

## TheSpec.com - Local - Wave of opportunity on waterfront

Photos by Kaz Novak, the Hamilton Spectator



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### City to create development corporation

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THE HAMILTON SPECTATOR  
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Hamilton is planning to create a waterfront development corporation like those in Toronto, Halifax and Pittsburgh.

It could help redevelop land around Rheem Canada's former water-heater plant overlooking the bay on Barton Street West, whether or not the city wins the 2015 Pan Am Games and puts a new stadium there.

Condominium housing east of Williams Coffee Pub on Pier 8 is another possibility.

It might even get involved in the Confederation Park area on the shore of Lake Ontario.

Officials say other North American cities have concluded that government "can act as a catalyst for the redevelopment of underutilized waterfront communities or neighbourhoods in transition."

They say a city-owned corporation could help lure private investors who fear "the inherent complexity and financial risk involved" in waterfront projects.

Chris Phillips, an advisor to city manager Chris Murray and to Tim McCabe, general manager of planning and economic development, told councillors this week the proposed corporation would not engage in visioning, but would instead implement existing council-approved plans such as Setting Sail for the west harbour and the Hamilton Beach neighbourhood plan.

Councillor Chad Collins, chairperson of the Hamilton Waterfront Trust, said it could co-exist happily with the waterfront corporation because "most people would find it odd to see the trust, for example, building a residential project, which is not within its mandate. The trust has park planners and landscape architects on staff, so we would still focus on the water's edge and design of new projects."

After hearing from Phillips this week, council directed staff to come up with a detailed proposal with a specific mandate, governance structure and staffing plan as well as potential start-up and operating costs.

No deadline for the proposal was imposed.

Ward 1 Councillor Brian McHattie didn't win support for his suggestion that the corporation also take responsibility for downtown redevelopment because Hamilton doesn't have as much waterfront land as Toronto and Halifax.

McHattie noted that the public-private Hamilton Realty Capital Corp., established two years ago with \$2.25 million from city coffers, has made "no obvious progress."

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