

WORLD EXPO 2017

The City of Toronto spent approximately 2 years, and in excess of \$3 million, the Province of Ontario, preparing to submit a formal bid for the 2015 Universal World Expo, provided some of which. As a result of failed last-minute negotiations between the Municipal, Provincial and Federal Governments, the bid was in fact not submitted by the November 2, 2006 deadline. The 2015 World's Fair will now be contested between Milan, Italy, and Izmir, Turkey, with a decision expected in early 2008. The organization that decides this competition is the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE), headquartered in Paris, France.

A Universal Registered World Expo is similar in scope to Expo '67 held in Montreal. An International Recognized World Expo is similar in scope to Expo '86 held in Vancouver. The BIE has now mandated that a Universal Expo be held every 5 years in years ending in 0 and 5, and that an International Expo be held every 4 to 6 years, in a year ending in either 2 or 3, and then either 7 or 8.

The 2012 International World Expo is also currently being contested, with a decision expected later this year. Tangier, Morocco is competing with Yeosu, Korea, and Wroclaw, Poland for the right to host this World's Fair.

World Expo 2008 will be held in Zaragoza, Spain, and World Expo 2010 will take place in Shanghai, China.

With Toronto having missed the deadline for 2015, the next World Expo that will be available for bid will be 2017. This happens to be Canada's 150th birthday. A columnist with the Edmonton Journal had already written about how an Alberta bid for 2017 should be considered. In light of Toronto having missed the 2015 deadline, it is clear positioning for a future Canadian World Expo bid will likely start soon, given that there has been no World's Fair in North America since Vancouver in 1986.

The following information is now being provided to the community regarding how Hamilton might position itself for its own bid for the 2017 International Exposition, commemorating Canada's 150th birthday, 50 years after Montreal's Expo '67 Centennial celebration.

A Hamilton 2017 World Expo bid would require the following steps:

- 1) A determination the City will rely on the success of the 2003 World Road Cycling Championships as the template for demonstrating the City's ability to host international events (especially in preparing a bid for the Paris-based and somewhat European-centred Bureau International des Expositions which would be well-aware of the Cycling event);
- 2) An early decision by Council to begin exploratory talks with the BIE, largely in order to get out in front of any percolating Edmonton or Toronto effort to lay claim to the next World Expo in North America;
- 3) A decision to have these preliminary talks led by consultants who would work with Council, staff, North End and West Harbour neighbourhood representatives, Tourism Hamilton and the private sector to initiate and maintain BIE contact, work towards

identifying possible approximately 100 acre sites (with a specific focus on the CN rail yards at Stuart Street and West Harbour lands up to Pier 8), and prepare prospective draft budgets and proformas predicated on maximizing private-sector participation and minimizing public-sector financial exposure;

4) Limit municipal expenses to preliminary consultants work at approximately \$75,000 to \$100,000 per year, for an approximately 2 year period, until early 2009, at which time Council would decide if it wants to launch a formal bid preparation process (creation of a corporation similar to Toronto's World Expo Corporation which was a subsidiary of Toronto's Economic Development Corporation (TEDCO));

5) If a formal bid preparation is then launched in 2009, it would last until the letters of intention to bid are open for acceptance by the BIE, not later than May, 2011, and hopefully earlier if Canada's proactive effort encourages the BIE to open the 2017 process sometime in 2010. Using Toronto as an example, they spent (in concert with the Provincial Government) approximately \$3.3 million over about 2 and 1/2 years leading up to the November 2, 2006 deadline. They budgeted somewhere between \$10 and \$12 million for the 15 month formal campaign leading to the February, 2008 decision for 2015, an amount that will obviously now not be spent. There are already emerging professional opinions from international consultants experienced in World's Fairs that a strong, focused bid can be fashioned for a fraction of what Toronto was projecting.

Hamilton's ability to attract the BIE's attention would likely be influenced by the following:

- 1) A credibility issue for Toronto resulting from the 2015 failure;
- 2) The success of the 2003 Cycling Championships and European awareness of that event;
- 3) A perceived willingness, even eagerness, on the part of the BIE to return to North America;
- 4) An ability to sell Hamilton's unique geographic location in the heart of Southern Ontario's Golden Horseshoe, thereby allowing visitors to a World's Fair held over a 3 to 4 month period to also have access to Toronto, Niagara Falls, and all points in between;
- 5) An early and well-articulated bid concept that includes full stakeholder participation by the North End and West Harbour neighbourhoods;
- 6) A bid that clearly indicates it will not be finalized at the 11th hour, but instead will be premised on coming in first as opposed to just before the deadline.

There will be a Canadian bid for a World's Fair in either 2017 or 2020. The only question will be which Canadian city gets ahead of this curve and becomes the preferred location. Unless Hamilton makes the decision to get in the game by doing preliminary work and staking its claim, the train will leave the station and Hamilton will not be on board. The question as to whether Hamilton wants to at least make a pitch, and in this case make it first before any other Canadian city really gets its act together, is the question being asked of Hamilton and its citizens.