



November 21, 2022

AN OPEN LETTER TO ELECTED OFFICIALS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Why the Canadian Olympic Committee and Canadian Paralympic Committee support and are proud to be partners in an Indigenous-led 2030 Olympic and Paralympic Bid

Just a few weeks ago, the Government of British Columbia announced it would not support the Indigenous-led bid to host the 2030 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

The announcement took us by surprise. A year ago, the Canadian Olympic Committee (COC) and the Canadian Paralympic Committee (CPC) were invited by the Liíwat7úl (Liíwat), x^wməθk^wəýəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations (the “Nations”) to join them in developing a responsible and sustainable proposal to host these Games.

We were honoured and inspired by the invitation. These 2030 Winter Games would be the very first Indigenous-led Games. Being invited to work together, side by side, all parties bringing unique strengths to the table, would be a strong, positive, and transformative example of reconciliation in action. The Games would also contribute economic and social benefits to British Columbians and all Canadians, as we are emerging from the pandemic. In the Fall of 2021, before starting the significant due diligence required, we met with Premier Horgan, and, although given no commitment, we were assured the province was open to this exciting concept.

Which is why the recent news was a surprise. With the feasibility work completed and a draft proposal submitted, we expected the next step to be a face-to-face meeting with all parties to discuss the costs and benefits, priorities, and possibilities. The B.C. government has not yet given any of the parties, despite attempts by us and the Nations, an opportunity to have this discussion.

We recognize the size, complexity, and expense of any project of this nature, and respect that the B.C. government has the right not to support projects for its own reasons. Among the many things we have learned over this past year working with our First Nations partners is that respect for process and protocol is important, and that collaborative dialogue is critical in decision making.

As final decisions are made, here are some of the crucial issues to consider:

- Never has a Games bid been a model for reconciliation. The Games would welcome the world to a stronger, more inclusive Canada, and align with B.C.’s commitment to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA)
- Never has a Winter Games returned to a host city or region and reused its sport venues, preserving investments and lengthening legacies



- Never has a Games been climate positive – not just carbon neutral. This bid places climate action, fiscal responsibility, accessibility and the housing and development needs of the host communities at the heart of the Games concept
- Never has a Winter Games relied so little on government investment, with the entire \$2.5 billion operating budget proposed to be funded privately with over \$2.1 billion in subsidies from the International Olympic Committee and private sponsorship dollars flowing into the region

We are so proud of what the partners have already achieved together (it can be found at www.gamesengagement.ca). Our collective work sets a new precedent for putting reconciliation at the heart of major event planning in this country, bringing to life Call to Action 91 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, as well as the principles of UNDRIP and DRIPA.

Beyond the vision, over a year of significant operational planning has been done, including detailed budgets, concept approvals, economic impact reports, security plans and budgets, venue use agreement negotiations, and over 9,000 hotel rooms secured should the Games be awarded to B.C.

We believe in the transformative power of sport. It is unique in its ability to inspire, unite, and build stronger, healthier citizens and communities.

Know, however, that we are only interested in moving ahead with this project if it makes sense to do so, with the benefits outweighing the costs. This project needs to be about practical realities and challenges. It also needs to be about a vision for our country. To make that determination it requires a full review and dialogue with all parties at the table. A unique project of this nature, led by the potential Host First Nations, deserves a deeper look.

We invite the Province, under the leadership of its new Premier, David Eby, to sit down with all parties and fully explore the potential of this project - together.

Sincerely,

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