health Department – Survey Results for Burlington Residents |

**Staff / Others Consulted:**

Name	Telephone
Healthy Green Spaces Committee	
Environmental Management Team	
Burlington Sustainable Development Committee	

**Notifications:**

Name	Mailing or E-mail Address
Letter of notification for C&CS October 8 <sup>th</sup> meeting and report to be distributed to all individuals on mailing list for this issue.	

**Special Instructions:**

--