



Oak View Group, HUPEG and City of Hamilton Seal Deal to Renovate FirstOntario Centre and Invest in Hamilton as Premier Entertainment Destination

HAMILTON, ONTARIO (November 2, 2023) – [Oak View Group](#) (OVG), Hamilton Urban Precinct Entertainment Group (HUPEG), and the [City of Hamilton](#) today announced that they have signed a deal to begin major renovations on FirstOntario Centre, a venue that will be the centerpiece in revitalizing the city’s position as a premier music, sports and entertainment destination for southwestern Ontario in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area.

The \$280 million renovation is spearheaded by Oak View Group, the largest developer of sports and live entertainment venues in the world, who will transform the facility into an 18,000-seat capacity venue with a reimagined facade, premium seating, enhanced acoustics, improved sightlines, upgraded concourses, optimized clubs and suites and artist lounges. The newly modernized venue will join a rapidly growing southwestern Canadian marketplace with the ability to accommodate larger shows alongside Toronto’s Scotiabank Arena. Work will begin in spring 2024, and the building is expected to open in fall 2025.

Live Nation joins OVG as a booking partner committed to bringing concerts and other live events to Hamilton. Combining Live Nation’s booking of top touring acts with OVG’s focus on the holistic guest experience from premium hospitality offerings to enhanced technology, the new state-of-the-art venue will be even more competitive in attracting top-tier events and, in turn, drive economic impact for the local and regional business community.

“Hamilton is already an important entertainment destination in Canada, and the city deserves a state-of-the-art venue that will attract the world’s best events to the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area,” said **Tim Leiweke, OVG Chairman & CEO**. “We are committed to delivering a facility that will completely transform the downtown area with its accessibility, technology forward improvements and priority on sustainability. We are confident the Hamilton Arena Project will bring vitality and economic development to Hamilton.”

The Hamilton Arena Project, to be designed by Brisbin Brook Beynon Architects, is part of a larger downtown revitalization project known as “The Commons”, which includes the newly reimagined arena, renovated convention centre, significant investments in the Art Gallery of Hamilton and concert hall facilities, as well as new residential, office, and retail space development.

“Born and raised in Hamilton, I have many treasured memories in this city’s arena, concert hall and convention centre,” **PJ Mercanti, HUPEG president and CEO**, said. “I’m honoured to lead our Precinct Group and work alongside OVG Canada and the City of Hamilton. We are deeply committed to this city and its future, and we look forward to driving the changes that will bring a new vibrancy to the downtown core.”

"This exciting redevelopment will create a world-class entertainment destination for the people of Hamilton and the entire region and contribute to the economic and cultural vibrancy of our city, said **City of Hamilton Mayor Andrea Horwath**. “OVG is an international entertainment powerhouse and their investment in Hamilton is a huge vote of confidence in our city. I’m so excited to see this transformation come to life.”

FirstOntario Concert Hall and the Hamilton Convention Centre will remain open and continue to host events during the arena’s renovation.

Interested community members can sign-up for news and updates on the Hamilton Arena Project by visiting OakViewGroup.com/Canada/HamiltonArena.

About Oak View Group

Oak View Group (OVG) is a global sports and entertainment company founded by Tim Leiweke and Irving Azoff in 2015. OVG’s mission is to be a positive disruption to business as usual in the sports, live entertainment, and hospitality industries. OVG is world-renowned as the leading full-service live entertainment and hospitality group, with 10 major new arenas either open or under development including: Climate Pledge Arena at Seattle Center; UBS Arena in Belmont Park, NY; Moody Center in Austin, TX; Acrisure Arena in Greater Palm Springs, CA; and CFG Bank Arena in Baltimore, MD; as well as arena development projects for Co-op Live in Manchester, UK; Anhembi Arena in São Paulo, Brazil; FirstOntario Centre in Hamilton, ON; a New Arena and entertainment district in Las Vegas, NV; and a New Arena in Cardiff, Wales. OVG360 is a full-service venue management, hospitality solutions, and venue services company servicing more than 400 arenas, stadiums, performing arts centers, culture institutions, and convention centers world-wide. More information at OakViewGroup.com, and follow OVG on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [X](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

About HUPEG

Hamilton Urban Precinct Entertainment Group (known as “HUPEG”) is a regional consortium led by Carmen’s Group and Mercanti Family and Friends that includes Alinea Group Holdings Inc., Mercanti Management Downtown Investments, Vaccarello Investments, Golden Horseshoe Enterprises, JJAA Consulting Services and POWERGROUP Resources. It is working in collaboration with a growing number of leading industry consultants and development partners including LiUNA, First Ontario Credit Union, Meridian Credit Union, among others, to revitalize Downtown Hamilton’s Arts & Entertainment District.

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