



CITY OF VANCOUVER

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: October 3, 2005
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CC File No.: 4209
Meeting Date: November 1, 2005

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: General Manager, Olympic Operations

SUBJECT: Olympic Handover and Countdown Celebrations, February 2006 and
Community Tourism Program

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council endorse the proposed celebrations in Vancouver designed to engage citizens and visitors in celebrating the symbolic handover of the Olympic Winter Games from Torino to Vancouver, and mark the four year countdown to the launch of the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games subject to the funding proposals outlined in Recommendation B.
- B. THAT Council approve the following funding application and request in support of the program as outlined in Recommendation A:
 - (a) Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) Community Tourism Program funding in the amount of \$215,000
 - (b) VANOC cost sharing for signing and banner materials.
- C. THAT Council approve \$10,000 from the Property Endowment Fund for the ground breaking ceremonies in the Southeast False Creek Development.
- D. THAT Council authorize staff to explore sponsorship opportunities with VANOC to assist in the 2006 celebration events.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager RECOMMENDS endorsing the February 2006 Olympic handover and countdown celebrations in Vancouver, and authorizing City staff to apply and request for funding from UBCM and VANOC in support of the celebrations.

COUNCIL POLICY

It is Council policy that grant applications be approved by Council.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's endorsement for City staff to organize a celebration in February 2006 to commemorate the Olympic flag transfer in Torino and Olympic flag arrival in Vancouver, and to seek Council's authorization to apply and request funding from the UBCM Community Tourism Program and VANOC to assist with the celebratory events.

BACKGROUND

The closing ceremonies of the 2006 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in Torino, Italy will take place on February 26, 2006. At this ceremony the Mayor of Torino will present the Olympic flag to the Mayor of Vancouver to mark the official handover of the Games. To celebrate that handover, the Vancouver Olympic Organizing Committee (VANOC) is dedicating their resources to producing the closing ceremonies which will be telecast around the world.

Upon conclusion of the closing ceremonies, the Mayor and the VANOC team will return to Vancouver with the Olympic flag. The City will become the custodian of the flag until the conclusion of the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

The handover event in Torino is an important and symbolic occasion. It not only represents the passing of the mantle from one city to the next, it also marks the start of the four-year countdown to these internationally recognized Games.

Due to staffing and resource constraints, VANOC has been unable to organize celebrations in Vancouver to mark this important occasion with residents and visitors.

The absence of a local event in the marquee host city prompted City staff to explore opportunities for a celebration that would engage Vancouver residents and visitors and would demonstrate our city's desire to welcome the world.

Local celebrations would provide the City with the opportunity to generate enthusiasm about the approaching Winter Games, engage people in the countdown celebrations, and brand Vancouver as the Host City of the 2010 Winter Games. Celebratory events would also promote the City to visitors, providing a direct benefit to tourism.

The Italian Institute of Culture has expressed an interest in cooperating with the City to host some celebratory events in Vancouver around the time of the handover event. Other sponsors may be interested in participating too.

The proposed Olympic celebrations coincide with a new source of funding administered by UBCM under the Community Tourism Program. The UBCM Community Tourism Program is a \$25 million program initiated by the Government of British Columbia to assist local governments to increase tourism activity and double the province's tourism activity over the next 10 years. The funding is to be allocated directly to local governments in two phases.

The City of Vancouver is eligible to apply for \$430,885.13 in the first phase of the program before March 30, 2007. The funding allocation for phase two has yet to be determined.

City staff have reviewed the application for the UBCM Community Tourism Program and have determined that a February 2006 celebration in Vancouver would be eligible for the funding. As per the motion (Appendix A) passed at Council's October 6, 2005 meeting, City staff have explored further opportunities for the UBCM Community Tourism Program funding with staff at Tourism Vancouver. Tourism Vancouver is aware of the celebratory events being proposed and have offered to assist where possible, and have offered to suggest other potential initiatives which could be funded under the UBCM Community Tourism Program.

The February 2006 Olympic handover and countdown celebrations being proposed for Vancouver include a number of small, manageable events around the city over a four to five day period. It is expected that similar celebrations will be organized in 2007, 2008 and 2009 during the month of February as a countdown to the 2010 Winter Games. Where activities do not meet the UBCM Community Tourism Program criteria, staff would seek cost sharing opportunities with VANOC and other organizations where possible. Funding would also be required from the City to supplement these outside sources.

DISCUSSION

The proposed February 2006 Olympic handover and countdown celebrations include capital improvements and community events, which would endeavour to be open and accessible to all residents in Vancouver. In particular, activities would promote the participation of children and youth in sports and culture.

Activities for the February 2006 celebration may include:

- Community event(s) where residents and visitors together can view the closing ceremonies and celebrate the symbolic handover and beginning of the countdown to 2010;
- The unveiling of the official countdown clock;
- Free access to certain recreational and cultural facilities in Vancouver;
- A ceremonial lighting event at the Inukshuk in English Bay, the inspiration behind Ilanaaq, the official emblem of the 2010 Winter Games;
- The installation of celebration street banners leading to and around future Olympic venues;
- The installation of new 'Welcome to Vancouver' signs to welcome visitors to our city and build awareness of the 2010 Winter Games;
- An event surrounding the return of the official Olympic flag to Vancouver along with the Mayor and the VANOC team;
- A flag raising ceremony at City Hall;
- A ground breaking ceremony in the Southeast False Creek Development; and
- Engagement of children through events at the schools and recreational facilities.

Olympic countdown celebrations in 2007, 2008 and 2009 would continue to be inclusive and accessible to all residents and promote recreation, arts and culture in the city as well as active living. Youth activities would continue to be a priority in the planning of future celebrations.

City staff would consult with VANOC, the City of Richmond and the Resort Municipality of Whistler in the planning of the 2006 Olympic handover and countdown celebrations and subsequent celebrations. Staff would also work with 2010 LegaciesNow to leverage opportunities for legacies in sport and recreation, arts and culture and volunteerism. We will also be liaising with the Italian Institute of Culture and possible sponsors to look for ways to cooperate and pool resources for any events or initiatives. City staff have met with Tourism Vancouver to discuss opportunities to maximize the benefits of the Community Tourism Program.

City staff, subject to Council approval, will seek UBCM Community Tourism Program funding for celebratory events and activities where a benefit to tourism can be demonstrated. All types of tourism related projects are eligible for the UBCM funding, including capital projects, marketing, planning, and special events. Staff will begin preparing the UBCM Community Tourism Program application once Council provides authorization.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There will be minimal cost implications for the City since the funding of these celebrations and the capital legacies will come primarily from existing budgets and the UBCM Community Tourism Program.

The total estimated cost of the proposed 2006 celebrations is estimated at \$305,000 with a major component providing lasting benefits to the City, including signs, banners, lighting and landscaping. A portion of the funding would be eligible for the UBCM Community Tourism Program and staff would seek VANOC cost sharing to offset other City expenditures.

The breakdown of the costs associated with the celebration is as follows:

Capital Items

Capital improvement costs are estimated at approximately \$200,000 and include themed street banners, 'Welcome to Vancouver' signs, lighting of the Inukshuk, and landscaping around the Inukshuk to ensure the area is safe for the public.

These capital items will serve as a community legacy in that they will be enjoyed beyond the 2006 celebrations. For example, the street banners can be erected each February to celebrate the countdown to 2010, and the 'Welcome to Vancouver' signs and the lighting of the Inukshuk are permanent improvements.

Funding for these capital improvements will come from three potential sources:

- \$50,000 from the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation 2005 Capital Budget,
- \$120,000 from the UBCM Community Tourism Program,
- approximately \$30,000 from VANOC cost sharing (proposal),
- The City is exploring sponsorship opportunities with VANOC for the Official Olympic Countdown Clock.

Event Costs

Costs are estimated at \$105,000 and include the handover/countdown community event, the Inukshuk lighting event, ceremonies to mark the arrival and raising of the Olympic flag, information support for the schools program, and a ground breaking ceremony in the Southeast False Creek Development. Costs include communication and advertising of the events and programs.

The City also anticipates non-monetary contributions from some community organizations, who have expressed an interest in collaborating on certain events. Sponsorships and in-kind contributions may also be forthcoming.

Funding for these events will come from three potential sources:

- \$10,000 from the Property Endowment Fund,
- \$95,000 from the UBCM Community Tourism Program, and
- A small amount of foregone revenue to provide the public with free access to recreational facilities in the City.

Based on the proposed costs and funding sources, staff seek Council's approval to apply to the UBCM Community Tourism Program for \$215,000 of the \$430,885.13 available to the City of Vancouver for capital improvement costs and related events to celebrate the official handover of the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games to the City of Vancouver. Staff also seek Council's approval to approach VANOC for cost sharing and sponsorship opportunities to assist with signing and banner materials.

Should any of the proposed funding sources not materialize the scope of the proposed program and capital improvements will be reduced. Staff will bring options for a reduced program and capital improvements plan back for Council's consideration. Future reports would address proposals for the remaining funds in the Community Tourism Program.

CONCLUSION

The objective of the February Olympic handover and countdown celebratory events is to excite the citizens of Vancouver and build awareness about the 2010 Winter Games. This is an opportunity for the City of Vancouver to brand itself as the 2010 Host City, promote tourism and encourage citizen participation in sport and cultural activities. Tourist related activities will be emphasised where possible to maximize the benefits of the UBCM Community Tourism Program. It is recommended that the February 2006 celebrations be endorsed and that staff be authorized to begin the application process for UBCM Community Tourism Program funding.

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Regular Council Meeting immediately following
Standing Committee on City Services and Budgets Meeting
October 6, 2005

2. Community Tourism Program

WHEREAS:

1. The Province of British Columbia has established a Community Tourism Program with funding allocated to the municipalities to promote and encourage tourism in the Province;
2. Direct funding grants will be provided to the municipalities and the City of Vancouver's allocation for the first phase of the Program amounts to \$430,885.13;
3. City staff have been in contact with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) staff who are administering the funds on behalf of the Province in order to gain information on the application criteria;
4. City staff are currently reviewing opportunities for use of the funding particularly related to events promoting Vancouver as the Host City of the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games; and
5. Tourism Vancouver has contacted the City to explore further opportunities to promote tourism through the funding of regional initiatives.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That City staff work with Tourism Vancouver to explore opportunities and to report back on how to utilize the funds made available by the Province through the UBCM Community Tourism Program.