



City of Richmond
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News Release

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For Immediate Release

Construction begins on Richmond Oval

Richmond, BC - Construction is now officially under way on the Richmond Oval, home of the speed skating competition for the 2010 Olympic Winter Games. The City of Richmond was joined today by representatives from the Government of Canada, Province of British Columbia, First Nations and the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC) in a special groundbreaking ceremony to kick off the project construction.

“This is an historic day for our City,” said Richmond Mayor Malcolm Brodie. “We are committed to creating a premier venue for the 2010 Games and to building a legacy that will be a point of pride for our community and an international centre for excellence in sports and wellness. The Oval will also act as catalyst that will reshape our City Centre and help Richmond achieve its vision to be the most appealing, livable and well managed community in Canada.”

Scheduled to open in 2008, the Richmond Oval will be home of the long track speed skating venue for the 2010 Olympic Winter Games, with a 400-metre track and seating for approximately 8,000 spectators. The Richmond Oval is expected to be home of up to 12 medal events in 2010, with a potential 36 medals to be awarded.

Post-Games, the Oval will become BC’s premier multi-purpose sports, recreation and wellness facility. The project also includes creation of a new international destination and meeting place. The Oval, along with an adjoining waterfront plaza and park, will be the centre piece of a major new City Centre community to be developed on 32 acres along the banks of the Fraser River.

“This early start to construction supports our goal of early delivery of our competition venues for the 2010 Winter Games,” said John Furlong, VANOC CEO, “Early delivery means less complexity and early access for athlete training, and the opportunity to achieve podium success. It also means extra time to test and re-test venue operations well in advance of the Games.”

“With today’s milestone comes a new wave of enthusiasm and anticipation for the 2010 Winter Games. As we work towards this major event, the tremendous pride that we share in our athletes and our country brings all Canadians together,” said the Honourable Stephen Owen, Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister of State (Sport). “As a major and committed funding partner, the Government of Canada sees the 2010 Winter Games as an opportunity to reinforce its commitment to sport, culture, and healthy communities.”

“In just three years, the Richmond Oval will stand as a world-class venue for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games,” said Tourism, Sport and the Arts Minister Olga Ilich. “And when the Olympic and Paralympic torches have been extinguished, this facility will be a place where young athletes can train and participate in sport year-round – a lasting legacy that will

help us sustain international podium performance and achieve our goal of becoming the healthiest jurisdiction in North America.”

“With the groundbreaking of this speed skating oval, our Olympic and Paralympic dreams are much closer to becoming reality,” said the Honourable Raymond Chan, Minister of State (Multiculturalism) and Member of Parliament (Richmond). “I am excited that athletes’ dreams will be fulfilled in my home of Richmond.”

The Richmond Oval is part of a C\$620 million investment for 2010 Winter Games venues funded equally by the Governments of Canada and British Columbia. The federal and provincial governments have committed \$30 million each toward construction of the Oval. The City of Richmond is responsible for additional project funding. Total cost of the Oval and related projects, including the waterfront park and plaza and parkade is \$178 million.

Construction is beginning with densification of the Richmond Oval site. Vibrocompaction of the site will be ongoing for the next few months, with preloading of the site to begin shortly. More than 100,000 cubic metres of sand will be placed on the building site to ensure the ground the Oval is built on is stable. The sand pile will measure up to six metres in height and be approximately 200 metres square, the equivalent of more than six international-sized hockey rinks, and will be in place through the spring of 2006.

Following completion of the densification and preloading, construction of 33,000-square metre Richmond Oval will begin in May, 2006. The Oval is scheduled to open in the summer of 2008.

VANOC is responsible for the planning, organizing, financing and staging of the XXI Olympic Winter Games and the X Paralympic Winter Games in 2010. The 2010 Olympic Winter Games will be staged in Vancouver and Whistler from February 12 to 28, 2010. Whistler will host the Paralympic Winter Games from March 12 to 21, 2010.

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