IOC - Impact of the Olympics on Community
:a community-based coalition

Ahead of the Game

July 4, 2002

Jack Poole
CEO, Vancouver Olympic Bid Corporation
Suite 500 – 375 Water Street
Vancouver, BC
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Dear Mr. Poole and members of the Board,

Thank you for taking the time to meet with representatives of the Impacts of the Olympics on Community Coalition on July 3. Although it has been some time since our original request for a meeting date December 21st, we are grateful for the opportunity to work productively in addressing some of the community concerns regarding the Vancouver Olympic Bid. We are *pleased that there is common ground and room to develop the bid in a uniquely Canadian way and are writing to review our discussion and hope the following accurately reflects your understanding of our meeting.*

Though the three pillars of the Olympic movement may be sport, culture and the environment, we believe that a fourth pillar of setting a high standard on the social side could transform the Olympic movement in a more positive direction. Just like Lillehammer transformed the Olympic approach to the environment, we believe Vancouver could do the same in regards to setting a high standard in building a social legacy for the people of BC and ensuring that the negative effects of hosting hallmark events do not happen here. It would certainly raise the standard of future Olympics. In order for that to happen, the quality of planning related to the Games must take a novel and creative approach.

We discussed the potential for Olympic related evictions and agreed that there is a role the Bid Corporation and its' Board can play in assisting to leverage protections for tenants. One key piece is a Vancouver by-law that would regulate the conversion of Single Room Occupancy hotel rooms to ensure no net loss of these rooms to tourist use prior to, and during the games. We were heartened by your agreement that if Vancouver does win the games, this should not result in people losing their homes. We would appreciate your assistance to champion this by-law with the City and Province.

As the Downtown Eastside community borders on key Olympic facilities such as GM Place and the Trade and Convention Centre, we agreed that promoting the development of affordable housing in Woodwards is vital to rebuilding this

neighbourhood. As it stands now the vacant building and deteriorating street is an embarrassment for the City of Vancouver and indeed the Downtown Eastside.

We agreed that there is a role for the Bid Corporation to play in facilitating community economic development in the way of meaningful employment training programs such as Bladerunners and a policy for the Bid Corporation and later the Organizing Committee to obtain goods and services where ever possible from local inner city businesses and organizations. We spoke about the "DESTAn'EZ initiative as a model for including local business.

We agreed there is a role for the Bid Corporation to actively promote a legacy of environmentally sustainable transportation priorities for the region – in addition to the Sea-to-Sky highway and Richmond rapid transit projects already being championed. Clean fuel transit vehicles, expanded bus service, and pedestrian and cycling facilities such as the Central Valley Greenway would have broad and long-term community benefits for relatively modest public investment.

As we work together to make this a truly inclusive and socially sustainable Bid for the games and throughout this process related to housing, civil liberties, transportation, the environment and economic distribution, a specific recommendation that we touched on today at this point may be helpful to you:

2010 in 2010: An Olympic Legacy

Much has been said in recent weeks that the investment in Olympic infrastructure can be recouped four-fold in tax revenues to the different levels of government. Furthermore, it has been argued by the Premier, that this revenue can be used to pay for investments in health care, social programs and education.

Based on that economic argument, we would like some of the forecasted Olympic revenues earmarked towards the construction of 2010 new affordable housing units for the low-income families, singles and seniors of British Columbia prior to the beginning of the Olympic games. These units would not in any way take away from the existing social housing program funded by the Province of BC or the Government of Canada, which already have commitments into 2006.

We would view this legacy of 2010 units built prior to the Games as separate from the need to create affordable housing for the Woodwards project and any conversion to units attached to the athlete's village after the Games. These are pre-existing projects already under the planning process.

We believe that British Columbians would view this as a positive legacy that can be shared equitably throughout the Province including the Lower Mainland. The **2010 in 2010 Program** in addition to legislation protecting tenants would go a long way in ensuring that evictions do not needlessly happen related to the Olympics.

The Impact of the Olympics on Community will continue to play a watchdog role and will work with the Vancouver Olympic Bid Corporation in ensuring an open, democratic and equitable bid which meets the needs of British Columbians and respects the environment. On specific projects, *we will also work with the First Nations community to make sure the necessary support is present for projects of this kind.*

Once again, we thank you for taking the time to meet with us today and we look forward to forging a new and progressive working relationship with the Bid Corporation and its Board of Directors.

Sincerely,

Am Johal
Chair, Impact of the Olympics on Community Coalition
www.olympicsforall.ca

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