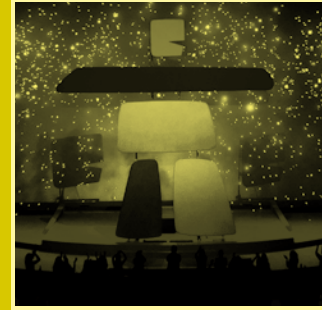


“The International Olympic Committee has the honour of announcing that the 21st Olympic Winter Games in 2010 are awarded to the City of... Vancouver.”



THE OLYMPIC VISION: SPIRIT OF THE GAMES FUELS COLLABORATION AND INNOVATION

With those words, spoken at 8:41 Pacific Time on July 2, 2003, President Jacques Rogge of the International Olympic Committee defined the next evolution of Vancouver. At that moment, the Official Development Plan for Southeast False Creek transformed into the plan for the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Village.

The Olympic Village plan moves beyond the Vancouver model of urban development, typified by high-rise towers on a street scale residential podium. Encouraged by architects seeking a new direction, City planners and the Council of the day instead turned to a more European form – lower-scale buildings with an extensive public realm and shared amenities.

The intent was to reflect the heart of a European village, focused on trade, gathering and entertainment, while seeking an effective balance between social, environmental and economic “well-being,” as reflected in Vancouver’s bid to host the Games. The synergy between these goals was supported by an unprecedented commitment from private enterprise to contribute a substantial subsidy to the Olympic program while striving to meet the City’s aspirations for an innovative, livable and resilient community.

The Olympic commitment also created the driving force of innovation, technical excellence and bureaucratic cooperation that has become the hallmark of the project. An absolute schedule and demanding functional program forced collaboration and problem solving. These strengths allowed the team to design, document, approve and construct a total of 1.5 million square feet of new development – comprising some 1,100 units of housing aimed at all income levels, supported by a real village centre, unsurpassed urban public realm and livable amenity services – in just three-and-a-half years.

As Mayor Philip Owen noted in his November 15, 2002 letter to Dr. Jacques Rogge:

“Our City looks forward to hosting an exciting, peaceful and prosperous Games. Vancouver is a multi-cultural and diverse society, ideally suited to hosting the Olympic Family and the rest of the world. The commitments for sustainability and inclusiveness will ensure a Games event like no other and set an example for future Games.”

The building of the Southeast False Creek Olympic Village demonstrates what can come from vision, collaboration and high ideals. It realizes a new paradigm in urban development and fulfills Vancouver’s continued evolution as a livable city.

Planning + Olympics Timeline

October 1999	SEFC Policy Statement approved by Vancouver City Council
2002	Sustainability background reports submitted to the City of Vancouver to inform the SEFC Official Development Plan (ODP)
2003	ODP process begins
May 2003	ODP preliminary submission to the City of Vancouver
July 2, 2003	Vancouver wins bid to host 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games
February 2004	ODP supplement submission to the City of Vancouver
April 2004	The architects’ letter to Vancouver City Council
July 2004	SEFC Green Building Strategy approved by Vancouver City Council
July 2004	City of Vancouver requests revised ODP urban design framework
October 2004	Final ODP urban design framework submission
March 1, 2005	Vancouver City Council approves ODP
December 21, 2005	City issues request for proposals to develop the Olympic Village
April 6, 2006	City Council selects Millennium SEFC Properties Ltd. as developer of the Olympic Village
April 26 + 27, 2006	SEFC integrated design process kickoff workshop
August 10, 2006	Millennium submits rezoning application for Olympic Village site

On Your Marks, Get Set...

And, they’re off! The selection of Vancouver as host city for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in July 2003 activated Vancouver’s Olympic planning and catalyzed the development of the Southeast False Creek (SEFC) lands. Eight city blocks (17 acres) at the centre of SEFC were designated to be the Olympic Village. The village would house approximately 2,800 Olympic athletes from around the world and be a centre of activity and celebration for the duration of the Games. The Olympic Village designation took the planning process for SEFC to the next level, requiring rapid goal-setting, decision-making and above all, action.

The SEFC Official Development Plan, which established a foundation for urban design and sustainability principles, was approved by Vancouver’s City Council in March 2005. Later that year, the City posted a call for proposals in search of a developer for the Olympic Village site. Proposals from each prospective developer had to take into account the interim use of the development as the Olympic Village as well as the sustainable design guidelines for the site. Millennium SEFC Properties was selected to develop the market residential and commercial areas and to design and build both the community center and affordable housing for the City, while the City undertook to develop the public realm and parks. This chapter details the timeline, conditions and constraints that led to the ultimate design of the Olympic Village.