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**The Canadian Race for 1968: A Plethora of Olympic
Winter Games Host City Hopefuls**

Long before the days of February 1988, when the ice rinks of Calgary and the slopes of the foothills of the Rockies became the settings for fulfilling the dreams of many an Olympic athlete, an Olympic dream and competition of a different sort was sweeping through the mountains of Western Canada. The Canadian quest to host the 1968 Olympic Winter Games began simply enough as what was the second stage of the Calgary

Olympic Development Association's (CODA) dream to bring the winter celebration to the Calgary area as early as 1964 or 1968. In May of 1959, Calgary's bid group had participated in the first stage of this dream when they asked the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to consider the merits of Calgary as a potential host for the 1964 edition of the Winter Games. However, this preliminary stage was actually regarded by CODA as merely a strategic means of introducing the IOC's members to precisely where Calgary was located on the world map as well as to what benefits the city could potentially offer in the way of facilities, organizational skills, and Western Canadian hospitality. What CODA did not anticipate gaining from this first bid attempt was the title of host for the Olympic Winter Games. That outcome was, in fact, the longer term goal for 1968 envisioned by the Association.

What CODA also did not, however, anticipate was the possibility that any other Canadian sites would present a challenge to their planned return to the international level of the IOC's host city bid race for the 1968 Winter Games. Instead, what first unfolded was a national level endorsement race that included five final contenders, one "also ran," one late contender, and three dreamers "in passing." In addition, it was also to become a national race that would be marked by a decidedly more hands-on involvement by both provincial and federal government officials, economically driven organizations, certain determined and influential individuals, and the media.

This study has been guided by three equally compelling objectives. The first of these, addresses the broader issue of the lack of recognition that scholars and archivists have largely given thus far to a process that is, in fact, an integral part of Olympic Games history. The second is aimed specifically at addressing the more pressing need to recover and preserve the dwindling number of bid documents that can then, in turn, be used to finally present an informed written historical account of one small, but significant, piece of Canada's own bidding history. The third, and final of these objectives, is designed to place this account within the proper context of the era of Olympic host city bidding and more general Canadian history into which it falls. It is, therefore, the purpose of this paper to not only document the factual evidence of the Canadian stage of the 1968 Olympic Winter Games host city

competition, but to also attempt to examine why this battle was so large and why there has never again been a battle of this same magnitude for any other subsequent Canadian bid race.

The documentary sources which will be used in this paper come from the IOC Historical Archives of Lausanne, Switzerland, government and sport archives in Alberta and British Columbia, Canadian Olympic Association records, and the files of private individuals who were participants in the 1968 Canadian competition. These primary source documents include correspondence, minutes of committee meetings, and bid books as well as information gained from personal interviews with the participants. In addition, the large number of newspaper articles which were written at the time that the competition was unfolding have served as a valuable tool for revealing the chronology of this race and for providing clues that have aided in the continued search to uncover more primary source documents which might have potentially been preserved from this historically significant national stage of an Olympic host city bid race.
