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CITY OF HAMILTON MOTION

General Issues Committee (Budget): December 1, 2017

MOVED BY COUNCILLOR S. MERULLA.....

SECONDED BY MAYOR / COUNCILLOR.....

Sports, Entertainment and Convention Venues Review

WHEREAS, the FirstOntario Concert Hall (formerly Hamilton Place), the Hamilton Convention Centre, and the FirstOntario Centre (formerly Copps Coliseum) were built in 1973, 1981, and 1985 respectively;

WHEREAS, these Sports, Entertainment, and Convention venues have been major sources of community use and enjoyment;

WHEREAS, these venues have attracted Canadian and International performances, major events, and millions of attendees to our city;

WHEREAS, these venues continue to drive significant economic value to the city's restaurants, bars, retail shops and hotels each year;

WHEREAS, the aging of these venues has created a significant and increasing need for capital reinvestment;

WHEREAS, the total annual capital funding envelope for all 3 venues is only \$800,000;

WHEREAS, it has been identified that the cost of immediate repairs needed to the Convention Centre's exterior is estimated at \$2 million;

WHEREAS, it has been identified that the cost to replace end of life escalators and elevators at FirstOntario Centre is estimated at \$4.3 million;

WHEREAS, a recent report CM17008 regarding the updating of the FirstOntario Centre identified that a partial upgrade to the existing facility with remodeling of key areas would cost an estimated \$68 million and a full transformation would cost an estimated \$252 million;

WHEREAS, a motion was approved by Council on March 9, 2016 to direct the City Manager to establish a task force of subject matter experts, to identify strategic opportunities and to achieve realizable outcomes related to the City’s real estate interests;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) That staff be directed to investigate the opportunities for the redevelopment of the FirstOntario Centre, the Hamilton Convention Centre, and the FirstOntario Concert Hall, with the investigation to included, but not be limited to, an examination of:
 - (i) developers’ interest in creating a sports and entertainment precinct; and,
 - (ii) potential for the precinct to include an arena, a convention centre, a concert hall, condominiums, and retail; and,
- (b) That the potential transfer of ownership of the FirstOntario Centre, the Hamilton Convention Centre, and the FirstOntario Concert Hall properties, as the City’s financial contribution towards a future development, be considered;
- (c) That staff be directed to seek input from community stakeholders, industry experts, and comparator municipalities and report back to the General Issues Committee with recommendations regarding the scope of work and the process to move forward; and,
- (d) That staff be directed to conduct the appropriate due diligence in the event that staff receives an unsolicited proposal outlining a development proposal for any or all of the properties in question: the FirstOntario Centre, the Hamilton Convention Centre, and the FirstOntario Concert Hall that secures private investment funds;
- (e) That any discussion regarding the location of a new arena not be limited to the Hamilton downtown core; and,
- (f) That an open, transparent and highly publized process, aimed at engaging citizens across the city for their input, be implemented.