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TIMELINE: THE ROAD TO THE 2010 WINTER OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES

This background brief lists events leading up to the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games.

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1960

A group of Vancouver businessmen forms the Garibaldi Olympic Development Association to develop plans to host the Winter Olympics in Garibaldi (near Whistler). Bids to host the 1968, 1972, and 1976 Olympic Games in Garibaldi are unsuccessful.

1974

August 2 The provincial government withdraws support for a bid to host to 1980 Winter Olympics. Olympic planning is halted.

1997

December 15 Former Vancouver Canucks owner Arthur Griffiths and Tourism Vancouver officials meet with reporters to discuss plans to bring the 2010 Winter Olympics to BC.

1998

February 5 Griffiths, tourism and sports officials, and a group of local citizens form the Vancouver/Whistler 2010 Bid Society and approach Vancouver City Council for support.

March 11 The Vancouver/Whistler Bid Society submits an application to the Canadian Olympic Association proposing that Vancouver host the 2010 Winter Olympic Games. The bid is supported by Sports B.C, Whistler Resort Association, and Tourism Vancouver.

September 21 The Vancouver/Whistler Bid Society unveils a master plan for the Winter Olympic Games.

December 1 The Canadian Olympic Association selects Vancouver to represent Canada in the international bidding competition to host the 2010 Games.

Venue plans for the proposed Olympic Games are officially discussed.

1999

- June 1 The Vancouver 2010 Bid Corporation is incorporated to organize and develop plans to win the right to host the games.
- January 1 The Vancouver Bid Corporation creates 2010 Legacies Now to focus on sport development, community capacity building, and a province-wide community outreach program.

2001

- December 18 Whistler is dropped from the official title of the Vancouver/Whistler bid after an IOC ruling.
- December 21 The Canadian Olympic Committee officially announces that it will take the Vancouver Olympic bid to the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

2002

- February 5 Vancouver confirms that it is a bid city with the International Olympic Committee. The seven other competing cities are Salzburg (Austria), Pyeongchang (Korea), Berne (Switzerland), Andorra La Vella (Andorra), Harbin (China), Jaca (Spain), and Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina).
- March 26 Vancouver City Council endorses the city's involvement in the 2010 bid.
- August 28 Vancouver is named as a short-listed candidate city for the 2010 Games. Salzburg, Pyeongchang, and Berne are also finalists.
- September 13 Delegates from each of the four remaining candidate cities attend a five-day training seminar hosted by the IOC.
- September 27 Berne withdraws from the Olympic bid process, leaving three cities in the race.
- November 14 The City of Vancouver, Whistler, federal and provincial government, Canadian Olympic Committee and Canadian Paralympic Committee sign a multi-party agreement.

2003

- January 9 Vancouver 2010 Bid Corporation representatives present the official Bid Book to the IOC. The three-volume, 460-page book lays out the plan for the games.
- February 2 The IOC pays a three-day visit to Vancouver to consider the city's bid.
- February 22 Vancouver residents vote 64 per cent in favour of hosting the 2010 Olympics in a referendum initiated by city council. Forty-six per cent of voters participate in the referendum.
- March 2-5 The IOC evaluation commission visits Vancouver and Whistler to assess the bid.
- May 10 The IOC evaluation commission report is released in Lausanne, Switzerland. Vancouver is given a positive report.
- July 2 Vancouver is awarded the 2010 Winter Games by the IOC in Prague, Czech Republic. The Vancouver 2010 Bid Corporation begins winding up operations.
- The site of the proposed Olympic Village is chosen on the southeastern shore of False Creek. The village will accommodate 2,850 athletes and officials during the games. VANOC will turn the village over to the City of Vancouver following the completion of the games.
- September 30 The Vancouver Organizing Committee (VANOC) for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games is established. VANOC's mandate is to support and promote the development of sport in Canada by planning, organizing, financing, and staging the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in Vancouver.
- October 1 Representatives from government, sports organizations, and First Nations are announced as members of the VANOC board.
- October 31 The International and Canadian Paralympic Committees visit Vancouver and Whistler.

2004

- February 20 John Furlong is selected as the CEO of VANOC.

- July 1 Construction on the Canada Line begins. The Canada Line provides an important link between Vancouver, Richmond, and the Vancouver International Airport.
- September 1 Work begins on the upgrade of the Sea to Sky Highway linking Vancouver to Whistler.
- November Construction starts on the Vancouver Convention and Exhibition Centre. The center will be used to accommodate broadcasters and international media during the games.

2005

- January 1 Own the Podium, an organization supported by sports groups and government, is launched to help Canada win medals at the games.
- February 3 Plans to build a First Nations Cultural Centre to showcase the heritage of the Squamish and Lilwat First Nations are announced.

The official Olympic emblem, Ilanaaq the Inukshuk, is revealed.
- April Construction begins at Whistler Olympic/Paralympic Park. Located in the Callahan Valley, the park houses Whistler Nordic Center, the location of biathlon, cross-country, Nordic combined, and ski-jumping events.
- June Construction starts at the Whistler Sliding Center. Bobsleigh, luge, and skeleton events will be held at the center.

Development of Whistler Creekside begins. It is the location for alpine skiing events.
- July Renovations begin on the Pacific Coliseum in preparation for short track speed-skating and figure skating competition at the games.
- September 19 Construction begins on the Richmond Speed Skating Oval, the site for speed-skating competition.

2006

- February 1 Site preparation and infrastructure work begins on the Vancouver Athletes' Village.

- February 10-26 The 2006 Olympic Winter Games are held in Torino, Italy. VANOC sends an observation team. Vancouver Mayor Sam Sullivan bears the 2010 Olympic flag during the closing ceremonies of the games.
- March 1 Phase one construction of the Winter Olympic and Paralympic Athletes' Village begins.
- March 10-19 The 2006 Paralympic Winter Games are held in Torino. VANOC sends an observation team.
- April 1 Construction begins on the University of British Columbia Thunderbird Winter Sports Centre, the venue for men's sledge hockey and most of the men's and women's ice hockey events.
- May Upgrading of Cypress Mountain Resort begins. Freestyle skiing and snowboard events will be held at the resort.

2007

- April Work begins on a new facility at Hillcrest/Nat Bailey stadium to host curling and wheelchair curling competition. The facility replaces the Vancouver Curling Club.
- June 1 Renovations begin on B.C. Place stadium. The stadium will be used for opening and closing ceremonies and medal presentations.
- June 15 VANOC reveals plans for its Cultural Olympiads, a celebration of Canadian and international arts and culture, leading up to the games.
- October Minor upgrades to General Motors Place are undertaken in preparation for the Olympic ice hockey tournament. The venue will be known as Canada Hockey Place during the games.
- August 30 Vancouver City Council approves two Live Sites for broadcasts of Olympic events, entertainment, merchandise, and pavilions. David Lam Park and Beatty Street are designated sites.
- September 21 David Atkins is chosen from a pool of fifteen contenders to design the 2010 opening and closing ceremonies.

- November 27 The Winter and Paralympic Games' mascots are unveiled to the public. They are Miga the sea bear, Quatchi the sasquatch, and Sumi the animal guardian spirit. They are accompanied by Mukmuk, a Vancouver Island marmot, as an unofficial mascot sidekick.
- Fall Venue improvements are completed at Cypress Mountain.
- December 7 Construction is completed at the Whistler Sliding Center.
- December 10 Former Quebec speed-skater Natalie Lambert is named the overall team leader and spokesperson for Team Canada.
- December 15 Whistler Olympic/Paralympic Park opens.
- The completed Olympic bobsled track is christened.

2008

- February 1-March 21 The 2008 Cultural Olympiad takes place featuring performances by Feist, Ornette Coleman, and Janet Cardiff.
- February 11 The Olympic Business Summit is held in Vancouver with major sponsors such as Coca-Cola and Visa in attendance.
- February 12 Olympic organizers put out a call for 25,000 volunteers to assist with the games.
- February 21 Testing begins on the Whistler Alpine ski course.
- March 5 VANOC signs agreements with the Lilwat, Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations to market merchandise with Aboriginal themes under the Olympic brand.
- Summer Renovations are completed at the Pacific Coliseum.
- July 7 The UBC Thunderbird Winter Sports Centre officially opens (also known as the Doug Mitchell Thunderbird Sports Centre).
- August 1 Detailed schedules for the Olympic and Paralympics Games are released.
- August 8-24 The 2008 Summer Olympic Games are held in Beijing, China. VANOC sends an observation team.

- September 24 VANOC announces it will use the lines "with glowing hearts" and "des plus brillants exploits" from the Canadian national anthem in promotions.
- September 6-17 The 2008 Paralympic Summer Games are held in Beijing. VANOC sends an observation team.
- September 17 Twenty-four pictograms for the Olympic and Paralympic games are released. Fifty-two detailed ticket packages are also unveiled.
- September 22 Vancouver Symphony begins recording one-hundred national anthems to be played during Olympic medal ceremonies.
- October 3-December 22 Phase One ticket sales for the Vancouver 2010 Winter Games are held.
- November 21 The Olympic torch relay route map is unveiled. The 106-day coast-to-coast journey will cover 45,000-kilometres.
- November 25 Vancouver releases planned traffic changes, including pedestrian-only area, security zones, on-street parking limitations, and priority lanes.
- November 28 Previously an Olympic mascot sidekick, Mukmuk the Vancouver Island marmot is designated an official Olympic mascot.
- December 12 The Richmond Olympic Oval is officially opened.
- December 19 The Hillcrest Olympic and Paralympic curling venue is completed.
- Winter Media accreditation for the 2010 Winter Games begins. An estimated 10,000 media members are expected to be accredited.

2009

- June 6 -July 31 Phase Two ticket sales for the games are held.
- February 1-March 21 The Cultural Olympiad 2009 takes place with performances by the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields Orchestra and the Japan Awaji Puppet Theatre.

- February 12 Sarah McLachlan, Joel Plaskett, the Alberta Ballet, and Adrian Anantawan are featured in a one-year countdown Cultural Olympiad concert at Queen Elizabeth Theatre.
- The design of the Olympic torch is unveiled.
- February 19 The curling rink at Hillcrest/Nat Bailey Stadium Park officially opens.
- May 6 Tickets for the Paralympic Games and opening ceremonies go on sale.
- Summer Construction begins on Whistler Medals Plaza. The plaza will be used for medal award ceremonies and concerts during the games. Closing ceremonies for the Paralympics will also be held at the plaza.
- August 17 The Canada Line officially opens to the public.
- October 1 The official team outfits for the Canadian Olympic team are unveiled by the Hudson's Bay Company.
- October 22 The Olympic torch is lit in Ancient Olympia. The torch is carried through Greece on an eight-day relay before being transported to Canada.
- October 30 The Olympic torch relay begins in Victoria. An estimated 12,000 Canadian will carry the torch.
- November 14 Phase three tickets sales begin.
- December 8 VANOC unveils headline performers for nightly Vancouver Victory Ceremonies
- Fall The Whistler Olympic and Paralympic Village is completed.

2010

- January 22-March 21 The Cultural Olympiad 2010 takes place.
- February 12-28 The XXI Olympic Winter Games are held. Around 5,500 athletes and team officials from over eighty countries will attend and take part in eighty-six medal events.
- Phase four ticket sales take place during the games.

March 12-21

The X Paralympic Winter Games are held. Approximately 600 athletes from over forty countries are expected to attend. The Paralympic Games feature five sports and sixty-four medal events.

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