

Staff Report

Origin

Based on the experiences of other Olympic Host and Olympic Venue Cities, it can be anticipated that Richmond will be the site of numerous celebrations, festivals, special events and other community activities leading up to and during the 2010 Olympic Winter Games. To help the City prepare for and support these activities, and based on the strong advice from previous cities involved in the Olympics, staff are recommending the establishment of an Olympic Opportunity Fund. The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the details of how other cities have dealt with hosting celebrations leading up to and during Olympic Games events, and to outline how Richmond can maximize on the Olympic opportunity based on findings from best practices research from other Olympic cities.

Analysis

As the host of the Long Track Speed Skating competition, Richmond will welcome the world as a Venue City for the 2010 Olympic Winter Games. Between February 12th - 28th, Richmond will celebrate the Games with festivities for athletes, visitors, media and local residents. Celebrations will occur at the Olympic Oval, Olympic Plaza, Waterfront Park and throughout the City. These activities will be sponsored and organized with various community partners, agencies and the City of Richmond itself.

The City currently does not have funds set aside for events and celebrations of this nature and budgeting is not included in the annual budget process. Best practices research has indicated that previous Olympic cities in North America and Europe created "Olympic Opportunity Funds" specifically for these types of celebrations. Over several years leading up to the Games, these cities contributed dollars annually to "build up" these funds specifically for celebrations. As celebrations will attract visitors from all parts of the world, it is strongly recommended to have funds readily available to host quality events.

Hosting an Olympic competition in 2010 is a rare opportunity for any city. By hosting celebrations in our community, the City can capitalize on the Olympic opportunity to create economic spin-offs, heighten community spirit, build community pride and increase regional, national and international awareness of Richmond. As well, these celebrations will bring a tremendous opportunity for community partners and volunteers to work together and show the true community spirit of Richmond. Not only will our community receive a world-class Oval facility, experience economic growth and increased tourism, the community will participate in numerous activities celebrating sports, arts and culture and gain a sense of being part of the Olympic family. Visitors from far and wide will celebrate with the community and will take memories back to their home country of their experiences in this City. This is a unique opportunity to put Richmond on the global map.

Inspiring celebrations of success from previous Games include: Park City's Main Street Celebrations; Lillehammer's Main Street; Albertville's Villages of the Savoie; Atlanta's Centennial Olympic Park; Nagano's Alpine Village at Hakuba; and Sydney's Live Sites. In each

case, the majority of resources were contributed from the Host and Venue Cities with help from the Organizing Committee, local community partners and private sponsors.

One example of a successful approach to celebrations and festivities during the Olympics is Park City, Utah, a Venue City for the 2002 Olympic Winter Games and host to the Alpine events. Park City estimates 75% of their visitors attended celebrations hosted by the City during the Games. Some visitors could not attend actual Olympic competition events but relished in the Olympic experience by attending the celebrations. Those that attended rated the entertainment, displays and exhibits very high (4 and 5 out of a rating of 5). Some of the events and activities held during the Games included the Olympic Torch Relay, live stage entertainment, outstanding food areas, huge video boards broadcasting live Olympic events, Olympic Arts Festival, and nightly fireworks display. The "Main Street Celebrations" were free to the public and extremely well attended. Park City representatives feel strongly that the atmosphere created by the City during the games helped to increase visitor awareness of them as a resort destination, and as a place to return to in future years.

Park City spent approximately \$1.5US million on Main Street Celebrations, which equates to \$80,000US per day during the 2002 Olympic Winter Games. These celebrations were jointly supported by the City, Chamber/Bureau, Salt Lake Organizing Committee (SLOC), and private corporate sponsors. According to city officials and organizers, the key to the success of the celebrations was to have funds readily available and dedicated specifically to celebrations for the entire two-week period.

The Resort Municipality of Whistler has learned from Park City's experience and has created three funds for initiatives and events for their municipality. Each year, contributions are made to each fund with the goal of having a significant amount available in 2010. The "Events Fund" will be used for specific events and activities on the mountain that are co-sponsored by corporate sponsors with a contribution of \$265,000 annually to the fund. The "Initiatives and Festivals Fund" will be used for festivals and activities in and around the Village with an initial contribution of \$250,000 annually and increased to \$400,000 annually in 2005. The "Village Improvement Fund" will be used to ensure the Village is in pristine condition just prior to the Games with an initial contribution of \$150,00 annually and increased to \$300,000 annually in 2005.

The City of Vancouver has identified the importance of having funds set aside for events, festivals and activities around Vancouver but have not yet established an Olympic Opportunity Fund. Currently, city staff is exploring different options for creating a Fund and, as the Olympic Host City, working closely with VANOC to determine what will be needed for the period leading up to and during the Games.

The Richmond Spirit of BC Community Committee, appointed by Council, has formed three sub-committees in the areas of volunteers, events/festivals and communications. In line with the Council approved Terms of Reference for this Committee, Committee members and staff are working together to form strategies to coordinate, organize and implement events and activities in the period leading up to and during the Games. The Olympic Opportunity Fund will support the implementation of these strategies, upon Council approval and direction. The Richmond

Spirit of BC Community Committee will present a detailed report to Council in the near future on the overall strategies and implementation plans.

It should be emphasized that it is not intended the City be the sole contributor to Olympic celebrations, and other organizations will be asked to contribute financially, and in a combined coordination, marketing and volunteer effort. The City of Richmond and its community partners will work together in a joint effort to seek other forms of support for celebrations. The 2010 Olympic Winter Games is an opportunity for the entire community to be involved and everyone from the tourism industry to the business community to private corporations to the residents will play a crucial role in the overall success of celebrating the Games in Richmond. To this end, the Olympic Opportunity Fund can be used to provide "matching funds" to leverage other grants and funding opportunities from other organizations. One such opportunity is that offered through LegaciesNow, an organization aimed at working in partnership with community-based organizations to develop and support participants and athletes from playground to podium, and to develop vibrant volunteer sectors, healthy and active communities and diverse arts and cultural activities. LegaciesNow offers grants in the areas of Sport and Recreation, Arts, Literacy and Volunteers and will match funds with the applying organization. The Olympic Opportunities Fund will allow the City and the Spirit of BC Community Committee to apply for grants in the appropriate areas. LegaciesNow also provides grants in their "HostingBC" program that provides funding to organizations interested in staging international and national sports events in British Columbia. The program has an emphasis on pre-Olympic/Paralympic test events leading up to the 2010 Games. The hosting of national and international sports events in Richmond will provide opportunities to facilitate sport, economic, social and community development within our community. Again, the Fund will allow for an opportunity to apply for such grants and subsequent matching dollars.

Financial Impact

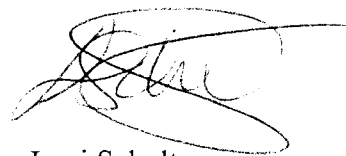
Staff are recommending the Olympic Opportunity Fund be established with an initial contribution in the amount of \$250,000, with funds coming from the 2005 annual surplus. Subsequent annual contributions would be required with a goal of attaining \$1,000,000 in the Fund by 2010. In each year, money would be coming from available annual surplus and the tax base will not be affected. Any expenditures from the Olympic Opportunity Fund will be subject to Council approval and similarly, all events, festivals and activities will be brought forward to Council for final approval.

Conclusion

The 2010 Olympic Winter Games provide an excellent opportunity to bring the community together and to increase global awareness of Richmond. Establishing and building an Olympic Opportunity Fund will help the City to support quality events and celebrations that capitalize on this opportunity and that help celebrate Richmond's diverse culture, heritage, community spirit, and economic vitality. It is not intended that the City be the sole contributor to Olympic celebrations. The City and its partners will seek out other forms of support for celebrations, and other organizations will be asked to contribute in a combined coordination, marketing, financial, and volunteer effort.

April 27, 2005

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lani Schultz", is written over a faint, circular stamp or watermark.

Lani Schultz
Director, Richmond Olympic Business Office
(4286)

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