HOW LEGACY GOVERNANCE STARTED IN RICHMOND

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In 2008, two years before the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games, the opening of the Richmond Olympic Oval was celebrated. That same year, the Oval was incorporated as a municipal corporation. Immediately after the Games, the Oval hosted the Wheelchair Rugby World Championship. It has since been host to many subsequent editions of this event. Residents and visitors in Richmond, Canada, continue to benefit from the city's decision to host a portion of the Winter Olympics 2010. Sports managers have ensured that facilities and programmes are accessible to the entire community.
How does a city with a population of around 223,000 manage to annually stage international and national sporting competitions, in addition to more than 100 community events? In recent years, Richmond, in British Columbia, has hosted a long list of high-profile contests such as the World Martial Arts Games, the World Wheelchair Rugby Championships, and the Fencing World Cup.

During the 2010 Olympic Winter Games, the city was the home of long track speed skating and is proud of the fact that the venue, the Richmond Olympic Oval, now serves the community on a daily basis. Thanks to its great modularity, the Oval has over 6,000 members who use its fitness, wellness and sport facilities for activities including basketball, volleyball, ice hockey, speed skating, figure skating, group fitness, yoga, table tennis, and more.

In addition, the Oval has over 2,400 m² of strength training and workout space, a 17-metre climbing wall complete with lead, speed and bouldering, two indoor hockey rinks, and is home to the Richmond Olympic Experience, an engaging interactive high-tech Olympic Museum. Thanks in part to the many opportunities offered at the Oval, Richmond attracted 8 million visitors in 2019 – 600,000 more than in 2015.

**VISION**

“Sport, health, wellness and entertainment—all under one roof” is the motto of the Richmond Olympic Oval.

The Oval project vision is to be “an outstanding centre of excellence for sports and wellness at the heart of an exciting urban waterfront.”

**Legacy is...**

To use the Olympic opportunity as a catalyst for raising the City to international stature, and creating new social and economic capital that significantly enriches Richmond’s quality of life. The Oval itself has endorsed the role of an agora around which a new city centre is being developed.

**What's next?**

Subsequent steps include:

- Promote the Community Wellness Strategy.
- Continue to strengthen commitment to the community for the next ten years.
- Continue to provide a training and competition facility for high performance athletes.

**OBJECTIVES**

**Promote a healthy and active lifestyle**

The Oval is a one-stop shop for all ages and skill levels, from members of the community looking to try an activity for the first time to athletes representing the country on an international stage.

The Oval’s activities are integrated within the City's policy with the aim of positioning Richmond as the best place for residents to play and achieve their highest potential, while also being a model of a
Sport For Life community for Canada and the world. Richmond works towards integrating the delivery of recreation, school physical education and athletics, community sport, and regional health, to enable all citizens to reach their full potential within the framework of physical literacy, enhanced sport achievement and active for life.

Richmond became involved with the Active Well-being Initiative (AWI) as a pilot city because it wanted to connect with other cities, and to share its experiences as a place that is making the most of its Olympic legacy. In Richmond, there is a culture of activity, sport and wellness that is being served in the Oval and across the whole community. In November 2018, the city was designated as one of the world's first Global Active Cities. The designation honours cities which have worked hard to offer all their residents the opportunity to have active and healthy lifestyles and to improve their well-being. As Richmond Mayor Malcolm Brodie says, “Richmond has long been known as one of Canada's healthiest cities. We continue to work hard to help our citizens lead healthy, active lives through a wide variety of strategies including our recently approved Community Wellness Strategy, which was developed in concert with numerous partners. This tremendous global honour will help further energise our efforts to make sure all Richmond residents enjoy a great quality of life.”

**Promote the City by leveraging its affiliation with the Olympic Movement**

Richmond increased its visibility by being identified as an official Olympic site for the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games. In addition to its role as an indispensable place for sport and entertainment for the locals, the Oval is also a world-class facility hosting national and international events and the training of elite athletes. The Olympic Games contributed to locating Richmond on the world map as a host city for big events. The Richmond Olympic Experience (ROX) contributes to the promotion of the city's Olympic history and links past, present and future.

In the words of CEO George Duncan, “The Richmond Olympic Oval’s history is entrenched in sport excellence. From its foundation as a host venue for the XXI Olympic Winter Games, the Olympic spirit is encapsulated in every aspect of the operations at the Oval. From its evolution as a long track speedskating venue to a multi-use sport and culture destination, a world-class standard was established in the form of legacy goals that the Oval continues to work towards today.”
PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Internal & External Stakeholders

- City of Richmond
- Games Operating Trust
- Partnership-based Community of Excellence Initiative

Finance and Cost

The Richmond Olympic Oval was incorporated on July 1, 2008. The Oval was established as a municipal corporation by the City of Richmond and charged with the responsibility to provide effective operations and to implement and support a variety of health, sport, wellness and fitness services to the community.

Memberships, admissions, and programs are the main sources of revenue. The City also applies for and receives funding from the 2010 Games Operating Trust ("GOT"). The Corporation also receives a contribution from the City. Other revenue sources include parking, leasing, sponsorships, and capital funding.

Use of the Olympic Brand

The Olympic Oval, including the Richmond Olympic Experience (ROX) features the word “Olympic” at the heart of its name and the Olympic Rings at its front.

EVALUATION

Figures speak for themselves. The 2019 Report shows the following results:

- 1.1 million visits
- 60,943 Group Fitness visits (+25% from 2018)
- 53,655 High Performance Training Sessions (+3%)
- 1,876 Learn to Skate registrations (+24%)
- 2,735 Summer Camps registrations (17%)
- 35,572 visits to the Richmond Olympic Experience (3%)
- 63 events hosted (+13%)
- Constant increase in social media followers & web visits

KEY CHALLENGES

Competing environment

The Corporation operates in a highly competitive sport and fitness market which offers personal training, group fitness classes, high performance training, yoga, wellness, weight training and sport-specific training and facilities. The Corporation also hosts many local and national events and has various open spaces and rooms which are available for rent to the public. In addition, the Corporation also operates an Olympic museum and a retail store as part of the overall services offered to the public. The challenge is to attract both local users and high-level events and athletes in the same venue.
KEY LEARNINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Setting clear legacy goals
The Corporation adopted a set of five objectives in order to address its obligations to the City under the Operating Agreement and the funding requirements of the 2010 Games Operating Trust (“GOT”). To continue to build on its strong Olympic legacy, the Corporation focuses on:

- Establishing positive brand awareness.
- Becoming valued by the community and its employees.
- Becoming the desired location for community sport, health and fitness.
- Supporting high-performance sports.
- Operating in a financially sustainable manner.

Every year, the annual report is an occasion to look back and assess the achievement of these objectives.

Defining ambitious operating objectives
Objectives were fixed in a 2008 agreement between the City and the Corporation and have since been adhered to.

- The Oval will provide facilities, programs and services for quality sport, fitness, recreational uses and wellness services for the Richmond community, neighbouring communities and the general public.
- The Oval will be developed, used and promoted as a training and competition facility for high performance sport.
- The Oval will provide facilities for cultural, community and entertainment events. The Oval will provide ancillary commercial, retail, health and wellness services intended to enhance its use in respect to the activities set out above.

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Additional information
https://www.richmond.ca/home.htm
Richmond Olympic Oval Annual reports: https://richmondoval.ca/about-us/annual-reports/