



Friday, September 13, 2024

The City of Hamilton
c/ o Tourism Hamilton
28 James Street North
Hamilton, ON L8R 1A1

Re: 2024-2028 Tourism Strategy

Dear Mayor Horwath and Hamilton City Council:

On behalf of Carmen's Group and HUPEG (Hamilton Urban Precinct Entertainment Group), I am writing to express our enthusiastic support of Tourism Hamilton's 2024-2028 Tourism Strategy document.

With the substantial investments being made into Downtown Hamilton's entertainment infrastructure including a \$280M renovation of FirstOntario Centre and \$10M+ renovation of the Hamilton Convention Centre, we are delighted to see as an action item that Tourism Hamilton will implement sales campaigns to securing sport and cultural tourism events. These major events fill hotel rooms, fill downtown restaurants, support retail activity and contribute to community pride and vibrancy across the City. In addition, we are pleased to see that implementing dedicated sales campaigns to secure international, national and provincial meetings and conventions is a renewed focus area. Not only do meetings and conventions provide an economic boost to the downtown core, but they also allow professionals from around the world to experience the uniqueness of our city and the first-class hospitality that Hamilton offers.

We applaud this new direction of Tourism Hamilton as we have long believed that articulating new Key Metrics and Desired Outcomes (Key Performance Indicators) were required to align with industry best management practices. Documenting the number of major events hosted in Hamilton, as well as monitoring leads generated and secured through campaigns, coupled with the economic impact of major events, are so incredibly important as this will establish greater performance accountability.

We wholeheartedly support Tourism Hamilton's plan and believe that the best is yet to come for the City with this ambitious new approach. As industry partners, we look forward to working in collaboration with Tourism Hamilton to support your execution of this plan and to see you achieve great success.

Yours sincerely,

PJ Mercanti

CEO, Carmen's Group