



Impact on Community Coalition

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Impact on Community Coalition

To: Mayor Larry Campbell and Vancouver City Council

Subject: Report on Torino Olympic Legacy Findings

In April 2005, Council approved a grant to the IOCC through the Mayor's fund to send an IOCC representative to Torino as part of a civic fact finding delegation to determine Torino's Olympic related legacy commitments to the community.

The IOCC was to investigate:

- What legacy commitments have been made to the community;
- Whether the TOROC is delivering the legacy commitments and how they are ensuring they are an asset to the community;
- How the TOROC is monitoring its community commitments;
- How the TOROC collaborates and communicates with the NGO sector;
- How the low income community will be treated during the 2006 Games;
- How security measures will impact the community during the Games.

The delegation was led by Councilor Jim Green who was accompanied by Executive Assistant to the Mayor, Geoff Meggs, VANOC representative Maureen Douglas, Ken Lyotier, Executive Director of United We Can, Wayne Peppard, Executive Director of the BC Building Trades Council and Linda Mix of the IOCC.

This report discusses the IOCC's findings on issues such as social inclusion, housing, community economic development, environmental sustainability, transportation and cultural initiatives undertaken by the City of Torino and TOROC. The IOCC will also make recommendations to the City of Vancouver and its Olympic partners, VANOC and the Province of British Columbia based on our findings.

Background

Prior to the City of Vancouver 2003 plebiscite on hosting the 2010 Winter Olympic Games, Mayor Campbell held community consultations comprised of eight public forums based on specific themes: social, environmental and economic sustainability of the Games. These forums were attended by over 700 citizens and a series of recommendations were made at all events.

In addition to the forums, Mayor Campbell held meetings with 117 individuals representing various stakeholder groups from across the City. Leading into the plebiscite Vancouver voters were well informed and voted 64 percent in favor of Vancouver hosting the 2010 Winter Olympic Games.

One of the recommendations from the consultations was that the City of Vancouver *commit to work with interested community organizations with an interest in the Games and monitor the progress of the bid (and subsequent Games Planning) to ensure it achieves the City's objectives for sustainability.*

In 2002 the Inner City Inclusive Commitment Statement to which the City of Vancouver is a signatory stated that the VANOC should “*work with and be accessible to an independent watch dog group that includes inner city residents*”.

Based on lessons learned from past hallmark events such as Expo 86 and the Atlanta, Seoul and Calgary Olympic Games, low income communities fell victim to displacement and were excluded from opportunities for employment related to the development of the hallmark event. In 2001 the IOCC (Impact on Community Coalition) was formed. The IOCC is a coalition of community-based groups working to ensure that the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games delivers long term legacies and maximizes the benefits and minimizes negative impacts to communities of the Lower Mainland and BC.

General Impressions

The City of Torino staff and elected officials were generous with their time and hospitality and were open to rescheduling planned activities to accommodate the Vancouver delegation's desire to view sites such as the Athletes Village development.

One of the clear messages from Mayor Sergio Chiamparino was that the City of Torino had at one point struggled with TOROC and the IOC, and it appears that communication and collaboration has left a lot to be desired. We were told the parties are working on resolving disputes; the new head of TOROC is the former mayor of Torino and at this late juncture, with six months to the Games, TOROC and the City of Torino are attempting to mend fences and build relationships. We appreciated their frankness.

It is evident that on some fronts, such as environmental sustainability, accessibility and social issues, Vancouver is “ahead of the game”. But the lessons learned in Torino surrounding communication and inclusive partnerships, including those with the community, can guide the City of Vancouver, VANOC and the Province to set the bar for a truly socially sustainable and inclusive 2010 Winter Olympic Games.

Community Collaboration

We saw no evidence of any working relationships with community-based organizations around Olympic planning or community impacts. While touring one

social housing complex we spoke with representatives from the local voluntary sector that works with seniors, sex trade workers and single parents. These groups were not invited to be involved in the Games development in any way, were not opposed to Torino hosting the Olympics and did not link the Games in relation to their lives. One volunteer commented that she was more worried about government than the upcoming Olympics.

The delegation was scheduled to meet with a representative from the “third sector” but due to going overtime in other meetings, that session did not take place. On checking the organization’s Social Action web-site I found information about a network of foundations and organizations that worked with disadvantaged communities. Their focus was on fundraising activities and events targeted to assisting persons living with mental and physical illness and facilitation for immigrants and refugees attempting to settle in Italy.

The word “homeless” did not appear on any of their web material and there was no correlation to mental health, addictions and homelessness.

VANOC’s representative met with Authority Relations, a division of TOROC and reported that TOROC communicates regularly with the venue communities which includes seven municipalities. Communication is generally around venue preparation and timelines. There was no indication that TOROC is monitoring community or social impacts.

TOROC is engaging NGOs around their environmental sustainability framework and promoting Agenda 21. The focus is primarily environmental and not on social sustainability.

Community Economic Development

The loss of their economic base required the City of Torino to look at ways to create a sustainable city and in the late 1980s embarked on a “Master Plan” that looked ahead at planning and development initiatives for the next 30 to 40 years. The Plan identified social, economic and infrastructure development activities to improve the quality of life in the region. The City of Torino invested resources into infrastructure projects to “transform the urban landscape and upgrade entire neighbourhoods”.

An important piece of Torino’s urban transformation was their Olympic bid and subsequently being awarded the 2006 winter Olympic Games. As with other Olympic cities, Torino is using the Games to facilitate community economic development. The 2006 Winter Games are just one of many major development projects currently underway in accordance to the “Master Plan”. The former Michelin plant for example is being regenerated as a living learning lab for children, mixed housing, a shopping mall and offices.

A major piece of Torino's urban transformation is the development of a railway network that will connect with existing at grade commuter trams and underground rail lines, and eventually link to a high-speed line to Milan and other centers in northern Italy. This project is a long-term investment that facilitates employment and economic sustainability.

Over the years Torino has attracted new employment through its infrastructure programs and the is promoting development of a research and education center with the expansion of its university and polytechnic school.

Torino Image

As with the Master Plan, the City of Torino made a deliberate attempt to promote its identity using the 2006 Games as a starting point — but not depending entirely on the Games for its image.

Torino embarked on a progressive branding of the City, utilizing a separate City logo, motto and colours distinct from those officially used by TOROC.

Employment

The closure of the FIAT factory in the late 1970s led to the downsizing, and in some cases abandonment, of other Torino based industries resulting in the loss of 200,000 jobs. The Vancouver delegation met with Tom Dealessandri, Deputy Mayor for Employment and Work Policies, to hear about Torino's actions to facilitate employment.

We learned that while there are some employment and training programs, they are limited and targeted to the work involved in the restoration of Torinos' many grand heritage buildings. The remuneration is kept at National Labour Contract Standards and the training is not necessarily tied to Olympic development.

One third of the workers on the Olympic and infrastructure projects are immigrants that generally come from Northern Africa. When we asked where these workers lived we were told there is no displacement of local residents as workers are housed in temporary accommodation provided by the construction companies outside of Torino. According to Mr. Dealessandri, the City of Torino will take over the worker housing after the Games. We were unable to determine from his answer who would later be housed once the City took over.

Environment

There did not appear to be the strong commitment to progressive innovations in environmental sustainability as have been embraced in Canada over the last 25 years. For example, we are far ahead in household and hotel recycling; we just do it.

A non-profit agency has been set up with funding from the City of Torino and the EU to explore and implement sustainable energy projects and promote alternative energy sources for hotels. Christina Barbero, Director for the Turin Agency for Energy reported there is very little buy-in from the business

community. It appears that green and clean initiatives for the 2006 Games will only meet the minimum standards as set out by the IOC.

We did, however, observe lush and green garden roof-tops throughout Torino. Whether this is a thoughtful accident or intentional planning for green roofs, they are a welcome addition to the Cityscape.

Transportation

The “Backbone” project is an underground rail line that will serve the City of Torino and surrounding areas to connect with a high velocity rail line to Milan and into northern Europe. From what we observed the “Backbone” construction is using the cut and cover and tunnel method. We were told the only opposition to this project is from merchants along the line and rural residents outside of Torino.

Current public transit is very limited in terms of accessibility design for people with disabilities. During the 2006 the games only 50% of the buses will be equipped to transport people with mobility challenges.

Housing/ Homelessness

We did not observe visible homelessness in Torino. In our travels around the city I counted three people who appeared to be begging. It was difficult to get an understanding of programs or services for the homeless or those with mental health or addiction problems.

We drove past, but were not able to enter, Villa Providence, a large facility in the downtown core that accommodates persons with disabilities, students who cannot afford the rents and those that have been “abandoned by their families”. We were unable to determine from Torino officials how residents were selected or ended up in Villa Providence. Presumably the family is an important piece of the social safety net and there is still institutionalization of persons with mental illness or addictions.

Like Vancouver, Torino has about 25,000 social housing units. The social housing agency is 80 years old, and like BC Housing has a similar points method of determining housing eligibility. Unlike Vancouver, tenant population is limited to seniors and low-income families. The older and recently refurbished housing stock does not accommodate people with physical mobility disabilities and only new social housing meets building code accessibility requirements.

There are about 8,000 households on the Torino area waiting list for social housing and the agency generally places 1,000 families or seniors per year. About 700 move into the existing units that become vacant due to relocation or death of elderly tenants, or working tenants that have moved into home ownership. The City, through provincial and EU funding, develop 300 to 400 new units a year. The minimum new unit size is 42 square meters or 452 square feet.

The City of Torino makes an intentional effort to create mixed income communities to prevent “social problems”. According to Giovanni Magnano, Director of the Department of Urban Regeneration and Neighbourhoods, mixed income housing facilitates the economic viability of Torino’s housing investment and social sustainability of the community. There is a concerted effort to create mixed income communities based on the “one third” formula with an aim to create balanced communities and “*avoid a concentration of families with problems*”.

Newer social housing stock, including the concept of mixed income communities, met with some opposition in some areas of Torino. In one case it took the City eight years to “massage relations” with the community and introduce an acceptable building and site design. We visited this development and in my opinion it is a mixed housing Utopia. SEFC could aspire to this model

Olympic Housing Legacy

The Athlete’s Village in Torino consists of 39 buildings and will house 2,600 athletes during the 2006 winter Games.

After the winter Olympics the Athlete’s Village will be converted to an inclusive mixed housing development. One-third of the units from Athletes Village will go to low income families, one-third to student housing (with development of a university and polytechnic institute there is a high demand and shortage of affordable student housing) and one-third will be sold in the market.

Cultural Olympics

Sport and culture are two pillars of the Olympic values and as with all Olympic Games, cultural events are planned to take place prior to and during Torino’s 2006 Games. The Cultural Olympiad is coordinated by TOROC in collaboration with the City and Province of Torino, the Piedmont Region and Torino’s many local cultural organizations.

The Cultural Olympiad will feature 15th century art from the western Alps, avante garde and contemporary urban art, classic Italian films featuring works by Fellinni and Mastroianni, theatre and dance performances. One interactive dance performance will take place in the dark with the audience participating with visually impaired dancers. The Cultural Olympiad program boasts the performance of two Puccini operas, *La Boheme* and *Manon Lescaut*, and symphonic works performed by the Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della rai.

Many events are free to Olympic ticket holders and general tickets will be kept to regular prices. Price gouging is prohibited.

We were disappointed to learn that there is no accommodation for free tickets to these cultural events for low-income children or families.

Vancouver ICI statement calls for reduced or free events tickets for inner city school kids and Bid book calls for 50,000 reduced or free tickets.

Olympic Truce

The tradition of peace during the staging of the Olympics dates back to the Ninth Century BC. The Olympic Truce was intended to allow citizens and athletes the ability to travel to and participate in the Games. The IOC has embraced this concept too, and uses the Olympic Games as a way to facilitate a peaceful and diplomatic resolution to international conflict.

The City of Torino is working with 100 cities on four continents to sign an accord to agree to peace during the 2006 Winter Games. They are currently waiting approval of the Olympic truce by the United Nations, and to go a step further, specific agreements are being sought between Palestine and Gaza for peace during 2006 Olympic games.

Security

The delegation was unable to secure a meeting with any officials responsible for security during our visit. We did observe armed military personnel stationed at the entrances to the short track venue under construction. Other than staff at the site, and trailers at the stadium and hockey construction sites, there were no visible security personnel.

The Athlete's Village is being constructed across the street from a high-density neighbourhood. We were not told of any security plans for the neighbouring buildings for the Games, only that residents would not be displaced during the games. The nightly medal ceremony will be held in the Piazza Castella, a beautiful historic square in the middle of Torino. There is a residential tower abutting the Piazza. Again we were not told of any security plans or concerns that TOROC or the City of Torino had for this building.

Summary of Observations

There is no evident community opposition to Torino's Games and the community does not link the Games to any impact on their daily life or changes to city

Due to local low unemployment, foreign workers are brought to Torino to build the Olympic village and venues. There is no link between training programs and Games development.

There is little opposition to infrastructure projects such as the rail line. Citizens recognize the need and are not opposed to capital borrowing to pay for infrastructure, or the rail line that utilizes both cut and cover and tunnel methods.

Recommendations

- **That the City of Vancouver promote its identity separate from the 2010 Olympics with its own distinct logo design and branding that depicts Vancouver and the West Coast.**
- **That VANOC, the Province of British Columbia and the City of Vancouver continue to involve and work with community based groups to find ways to implement the Inner City Inclusive Commitments.**
- **That the Province of British Columbia and the Federal government restore funding to social housing programs that will see 300 to 400 new units of affordable housing for low-income persons built annually in the GVRD.**
- **That the Province of British Columbia increase income assistance, employment training and education supports to prevent homelessness.**
- **That the City of Vancouver require a one-third formula of income mix in all major housing developments to promote inclusive and socially sustainable communities.**

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Mix