



Pan Ams will put us on world stage: Florida

The Spectator asked urban economist and Who's Your City? author Richard Florida a few questions about the impact of the Pan Am Games on Hamilton and area.

November 19, 2009

THE HAMILTON SPECTATOR

(Nov 19, 2009)

Q: What could the Pan Am Games mean for this area?

A: It's really going to put the region on a world stage. Given the population here and the diversity, it creates an opportunity to show how we relate to the rest of the world. Pragmatically, it also forces us to work together. We're going to have to work together to pull it off. It will also finally enable us to build the infrastructure we need. What international games like these give cities is infrastructure projects.

Q: The discussions are already beginning about where to build a stadium in Hamilton. Some want to see it on the waterfront, others right downtown. Still others want to see it around the airport. What would you advise?

A: You have to build it in the densest area you can. The stadium should be less car-oriented and be able to be used for a variety of uses and events.

The closer to the core, the better. That's where the greatest impact will be but the real challenge is to make it part of the neighbourhood.

Q: Should Hamilton tie its future more fully in with the Greater Toronto Area?

A: We talk about this at the (Martin Prosperity) Institute all the time. We can't make it alone. Toronto isn't big enough to make it on its own. If this region is going to grow, Toronto needs Hamilton, Waterloo, Guelph, Burlington just as much as they need Toronto.

This region is not as big as the big metros of the world. That means we have to get stronger rail links and faster commutes. We have to knit ourselves closer together and transit is the key.

That means making the centres denser and growing out at the boundaries, too.