

Hamilton council endorses 2030 Commonwealth Games bid



BY [KEN MANN](#) - 900 CHML

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— PJ Mercanti, Hamilton 100 President, welcomed officials with the International Commonwealth Games Federation and Commonwealth Games Canada in August to explore a 2030 games bid. *Ken Mann / Global News*

City Council has voted 10-3 to endorse a proposal to bring the 2030 [Commonwealth Games](#) to Hamilton, Ont.

If successful, 2030 would be the anniversary of the city’s first-ever hosting of the games 100 years ago, when they were known as the British Empire Games.

Council’s endorsement allows Hamilton 100, a group of local volunteers and business people, to submit bid documents to Commonwealth Games Canada (CGC) ahead of a March 9 deadline.

The focus now shifts to CGC and whether it will support Hamilton’s application, or instead back Calgary’s bid to host the international sports competition in 2026. That decision is expected by the end of March.

Hamilton Mayor Fred Eisenberger thinks the choice will be clear, saying that the 100th anniversary is a “logical conclusion.”

More than \$1.4 billion worth of infrastructure and facility upgrades would be needed should Hamilton win the right to host the games.

For now, city council has not been asked to make a financial commitment but a staff report indicates that the city would be responsible for up to 20 per cent of the capital cost of a successful bid, \$250-300 million, and that dollar figure was enough to scare off a few members of council.

Ward 8 Coun. John Paul Danko says he doesn’t have the information he needs to take a “leap of faith” while Ward 1 Coun. Maureen Wilson worries that “it gets a lot harder to take an off-ramp the further you get into this.”

Supporters of the bid argue that many of the capital projects that would be funded, 80 per cent by the provincial and federal governments, to bring the 2030 Commonwealth Games to Hamilton will be needed regardless of whether the city hosts the games.

As an example, Director of Recreation Chris Herstek notes that the venue plan calls for new recreational complexes in the fast-growing communities of Glanbrook and Waterdown. He says both facilities are in Hamilton’s 10-year capital plan and will be a “requirement for recreational programming” in the future.

Hamilton 100 spokesman PJ Mercanti predicts the initiative will be “a 10-year city building exercise that will electrify the community, serving as a catalyst for social transformation and economic development.”