

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**TO:** Members of the Hamilton City Council  
**CC:** Clerk of the City of Hamilton  
**RE:** Downtown Entertainment Precinct Status Update

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As members of Council, you have a choice to make. Not a choice of Vrancor Group versus the Urban Precinct group, but a choice on the **process** in which the Downtown Entertainment facilities will be updated.

Much of the discussion of the downtown entertainment facilities so far has been on FirstOntario Centre. The facts of the FirstOntario Centre are clear. First, the City should not be in the sports arena business. It is bad for taxpayers, period. Second, the current FirstOntario Centre is a liability rather than an asset. Renovation, redevelopment, lease, or sale is a must. Third, the best way to go about this reimagining process is an open bidding process.

The City's open bidding process on the Pier 8 redevelopment, for example, attracted the best and brightest teams of architects and developers from across the country and is widely considered an excellent project as such. There is no reason not to employ the same process on the FirstOntario Centre and on other downtown entertainment facilities like the Hamilton Convention Centre which is proving too small for our growing city.

Do the right thing - don't decide the future of the FirstOntario Centre or any other venue in the dark where residents have little say and where taxpayers may not get the best value.

On behalf of the board of directors of HamiltonForward,

Lachlan Holmes  
*Chair*