

HAMILTON100

COMMONWEALTH GAMES BID CORPORATION



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www.hamilton100.ca

June 7, 2023

Via Email Angela.McRae@hamilton.ca

General Issues Committee
c/o Angela McRae
Legislative Coordinator
Office of the City Clerk

Dear Mayor and Members of the General Issues Committee:

Re: 2030 Commonwealth Games Initiative

As an adjunct to the provision of the City staff report on the 2030 Commonwealth Games effort which is before you, we are writing to share our perspective on recent events including the transfer of the 2030 'Preferred Candidate' designation to an Alberta consortium which includes the Cities of Calgary and Edmonton, as well as to update you and the general public on our ongoing efforts to leverage the 2030 Commonwealth Games opportunity to promote local and regional interests.

Relevant Background

As many may recall, in 2019/20 Commonwealth Sport Canada (CSC) held an open Request for Proposal process to find a Preferred Candidate to bid for the 2030 Commonwealth Games. At the conclusion of that process, our volunteer organization, the Hamilton Commonwealth Games Bid Corporation (Hamilton100), was selected as that Preferred Candidate on March 26, 2020. Following that date, including a period in which we explored the feasibility of Hamilton hosting the 2026 Commonwealth Games without competitive bidding (which effort was abandoned as a consequence of the province directing Hamilton100 to focus on bidding for 2030), CSC has been working closely with Hamilton100 and its key stakeholders in hopes of finalizing a 2030 Commonwealth Games Bid for consideration by the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF). This effort has included a significant number of regional municipalities and a broad stakeholder group comprised of educational institutions, social enterprises, private sector partners, indigenous nations and others, all aimed at curating a comprehensive and compelling plan to promote regional regeneration and wellbeing.



Ultimately, this work culminated in the Hosting Proposal that is appended to this document. This proposal represents the product of the collective effort of a wide range of individual contributors and dozens of organizations, here and abroad, over several months. The five key pillars of the Hosting Proposal which were intended to provide the framework for a formal bid, are as follows:

- Broadening impact through regional participation;
- Private sector engagement (and funding);
- Re-imaging 'legacy' as catalyzing immediate impact by inspiring and resourcing a movement rather than hosting an event;
- Equity, Inclusion and Diversity; and,
- Health and Wellbeing

Those interested in more fully appreciating the opportunity these Games present through our innovative approach to maximizing their impact through these five pillars are encouraged to read this proposal in its entirety.

Upon completion, the Hosting Proposal was subjected to stakeholder consultations and review by both the federal and provincial governments, including an independent analysis of its merits by a major consulting firm engaged by the Government of Canada. Following this rigorous assessment, Hamilton100 was commended for an exemplary and innovative hosting proposal and, notably, was advised in early 2023 by representatives of the federal and provincial governments that: (i) nothing further was outstanding or required from Hamilton100; and (ii) that the decision to proceed was henceforth entirely 'political' with the matter resting with the Province of Ontario.

Contemporaneously, the CGF set a deadline of February 28, 2023 to receive Expression of Interest (EOI) submissions from countries interested in hosting the 2030 Commonwealth Games and set a deadline of end of August for the submission of a compliant bid. EOI submissions were required to include letters of support from the City/Region, State/Provincial and National Governments stating their "willingness to engage CGF in the Dialog & Feasibility stage".

As a consequence of the forgoing, and out of an abundance of caution, CSC unilaterally set a deadline of January 31, 2023, to receive letters of support from the City of Hamilton, Government of Ontario and Government of Canada, as well as commitments of financial support from the Ontario Government to execute the Hamilton 2030 Commonwealth Games International Bid Plan and for the planning & delivery of the 2030 Commonwealth Games.



On January 31, 2023, the Government of Ontario stated that it would respond to CSC's requirements by "mid-to late February". Owing to this response and with Hamilton100's strenuous urging, the CSC extended the deadline for the Government of Ontario to respond from January 31 to February 13, 2023 while making it clear that it reserved the right to revoke its Preferred Candidate designation from Hamilton100 in the absence of an affirmative response.

Ultimately, the Province of Ontario failed to respond at all to the CSC or Hamilton100. To date, no formal position has been taken by the Province of Ontario in relation to the award of the 2030 Games. Nor has the Province of Ontario or the Government of Canada indicated to CSC or Hamilton100 that any further or other information is required in order for it to confirm its willingness to proceed.

In late 2022, we were given to understand that CSC had remained in communication with other interested parties as a contingency to Ontario declining the opportunity and, in that regard, that it had received funding commitments from Alberta in the event that the Preferred Candidate status was removed from Hamilton100 and conferred upon an Alberta bid effort. It bears noting that on short notice both Calgary and Edmonton city councils voted unanimously to provide several millions of dollars in funding to their bid committee to explore the opportunity.

Following the failure of the Province of Ontario to respond, and on the strength of the Alberta bid committee's financial commitment, CSC revoked our preferred bid status and transferred it to Alberta. Given these developments, Hamilton100 made the very difficult decision not to return to Hamilton City Council to advance the bid process in collaboration with Hamilton City staff as we had intended to do. To our understanding, owing in part to our continued dialogue with CSC, efforts to explore the finalization of a bid in Alberta continue with the benefit of municipal and provincial government support. The deadline for such remains the end of August.

Our Continuing Resolve

Notwithstanding recent events, we remain passionate proponents of the Commonwealth Games movement's efforts to promote peace, sustainability and prosperity and continue to believe that an award of the Games to Ontario for 2030 on the strength of our innovative hosting proposal would resource and activate a host of benefits and impacts that would materially benefit a broad cross section of our population in ways that will yield important dividends that are urgently needed.

As a consequence of our deep belief in this enterprise, and in having developed a close relationship with the CSC leadership team over our many years of collaboration, we have remained in communication with them with a view to being positioned to renew discussions around the Games in the event that an Alberta bid does not materialize and circumstances permit, and also to explore a variety of initiatives and events that may be undertaken in the years leading



up to 2030 and during the Games in 2030, wherever they may be hosted. We do this, in part, in recognition of the fact that the centenary of the founding of the Commonwealth Games is an important element of our heritage and worthy of commemoration no matter where they are held and because we share the values and vision of the Commonwealth Games movement to foster positive social change.

More concretely our ongoing efforts include the following two initiatives:

- Owing to our being advised that the Alberta Bid effort is not pursuing an E-Sports program, we have been invited to pursue Games' themed E-Sports programming. This effort is detailed in the Hosting Proposal attached, and, beyond curating a 2030 demonstration event, is aimed at engaging at risk youth and promoting STEM educational programs and other skills in consultation with regional post-secondary institutions and the social enterprise sector; and,
- Introducing the Social Impact Games - powered by Xocial! Among the insights we developed in exploring the curation of a social impact related 'movement' was the possibility of creating a digital platform engaging the private, public, educational and not for profit sectors in a 'gamified environment' that would raise awareness of the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals – a key priority in our work. We did this in collaboration with Xocial, a ground breaking local technology venture that is pioneering digital tools in this space. Our collaboration with them, and a shared desire to 'democratize' the Games experience by providing a sustainable platform of competition for all ages and abilities, led to the creation and launch of "the Social Impact Games" <https://thesocialimpactgames.com/>. In the coming weeks and months we will work with Xocial through our web and digital platforms (which will be refreshed imminently) to champion this initiative as the first of many potential legacy initiatives.

Conclusion

Although the Games' effort is currently not where we would wish it to be, we are very thankful for the contributions and efforts of the many volunteers, municipal governments, indigenous representatives, social enterprises, educational institutions and others that have been part of this journey. Their collective effort, even in the absence of funding, resulted in our securing Preferred Candidate status, curating an innovative and compelling hosting proposal, met all of the requisite criteria for government support and brought us to the very precipice of finally securing the rights to host the only major international event created in Hamilton. No small feat.

We wish also to thank our many supporters, the mayors from around the region, our champions on Hamilton City Council in this and under the prior administration, including Mayor Horwath, and

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our collaborators from around the world. Those that are familiar with the Commonwealth Games movement know that the hosting process can take many unexpected turns. We remain ready, willing and able to bring the Games to Hamilton in 2030 if invited to do so and until then will work tirelessly to secure the benefits that the Games' movement inspires.

Sincerely,


P.J. Mercanti
President and CEO
HAMILTON100


Louis A. Frapporti
Chair
HAMILTON100

c: Brian MacPherson CEO, *Commonwealth Sport Canada*