



To: Regional Council
Meeting Date: March 20, 2025
From: Erin Mahoney
Chief Administrative Officer
Re: **2030 Commonwealth Games – Bid Process, Timelines and Cost Overview**

On February 27, 2025, Regional Council passed a [motion](#) for York Region to explore hosting sporting events for the 2030 Commonwealth Games, as part of any potential Province of Ontario led Expression of Interest for the Games. This memo and Attachment 1 provide information on the bid process, timelines and estimated costs to host the 2030 Commonwealth Games.

Commonwealth Games is an international multi-sport event among athletes from the Commonwealth of Nations

The Commonwealth of Nations, simply referred to as the Commonwealth, is a political association of [56 member states](#), the vast majority of which are former territories of the British Empire. The 2030 Commonwealth Games, officially known as the XXIV Commonwealth Games will mark the centenary of the Games, first held as the British Empire Games, and hosted by the City of Hamilton in 1930.

Commonwealth Games are overseen by the [Commonwealth Games Federation](#) headquartered in London, England. The Federation is the international organization responsible for direction and control of the Commonwealth Games and is the governing body of the various country associations. Its role includes assessing and choosing the host country for the Games.

[Commonwealth Sport Canada](#) is the Canadian sporting body that selects which province or territory (or group of provinces and territories) would best represent Canada to host the Commonwealth Games.

Approach for hosting the 2030 Commonwealth Games has changed considerably from the approach of past Commonwealth Games

Historically, hosting such a large sporting event would be an opportunity to leverage new infrastructure and create new additional sporting venues. However, a new approach introduced

by Commonwealth Sport Canada, proposes no new capital or infrastructure construction, instead using sporting venues and infrastructure already existing in host municipalities for the 2030 Games.

A multi-jurisdictional approach has been introduced whereby multiple host municipalities within a province or territory, or multiple host municipalities across multiple provinces and territories is encouraged. This new approach is referred to as the **United Canada 2030 Commonwealth Games**. It is thought that this new multi-jurisdictional approach to hosting will encourage more municipalities to be directly involved in the 2030 Games.

Bids to host the 2030 Games will now come directly from provincial or territorial governments and not from municipalities as has been the case in the past. If multiple provincial/territorial governments express interest to host the same sport(s), the Commonwealth Games Federation will work closely with those governments to find common ground.

Commonwealth Sport Canada has estimated \$348 million as the overall cost of hosting the 2030 Commonwealth Games

The cost of hosting large sporting events has traditionally been in the billions of dollars, causing all levels of government to pause and be non-committal in providing funding assurances. This new approach of leveraging existing sporting venues and infrastructure is meant to reduce the cost of hosting the 2030 Games by keeping costs to operating expenses only. Infrastructure investments are not proposed as part of Commonwealth Sport Canada's new approach.

Commonwealth Sport Canada estimates the cost of hosting the 2030 Games at \$348 million, essentially the operating costs of the Games by proposing:

- No new capital or infrastructure investments, leveraging existing sporting venues and infrastructure being used for the 2030 Games
- Scaled down opening and closing ceremonies to minimize costs
- No centralized "Athlete's Village" and instead athletes will be housed near their sporting venue in a manner determined by the hosting municipality

Commonwealth Sport Canada has proposed the \$348 million cost of the Games be funded in the following manner:

- **\$122 million federal funding**
- **\$156 million provincial funding**
- **\$70 million funding from generated revenues**

The Federal amount represents a 35% "funding floor commitment" that is currently a federal policy for funding international sporting events.

The \$70 million revenue amount is calculated as the average generated revenues from the previous 3 Commonwealth Games. As those 3 previous Games held more events than

anticipated for the 2030 Games the \$70 million revenue amount may be a challenge to fully realize.

The \$156 million in provincial funding is the biggest unknown. Municipal funding contributions may be expected by the Province to reduce its funding commitments. Cost-sharing arrangements with municipalities have historically been Ontario's approach to these types of initiatives outside traditional mandates. Responsibility for any shortfalls from cost overruns and/or unrealized revenues would need to be confirmed with the Province.

In August 2024 Glasgow, Scotland reached an agreement to host the 2026 Games, proposing a scaled-back version of the event, featuring 10 to 13 sports using existing infrastructure and venues. Estimated costs for this "scaled down" version of the 2026 Games is currently projected to be about \$450 million (Canadian \$), suggesting the projected \$348 million cost for the 2030 Games may be understated.

Streamlined bid process and timelines for 2030 Commonwealth Games is very tight

With a new approach for the 2030 Games comes a new streamlined bidding process with tight timelines as outlined on page 3 of Attachment 1 (United Canada 2030 Commonwealth Games Expression of Interest Guidelines).

Key bid development steps, activities and timelines are as follows:

- In advance of March 31, 2025 – Ontario municipalities interested in being a part of any provincial Expression of Interest would need to send information to the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport to convey municipal interests by indicating which sporting events they wish to host, and which existing venues would be used for each of these sports
- March 31, 2025 - Deadline for Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport to submit Expression of Interest to Commonwealth Sport Canada. From Expressions of Interest received Commonwealth Sport Canada then determines the preferred provincial candidate(s). This deadline was extended from the original February 28, 2025 deadline outlined in the Bid Development Phase graphic shown on page 3 of Attachment 1.
- March 31, 2025 – Current deadline for Commonwealth Sport Canada to notify Commonwealth Games Federation of any bid intentions from Canada
- Spring/Summer 2025 - Commonwealth Sport Canada in partnership with successful provincial or territorial government(s) to undertake a feasibility study and develop a United Canada 2030 Commonwealth Games bid or Hosting Proposal. Hosting municipalities need to identify training venues for each sport for athletes to use during the Games, as well as housing locations for athletes indicating proximity to competition and training venues
- August 31, 2025 – Deadline to submit Hosting Proposal to Commonwealth Games Federation
- November 2025 – 2030 Games awarded to host country by vote of Commonwealth Games Federation Members at its 2025 General Assembly

York Region is encouraging support and participation from adjacent cities and regions

Regional staff have reached out to York Region's local municipalities to confirm their interest in hosting event(s), and if interested, have requested that each local municipality indicate which event they would prefer along with the proposed venue in their municipality that could be used. Responses were requested by March 19.

Regional staff have also reached out to five adjacent municipalities included in the [motion](#), specifically the City of Toronto, Durham Region, Halton Region, Peel Region and Simcoe County, to gauge their interest in hosting events.

Durham Region indicated its Invest Durham team is reviewing the information and evaluating resources and potential venues. Correspondence is planned for Durham Regional Council's March 26 meeting. Halton Region has confirmed they will not have adequate time to address York Region's Motion with Halton Council before the March 31st deadline. At the time of drafting this memo, other adjacent municipalities have yet to respond to our inquiry. Other municipalities may be exploring interest with the Province, however, there is no formal information to share or confirm at this time.

York Region could be in a position early in the week of March 24 to prepare a letter from the Chairman to the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, confirming York Region's interest in hosting events, along with an attachment of any proposed venues confirmed by local municipalities, should the Province undertake an Expression of Interest to host the 2030 Games.

Conclusion

The cost of hosting large sporting events has traditionally been in the billions of dollars, causing all levels of government to pause and be non-committal in providing funding assurances. This new approach of leveraging existing sporting venues and infrastructure is meant to reduce the cost of hosting the 2030 Games by keeping costs to operating expenses only. Infrastructure investments are not proposed as part of Commonwealth Sport Canada's new approach.

This new approach puts the onus on the Province to submit an Expression of Interest and show commitment prior to any international submission. Given the parliamentary pause for the recent Ontario election and the timing for appointment and confirmation of Ministry positions after the February 27th election, the March 31st deadline may be impractical for the Province of Ontario to meet.

At the time of drafting this memo, the Province of Ontario has not provided any indication as to its interest in hosting the 2030 Commonwealth Games.

York Region has not allocated 2025 budget dollars for bid preparation or submission.

For more information on this memo, please contact Erin Mahoney, Chief Administrative Officer at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 71200. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Mahoney', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Erin Mahoney
Chief Administrative Officer

Edocs # 16650505
Attachments (1)

Attachment 1 - United Canada 2030 Commonwealth Games Expression of Interest Guidelines

March 18, 2025
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