Imagination and the Washington, D.C. 2012 Olympic Bid
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Acknowledgments:

This paper would not have been possible without the advice and support of many people. Special thanks to Chuck Ruthesier, Jay Kriegel, Clarence Bishop, Stewart Schwartz, and Richard Stevens for their time and expertise. Professor McDonogh’s organizational advice and insight was crucial to the final formulation of my thesis. Thanks also to Lisa Gittlen and my father for patiently and willingly reading my draft over the Thanksgiving holidays. Finally, I appreciate the patience and kindness of all those who have spent significant time around me this semester—Jess Latterman for listening to me babble incessantly about my ideas, my suitemates for their support and providing a nice home for me to come home to from the computer lab, my friends for providing an outlet, and finally my family for constant love, support, and even interest.
Abstract:

In this age of global competition, large cities increasingly desire the Olympics as a mega-event because of its promises of local economic development, catalysis of urban development projects, and unparalleled standing on the global stage. These incentives outweigh the risks and significant costs of staging the Games. Not only does staging the modern Olympiad call for huge investments of money, time, effort, and other resources, so too does the mere chance of hosting the Games. Cities interested in hosting the Olympics must participate in a rigorous and intense competitive bid procedure before the International Olympic Committee (IOC) selects a host city. The bid process itself can be just as valuable to a bid city as hosting the actual Games themselves.

The Olympic bid process has enormous potential as an imaginative exercise in reimagining the city. However, IOC composition, bid procedure, and common urban power structures all, in varying degrees, place demands upon and threaten this potential. The current Washington D.C. 2012 Olympic bid presents an excellent opportunity for the examination of the city's ability to challenge these limitations. As much about the city of Washington as the Olympic bid process, this thesis uses D.C.'s bid process as a means to display the city's multiplicity. Further, the bid process reveals elite forms of control at the same time that it serves as an important discussion about the future shape of both the city and the region.
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Introduction: The Lure of the Olympics
“…the chance to remake ourselves is irresistible. This is a new war. The best. The war to save our skin, our social selves, the fun of living, to build instead of destroy, to survive rather than be bored to death. To be once more the children of a wide-ranging, imaginative and vital culture rather than the slaves of network television. What greater challenge is there? Forward!”
-Ray Bradbury1

Although not speaking directly of cities, Ray Bradbury’s challenge could not be more appropriate. The chance to remake ourselves is truly one of the greatest challenges facing today’s cities and citizens. The Olympic Games appeal to an increasing number of cities for this very reason. The Olympic Games themselves do create an optimum setting for bringing creative power to the host city, but, more importantly, the bidding procedure and process through which cities compete to win the right to host the Olympic Games exhibits this creative potential. Therefore, hosting the Olympic Games is not a prerequisite for benefiting from the Olympics. The bid procedure presents a city with a single project, an amazing opportunity in which thoughts, initiatives, and projects can coalesce to remake, reimagine, redesign, and revaluate the shape of the city.

However, International Olympic Committee’s (IOC) demands, specific bid procedures, and the application of prototypical models without regard for local vagaries, in some ways, limits and confines the reimaginative process of hosting the Olympic Games. Therefore, bid committees (officially recognized planning entities for an Olympic bid) do not have full freedom of choice in tailoring the Olympic Games to their city; they must also respond to the proscriptions of Olympic formal bodies. For example, Olympic plans could include the revitalization of run-down neighborhoods. Unfortunately, unlike environmentally responsible

bids, the Olympic rules do not yet give a competitive advantage to socially responsible bids; thus, bid committees often logically ignore such actions in favor of designs and programs noticed and given increased merit by Olympic judging bodies. Such subtle, yet real, restrictions threaten the potential scope and ability of Olympic bidding in bringing meaningful change to the city.

The current (Fall 2001) domestic Washington, D.C. bid for the 2012 Summer Olympic Games provides an excellent case for the examination of the imaginative value within the Olympic bid process as an effective point of reflection for a particular city. Like many large cities, Washington, D.C.’s agenda includes redress of specific social and structural ills and also marketing the city as a desirable place in which to live, work, and visit. Can the thought process of the Olympic bid aid the development and direction of such an agenda? What opportunities exist within Washington, D.C. for using the Olympic bid process to give the city the imaginative license to remake itself in ways that transcend the limits of the IOC, its bid procedure, and normative expectations? What else does the Olympic bid reveal about the city of Washington, D.C.?

The bid process itself provides Washington, D.C. with the perfect opportunity to embrace Bradbury’s challenge. After all, the Olympic Games represent a set of opportunities for rethinking the city in a massive way that may not be conceivable in ordinary practice. Exploring the Washington, D.C. 2012 bid reveals it as a creative plan with potential value for the city, region, and the Olympic Movement overall. Although problems would likely surface in the actual staging of a Washington Olympics, the Washington bid suggests that the Olympic bid process, limitations and all, is a valuable tool in reflecting upon and reimagining a city. Furthermore, the bid’s creativity and attention to local particularities strengthens the bid.
Whether the bid city hosts the Games or not, the thought process itself produces lasting change and provides important opportunities to recognize the changing nature of Washington, D.C.

*The Olympics as a Mega-event*

However, the Olympic Games as a mega-event and, hence, a premier urban growth strategy, must be viewed within the current discourse and context of cities competing in a postmodern global world. The postmodern era’s recent increase of communication technology, the global exchange of information, and the mobility of human, production, marketing, and financial capital significantly altered the way people think about place. Cities no longer completely depend on local resources (i.e. industrial sites) for the bulk of their wealth. With much of the economy based in the tertiary level of production and consumption, cities must present themselves as offering an attractive package of amenities to attract necessary development, businesses, and residents. Social geographer David Harvey notes that this environment in which people “try to differentiate their place from other places and become more competitive in order to capture or retain capital investment”2 lead to an increased emphasis on the marketing of place and image construction.

Unfortunately, this emphasis on image construction has lead to an increase in consumption-oriented development which tends to “create seemingly standardized tourist environments consisting of convention complexes, fancy hotels, entertainment and gambling complexes, and sports facilities alongside new office towers and redeveloped waterfronts.”3

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a mega-event,⁴ the Olympic Games present the perfect opportunity for local leaders to employ
“entrepreneurial strategies to promote growth and enhance their city’s image.”⁵ Regrettably, this elite style of remaking the city ignores many of the more disenfranchised and disadvantaged stakeholders of the city. Regardless, if Olympic cities wish to remain unique places, then bid cities must ignore the tendency toward standardization and the homogenization of space and place. Of course, even if bid cities successfully ignore such a tendency, nothing guarantees that the resulting dominant image of the city will be any more equitable than the standardization image.

Despite this postmodern discourse surrounding the global competition amongst cities, the local particularities of a city do matter. “Globalisation processes make ‘the local’ newly important in contemporary social formations,”⁶ especially as cities seek to differentiate themselves in spite of similar models of consumption-oriented development. Attention to the local particularities can counteract homogenization. In addition, shaping a citywide project, whether a new convention center or the Olympic Games, as responsive to local circumstances increases the likelihood of the project’s success. Cities must not apply prototypical models, but must use and work with what they have- from geographic features, to urban arrangements, political structures and other resources. For example, a centralized sports venue plan for the Washington Olympics would be ineffective because it would not respond to the regional realities and resources of the Washington, D.C. area. Matthew Burbank et.al further highlights the crucial role of “the local city” with the recognition that “Only a government entity, a city, can

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⁴ “ ‘Mega-events’ are large scale cultural (including commercial and sporting) events which ahve a dramatic character, mass popular appeal and international significance (Roche, 1).”
⁵ Burbank, 30.
enter into the contractual agreement with the IOC to host the games, and it would be impossible to conduct the games without the cooperation of government officials and the use of public resources.” Ever since the widely recognized success and profitability of the 1984 Summer Olympic Games in Los Angeles, large cities increasingly desire the Olympics as an urban growth strategy. A temporary event, lasting only 17 days, the Olympic Games still bring promises of lasting change. The Olympics represent the potential for a city to increase local economic development, catalyze urban development projects, leave a lasting architectural legacy, improve transportation, gain global media exposure, create a world-class image, attract tourist dollars, enhance its sporting facilities, and boost its hospitality, construction, and communication industries. These incentives provide enough motivation to justify the risks and major costs of staging the Games, not to mention the money, time, and effort required to prepare an Olympic bid with no guarantee of selection.

However, just as there are typical incentives for hosting for the Games, a set of typical problems and issues also arise for most bid and host cities. Olympic scholar John Lucas cites the following as common complaints associated with the Olympic Games: “expression of discontent by political self-interest groups; complaints of commercialism gone berserk; persistent vexation against the IOC; the “muddiness” of Olympic philosophical principles; [and] Olympic Games as “war without weapons.” The latter refers to issues of racism, colonialism, and political dominance that occasionally emerge through the Olympics- for example, terrorist attacks of Munich 1972, the United States’ 1980 boycott of the Moscow Games in 1980, the Soviet boycott

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7 Burbank, 161.
of the 1984 L.A. Olympics and also the once banned participation of South African representatives to the Games. Increasing criticism of the Olympics include complaints of the Games as too commercial (i.e. Atlanta 1996), Eurocentric, elitist, capitalistic, feudalistic, imperialistic, monopolist, and dishonest in IOC and USOC practice.

On a more local scale, in cities Olympics typically highlight hot-button issues such as tax burdens, housing, homeless, preference given to tourists over residents, security, diversion of money away from social welfare programs, power of the elite and accountability to the public. Nearly all of these issues stem from concern for the expenditure and allocation of money. The extensive and unexpected debt Montreal government and residents experienced after the Montreal 1976 Winter Olympics made future host cities and their citizens wary of the possible tax burden of the Games. Despite the success of the completely privately funded Los Angeles 1984 Summer Olympics, concern for a public tax burden remains a major element of Olympic criticism and concern.

The aforementioned incentives, concerns, and risks of Olympics, for the most part, hold true for all bid and host cities and have been well-established in academic discourse. Therefore, the existence of this typical Olympic model itself will not be refuted nor elaborated upon in this thesis; nonetheless, such a model must be kept in mind as a backdrop to the examination of the Washington, D.C. 2012 Olympic bid.

Washington, D.C. as a Case Study

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10 Lenskyj.
Although the Olympics bring a typical set of incentives and goals to the bid city, specific problems face each city which are significant to the analysis of an Olympic bid. An analysis of Washington Post-identified key newspaper headlines over the past two years shows that Washington’s primary areas of concern are wide-ranging and often typical of the problems faced by modern urban areas. Social concerns exhibited by these headlines include D.C.’s poor urban education system, urban health problems which include the closure and reconfiguring of D.C. General Hospital and the second highest infant mortality amongst large American cities, a need for affordable housing, and a need for improved human service delivery to neighborhoods. Governmental and structural problems encompass long Department of Motor Vechile (DMV) waits, resignation of D.C. law officials, the lack of voting rights at the national level and the related inability to control their own tax revenue.11

Furthermore, citizens themselves cite public drunkenness, failure of police to answer distress calls, and “an affordable housing crisis and a persistent lack of confidence in the public schools”12 as fundamental problems. They also recognize a need “to create more community-based residential facilities”13 Another well-recognized problem facing D.C. is traffic- on the one hand, this refers to lack of Metro train stops in some sections of the city and faulty escalators; on the other hand, this refers to the massive congestion problems faced by the Washington, D.C metropolitan region, including major portions of Northern Virginia and Southern Maryland.

However, it must be duly noted that, the entire climate of Washington, D.C. and its surrounding region are too encompassing and complex for this thesis to grapple with in terms of analyzing the readiness of the city for the Olympic Games. To determine the suitability and

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applicability of the Olympic bid process to Washington, D.C., I look primarily to improvements to the city (i.e. new buildings, infrastructure), the leadership of Mayor Anthony Williams, and his projects. The conclusions drawn from my investigation must be understood with the knowledge that I exclude voices of some constituency groups. Also missing is an exhaustive study of the past history of mega-events and decision-making in the District.

The broad scope of the Olympics itself also limits this study; as Mark Dryeson notes, “sport has become the most important institution through which many Americans deliberate political, racial, ethical, and social questions.” Many Olympic topics worthy of study exist that I do not focus on in this thesis- specifics on environmental concerns, housing issues, the role of the media and sponsors, international relations, and the rhetoric of Olympic ideals. I also recognize the value of comparative cases, but, the comparisons in this work are confined to past Olympic Games and bids, such as Atlanta 1996 and the Toronto bid for 2008. Time constraints and the extensive nature of the Washington, D.C. case preclude further extensive comparative work with concurrently developing U.S. bids for 2012 in New York City, Houston, and San Francisco, which I briefly examined at an earlier stage of my research.

Supporting Sources

Even though I do not specifically include many Olympic issues in this thesis, extensive research informs my understanding of the Olympic Games’ complexities, thus creating an essential base from which to examine the Washington, D.C. case. Especially within the past few

years (from 1996-2001), an extensive number of books were written about the sociological, political, and urban aspects of the Olympic process. Christopher Hill’s *Olympic politics* takes a historical approach as he covers the political implications, both national and local, of the modern Olympic Games. The near universal citing of this book in other works on the Olympics exhibits its importance as a foundation to Olympic study.

Recently there has been a growing opposition strain in academic Olympic discourse. Andrew Jennings and Vyv Simpson’s book *The Lord of the Rings: power, money and drugs in the modern Olympics* and Jennings’ sequel *The New Lord of the Rings* are much cited as key works with regard to IOC corruption and bribery. However, more important to my study of the Olympics is Helen Jefferson Lenskyj’s work on the relationship of citizen participation and opposition to the nature and shape of the Olympic bid and subsequent Games. Her case studies on Toronto, Sydney, and Atlanta largely inform my critical look at Washington’s readiness for the Olympic Games.

The local impact and urban implications of the Games have also featured prominently in both favorable and critical works. Usually such analysis typically focuses around a singular Olympiad; entire books exist on Barcelona ‘92 Atlanta ‘96, and Sydney ‘00. In contrast, Matthew Burbank, Gregory Andranovich and Charles Heyling examine several Olympic cases in *Olympic Dreams: The Impact of Mega-events on local politics*, which asserts that the realities of local governing practices and institutions shape the Olympic aspirations of cities. Their description of the intersections between consumption-oriented development, urban power

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15 The United States Olympic Committee’s (USOC) selected these four cities on October 26th, 2001 as finalists for the U.S nomination. Los Angeles, Dallas, Tampa and Cincinnati were eliminated from the original pool.
regimes, and mega-events in the lives of cities clearly relates to this thesis. This provides powerful justification for a thesis which explores the reciprocal effects of the Washington, D.C. Olympic bid upon the city itself and Olympic procedure.

Although a few writings exist on failed bids, the majority of Olympic writings cover successful bids and actual Olympic host cities. My study takes a new approach for I am examining a current bid; it can not be analyzed from either a standpoint of success or failure, but rather one of reflection and anticipation.

The impetus to study the relationship between Washington, D.C. and the Olympic Games stems from hometown interest paired with a continuing interest in exploring cultural implications through connections to the sporting world. Living in Alexandria, Va. and paying particular interest to urban development and growth issues of the region since 1997 supplements my more formal knowledge of Washington, D.C.

In researching the Olympics and Washington, D.C., my thesis depends on both primary and secondary sources. The data collected specifically about the Olympic Movement, its history and other case studies relies heavily on secondary sources, such as books and journals. The only exception is the primary documents from the International Olympic Committee (IOC). In contrast, nearly all of the data gathered for Washington, D.C. comes from primary sources. Print media include newspaper articles, predominantly from *The Washington Post* and *Baltimore Sun*, press releases from the Chesapeake Regional Coalition (the group in charge of Washington, D.C. 2012 bid) and press releases from the office of Mayor Anthony Williams. To supplement these

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17 Lenskyj.
articles, I conducted five telephone interviews. In addition, an informal survey was conducted to estimate public opinion about the bid. (see Appendix A)

Maurice Roche’s assessment of mega-events as growth strategies greatly influences my structure and research methodology - “He [Maurice Roche] notes four elements he believes will strengthen future mega-event analysis: describing the type of city; examining the nature of citizen participation in urban planning and in mega-event planning; identifying the nature of urban leadership; and identifying the urban regeneration and reimagining strategies of the city may be using.”¹⁸ My thesis addresses these concerns in varying degrees.

Outline of Argument

The first chapter of my thesis discusses the typical framework in which the Olympic bid takes shape. This model is two tiered; I cover both the procedures and limits of the IOC and also local networks of elites. This chapter establishes the context of the bid and details the issues that Washington, D.C. must be prepared to face and challenge. The second chapter examines the way the D.C. case fits and responds to the context outlined in Chapter 1. The third chapter matches most closely with Roche’s statement as it examines the readiness of Washington, D.C. to host the Olympics. I evaluate the recent economic rebirth the city, the growth of its hometown image and the mayoral leadership in a discussion of how these city trends can be capitalized upon in the bid process. In the fourth chapter, I address the creative and unprecedented components of the bid and the implications for Washington, D.C. and its region. I conclude with an assessment of the Olympic bid process’ role in reimagining and revealing

¹⁸ Burbank, 47.
new complexities about Washington, and also its feasibility in the District of Columbia as an imaginative process.
Chapter 1: Olympic Context and Local Responses

The Washington, D.C. 2012 Olympic bid develops within two contexts- first, that of the Olympics as a historic and evolving movement that provides a formal set of rules for the bid, and second, that of the complex local realities of power, control, and division existent and emergent in bid cities. This chapter describes the ways in which this Olympic context places demands and limits on the bid’s development and the bid city itself. Also, this chapter delineates, through examples from the 1996 Atlanta Olympics and the 2008 Toronto bid, an exclusionary pattern of the ways cities respond to Olympic demands and limits. Together, the Olympic context and subsequent local responses frame an upcoming examination of the Washington, D.C. 2012 Olympic bid.

Olympic Context:

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) ultimately judges and selects Olympic host cities, placing enormous power with this international body. Since all bid cities must comply with the rules of the IOC, National Olympic Committees (NOCs), the official bodies which choose their country’s candidate city, typically design their own requirements in a fashion compatible with the IOC’s criteria. The United States Olympic Committee (USOC), which will select the 2012 U.S nominee from a field of four in October 2002, follows such a procedure.\(^\text{19}\) In fact, since the Amateur Sports Act of 1978 made the USOC the official body in charge of organizing Olympic matters for the United States, they advocate proper bidding criteria in each of the individual bid committees. For example, once deposits and documents guarantee a bid

committee’s commitment, the USOC holds several informative seminars about technicalities and requirements for bidding and hosting the Olympic Games as required by the USOC and ultimately by the IOC. 20 This strategic method implies a clear connection between compliance with and emphasis on these criteria and improved chances of success at each competitive level.

Subsequently, as a bid for the U.S. nomination to the international competitive bid field, Washington, D.C. 2012, must follow USOC criteria which mirror IOC criteria. Thus, this chapter looks directly to IOC guidelines and specific bid procedures, not those of the USOC, in considering the Olympic context in which the D.C. bid develops. I first address the elite composition of the IOC and its contradictions with Olympic ideals before examining the IOC’s recently amended bidding procedure. This in-depth examination of the IOC’s guidelines as well as its internal composition reveals a disconnect between democratic Olympic ideals and the undemocratic fashion of selecting Olympic host cities.

**IOC Ideals and Composition**

As revived by Pierre de Coubertin in 1894, the principles of the Olympic Movement guide the Olympic Games and the establishment of the IOC. The IOC uses the ancient Hellenistic origins of the Olympics and its allusions to the birth of democratic and humanistic civilization to romanticize the definition of the Olympic Movement as “the philosophy that sport can teach humans as a whole “fair play” by observing the rules of combat, treating the losers with honor and respecting the winners. This approach forms noble sentiments that can be used in other aspects of life.”21
Therefore, as the “primary source of the Olympic Movement” and “the most manifest activity of the International Olympic Committee,” the Olympic Games should embody these democratic, equalitarian, and humanistic ideals. In fact, the Olympic Charter officially includes the Olympic Games as part of the Olympic Movement and gives this event the power to “place everywhere sport at the service of the harmonious development of man, with a view to encouraging the establishment of a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity.” By extension this rhetoric creates the implicit expectation for bid cities to follow the Olympic Movement in the development of their plans, which should display the glory, power, and equalitarian nature befitting an “Olympic city.” Unfortunately, the manifestations of these principles through the IOC and the bidding procedure make the fulfillment of such expectations difficult and implausible.

The Olympic Movement rhetoric, ideals, and their subsequent expectations lead many to misconstrue the IOC as an egalitarian, representative body with powers and membership similar to the United Nations (UN). In reality, the IOC’s exclusive control of the world’s premier sporting event and the Charter’s codification of the IOC as “the supreme authority of the Olympic Movement” generated an elite self-regulating and self-electing body that quickly became the single most dominant entity in the modern sporting world. Granted, an elite nature alone does not preclude a body’s ability to produce events which exhibit democratic ideals. However, the widely criticized elite and biased membership of the IOC gives no indication of being able to deliver its ideals.

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22 www.olympic.org/ioc.

23 As defined by the IOC, “The Olympic Charter is the codification of the Fundamental Principles, Rules and Bye-laws adopted by the IOC. It governs the organization and operation of the Olympic Movement and stipulates the conditions for the celebration of the Olympic Games.”
First formed in 1894, the IOC currently consists of 126 members (including 11 active athletes) and 22 honorary members. These members meet once a year at the IOC Headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland for the annual IOC Session, which can include amends to the Olympic Charter and periodic selection of Olympic host cities. In addition to participation in these Sessions, duties of IOC members also include developing the Olympic Movement through following local programs, informing the IOC President of the development of such, and working with IOC Commissions to which s/he has been appointed. The IOC also has an eleven-member Executive Board comprised of a president, four vice presidents and six selected IOC members. As its primary responsibilities this body “assumes the ultimate responsibility for the administration of the IOC; approves the IOC’s internal organization;…is responsible for the management of the IOC’s finances; … recommends [persons] for election to the IOC; supervises the procedure for accepting and selecting candidatures to organize the Olympic Games;… enacts all regulations necessary to ensure the proper implementation of the Olympic Charter and the organization of the Olympic Games.”

This barebones description initially seems reasonable and efficient; it does not implicitly indicate an elite membership. However, the selection protocol of the IOC members clearly displays the opportunities capitalized upon in the creation of this elite group: “The IOC chooses and elects its members from among such persons as its nominations committee considers qualified. All Olympic Movement members have the right to submit nominations.” In other words, no specific qualifications guide the selection of new IOC members and these members are only selected by those already deeply involved in the Olympic Movement. Given that the

24 www.olympic.org/ioc.
25 Hill, 263; Roche, 185.
26 www.olympic.org/ioc
original IOC began as a collection of the European aristocracy and royalty, the selection process lends itself toward the perpetuation of an elite group. The fact that each member’s eight year term is not limited, but renewable until they turn 70, at which point they must retire, effectively extends this self-perpetuating influence.

These loosely defined guidelines for nomination and unlimited renewable terms, not surprisingly, prompted Olympic scholar Angela Burroughs to join other critics in her description of the IOC as “an exclusive club of well-connected, self-selected members, appointed for life, whose members are often royalty, previous political or military leaders, and members of the aristocracy.”

Christopher Hill further identifies the IOC as comprised of the “rich or well-born or powerful, or all three.” In support of this claim, three princes, one princess, and two grand dukes stand out among current IOC members. Helen Lenskyj also criticizes the IOC for their Eurocentric bias in their membership and site selection. To their credit, the IOC’s self-description does not try to mask their composition as it decries the misconception of the IOC as a UN-like body: “The members of the IOC are individuals who act as the IOC’s representatives in their respective countries, not as delegates of their country within the IOC.”

Although bias and elitism unquestionably present themselves through the membership and selection of IOC members, sociologist Frank Lucas notes the changing character of this membership into, “a modern IOC membership which, in the 1990s, will be younger, better

27 Ibid.
29 Hill, 60.
30 www.olympic.org/ioc
31 Lenskyj, 51.
32 www.olympic.org/ioc
educated, multiracial,”^33 and comprised of both men and women. Briefly scanning available membership profiles indicates that today’s IOC contains many more women members, members from non-European countries, and business leaders who acquired rather than inherited their fortunes, than past IOC memberships.\(^34\) Regardless, such diversification does not automatically entail a change in the elite composition of the IOC. The persistent elite composition and hegemonic structure of the IOC translates into forms of control that place additional limitations on the fulfillment of Olympic democratic expectations.

First of all, IOC exercises control via host city selection procedures that provide no room for public accountability or review. Since they are the sole body in charge of the Olympic Games, the IOC “…can choose (and have chosen) to operate and exercise this power without any recognition of a need to publicly account to, and be answerable to anyone but the IOC.”^35 To this end, the IOC mandates that reports from bid cities “may not be distributed or made public until it has been submitted to the IOC and the IOC’s written authorization has been obtained.”^36 Furthermore, the secret voting undertaken in the IOC Session’s periodic selection of host cities exacerbates the accountability problem in that bid committees, countries with IOC members, NOCs, and International Sports Federations, among others, cannot monitor the voting patterns of any of their members.\(^37\) Even if voting were no longer secret, the fact that a straight majority vote does not determine the host city winner makes voting patterns more difficult to trace.\(^38\) This lack of public accountability, paired with no equally powerful sports-related or other

\(^{33}\) Lucas, 127.
\(^{34}\) www.olympic.org
\(^{35}\) Roche, 151.
international bodies to balance IOC decisions, creates structural barriers to democratic notions and fair play in the selection of host cities. The demonstrated dominance of the IOC reappears in the IOC’s manner of conducting its financial affairs.

The corporate world’s role in the financial affairs of the Olympic Movement further compromises Olympic ideals and widens the disconnect between these ideals and the feasibility of fulfilling the expectations they set. The IOC’s exclusive ownership of any use of the Olympics and its powerful symbol and its benefits makes actual achievement of the Olympic Movement’s lofty image difficult. After all, how can the Olympics achieve their noble ends if the IOC sequesters the powerful symbol of the Olympics- the very touchstone for universal peace, harmony, and equality? Instead of making these ideals universally accessible, the IOC profits from selling them to corporate sponsors. Peace, harmony, and sports, brought directly to you from Coca-Cola and McDonalds! The IOC’s direct contracts with the major corporate sponsors and television stations coupled with a revenue nearly entirely dependent on such contracts, incurs prolific criticism of the Games as “too commercial” and elicits warnings about the role of big business. However, in their defense, 93% of IOC revenue is “redistributed to the Organizing Committees, the NOCs and the IFs,” ostensibly for the development of Olympic athletes and also in the promotion of Pierre de Coubertin’s movement toward “Sport for All.” A paradox of sorts emerges as corporate money obtained through methods not strictly adherent to principles of the Olympic Movement is used in the propagation of those ideals. The

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38 Voting occurs in successive rounds until one candidate city gains 44 votes, which is considered a clear majority (www.olympic.org/ioc).

39 Lucas, 75; Dunn and McGuirk, 37; Ham, Paul. “This is a Message from Your Sponsors.” Newsweek Bulletin March 2, 1999: 30.

40 www.olympic.org/ioc.
use of corporate money for the furtherance of Olympic ideals beyond the time period of the 17-day long Games reveals the complicated intersections of ideal rhetoric and actual reality within the Olympic Movement.

However, despite its dominance, the IOC has not been able to avoid the consequences of the exhibited disjuncture of the democratic expectations of the Olympic competition with the complex realities of IOC composition and procedure. Spearheaded by the widely publicized exposure of a bribery scandal in the selection Salt Lake City for the Winter 2002 Olympics, the IOC has recently experienced very intense criticism for its lack of fairness and democratic competition in the bidding procedure. In response, the IOC developed the current Global Promotional Campaign with the theme of “Celebrate Humanity” in attempts to garner support for the vitality of the Olympic Movement. Not fooled by yet another false IOC image, several critics have debunked this publicity effort as an attempt to ignore and divert attention from the very real concerns of IOC corruption. Nonetheless, others argue that the IOC has begun a real, though gradual, process of reform, “Honest accusations, accurate revelations of shortcomings, and constructive criticism of past Olympic efforts have helped the Movement to improve itself slowly.”42 The amendments to the Olympic Charter from the 110th IOC Session in December 1999 in Lausanne, Switzerland indicate the most significant and relevant changes. Through the development of a more precise and “objective” procedure for both the bidding for and selection of an Olympic host city these changes attempt to repair the disconnect between Olympic ideals and the corruption which stem from the IOC’s elite and dominant character. Unfortunately,

41 Lucas, 79.

42 Ibid., 128.
another counterproductive relationship emerges as these well-intentioned amendments and their subsequent actions do not completely manifest Olympic ideals of fair competition.

The Amended Bid Procedure

The 1999 amendments attempt to reduce bid cities’ costs, eliminate bribery, and, most importantly, create a more objective way of judging bid cities. Ironically, after analysis, the very measures intended to repair these problems appear simply to exercise another form of elite control over bid cities. In fact, the specifics of the bidding procedure place demands on bid cities that can potentially proscribe the development of said city’s bid.

In the evaluation of the changes in IOC procedure, amendments to the By-law to Rule 37 of the Olympic Charter and its subsequent implementation plans play the most relevant role in analyzing procedural changes’ effects on bid cities. Amendments to the By-law to Rule 37—“Selection of Host City” stipulates changes in bid procedure and mandates that the IOC Executive Board create a candidate acceptance procedure and an evaluation commission for candidate cities. Since the amendments were accepted in 1999, this new selection procedure has only been applied once- in the July 2001 selection of Beijing for the 2008 Olympiad. Thus, this thesis relies upon the Candidate Acceptance Procedure and relating documents developed specifically for the selection of the Olympic host city for 2008.

One of the primary barriers to fair competition that the By-law to Rule 37 addresses is the issue of biased and bribed IOC votes. Prior to the 110th IOC Session no rules prohibited IOC members from visiting bid cities. Ostensibly these visits would improve selection decisions through the quality of information and evaluation available from on-site visits. In actuality, these informative visits were little more than paid vacations complete with luxury treatment and
extravagant gifts, all at the bid committee’s expense. As a result, bid committees spent too much money on bribes and IOC members’ votes reflected such influence, thus destroying any actualization of Olympic Movement fair play.

The 2008 Candidate Acceptance Procedure (CAP), created in accordance the By-law to Rule 37, curtails these corrupt practices with its rule 2.9, which states that “There will be no visits by or to IOC members” and “no gifts may be given or received.” However, the ban on IOC visits does not mean that the IOC loses the benefit of firsthand accounts in judging the candidate cities. By-law 37.3 regularizes the collection and evaluation of such primary data with the prescription that “The candidatures of cities applying to host the Olympic Games shall be examined by an evaluation commission for candidate cites.”

Ostensibly this committee objectively evaluates each candidate city and submits a report to the IOC for review. To further eliminate possibilities for bribery, Rule 2.7 of the 2008 CAP declares that “The costs of the visit [by evaluation commission] shall be borne by the IOC.”

However, despite the addition of more democratic and objective measures in Olympic procedure, the manifestation of the amendments in specific selection protocol indicates opportunities for subtle bias. On February 18, 2000, the IOC Executive Board created and adopted a new “Candidate Acceptance Procedure” (CAP) applicable to all candidate cities. The implementation of CAP consisted of two phases- Phase I involves the evaluation of 10 cities in order to select 4 candidate cities and Phase II entails the submission of the four cities’

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43 “Candidature Acceptance Procedure.”
44 www.olympic.org/ioc

45 “Candidature Acceptance Procedure.”
46 The term “candidate city” is essentially synonymous with “bid city.” The IOC uses “candidate city” to refer to the cities from which the IOC will select its competitors and eventual host.
candidature files and the IOC’s ultimate selection of the host city. Despite their best intentions, the documentation of both these phases represent subtle directives to the bid cities.

The first stage of evaluation did not involve a visit by the IOC Evaluation Commission for the 2008 Olympic Games, but rather depended upon a rubric developed by the IOC Candidature Acceptance Working Group for the purpose of objectively judging the 10 cities’ readiness to host the Games. The IOC deemed this elimination necessary due to the recent proliferation of cities bidding for the Olympic Games. To this end, the IOC administration developed the “Questionnaire for cities applying to become Candidate Cities to host the Games of the XXIX Olympiad in 2008” which was sent to the 10 cities jockeying for Olympic candidate city status. The Working Group then used their rubric to assess the responses of the possible candidate cities for the 2008 Olympic Games and report them to the Executive Board, which was responsible for selecting the four candidate cities.

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47 Bangkok, Thailand; Beijing, China; Cairo, Egypt; Havana, Cuba; Istanbul, Turkey; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Osaka, Japan; Paris, France; Seville, Spain; Toronto, Canada.

The Working Group “limited itself to the examination of technical and factual data,” and decided that “the assessment of Applicant Cities in Phase I should be backed up by a software decision making programme” known as Decision Matrix.\(^{49}\) In spite of these precautions to insure the objective nature of their evaluative report, an analysis of these methods shows that, to a degree, biased values remain in the judging procedure. These biased values reveal themselves through IOC-determined 11 weighted “technical assessment criteria” which the Working Groups used to judge the cities’ responses to the 22 Questionnaire questions, which were ordered under seven themes- “Motivation and Concept,” “Political and Public Support,” “General Infrastructure,” “Sports Infrastructure,” “Logistics and Experience,” and “Financing.” These weighted criteria are as follows:\(^{50}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government and public support</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Infrastructure</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports Infrastructure</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olympic Village</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental conditions and impact</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accomodations</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience from past sports events</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance (no specific criteria, finance makes up a portion of all other criteria; general remarks only)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Concept</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although these criteria are undeniably valid factors in the Olympic readiness of a city, their weights reflect priorities of the IOC. Contrast, for example, the fact that “Government

\(^{49}\) Ibid., 5.
support and public opinion” receives the lowest rating of 1 and “Accommodation” receives the highest rating of 5. The massive amounts of visitors the Olympics bring to a city justifies the high rating for “Accommodation.” However, contrary to the Olympic Charter requirements for city government guarantees of support and host city contracts signed by the city government, the weighted criteria devalue “Government support and public opinion” in the Olympic bid process. This lack of regard for government support clearly breaks with Olympic democratic expectations. The need for bid cities to respond to the CAP’s Questionnaire may encourage bid cities to tailor their Olympic plans according to the values of weighted criteria. As Lenskyj points out, IOC guidelines justify a number of ways in which a bid takes shape. For example, a bid committee may divide its resources, time, and energy according to criteria weights, so that “accommodation” would receive more attention than “government and public support.” However, if the Olympics ever expects to truly embody their universal ideals, then public support should be valued more highly. Therefore, in spite of the appearance of uniformity, objectivity and the use of a computer program, the new judging procedure recreates some of the very biases the 110th Session amendments tried to eliminate and perpetuates the difficulty in fulfilling democratic expectations for bid city competition.

In contrast, as a positive result, the Manual for Candidate Cities for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad 2008 (distributed in Phase II) sets a standard for the Candidature File, which reduces the overselling tendencies of bid committees. The fact that the Manual explicitly stresses that the candidate city must “present its plans in a realistic manner” and that “form and

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50 Ibid., 4.
enskyj, 51.
presentation of the file are not evaluation criteria”52 undeniably accounts for the different forms of the Atlanta 1996 Candidature File and the Toronto 2008 Candidature File. The Atlanta file reads like a tourist magazine, full of glossy photos, while the Toronto file looks more professional and contains more comprehensive information which respond to all of the questions posed by the Manual for Candidate Cities.53 Therefore, the bidding procedure does influence the shape and design of a bid.

In short, through the 110th Session amendments, the IOC formulates a precise model for the development of the ideal Olympic city, espouses it through the CAP’s weighted criteria, and subsequently, bid cities may develop their bids in accordance with these criteria, rather than in a responsive fashion to the character of their own city. This amended procedure, while important, creates a split between what the IOC finds important and what may be the best focus for the bid city. These new amendments perpetuate the fact that “the concept of an ‘Olympic city’ is effectively written into the Olympic Charter and the IOC’s contract with candidate cities.”54 In this manner, the IOC’s new “objective” system not only threatens the manifestation of principles of the Olympic Movement, but also threatens imaginative and creative possibility within the Olympic bidding process.

Although the recent nature of this new procedure makes projection difficult, it is to be hoped that the new “objective” criteria and uniform style of presentation and judging will not become so rigid as to limit the creative options that the Olympic bid may bring to the city. Later I show, through the case of the Washington, D.C. 2012 bid, that, despite the intricacies and

53 Toronto’s Bid for the 2008 Games; Atlanta’s Bid for the 1996 Games.
subtle biases of the amended Olympic bidding procedure, candidate cities can continue to reimagine their city in expansive and imaginative ways.

**Local Responses:**

Despite the IOC’s formulaic selection procedure, the opportunity to bid for the Olympics still affords a city a unique opportunity to reflect upon its present and the possibilities of remaking itself for the future. While the imaginings of a bid city extend to all its constituents—local citizens, business groups, nonprofit organizations, government officials, and cultural institutions, the Olympic context described above privileges elite groups in the actual construction of the bid. I use brief case studies of the 1996 Atlanta Olympics and Toronto’s bid for the 2008 Games as examples of local responses to the Olympic context which indicate the way in which the emergence of such elite groups as a spokesperson for the city reiterates structural barriers to Olympic ideals and issues of power and control exercised by the IOC.

*Elites, Efficacy, and Exclusion*

Elites’ ability to tap into powerful resources of private businesses and garner support from local governments contributes to their efficacy in advancing various city projects as they make decisions for the development and direction of the city. Large scale city projects bring together these various power structures in the city according to the character of the project and thus, constantly create new patterns of elite cooperation. Matthew Burbank et. al, who defines such elite networks as an “urban growth regime,” astutely notes that “These informal, horizontal connections between elite are viewed as more central to understanding which policy objectives

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54 Roche, 10.
receive attention and what actions will be taken than the formal, hierarchical structures of
government.”55 Unlike the IOC, no set list of members exist for the “urban growth regime;”
constant flux characterizes the composition of these elite networks. The effective capabilities of
patterns of elite cooperation make such a process an ideal avenue through which to pursue the
Olympic bid.

The Olympic Games’ nature as a mega-event requires a massive mobilization of
resources and coordinated development in a collapsed time frame, both during the staging of the
Games and the bidding process. These inherent conditions of the Olympic bid process typically
cause a network of elite businessmen and government officials to coalesce for the initiation and
organization of a city’s bid. Although previous to the bid these elites may have comprised an
informal and nebulous group, the Olympic bid process often results in the formalization of this
amorphous group in the bid committee’s membership. The predominance of such an elite
network in the bid’s development becomes a double-edged sword of efficacy and exclusion.

As previously exhibited, the resources available to an elite network make it the most
logical avenue for the effective pursuance of the bid. The elites that typically coalesce in the
formation of bid committees do not do so simply because it will be more effective than the
government or a group of non-profits developing the bid. Rather, these elites themselves usually
stand to benefit from Olympic promises of increasing economic development, tourist dollars, the
fast-tracking of urban development projects, and improving transportation systems. The chance
to create “The shared image of what they want their city to be”56 significantly contributes to the
impetus behind an elite bid. This group uses the Olympic bid as a point of reflection about the

55 Burbank., 21.
city, but does so in an exclusionary fashion which is neither respectful of the rest of the city nor of the democratic ideals of the Olympic Movement. A brief review of the cases of the Atlanta Olympics in 1996 and Toronto’s failed bid for the 2008 Games illustrates the potential threats of an elite development of an Olympic bid.

Even though both cities faced IOC rules which hamper meaningful public participation through the denial of public distribution of the city’s candidature file, Atlanta and Toronto present different models of citizen participation and involvement in the development of an Olympic plan. Atlanta provides a model of belated piecemeal opposition, and Toronto showcases a timely and well-coordinated opposition effort.

In 1990 Atlanta secured selection as the host city for the Centennial Olympiad over finalists Belgrade, Manchester, Melbourne, Toronto, and the sentimental favorite of Athens. Power structures in Atlanta center around a typically African-American local government and a corporate scene dominated by a significant number of Fortune 500 companies including Coca-Cola (one of the IOC’s top 10 sponsors). Thus, the bid effort for the Olympic Games was organized by an elite network of individuals from these power structures. In the construction of their bid, this powerful group ignored disadvantaged populations within the city and also did not provide for opposition voices to be heard until after the bid was accepted, at which point the bid’s development had usually reached an advanced and complete state, making significant change difficult.

Opposition in Atlanta did not concentrate around comprehensively anti-Olympic plans, but rather, around particular geographic locations slated for Olympic-related construction projects. “When this [proposed Olympic construction in neighborhoods] happens, local

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56 Lucas, 28.
community groups and civic associations, neighborhood activists, and the clergy mobilize, organize, and lobby to protest against or claim the benefit of the kinds of dislocation that Olympic construction can bring.” Of the two most significant cases of this form of opposition in Atlanta, one experienced success, whereas the other did not. The former was the proposal to locate Olympic volleyball in Cobb County, a suburban district that still had openly homophobic policies. The latter refers to the battle fought over the displacement of people from the public housing project of Techwood Homes with the construction of the new Olympic Stadium.

The composition of the neighborhood affected by construction in Cobb County played a significant role in the success of their battle with the Atlanta Olympic Organizing Committee. The elites involved in the development of the Olympics were sympathetic to the Cobb County residents, the majority of whom were of a higher class standing and held more political clout than the lower-income residents of Techwood. The lower class status of these inner-city residents was significant in their nominal impact on the construction of Olympic Stadium. The corporate power of Ted Turner, who owns the Atlanta Braves (post-Olympics, the Olympic Stadium was converted for use by the Braves), was too much for the coordinated effort of the groups of Atlanta Neighborhood United for Fairness, Metropolitan Atlanta Taskforce for the Homeless, and the Atlanta Olympic Conscience Coalition who worked together on the opposition effort.

Despite such organization, as a whole, the citizen opposition effort against the Atlanta Olympics was not well-coordinated nor extremely effective, especially considering that virtually no opposition occurred during the bidding stage. Of course, as anthropologist Chuck Rutheiser

notes, no one in Atlanta took the bid very seriously, much less expected it to win.\textsuperscript{59} The Atlanta case illustrates that the absence of citizen opposition at early stages of the bid process reverberates when the bid is selected, at which point the ability to drastically alter the shape of Olympic plans becomes difficult. As Olympic critic Helen Lenskyj astutely notes, “These cities [Atlanta, Sydney] also represented disturbing examples of negative social impact, largely as a result of Olympic bids and preparations that were undertaken with little or no community action.”\textsuperscript{60} The case of Atlanta shows how the lack of early opposition can compound the exclusionary nature and practices of the elite networks involved with Olympic development.

Unlike Atlanta’s piecemeal opposition, opposition to Toronto’s bid for the 2008 Games developed during the bid stage into an active, well-coordinated, and encompassing effort. Toronto’s bid for the 2008 Olympic Games was the city’s second failed bid attempt. After loosing to Atlanta for the 1996 Olympics, Toronto formulated its bid into one of the top contenders for the 2008 Summer Games along with Paris, Osaka, and the eventual winner, Beijing.

Toronto’s recent experience the Olympic bid for the 1996 Games gave city residents, the local government, and the bid committee extra time consider the idea of a Toronto as an Olympic city. This additional time provided a greater chance for public review and gave opponents more time to develop arguments against the 2008 bid. Additionally, the local context of Toronto’s opposition effort played a crucial role in the development of citizen opposition. First of all, the debt of the Montreal 1976 Olympics struck very close to home as did large deficit incurred in

\textsuperscript{58} Lenskyj, 136.
\textsuperscript{59} Rutheiser, Chuck. Telephone interview with the author of Imagineering Atlanta, October 8, 2001.
\textsuperscript{60} Lenskyj, 152.
Elena Guarinello

Calgary in 1988. This national memory coupled with Toronto’s strong history of community activism and participatory planning added to the strong climate for active Olympic opposition. An organized group known as “Bread Not Circuses Coalition” accounted for the major impetus behind and spearheaded Olympic opposition in Toronto.

The production of “Stop Playing Games with Toronto: The People’s Anti-Olympic Bid Book” displays the well-organized and serious nature of the Bread Not Circuses Coalition. This document decodes typically confusing bid committee language, extensively outlines real concerns facing Toronto, discusses how the Olympics relates to these concerns, and proposes alternative solutions. Despite this document and other efforts, Bread Not Circuses faced both a press which gave the effort very little recognition, and an unwilling, non-inclusive elite network of Olympic organizers.

With the cases of Atlanta and Toronto I have focused on citizen opposition, but also significant are a few words about typical patterns of citizen participation. Not only are elite bid committees unresponsive to citizen opposition, they also do very little to encourage citizen participation during the bid process itself. Bid committees’ attempts at community inclusion usually only play lip service to meaningful citizen participation. Public meetings often strictly use such time to inform citizens of the bid committee’s intentions, not to listen to nor incorporate citizen ideas. In this manner bid committees perpetuate the IOC’s pattern of unmanifested democratic ideals.

61 Ibid., 62.
62 Ibid., 62.
From the start, the limitations discussed in this chapter, from IOC structure and policy to the exclusionary practices of elite Olympic developers at the local level, threaten a bid city’s plans for a potential Olympics. Additionally, these limits threaten the imaginative scope of the bid city’s plans and also jeopardize the bid city’s chances of fulfilling democratic and universalistic Olympic ideals and expectations. However, these limits also create unique challenges in today’s bid cities’ quest to remake themselves. Washington, D.C. currently grapples with these very issues.
Chapter 2: The Multiple Character of Washington, D.C.

A descriptive snapshot of recent and important trends in Washington, D.C. must precede an exploration of the Olympic bid’s role in the city. As Maurice Roche intimates, the urban climate from which the bid originates is crucial in understanding the bid’s role. As previously mentioned, the Olympic bid provides a unique opportunity for the bid city to reflect upon its present and contemplate its future. However, Washington, D.C. does not exist as a unified entity, but rather, like most large cities, consists of a complex, and often divided, arrangement of varying interests, people, and objectives. Therefore, an array of supporting circumstances, responses, and possible extensions of the bid greet the opportunities and challenges of the 2012 Olympic bid. In order to illustrate the multiple character of D.C., even as this chapter ignores other aspects of D.C., the text focuses on pertinent issues to the Washington, D.C. 2012 Olympic bid. I use an explanation of Washington, D.C. as a “federal city,” as a “local city,” and as a “regional city” to provide an important lens for the analysis of the D.C. 2012 Olympic bid.

The Federal City:

First laid out as the nation’s capital by Pierre L’Enfant’s 1791 plan, the District of Columbia’s identity has always included the federal government. The very presence of the federal government brings other identifications to the city as well- it is a city of federal employees, a city of politicians, a city of monuments and memorials, a city of symbolism and grandeur, a city of free museums, and a city of public protests and marches. The symbolic character and the practical workings of the federal government have played a large role in shaping D.C.’s identity.
In many contexts, “Washington, D.C.” is synonymous with “authority.” The proliferation of Washington, D.C. in newsprint best represent D.C.’s connection with “authority.” Typically newspaper articles list a place name before beginning the actual text. Usually, said identified place is topical to the following article; however, “Washington, D.C.” precedes the text of many articles which do not relate to local matters, but rather to those of national importance. For example, in the December 10th, 2001 edition of *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, “Washington” precedes the texts of both “Lawmakers near completion of education reform bill” and “Tape proves bin Laden’s involvement.” The events discussed have no greater effect on the city of Washington than they do on the rest of the nation nor does their text contain reference, direct or indirect, to the city of Washington, D.C. Granted, the articles’ information came from people, such as Dick Cheney (current VP), who are involved in the federal government and, therefore, are undoubtedly in D.C. Regardless, news of national significance may gain more credit and attention when sourced from “Washington.” A short article entitled “CDC issues guidelines for dealing with mail,” clearly displays of this phenomenon. The article consists of official warning statements from the Center for Disease Control, which is based in Atlanta, Georgia, not Washington, D.C. The addition of Washington, D.C. as a source for this information attaches greater officialty to the CDC’s statements. Thus, the popular mind connects “Washington” with official and authoritative issues of national significance.

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As a capital city, Washington symbolizes the power of the national government and serves as a stage for popular display and as a prime tourist destination. Washington is a stage for protesters and marchers- the presence of the federal government allows them to make a political statement built upon physical proximity to the nation’s decision-making power and the symbolic power of this space. Visitors from the United States and the world come to see the grandiose government buildings, monuments, and the free museum system. For international tourists, Washington often represents the entire nation. Accordingly, the D.C. Olympic bid builds upon the city’s experience with large crowds and events (i.e. inaugural parades, marches, etc.) and its symbolic and aesthetic appeal as a capital city as selling points of the bid.

Although the “federal city” is an important component of Washington, D.C. as an authoritative political arm, as a powerful symbol of democracy, and as a destination, the “federal city” of Washington cannot be interpreted as representative of the entirety of D.C. An overemphasis of D.C.’s political character at the expense of, i.e., its residents and corporate workers would not reflect urban realities.

**The Local City:**

“What makes the District’s situation unique is its double life as America’s Capital and a hometown.” - *Extending the Legacy, NCPC* 68

Despite the historically dominant federal influence in the District of Columbia, the city has also always been a place where people live, work and play. Even though this local city often defines itself in opposition to the “federal city,” recent changes in Washington, D.C. exhibit a strong growth of local resources, identity, and power which question the prominence of the
federal government. I explain the recent strength of Washington as a “local city” specifically through a discussion of economic rebirth, strong mayoral leadership, and the emergence of a hometown identity.

Washington’s Economic Rebirth

“Second-Best City for African Americans”\textsuperscript{69}
“National League of Cities Award”\textsuperscript{70}
“Fourth Best American City for Business”\textsuperscript{70}
“America’s Top Wired City”
“First in Knowledge Jobs”
“First in Workforce Education”
“Fourth in transformation to a digital economy”
“Fourth in on-line population”
“First in High-Tech Occupations”\textsuperscript{71}

The possibility of hosting a mega-event such as the Olympic Games in Washington D.C. would not have been conceivable without the recent and recognized rebirth of the District of Columbia, both of which are clearly evidenced by all of the above 2001 accolades. My examination of this rebirth begins with business and construction projects that have improved the District before turning to a more qualitative look at the growing recognition and demonstration of a hometown identity for D.C.

The late 1990s brought much rejuvenation to downtown Washington. 1997 alone saw major and influential construction projects- the massive Ronald Reagan Building and Internal Trade Center were added to the Federal Triangle complex; renown architect Cesar Pelli revamped and extended National Airport; the MCI Center brought the NBA and economic

\textsuperscript{69} “DC Selected Second Best City to Live In.” June 12th, 2001. and “District Wins National League of Cities Award.” June 18th, 2001. \textit{Mayor’s news release}
\textsuperscript{70} “District Wins National League of Cities Award.” June 18th, 2001. \textit{Mayor’s news release}
opportunity to Chinatown; and the memorial to Franklin Delano Roosevelt was completed in West Potomac Park.\textsuperscript{72} In the same year, Washington’s first and second business improvement districts (BID) were formed- the Golden Triangle along the K Street corridor\textsuperscript{73} and Downtown DC located predominantly in the East End.\textsuperscript{74} (see Figure 1.1) Based in principles of improving a city’s public spaces and creating a 24-hour vibrant downtown for residents, workers, and visitors, both BIDs have made a significant impact on D.C. downtown areas.\textsuperscript{75}

Construction projects and development continue today throughout D.C., most evidently in the Downtown DC BID area.\textsuperscript{76} (see Figure 1.2) For example, in 1998, D.C.’s new convention center broke ground at Mt. Vernon Square.\textsuperscript{77} In part, positive conditions amongst often disparate groups- the growth and development market, the economy, activists, planners, and politicians- facilitated this remarkable chance for rejuvenation and hence, the real possibility of hosting the Olympics in the future.

The recent economic growth and development of downtown Washington, D.C. brings a sense of excitement to the area which, though independent of specific Olympic bid excitement, rearticulates itself in the bid’s formulation. Press coverage illustrates the excitement engendered by downtown Washington’s rebirth. Every year since 1997, \textit{The Washington Post} featured articles celebrating the city’s growing development, including a two-part series this past summer.
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(2001) entitled “Urban Rebirth.” Gregory Storrs and Matt Birenbaum, both area developers, respectively stated, “Everybody feels like the city has done a 180-degree turn,”78 and “You can feel the excitement down there now.”79 Further, Post journalist, Debbi Wilgoren, noted that “the city’s core has started to breathe again.”80

Mayoral Leadership

Through his role in Washington’s local government, Mayor Anthony Williams forms a major component of Washington’s rebirth. Inaugurated in January 1999, Williams has been a breath of fresh air for the city, especially considering a recent history of inadequate D.C. mayors. Anthony Williams’ emphasis on economic development and fiscal responsibility brings a “surge of interest and confidence in Washington’s future.”81 With a background in public policy, city planning, and development, Williams’ governance is characterized by an intense focus on neighborhood development and a belief that the citizens must set the city’s agenda in order to achieve lasting stability for the District of Columbia. In the following section I outline relevant initiatives of Mayor Williams’ governance in order to lead to an examination of democratic expectations and possibilities within the D.C. bid process.

From the beginning, revitalization at the neighborhood level has constituted a major part of Williams’ political platform. For example, two months before his inauguration he unveiled a development plan to target six underdeveloped neighborhoods.82 (see Figure 2) Williams’ development plan complements the work of Golden Triangle and Downtown DC, for by

78 Spinner.  
79 Wilgoren.  
80 Ibid.  
81 Ibid.  
focusing on different geographic areas of the city, all parts of the city experience appropriate
development. In addition, Mayor Williams recruited the historically ignored and ineffectual
local planning department as a crucial actor in realizing his vision of citywide improvements and
a “long-term strategy for bringing residents back and creating jobs.”

A key step in this process was the mayor’s November 1999 appointment of Andrew Altman, the former planning and
zoning director in Oakland, CA. Williams charged Altman “to rebuild the planning
department” and “to immediately begin implementing a new model of planning excellence for
the City.”

Altman identifies his goals as “rebuilding neighborhoods” and “a clear, predictable,
fair process for development decisions;” D.C. Council Chairman Linda W. Cropp corroborates
that “planning must be a major part of this city’s revitalization.”

Williams and Altman’s emphasis on participatory planning manifest itself through the
Neighborhood Action program. On November 20th, 1999 Williams began the Neighborhood
Action program with the first Citizen Summit. More than a community meeting, the Summit,
which was designed with the intent of seriously incorporating citizens’ views into the
government’s plans, provided an avenue for citizens to give feedback on the first draft of the
citywide strategic plan and voice additional concerns. Nearly a month after the Summit of 3,000
residents, the mayor met with his cabinet to address citizens’ concerns in the revision of the
administration’s strategic plan for the city. Citizen review was again made possible during

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84  Ibid.
85  “Mayor Calls For New Model For Effective Community Planning.” November 4th, 1999. mayor’s news release
86  Fehr (1999).
87  “Mayor Calls For New Model For Effective Community Planning.” November 4th, 1999. mayor’s news release
88  “Mayor Williams and Cabinet Meet to Incorporate Citizen Priorities From Neighborhood Action Citizen Summit.” December 16th, 1999. Mayor’s news release
Four months of work by the city government resulted in the finalized version of the citywide strategic plan which the mayor officially unveiled on April 20th, 2000. Heralded as responsive to the citizens, the plan outlines five budget priority areas—“Building and Sustaining Healthy Neighborhoods; Healthy Families, Children and Individuals; Economic Development; Making Government Work; and Unity of Purpose and Democracy.”

In addition to marked improvement in the delivery of services to neighborhoods and economic growth, the creation of the accountability “scorecards” for government agencies further demonstrates Williams’ serious commitment to his citizens’ views. “The Scorecards allow citizens to track the Administration’s progress on citizen priorities and offer a window into a government that operates with greater transparency.” The D.C. Government’s website makes Scorecard charts with goals and actual attainments available. Also Mayor Williams makes himself more accessible through an “Ask the Mayor” section of his website, which consists of a form to send questions or concerns directly to the mayor. The International Association of Public Participation’s April of 2000 announcement of Neighborhood Action as Project of the Year applauds Williams’ efforts at democratic participation and, as Williams astutely notes, “This award validates our efforts for the last six months to empower citizens to set priorities for our city. It shows we are bringing new meaning to self-government—sending an unmistakable message that democracy can work here in the nation’s capital.”

89 “Mayor Unveils Finalized City-Wide Strategic Plans And Accountability “Scorecards.”” April 20th, 2000. Mayor’s news release
91 Biography of Mayor Anthony A. Williams, www.dc.gov/mayor/bios/williams.htm
92 www.dc.gov/mayor/talk.htm
As a matter of course, the recent economic recovery resonates in the pride and identity of the District of Columbia. Whereas economic rebirth created the opportunity for the feasible conception of hosting the Olympic Games, the emergence of an image of a “Hometown D.C.” represents an opportunity for the bid to capitalize upon and advance this sense of identity for the city’s residents. The emergence of D.C.’s hometown identity reveals itself in less quantifiable ways than its economic rebirth, which does not diminish the importance of this identity. Such notions have probably always existed, and there have always been lifetime residents of D.C. I do not intend for the following analysis to refute other and past presence of community pride. However, the amount of public visibility of a “Hometown D.C.” is noteworthy in an examination of today’s Washington, D.C. and the possibilities for this hometown identity within the D.C. bid. The rise of a hometown identity articulates itself through the campaign for full voting rights, cultural institutions, and the current sports scene.

As home to the federal government, Washington, D.C. as a city of residents has struggled to establish its identity as a “local city” apart from the “federal city.” The District of Columbia has not always been viewed as a city in its own right, independent from the federal government. In many ways, the federal government itself only reluctantly, if at all, fully recognizes D.C. and its citizens. In 1974, the federal government granted D.C. Home Rule, which entitles the District to a locally elected mayor and government that can pass laws for the governance of the city; however, Congress reviews all locally passed laws. In fact, “Congress has frequently overruled decisions of the locally elected government and has even overturned citizen-passed ballot

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93 “Mayor Unveils Finalized City-Wide Strategic Plans And Accountability “Scorecards.”” April 20th, 2000. mayor’s news release
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initiatives.” Such Congressional oversight has the potential to tie the District’s hands in determining its own budget. Furthermore, D.C. citizens are not recognized at the national level; D.C residents did not even gain the right to vote in presidential elections until 1961. Currently, D.C.’s only voice in Congress is a nonvoting member of the House of Representatives. As a result of all of these conditions, the approximately 500,000 citizens of D.C. have no representational voice on national issues.

Although there have been attempts in the past to lobby for voting rights, recently the campaign has moved beyond political circles to the residents. In 2000, D.C. residents brought a case for full voting representation to the federal appeals court, but the case was denied 2-1. In addition to the fairly vocal D.C. Statehood Green Party, D.C. citizens play an active part in the formation of the D.C. Vote nonprofit organization. However, perhaps the most visible change has been in the nature of D.C. license plates. With the essential and even vocal support of Mayor Anthony Williams, the DMV approved plates that display “Taxation without Representation.” While all D.C. drivers who register with the DMV are issued such plates automatically, President George W. Bush symbolically replaced these plates on the presidential limo with blank D.C. plates, thus exhibiting the continued tension between federal and local Washington.

Despite this symbolic setback and the historic difficulty of achieving full voting representation, the new focus on D.C. voting rights is encouraging. This effort underscores a
citizenry that cares about its role in the nation beyond housing the “federal city” and desires national recognition of the District of Columbia as a city in its own right. The presence of such a citizenry together with Olympic expectations of democratic ideals create a unique opportunity—the expectations of the bid could be used as leverage against the government’s prohibitions on full D.C. representation. After all, an Olympic city with a populace that has no national representation would not bode well for fulfilling democratic expectations.

Additionally, recent cultural movements in D.C. clearly reflect the desire for recognition as a hometown. The creation of the City Museum of Washington, D.C. (scheduled to open in 2003) represents one of the most important cultural boosts for D.C.’s hometown image. Initiated in July of 1999, with construction beginning in 2001, the City Museum will appropriately fill the historic Carnegie Library, strategically located across the street from the new convention center in the eastern portion of D.C.’s downtown. (refer to Figure 1.2) Developed and operated by the Historical Society of Washington, D.C. (formerly located in the Heurich House near Dupont Circle), the City Museum provides a unique opportunity for local D.C. to showcase its people and the history of its neighborhoods. Not only will the museum give tourists a taste of D.C. beyond national tourist attractions, but will also exists as a source of pride for D.C. residents. Particularly since the District is the nation’s capital and possess a rich history, the development of such a museum is long overdue—“Washington, D.C. is one of the few major urban centers in the nation and the world that does not have a museum devoted to its history.”

In the formation of a hometown identity, the initiatives of the D.C. Heritage Tourism Coalition represent yet another important accomplishment, but one with immediate and current returns. Formed in 1996, this group comprises a mixture of heritage, neighborhood, and cultural
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organizations. The Coalition’s primary goal is “to invite visitors to the nation’s capital to
discover the rich history and fascinating attractions of the city beyond the monuments.” In
fact, “Beyond the Monuments” serves as the key catch-phrase in one of the Coalition’s major
projects.

The annual D.C. Neighborhood Day functions as the main event of the “Beyond the
Monuments” campaign. During June of the past two years, through the planning of events,
walking tours, bazaars, and activities, 18 neighborhoods have taken part in this citywide
celebration. A “Beyond the Monuments” map and guide was developed in conjunction with the
initiative. (see Figure 3) Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) played a
crucial role in establishing “Beyond the Monuments.” The linkage of neighborhood activities to
Metro train stops insured the accessibility of the heritage tours and facilitated visits to more than
one neighborhood in a single day. Aside from the specific Heritage Days, “Beyond the
Monuments” continues everyday. The WMATA webpage and nine Metro station kiosks make
neighborhood specific “Beyond the Monuments” guides available. (see Appendix C)

In addition, members of the D.C. Heritage Tourism Coalition have done their part to
promote the exploration of hometown D.C. For example, this summer (2001) the Historical
Society of Washington, D.C. had an exhibit entitled “Growing Up in D.C.” and the summer
outreach program at the National Building Museum involved teen-created exhibits centered on
neighborhoods in D.C. Furthermore, these cultural initiatives have been supported by various
public-private partnerships and have been widely endorsed by Mayor Anthony Williams- “I want

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100 www.dcheritage.org
101 www.wmata.com
District visitors to experience the history of the city, not just the history of our Nation’s Capital.”  

Unlike the license plate issue, players at national level reiterate the desire move beyond the monuments. The National Capital Planning Commission’s “Extending the Legacy” plan echoes Williams’ desire for extending the experience and reality of Washington beyond the “federal city.” As a long-term growth plan designed as a vision for the next century, “Extending the Legacy” involves Washington’s work of “continually reinvent[ing]” itself while “always respect[ing] local planning prerogatives and community wishes.” To this end, the plan includes connecting the monumental core centered around the Capitol with all quadrants of the city, developing monuments off the Mall, and also revitalizing the Anacostia waterfront. (see Figure 4.1 and 4.2) Along with the Legacy’s heavy rhetoric about the importance of neighborhoods, these ideas indicate a desire to build ties between the “federal city” and the “local city.”

The locally based foci of “Extending the Legacy” and public-private partnerships’ endorsement of a “Hometown D.C.” indicates the awareness of such an identity’s significance within entities beyond the city’s cultural and tourist institutions. Therefore, with the Olympics’ known value in image construction, the possibility exists to use the Olympic bid as a means to enhance, develop, display, and expand D.C.’s hometown identity. Whether or not such a pursuit is indeed appropriate for the Olympic bid will be discussed later in this thesis.

102 “Mayor Williams Launched “Beyond The Monuments” Heritage Tourism Initiative with Local and Federal Partners.” June 1st, 2000. Mayor’s news release
103 “Extending the Legacy.”
104 Ibid.
The possibility of incorporating a hometown identity into the Olympic bid seems even more feasible since hometown pride has also been building on the sporting fields and courts of the District. Despite a recent tradition of losing and fair teams, within the past year, the D.C. sports scene has been invigorated by the arrival of big name athletes. Mia Hamm, one of the world’s top, and certainly America’s most popular, female soccer player, is a member of the newly formed Washington Freedom (6-13-3 in 2001 opening season). The July 2001 acquisition of Czech hockey star Jaromir Jagr from the Pittsburgh Penguins gave a boost to one of Washington’s better teams, the Washington Capitals, with a 41-27-10 record last year. Jagr, the NHL’s leading scorer for the past four years, is an exciting move for the D.C. sports community: “His addition to the Caps’ lineup without any significant subtractions instantly makes Washington a formidable force in the Eastern Conference.”

Arguably the most exciting event in Washington sports comes to the team that has not had a winning season since 1996-7 and has only been just over .500 three times in the past 21 years—The Washington Wizards (formerly the Washington Bullets). Michael Jordan, easily basketball’s greatest player, first stepped onto the Washington scene in January of 1999 when he became President of Basketball Operations for the Wizards. Finally, after months of speculation, on September 25, 2001, Michael Jordan resigned from his managerial role and signed a player contract with the Wizards.

The significant excitement over Jordan’s managerial role pales in comparison to the palpable fervor and renewed hope in the Wizards since Jordan’s return to the court. Nearly every Washington Post article about the Wizards features Jordan, the paper’s sports columnists have all written articles about his return, and the Wizards’ web page of washingtonpost.com has

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an entire “Eye on Jordan” section. Also, the attendance problems of the Wizards seem to have been solved with a sellout crowd of 20,674 in the home-opener against Philadelphia on November 3rd, 2001. A Post report of the game indicates high levels of enthusiasm, “‘We’ve got Jordan,’ they [the fans] chanted, standing on tiptoe, sassy and buoyant. ‘Yes, it’s true,’ a capacity crowd of 20,674 seemed to tell the world: Washington has claimed basketball’s biggest superstar and, on this night at least, Michael Jordan had transformed MCI Center into the coolest place in the National Basketball Association.” Of course, the outcome of Jordan’s return on the Wizards’ success cannot be determined since the 2001 season has just begun.

In addition to the plethora of Jordan articles, recent press about D.C. exhibit the burgeoning growth and subsequent excitement about Washington, D.C. as a hometown city. A reflective piece by 20-year resident and Washington Post columnist, Bob Levey, clearly exemplifies the assertion of a hometown identity and pride in D.C. Amidst claims and reflections about Washington’s recent improvements, problems, and changes over the past 20 years, Levey peppers his column with comments such as “This city knows its history. ...it’s a real hometown, with enduring loyalties...it feels like a place to live.” The rise of an authentic identity for the city of Washington, D.C. creates an opportunity for the Olympic bid to capitalize upon such an image, rather than smother it with glossy postmodern images that sometimes seem like standard fare. However, in actuality, the D.C. bid focuses on the city as part of a complex region, encompassing Northern Virginia and parts of Maryland which extend to Baltimore.

The Regional City

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The regional theme of the Washington Olympic bid is not simply based on geographic
proximity and location of sporting venues, but stems from a history of regional cooperation and
identity. Regional ties were seen to evolve as early as 1844 when the two cities become the first
connected by telegraph. In 1904, Washington sent their fire department to assist a large fire in
Baltimore showing that “the idea was present that the two cities could help each other.”
Over the years, various transportation solutions provide evidence of regional cooperation. For
example, Virginia, Maryland, and D.C. all paid for the George Washington Memorial Parkway;
the Baltimore-Washington International Airport was a joint project; the three areas combined to
build the Baltimore-Washington Parkway; and Virginia and Maryland helped fund D.C.’s public
train system- Metro.

Despite such evidence of coordination, transportation conundrums and increasing
congestion also surface as sources of disagreement between the various concerned polities. For
example, the start of construction for the Woodrow Wilson Bridge’s planned improvements was
very controversial between the governors of Virginia and Maryland (the bridge spans the
Potomac River from Alexandria, Virginia to Oxen Hill, Maryland). However, considering the
highly charged politics behind transport appropriations and the overlap of so many political
jurisdictions within one interconnected region, such disputes are not at all surprising. All of
these areas’ dependency on the same roadways necessitates regional action and cooperation.

In addition to the aforementioned past and transportation examples, the
Washington/Baltimore region has a recent history of multiple forms of coordination. As part of
the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, in June of 2000, governors of Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania

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and D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams signed an official agreement to join with environmentalists to make a regional commitment to the Bay’s health. Concern for a different type of health for the region led to the Office of National Drug Control Policy’s 1994 designation of the Washington/Baltimore High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA). Through a variety of programs and services, the resulting committee works with a 12 county area and 134 federal, state, and local agencies to “promote cooperation and coordination of law enforcement, treatment and prevention efforts throughout the region.” As the above examples illustrate, the Washington/Baltimore region has coordinated to address shared issues of transportation, environmental health, and public health. Clearly regional problems require regional solutions through regional cooperation.

In spite of the political distinctiveness between Washington and Baltimore and perhaps because of their long and consistent history of regional cooperation, the U.S. Census officially recognized the undeniably connectivity of the region in 1992 when Washington and Baltimore were merged into one Metropolitan Statistical Area. Since 1992 this Metropolitan Statistical Area has expanded and, as of July 1999, consists of the two cities themselves, 12 counties in Maryland, 17 counties in Virginia, and two counties in West Virginia- a total estimated population of 6,961,737 people. (see Figure 5.2). Although this merger did bring speculative press about which city was dominant in the pairing, more significantly, it lead to further suggestions of regional cooperation. Roger K. Lewis, a professor at University of Maryland, suggested that there should be a form of governance to fit the geographic pattern of ties and that many issues would be better handled at the regional level, instead of city-by-city and state-by-

110 Ibid.
David Rusk, author of Cities Without Suburbs, corroborates when he recognizes that “Having a Metropolitan government is much better than trying to get multiple local governments to act like a metropolitan government.”

As important note on the continued significance of regional cooperation, the National Capital Planning Commission includes the region in its “Extending the Legacy” plan for D.C. Although this document is concerned with improving the District of Columbia, they express the view that “Renewing Washington is impossible without a recognition that the District and its suburbs are one, a kind of city-state with resources greater than the sum of its parts.” The NCPC also emphasizes the tight economic, social, retail, and transport interweave of the Washington region. Not satisfied with past and minimal examples of coordination and divisiveness of identity within the region, the vision of “Extending the Legacy” stresses the crucial importance of regional cooperation and capitalizing upon regional opportunities in the future for the betterment of all related parties.

The relationship between Washington, D.C. and its surrounding suburbs exhibit a mutual reliance. Without a state like most cities, D.C., as a matter of course, is very interwoven with its surrounding states. In addition, the surrounding areas of Maryland and Virginia are more directly connected to and affected by the District than their own state capitals. Although the District does depend on the suburbs for two-thirds of its workforce, the dynamic patterns and relationships of the Washington metropolitan area are far more complex than a dual relationship between a central city and its suburbs. For example, people no longer go to the city to shop, even city residents travel to suburban shopping centers. Also, many residents commute from

113 Tripp., 51.
114 “Extending the Legacy,” 51.
115 Ibid., 51.
Virginia to Maryland, vice versa, and from one suburb to another. Over approximately the past 25 years, specific regional areas, especially in Northern Virginia, have grown into hubs of their own. Fitting neither into traditional definitions of a city or a suburb, urbanist Joel Garreau’s term “edge city” is useful in understanding this growth pattern. According to Garreau, edge cities are the mult-nucleated hubs that dot the borders of major metropolitan regions. Characterized by all the same functions of a city, albeit in spread-out form, these hubs are where increasing number of people live, work, and play. In fact, in his book entitled Edge City: Life on the New Frontier, Garreau uses Tysons Corner in Northern Virginia as emblematic of an edge city.  

A little further west of Tysons Corner, the Dulles, Reston, and Herndon area emerges as a considerable hub for the technology based services, especially information technology. This area, sometimes known as the “Dulles Technology Corridor,” is one of the leading areas in the nation for jobs in research, technology, and development corporations. The location of main centers of AOL, IBM, Nextel, and Lucent Technologies, Inc. along the Dulles Tech Corridor provides clear evidence of this area’s economic strength. These industries contribute to the region’s economic wealth, its westward expansion into more rural suburbs, and they also accelerate the already high growth rates of the region. The presence of these strong hubs coupled with intense, rapid growth and the recent revitalization of D.C. itself creates a complex, dynamic, and interrelated region. (see Figure 6).

Despite this regional interconnectivity, competition and rivalry does exist between the various constituencies and political jurisdictions within the region. For example, the feature article in the May 2001 edition of the Washingtonian magazine discussed which was “better”-

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Virginia, Maryland, or D.C. Regardless, the bid clearly would be foolish not to acknowledge the interdependency between Washington, Baltimore and the region.

Furthermore, the regional nature of the D.C. bid makes sense from a sporting standpoint for, over the years, Washington and Baltimore fan-bases have overlapped. Of the traditionally popular sports, currently, Baltimore hosts the region’s baseball team- the Baltimore Orioles; Washington has the hockey team- the Washington Capitals- and the basketball team- the Washington Wizards. In addition, Washington has both a men and women’s professional soccer team- the D.C. United and the Washington Freedom respectively. Both cities have their own football teams- the Washington Redskins (NFC) and the Baltimore Ravens (AFC).

Given the spread of sports between the two cities, sports fans in both Baltimore and Washington are accustomed to traveling to the other city to cheer on “their” team. This reflects a connective identity and also exhibits the willingness of residents to travel to the other city for sports events. Therefore, residents would probably not mind traveling to the other city for Olympic sports.

The regional bid makes further sense because the Washington sports franchises have long relied on the outlying areas for stadiums. The Washington Wizards used to play at the Capital Center/USAir Arena in Landover, Maryland before moving downtown to the MCI Center in 1997. In the same year, the Redskins moved to FedEx Field at the new Jack Kent Cooke Stadium in Landover, Md., vacating Robert F. Kennedy (RFK) Stadium in southeast D.C. for both the women’s and men’s professional soccer teams.

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The federal, local, and regional characterizations of D.C. compete and interact daily to form a complex, dynamic city. The thesis now turns back to the Olympic bid process to examine
the varying responses of the 2012 Washington bid to these separate yet intersecting parts in its endeavor to create a Washington Olympics.
Chapter 3: The D.C. Bid

The Washington, D.C. Olympic bid for 2012, as a work in progress, presents an excellent opportunity to assess how the Olympic and prototypical local context, as described in Chapter 1, responds to and reacts with the multiple character of Washington, D.C. in the formulation of the Olympic bid. This chapter deals with Washington’s typical exclusionary practices towards the D.C.’s “local city,” while Chapter 4 more fully explores the issue of the bid’s imagination as it responds to the assets of the “federal city” and the necessitates of the “regional city.” Before exploring these complexities at greater depth, the particularities of the bid should be described.

The Basics of the Bid

The bid for a Washington Olympics first began as two separate, not to mention rival, bids in 1997- one in D.C. and one in Baltimore. On May 1, 1997, the USOC recognized both cities as official candidates for the USOC’s single U.S. nominee to the international field. After some discussion amongst the cities’ business communities, Katherine Graham, the subsequently deceased owner of The Washington Post, together with Baltimore Sun publisher, Mary E. Junck, arranged a meeting of the cities’ influential people to discuss the notion of merging the two bid efforts. Merging the bids provided an opportunity to improve both cities’ chances of winning the U.S nomination for the 2012 Games. On June 30th, 1998 the USOC formally agreed to dissolve the two separate bid committees and recognize a new regional bid committee- the
Washington/Baltimore 2012 Regional Coalition (now the Chesapeake 2012 Regional Coalition).\textsuperscript{117}

The theme of using existing infrastructure to “Build Less, Not More”\textsuperscript{118} forms the central focus for the 631-page bid document. The design for this regional bid takes advantage of existing venues and infrastructure as it spreads Olympic competition to five major hubs throughout the region. These hubs, or the area the bid committee and documents refer to as “the Olympic Corridor,” consists of downtown D.C., downtown Baltimore, Annapolis, Northern Virginia, and College Park, Md. (see Figure 7) The last would be the site for the athlete’s Olympic Village as well as the Media Village. The partnership of local universities helps insure the use of existing facilities. The bid committee identifies 46 local colleges and universities in the region that could be used, primarily University of Maryland at College Park and in Baltimore County, the Naval Academy (Annapolis), Johns Hopkins University (Baltimore), George Mason University (Fairfax, Va.), Howard University (D.C.), and George Washington University (D.C.). The concentration of the five hub plan excludes those few sports which require special conditions that would necessitate their placement outside of the Olympic Corridor. These sites include sites for canoeing, preliminary soccer games, and the Great Meadows site for equestrian events in southern Virginia.

This five hub plan takes advantage of the region’s existing public transportation system. This includes Metro trains and buses which service D.C. and parts of Northern Virginia and southern Maryland, and the two light rail commuter trains- the MARC in Maryland and the Virginia Regional Express (VRE) in Virginia. The plan includes the region’s three airports

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(National, Dulles International, Baltimore-Washington International) and Amtrak stations as advantages in the region’s ability to facilitate the travel plans of athletes, officials, and spectators. The bid plans do not exclusively rely on existing infrastructure, but contain concessions for improvements as well. For example, RFK Stadium (currently used primarily for professional soccer) will need to be reconfigured for track and parking at Metro stations will need to expand.

In addition to existing infrastructure, the D.C. bid emphasizes its preexisting world-class status, its experience hosting major events, its financial strength, and its sports-friendly and active populace as major indicators of the region’s strong ability to host the Games. The plan also innovates a unique idea to hold the opening and closing Ceremonies simultaneously on the Washington’s National Mall and Baltimore’s Inner Harbor in order to take advantage of the cities’ dramatic and historic public spaces. All of these aforementioned themes serve as a foundation upon which to deliver the promises of the Games. Washington D.C. 2012 promises an opportunity to showcase the region on a world-stage, renew and build community pride, “leave a lasting legacy for future generations,” bring an economic boost, and to serve as a “catalyst for regional action.”

The preceding explanation of the D.C. 2012 bid minimally describes the bid’s existence in an idealized and theoretical world. Currently, the plans of the bid committee merely imagine Washington as an Olympic city; the bid is a thought exercise, not yet completely tested by reality. However, after careful consideration, complexities emerge regarding the bid’s extension beyond the documents and rhetoric of ideal creation of the Washington bid to the complicated and multiple realities of Washington, D.C. While the bid’s ideas and promises do suggest new

118 CRC’s “Information Booklet.”
120 Information Booklet.
and imaginative ways of thinking about the city and region, analysis also shows a tendency toward exclusionary practices which hinder democratic ideals of the Olympic Movement.

**D.C.’s Elite**

The organizational power behind D.C.’s bid reiterates the powerful networks of elites which the bid process tends to privilege, as discussed in Chapter 1. However, just as Toronto and Atlanta’s regime varied based on urban specifics, the regime behind Washington DC 2012 reveals the regional environment and power structure of both Washington, D.C. and Baltimore.

The composition of the Chesapeake Regional 2012 Coalition’s (CRC) Board of Directors indicates a representative sample of a typical urban growth regime as defined by Matthew Burbank et. al. (see Appendix D) However, from the very beginning inequity existed amongst the powerful business community and local government for the joint bid “was engineered by a group of business executives who believed a collaborative bid would strengthen the region’s chance of landing the potentially lucrative sporting extravaganza.”\(^{121}\) Though arguably efficient, the uneven roles of the business community and local government in the development of the Washington 2012 bid exhibits this elite group’s failure to fulfill the democratic expectation of Olympic competition.

The composition of the CRC’s Board of Directors coupled with the membership of the Executive Committee clearly indicates that the business leaders dominate this committee. The Board comprises of “31 business leaders from the region; five appointments made by each of the mayors of Washington and Baltimore, two appointments made by each of the governors of

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\(^{121}\) Wilson (Dec. 21, 1999).
Maryland and Virginia, seventeen regional athletes and sports personalities.”122 In addition, five members from the region’s major universities sit on the committee. Since modern universities often operate as businesses, the business community accounts for 60% of CRC’s membership; athletes make up 27%, and public representatives a mere 11%. The level of the 15-member Executive Committee exaggerates this disparity; 12 business members constitute 80% of Executive Committee membership and Arlene Limas, Jair Lynch, and Cal Ripken, Jr., as athlete representatives, round out the remaining 20% of the committee. No public officials or appointees sit on the Executive Committee.123

The financial contributions and support of regional corporations further advance the business community’s dominant role in organizing the D.C. bid effort. By October 3, 2000, a few months before the USOC deadline for the bid document, CRC raised $7.6 of an eventual $8.2 million from 46 area firms, including many major corporations that would undoubtedly benefit from a Washington Olympics. Holding out into the very day the bid was due (December 15th, 2001), the major powerhouse of AOL, based in Dulles, Virginia, made a dramatic contribution to the bid, including at least $500,000 and Internet services for the Games.124 This pattern of financial contributions clearly exhibits that the bid effort “is being driven exclusively by corporate money, not local government.”125 The fact that most of these corporations hail from the Dulles Tech Corridor testifies to the advanced role taken by the “regional city” of D.C. through its corporations.

However, the tight weave of the private interests in D.C.’s network of elites working on the Olympics displays itself not only through monetary contributions, but also through the

122 www.wbrc2012.com
123 Ibid.
connections between the donors and the CRC. All but four of the sixteen major corporate donors listed by the press have at least one member on the CRC’s Board of Directors for a total of seventeen such members, eight of whom are also on the Executive Committee. In addition, the private business groups that publicly endorse the CRC all have members on the Board of Directors. This well-calculated, coordinated effort results in a mutual relationship between Washington, D.C. and Baltimore’s business community and the 2012 Olympic effort.

Even though the bid committee’s official decision-making bodies do not include a wide representation of government officials, neither do they ignore the importance of public elites in pursuing citywide projects. Although the private sector of D.C.’s Olympic elite network dominates the bid process, the bid cannot proceed without public sector’s support. The support of both mayors is clear from their editorials in local newspapers, appearances at Olympic press conferences, and their general enthusiasm; all of which have aided in securing necessary public support. Further, “Resolutions of support have also been passed by the city councils of Washington and Baltimore, the Baltimore Metropolitan Council, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, the Arlington County (VA) Board and the Fairfax County (VA) Board of Supervisors.” The public sector also plays a role with regard to finance. In conjunction with the business community, which has given considerable funds for use in the bid process, the governments of D.C., Baltimore, Virginia, and Maryland have all passed identical legislation to guarantee financial help should the region eventually win the Games in 2005.

127 www.wbrc2012.com
128 Ibid.
Since business leaders and elected officials do have a major stake in what occurs in the city and region, the bid committee should consult and work with them. In general, coordinated efforts matching with projects undertaken by city and regional groups appear far more effective than singular and separate efforts by the bid committee. CRC vice-president Clarence Bishop attests to Washington D.C. 2012’s coordination aims in trying “to make sure that our plans are in line with their plans, particularly for any building or construction or road expansion and that kind of thing.”\(^{129}\) For example, comments from Richard Stevens, of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) demonstrate that the D.C. bid process expended a significant amount of energy upon making the bid correspond with WMATA’s view of the transit needs of the area.\(^{130}\)

These specific coordination techniques as well as others of the Washington 2012 bid do not alone constitute a problem. Rather, the problem, typical of elite networks and other hegemonic entities, lies within the CRC’s conception of with whose plans to coordinate. The CRC only gives credence to the plans of other elite and dominant groups. Bishop’s remark reveals a binary notion of who plans for the city- “our plans” and “their plans.” “Our plans” clearly entail a specific body- the CRC. However, “their plans” are not united in the same fashion as “our plans.” When Bishop refers to “their plans” he refers to the plans of business leaders and local government. However, business leaders and elected officials are not the only stakeholders in the city or region, nor are they the only ones working on projects to improve and/or change the city and region. Restricting the CRC’s conception of city stakeholders and

\(^{129}\) Bishop, Clarence. Telephone interview with the vice president of the Chesapeake Regional Coalition, Oct. 18, 2001.

\(^{130}\) Stevens.
decision-makers to a binary structure as a matter of course excludes other groups from CRC action and any other form of Olympic planning.

Nonetheless, the CRC does recognize the role of citizens in Washington’s bid efforts—unfortunately, they only do so in a negligible and nominal fashion. “Citizens, business leaders and elected officials from Washington D.C., Maryland and Northern Virginia should be very proud of the proposal their [my emphasis] bid team has put together.” This statement made by Charles Moore, chair of USOC evaluation team, underscores idealistic notions the bid. Placing “citizens” first and the use of “their” implies that the bid is indeed for the citizens and suggests an accountability of the bid team to the citizens. While the former may be true in some respects, the latter certainly is not for, as previously exhibited, the Washington D.C. bid committee centers around various constituents of D.C.’s elite. Unfortunately, as the primary organizational arm of the Washington bid, CRC ignores the “local city” of D.C. through its exclusionary community relations’ practices which examples of opposition emphasize and highlight.

Community Relations and Opposition

The rhetoric used by the Chesapeake Regional 2012 Coalition indicates a publicized concern for community involvement that, after analysis, appears largely nominal. This split between publicized intent and actualized practice greatly hinders Washington 2012’s chances of fulfilling the democratic expectations put forth by the Olympic Movement. The CRC states the following as an essential part of its plan to win the U.S. nomination: “Begin to build broad-based community support through information and involvement. We will be reaching out to key businesses and civic groups to share our message and enlist their support and seek out experts
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and others who can assist us in preparing a winning bid.”132 Such publication supports this 
image of a community-focused bid committee by stressing the amount of time that Dan Knise, 
the president and CEO of the CRC, devotes to “stepping up community outreach efforts”133 and 
meeting with groups at the grassroots level.134 In an article he wrote for The Washington Post, 
John Morton III, the chairman of the CRC, asserts that “[We] have taken steps to include all 
segments of the community the planning, staging and enjoying the games.”135

Unfortunately, consistent with the model described in Chapter 1, Washington D.C. 
2012’s outreach efforts consist mostly of information dissemination and do not follow principles 
of incorporation and concern. In addition to the aforementioned stated goal of the CRC, 
Clarence Bishop, CRC’s vice-president, exhibits the CRC’s real emphasis when he characterizes 
community involvement as an “information outreach effort to make sure that they understand 
what we are doing, what we are proposing.”136

The “Community Corner” page of the Washington 2012 website exhibits another way the 
bid committee falls short of its community promises. Listed along the bar at the top of the page 
are sections entitled “OlympicKids Program,” and “Community Bulletin Board;” and 
“Participating Schools and Programs,” “Sport of the Month,” “Photo Gallery,” and “Community 
Quilt” fill the body of the page.137 Unfortunately, none of these have connecting links or any 
explanatory information. A critique of the lack of development of its community programs must 
be circumscribed by the fact that the bid’s is still in relatively early stages of its development. At

132 “Information Booklet.”
136 Bishop.
this stage of the selection process, as far as the CRC is concerned, promises are far more crucial to winning the bid than the establishment of community programs.

The lack of well-developed community programs coupled with incomplete community involvement efforts demonstrates that building community support has not been a top priority of the D.C. bid process. This type of prioritization may filter down to the bid committee from the IOC. As was shown in Chapter 1, the amended IOC rules do not give very high priority on “government and public support” in judging a bid city.

Despite the IOC’s lack of attention to public support, in October of 2000, the CRC released the results of a study done of 1,059 adults by the Tarrence Group indicating “82% of the region’s population is in favor pursuing the Olympic Games.”138 In order to try to more fully understand the nature such support, I conducted my own informal study of 57 residents of D.C., Virginia, and Maryland (see Appendix A). In this survey I asked respondents to rate (from 1-5, 5 being the most important) the importance of the very same 10 technical criteria the IOC uses to judge candidate cities. Respondents were not told that the IOC used these criteria verbatim in their evaluation of candidate cities. In contrast to the IOC’s designated weight of 1, 50 people or 88% of my respondents gave “government and public support” a rating of 3, 4 or 5. Of that 88%, 46% gave a rating of 5, 32% gave a rating of 4, and 22% gave a rating of 3. All told, only 2 of my respondents gave the criteria of “government and public support” the same rating that the IOC felt it deserved. Although my survey is far from scientific, the results intimate a disconnect between people’s expectations of the Olympic process and the actual realities of the

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137 www.wbre2012.com

process. In other words, people expect their own opinions to carry weight in the Olympic bid process, whereas the IOC denies the value of such opinions.

Despite the crafty community relations techniques of the CRC, very real stories of opposition directly relate to the Washington D.C. 2012 bid. In contrast to their coverage of community focus, the press only minimally covers existing opposition to the Washington D.C. bid; at best a few articles make brief mention of “conditional support” without any substantiating information. Such a penury of coverage is not at all surprising given the fact that both executives at the major newspapers of Washington and Baltimore (The Washington Post, The Baltimore Sun) were instrumental players in the formation of the merged bid. This potential bias combined with the emphasis of the bid committee’s efforts, rather than actions, towards community involvement essentially operates as a silencing mechanism. The CRC gains the advantage of an image of community involvement without actually completely the work necessary to deserve such an image. Regardless, less widespread new sources provided more extensive information about opposition- the Washington CityPaper (a free weekly publication), a press release from the Green Party posted on a political watchdog webpage, and through an interview with Stewart Schwartz, the president of the Coalition for Smarter Growth.

Much like the Atlanta 1996 case, most of the opposition directed towards Washington’s Olympic bid targets specific sites. However, in contrast to Atlanta, these are not sites of construction, but rather the very usage of sites engenders opposition. The opposition sites with regard to the Washington 2012 bid include the equestrian site of Great Meadows, Virginia, Robert F. Kennedy Stadium (RFK) and its relation to D.C. General Hospital (DCGH), the Fitzgerald Tennis Center, and the National Mall (see Figure 8). Each one of these concerns highlights a different problem which together reveal a disconnect between the conceptual
promises of the bid and the slim probability of being able to deliver those promises. They all reveal the CRC’s lack of concern for opposing viewpoints at this stage of the bid process. In addition, they all inform an understanding of the need for meaningful opposition before the bid’s potential acceptance.

The question of the Great Meadows site for Olympic equestrian competition points out holes in the bid’s major selling point of accessible competition within the ‘Olympic Corridor.’ Stewart Schwartz called this issue to my attention when he recognized the incongruencies between the bid’s promises and the shape of its plan. “They [CRC] have said the right things about making this a transit-friendly Olympics. They say it. However, we look at some of the venues and go ‘wow, there are going to be some transportation challenges.’”139 The Great Meadows site is very distant from the nearest hub of Northern Virginia, approximately 33 miles from the Beltway and nearly 60 from D.C. itself. Further, the small southern Virginia community does not have the capacity to support the number of visitors the Olympics would bring. The Coalition for Smarter Growth strongly opposes the site because they are “deeply suspicious” that it will be a ploy by developers introduce road expansions and to get water and sewer systems “extended for some ‘public use’ and then they take advantage of that without having to pay for it.”140 In other words, the Coalition sees the bid’s extension to Great Meadows as a cover for easing development into southern Virginia. Such a revelation of the bid’s hidden threats exposes cracks in the bid’s rhetoric of easy transit and less building.

The coupling and substantiation of the Coalition for Smarter Growth’s opposition with alternative plans marks a major distinction of and credit to the Coalition’s opposition stance. With regards to the Great Meadows site, Schwartz notes “Alternate sites could include Baltimore
County or horse areas that are right off of I-95 north of Baltimore; also Prince George’s County Horse Center which is five miles off of the Beltway.\textsuperscript{141} Beyond easing transportation, the latter could be meaningful for the equability and socially responsible component of the bid for it introduces concern for a less-developed part of the region. “Certainly, they [Prince George’s County] could use some economic development.”\textsuperscript{142} This solution implies that if additional development must come with Olympic venue designations, such development should concentrate in areas closer to the Olympic core and in communities with greater need than old estate properties in the elite horse country of Virginia. Not surprisingly, these alternate solutions resonate with smart growth principles espoused by the Coalition.

The conflict surrounding the RFK and D.C. General Hospital (DCGH) site addresses the Olympic implications for lower class neighborhoods and residents. Robert F. Kennedy Stadium (RFK), built in 1961, on 2400 East Capital Street has meet a wide range of the city’s sports and entertainment needs. Once home to the Washington Senators (baseball) and more recently the past home of the Washington Redskins (football), RFK Stadium, managed by the D.C. Sports and Entertainment Commission, now hosts D.C. United and Washington Freedom (both soccer). Accessible by Metro’s orange and blue lines, RFK sits directly west of the Anacostia River on the eastern edge of the Lincoln Park neighborhood.\textsuperscript{143} (see Figure 8) Although not quite as disadvantaged as the area of Anacostia east of the river, this neighborhood consists mostly of lower class and economically disadvantaged residences. The siting of the stadium places it essentially in the midst of parking lots and highways- effectively isolating it from the

\textsuperscript{140} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{141} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{142} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{143} “DC Sports and Entertainment Commission.” website, www.dcsportcommission.com
surrounding neighborhood. Further, the area surrounding RFK is characterized by two other large buildings- The D.C. Armory, which is used for everything from conventions to the circus, and D.C. General Hospital, a several building complex south the RFK. (see Figure 9) In planning schematics these three buildings are often conceived of as a single unit. The bid’s suggestions to possibly reconfigure RFK as the Olympic Stadium raise concerns over the fate of DCGH and also over changes in the neighborhood. The fears over the future of this controversial site reveals a mismatch of planning ideas on the part of the CRC and the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPS) and also confusing concerns for planning with concerns of the Mayor’s summer of 2001 closure of DCGH.

The D.C. Statehood Green Party has been the major opponent of the D.C. bid’s plans to “reconfigure” RFK stadium and its surroundings for Olympic use. The area targeted includes the stadium, D.C. Armory and DCGH, which serves a significant portion of the District’s lower class residents. While concern over the future of this site is indeed legitimate, the Green Party’s press release two days before the visit of the USOC’s site evaluation team hints at undisciplined and confused opposition tactics. The article does not allude to the complexities at stake in restructuring DCGH and redeveloping RFK area. The article opens with, “Among the sites to be developed in preparation for the joint Washington-Baltimore 2012 Coalition’s Olympic bid is D.C. General Hospital.” This is simply not true; the line of causation is not quite so direct. The Mayor’s decision to close DCGH as such and reconfigure it as D.C. Community Hospital relates to current concerns of cost, effectiveness, accessibility, and other health care system woes, not a potential Olympic Games 11 years in the future. Without any apparent facts as

145 Ibid.
support, the article also merely insinuates the plans of the bid committee to demolish the DCGH building.

However, this undisciplined and weak opposition argument is not entirely the fault of the Green Party; the CRC’s bid documents make no mention of its specific intentions for the RFK site. The CRC’s failure to specify any changes to RFK may be attributable to the layering of plans for the redevelopment of the area, a problem also sited by the Green Party. The NCPI’s document, “Extending the Legacy,” presents a new vision of the city into the next century. More responsive to the surrounding community, “Extending the Legacy” layouts a vision for the RFK section of East Capitol Street to link the traditional “Monumental Core” of the Mall with the Anacostia River. The plan suggests a major memorial, increased park land, and new housing and community development.¹⁴⁶ (see Figure 10)

With the prevalence of several different projections for the RFK site— that of the NCPC, the CRC, and alternate views of the Green Party— perhaps this confusion and layering of plans caused the CRC’s lack of specificity about RFK. Nonetheless, the Green Party seems to think that the prerogatives of the NCPC would be subverted to the Olympic plans, “Under the Olympics bid the Commission’s plans would be modified accordingly.”¹⁴⁷ This notion along with the complex layering of plans for the RFK site is in conflict with the image of coordination presented by the CRC.

Despite its undisciplined and partially misinformed opposition effort, the Green Party’s opposition effort is very valuable because it indicates a concerned population aware of a threat posed by the D.C. Olympic bid. Atlanta can serve as a cautionary tale of the level of success

¹⁴⁶ “Extending the Legacy.”
¹⁴⁷ McLarty.
achievable through economically disadvantaged opposition. At a later stage of the bid process, the hope is that when the D.C. bid formally declares its intentions for the RFK site, this existing awareness and concern may transform into an effective opposition effort.

On the other hand, the D.C. bid outlines a specific plan for the use of the Fitzgerald Tennis Center as an Olympic venue, but at first did not produce the same level of community awareness as the DCGH case. The issue of proposing the usage of the Fitzgerald Tennis Center as the Olympic tennis venue speaks to the disruption and annoyance factor often identified with construction and major events in upper class neighborhoods. In this case, the Fitzgerald Tennis Center is situated in the upper class neighborhood near the upper end of Rock Creek Park in Northwest D.C. Every summer the Fitzgerald Center hosts the Legg Mason Tennis Classic, a premier international men’s tennis competition that typically draws high-profile players like Andre Agassi and Pete Sampras. Every year this event brings grumbles from neighbors unhappy with the noise, extra people, and cars. The neighborhood is also active in community protests of nearby construction of communications towers. Despite these indicators of experience with protest and community awareness, when Citypaper journalist Mark Cohen brought the designation of the site for Olympic use to the attention of James Jones, the chair of the area’s advisory neighborhood commission, Jones was clueless and indignant about the entire proposition: “I cannot believe they made this part of their proposal without consulting us.”

The Fitzgerald Tennis Center’s inclusion in the bid proposal does not guarantee its usage should Washington, D.C. win the 2012 Olympic Games. Since the Fitzgerald is part of Rock Creek Park, the National Park Service (NPS) must give final approval for the site’s usage. Terry Calstrom, the Park Service’s regional director, affirmed this rule; “Under the circumstances we
cannot promote the tennis center as a definite venue at this time. However, this does not preclude the site from consideration, pending completion of a public process at a later date.\textsuperscript{149}

In this case, the power and rights of a federal body would give support to citizen opposition, thus undermining the silencing efforts of the CRC.

The uncertainty of the Fitzgerald’s use for the Olympics could potentially damage the CRC’s vision of a D.C. Olympics. For example, say that Washington becomes the designated host city in 2005 and the public process promised by the NPS denies the use of the Fitzgerald Tennis Center. The CRC would either need to find another place to play tennis or build a new venue. Both options threaten to disrupt the bid’s major tenets of “build less, not more,” and the concentration of the five hubs in the Olympic Corridor. Therefore, the tennis venue, like the Great Meadows equestrian site, exhibits the uncertainty of the staged Olympics’ ability to deliver promises of the theoretical bid.

The role of national oversight is ignored by yet another component of the bid- the opening and closing ceremonies. In addition to the National Park Service’s role with the Fitzgerald Tennis Center, the use of the National Mall for a joint Opening and Closing Ceremonies with the Inner Harbor in Baltimore more drastically impinges upon and ignores this federal body’s rights. Arguably one of the nation’s most important and monumental parcels of public space, the federal government officially recognizes the National Mall as National Park Service land. Yet the NPS has not been given its due by the CRC. Concerned about damage to the grounds, security, construction, and subsequent limited use by visitors, “the Park Service has repeatedly denied the organizers approval for use of the Mall.”\textsuperscript{150} The words of Sally

\textsuperscript{148} Cohen, 26.
\textsuperscript{149} Ibid., 26.
\textsuperscript{150} Ibid., 26.
Elena Guarinello

Blumenthal, the deputy associate regional director of the Park Service, vehemently captures the problems of the National Mall and its inclusion in the bid:

“‘We have told them [CRC] they are not going to use the monumental grounds for the opening and closing ceremonies, but they keep showing it in their literature anyway…What are we, potted plants here? We are not going to allow it, it would be the kind of thing that would have to go through a public process. I can see it being controversial. If you thought the World War II Memorial was controversial, you can imagine what this would be like.’”151

Ironically, despite its prominence in the bid literature, complete with flashy renderings of the Mall, the CRC does not treat this plan with complete certitude. Already a controversial issue for its break with Olympic tradition and law, the bid documents do not finalize the National Mall plan for the opening ceremonies in the same way the Fitzgerald Center is identified as the venue for Olympic tennis. The CRC views the National Mall plans as an option, albeit the best one.

However, such proscriptive measures around the National Mall site likely have very little to do with perceived problems of approval from the National Park Service. Rather, such proscriptions are far more likely due to possible restrictions and disapproval by the IOC.

The uncertainty of the Fitzgerald Tennis Center and National Mall as a part of a Washington, D.C. Olympics does not keep them out of the bid documents. Yet an examination of the issues and controversy surrounding both of these sites shows that their inclusion in a Washington Olympics is not a foregone conclusion. In fact, this is equally true for Great Meadows and the RFK area. Each of these is an item in the D.C. bid that signifies a site of contention rather than a certain element of the bid. However, the CRC logically includes all elements of the proposed Olympics (certain or not) in the bid proposal to improve the bid’s chances of winning. After all, why would the USOC select a less than complete bid, even if it

151 Ibid., 27-28.
were more scrupulously honest? These examples of opposition indicate that Washington D.C.
2012 Olympic bid tries to win selection based on promises that they can only hope to deliver.

The effective exclusion of opposition groups from the planning of the bid’s initial
documentation exposes the calculated and compromising maneuvers of the CRC in their efforts
to submit a ‘complete’ bid. The Coalition for Smarter Growth’s experience with the CRC
exemplifies the bid committee’s view of the value of community participation, constructive
criticism, and inclusion. Schwartz’s story supports the typical Olympic model of community
meetings wherein the presence of opposition groups is mere show. Even though the Coalition
requested meetings on many occasions, “They [CRC] called us once. They called us in less than
a week before the final bid was due. They were basically using us for window dressing. They
wanted to ‘hear our concerns’ but when we asked if we could review the material, they said
“no.” They told us it was going to final printing and there was no time to make any changes.
We felt rather used by them.”152

The CRC itself even recognizes such a tactical move on its own part, of course without
expressing the negativity associated with the act of excluding city stakeholders from an expected
democratic competition. In fact, Knise states, “the community will have more input after the
coalition’s bid is accepted.”153 In addition, Schwartz speaks of the CRC’s promises to work with
the Coalition once the bid is won or maybe even if it becomes a finalist. Stewart Schwartz
accurately captures the prospects of such a promise when he said, “Now the real test is- will they
consult us?”154

152  Schwartz.
153  Cohen, 26.
154  Schwartz.
Despite the uncertainty of the bid’s promise to actually listen to community groups such as the Coalition for Smarter Growth, the aforementioned examples of controversy to the Olympic bid, whether well-formulated like the Coalition for Smarter Growth, or undisciplined like the Green Party, suggest that the bid itself, all 631 pages, is not beyond revision. The presence of this developing opposition hints that D.C. may not repeat the mistakes made in Atlanta, which suffered from opposition that organized far too late into the bidding and staging process of the Games to effectively impact the Games.

Even though opposition has been ignored at this stage in Washington’s bid process, the still early stage of the bid process provides encouragement for the D.C. bid. Another year remains before the bid may be selected as the U.S’ candidate city and three years beyond that before the international selection of a host city for 2012. The CRC will have a chance to change its community relations practices to fit its already publicized good intentions and oppositions groups will have more time to organize and gather specific information about the bid. However, the opposition groups will have to content with the fact that, typically, once a bid is selected with a completed form and proposal, enormous pressure develops to deliver all the promises made in the bid. In the eyes of the CRC, the examples of controversy exhibit that opposition and community involvement threaten the complete and ‘perfect’ form of the bid. Nonetheless, the potential revision of this idealized form presents a unique opportunity for the bid to remake itself as more responsive to the local concerns of the city and, with such revision, also come closer to fulfilling Olympic democratic expectations.

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The elite composition of the CRC and its community practices perpetuate Olympic patterns of the past as they exclude constituencies within the District. In addition, the specifics
of existing opposition reveal that the promises and themes of the Washington, D.C. 2012 Olympic bid document merely appear cohesive because they rely upon potentially false assumptions of local and federal coordination. Aside from the specific exclusionary examples of Great Meadows, RFK Stadium, the Fitzgerald Tennis Center, and the National Mall, the bid responds to the “federal city” and the “regional city” of D.C. in an imaginative fashion that presents transformative possibilities for Washington, D.C. as it challenges the bounds of Olympic rules and standard practice.
Chapter 4: Stretching the Boundaries

“The Washington area is a community of great subtlety and remarkable, regular change. The minute you think you have this place pinned under your thumb, it squirts free and redefines itself. It constantly demolishes clichés.”155

The Olympic bid process gives voice to this characteristic flux and redefining nature of Washington through the imaginative ways in which the Washington bid responds to the “federal city,” “local city,” and “regional city.” Despite the D.C. bid’s conformation to a typical Olympic framework through exclusionary community practices, the bid possesses great value in its movement outside of the traditional Olympic framework. The bid’s attention to specific circumstances of Washington, D.C., primarily through the bid’s response to the “federal” and “regional city,” produces an essential foundation for creative departures which challenge IOC limitations as they reimagine the city.

This chapter examines these creative departures as the CRC’s plan for the Olympic opening ceremonies with regard to the “federal city” and the intense regionalism focus as the element responsive to D.C.’s complicated “regional city.” However, despite the value of these elements, what the bid does not capitalize upon is also significant in this examination. Therefore, in the midst of addressing the transformative and imaginative roles of both the “federal” and “regional city,” this chapter will return to the “local city,” not in terms of the CRC’s exclusionary practices, but rather as an examination of missed opportunity and omission.

Federal Display- A New Opening Ceremonies

In their proposal to stage the Olympic opening and closing ceremonies on the National Mall the CRC utilizes the “federal city” in an imaginative fashion which challenges IOC

155 Levey.
limitations. This capitalization of symbolic space and power configures the opening ceremonies in a such a way as to advance Olympic democratic ideals, to showcase D.C., and to challenge Olympic norms. (see Figure 11)

Typical Olympic opening ceremonies take place in the city’s “Olympic Stadium” and consist of a parade of athletes grouped by country, the lighting of the Olympic torch, and a lengthy dramatic presentation exhibiting various qualities of the host city and country. IOC rules do not call for the standard of holding these ceremonies in stadiums, rather it is a formula established and advanced by consistent practice. The ceremonial use of stadium easily fulfills the IOC requirement that all athletes be in the same location for the ceremonies. D.C.’s controversial plan to divide the ceremonies between Washington’s National Mall and Baltimore’s Inner Harbor defies this dictate; even if all the athletes are in one of the two locations, a plan the CRC suggests- the legality of the plan remains questionably. Technically, the rule can be appealed to the IOC, but at this stage of the process the CRC has only appealed to the USOC. Although the USOC has made no final decision about the feasibility of the plan, Clarence Bishop firmly insists that the CRC is “very excited about it and hope that the USOC and eventually the IOC could get excited about it as well.”

Despite differing norms and rules, this imaginative concept for the ceremonies shows Washington’s willingness to take risks in the bidding process: “The Mall proposal is seen by some Olympic observers as a wild card that could help sell the bid or hurt it.” Fortunately, Washington’s risky plan entails the introduction of at least two new worthwhile strategies to the

156 Wilson (Oct. 27, 1999).
158 Bishop.
159 Heath (Dec. 14, 2000).
Olympic process- the use of local places to enhance the symbolic power of the Olympics and a move towards a democratization of sorts.

The plan to hold the opening ceremonies on the National Mall, arguably the symbolic heart of the “federal city,” gives the Olympics a tool to facilitate and emphasis expressions of city and national culture. As mentioned previously, Olympic opening ceremonies include a dramatic portion that incorporates skits, dances, and other displays intended to exhibit cultural and other identifiable qualities of the host city and country. The stadium forms the backdrop and stage for such a display. However, such the backdrop of the stadium alone rarely offers spectators and participants any cultural signs or clear indications of location. Therefore, the ceremonies rely upon added visual cues and theatrics to represent host city/country culture. For example, part of the Opening Ceremonies for the 2000 Sydney Summer Olympic Games featured large costumed kangaroos and, at one point, an impressive horse-riding routine in the tradition of “The Man from Snowy River.”160 Certainly such signs indicate “Australia,” but if these same displays took place with the Sydney Opera House as a backdrop, for example, the ceremony would no longer be taking place in a stadium anywhere, but unmistakably be occurring in Sydney, Australia. Subsequently, although costumes and theatrics would not likely disappear completely, they would no longer be necessary to identify “ownership” of the Olympic Games due to the addition of an intense sense of place. Taking the ceremonies out of the stadium would likely highlight the city’s best places and add symbolic weight to displays of culture and pride. The D.C. bid proposes do just that as they look to take advantage of one of the nation’s most symbolic places- the National Mall.

160 “The Man From Snowy River” is an epic poem written by Australian’s most representative and well-known poet- B.J. “Banjo” Patterson.
The Washington bid recognizes that the “area has a wonderful stage”161 and, therefore should be used as such. The inclusion of this plan into Washington’s bid, testifies to the CRC’s attention and commitment to the strengths of local circumstances despite IOC rules and Olympic norms. The bid embraces the symbolic components of the “federal city” to advance a new vision for the opening ceremonies. Clarence Bishops clearly illustrates this perspective when he states, “It is an option that we [CRC] thought, because of the geography of Baltimore and Washington and particularly Baltimore Inner Harbor and our National Mall, was too great an idea just to bypass. So we have to put it on the table as one idea [among other proposals].”162 In this respect, the bid stretches Olympic boundaries by recognizing the “federal city’s” symbolic spaces have enormous potential to localize the opening ceremonies, contribute to the emotional strength of the Olympics, and to fulfill democratic Olympic ideals.

The opening ceremonies can include more people in the Olympic Movement due to the physical characteristics of these places. Simply because the ceremonies would be held in two places does not completely explain the increased number of attendees compared to a stadium plan. Where a stadium can only offer inclusion in the Olympic Movement (via the ceremonies) to as many people as existing seats, the National Mall and Inner Harbor have no specific numerical limits. With its large amount of ceremonial open space and excellent views, the National Mall particularly creates an excellent opportunity for a large number of people to sense a shared presence, even if only some are able to view the ceremonies in their entirety. For example, a particular part of the show may take place near the Capitol, but could be seen on screens by the Washington Monument and in other various spots. Additionally, portions of the show which are visible from distant locations, such as fireworks, could extend the experience to

people watching from their balconies or roofs of their office buildings across the city, or even to viewers watching the display from National Airport or Potomack’s Landing (both are located along the Potomac River with clear views of the Washington Monument and Capitol Building).

The notion of extending the Olympic Movement to more people is a clear objective of the CRC in the development of the proposal for the opening ceremonies. Dan Knise himself identifies increased participation as a major impetus behind the non-stadium idea- “Wouldn’t it be great to engage more people in the opening and closing ceremonies?”\textsuperscript{163} In addition to its potential for meeting democratic expectations, the plan is also valuable for daring to think imaginatively outside of IOC parameters and challenge established norms. As a testament to this, Dan Knise recognizes the plan’s transformative power, “‘Think about having the ability to change that part of the Olympics and have more regular people involved…Our dream was to create an outdoor extravaganza to allow us to take advantage of two of the better backdrops in the world. This is doable. This is not impossible.’”\textsuperscript{164}

\textit{Local Olympic Possibilities}

Unlike its usage of the “federal city” the Washington, D.C. bid does not utilize the “local city,” as I describe it, in any component of their bid other than through displays of support. Aside from its exclusionary practices described in Chapter 3, omission characterizes the CRC’s response to the “local city.” Mayor Anthony Williams’ inclusion of citizens in the city’s decision-making process and the publicized emergence of a D.C. hometown identity create unique opportunities which hold potential value for the bid. And yet, the CRC does not include

\textsuperscript{162} Bishop.
\textsuperscript{164} Arney (Jan. 9, 2000).
these predominant elements of the “local city” in its bid construction. Such omission is just as crucial as “federal city” inclusion in understanding the role of the bid process as a point of reflection for the city.

Just as the National Mall opening ceremonies’ idea provides an opportunity to fulfill Olympic democratic expectations, so too do Mayor Williams’ principles and Neighborhood Action program (includes Citizen Summits) which have effectively expanded city decision-making to the citizen-level. Williams’ work exhibits D.C.’s populace as one willing to participate in urban decision-making, thus creating an opportunity for the CRC to follow Williams’ lead and, by the same token, come closer to fulfilling the democratic expectations set forth by Olympic ideals. Unfortunately, as the previous chapter outlines, the CRC’s exclusionary community relations techniques do not promote such strategies in their initial formulation of the bid. Regardless, due to the early stage of the bid process, the 2012 bid could, where appropriate, build upon, rather than deny, the valuable model of participatory planning that Williams tries to create in the District. Despite CRC’s omission of democratic techniques which Williams clearly favors, both Mayor Anthony Williams and Baltimore’s mayor, Martin O’Malley, not surprisingly, have fully supported the idea of a Washington Olympics from the very beginning. Indeed, such vocal support from the leaders of local government is necessary for a bid’s success. For example, Williams and O’Malley combined on an editorial piece for The Washington Post indicating their enthusiasm for the bid. The article, which was strategically written a week before the bid document was due in December 2000, draws comparisons between Sydney and the Washington/Baltimore region as a way of transferring the success of Sydney to
Washington/Baltimore. Williams also uses other Olympics to build support for a Washington Olympics in his “Statement of Beijing’s Successful Olympic Bid.” This statement has very little to do with Beijing, but is rather a way of stating his support for a Washington Olympics, “We look forward to continuing our work with the Committee to complete the US bid process.”

Although the mayors are not officially part of the CRC, the only way in which the CRC utilizes the “local city” is through the appropriation of the mayors’ symbolic support. The CRC clearly recognizes the power of mayoral support in the bid process and capitalizes upon this by peppering their press releases with favorable comments from both mayors. Also, the CRC has been sure to include the mayors at important events of the bid process. For example, the mayors were both featured at the ceremony for the mailing of the bid in December 2000, at a special press conference with the USOC Site Evaluation Team in June, and, most recently, at the celebration of making the initial cut for the US bid at RFK Stadium on October 26th, 2001.

Additionally, with its amazing potential and opportunity for identity construction, the Washington Olympic bid could focus on “Hometown D.C.” in the Olympic campaign. In addition to emphasizing the already well-established world-class nature of the city, the Olympic bid offers an excellent opportunity to showcase and catalyze the recognition of a Washington “beyond the monuments.” However, the bid does not include any of these intensely local values of D.C. in its promotional material.

The D.C. bid does not capitalize upon Mayor Williams’ model of participatory planning nor upon the growth of a hometown identity in Washington. Even though these are viable, largely beneficial options, and their omission initially appears negative, a closer look reveals

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165 Knise.
166 “Mayor Williams Issues Statement on Beijing’s Successful Olympic Bid.” July 13th, 2001. mayor’s news release
such omission may be an appropriate move for the Washington, D.C. 2012 Olympic bid. A comment by Jay Kriegel, director of NYC 2012, instructs this examination:

“[We] have to be realistic about what this is and what this isn’t. This is an Olympics 17 days in the future. It produces an amount of revenue, but not a limitless amount of revenue. It can provide dramatic initiatives and energy and focus and catalytic impact to the city on its economy and its projects, but it does not solve all its problems. The main thing is to make clear to people is what it achieves and what it doesn’t.”

The emphasis on the improper characterization of the Olympic bid as an urban panacea suggests that an Olympic bid should try to focus on what it can achieve according to its scope as a large and elusive event. Clarence Bishop, of the CRC, corroborates, “I can’t imagine a connection between one community effort that Mayor Williams has evolved and our effort to bring the Olympics to the entire region.” This statement clearly identifies the goals of the “local city” as ultimately distinct from those of the “regional city,” which is the primary focus of the D.C. bid. The immensity of the Olympics are indeed much more suited a long-range regional approach, rather than immediate smaller-scale community efforts.

Fortunately, in D.C.’s case, the omission of local issues from the Olympic bid does not preclude the continued growth of a participatory citizenry and a hometown identity. In fact the very strength of these local elements coupled with the city’s economic rebirth creates a healthy city- a foundation without which the very notion of hosting the Games would be inconceivable. With a predominantly healthy and improving city as a base, the D.C. Olympic bid is not tightly bound by notions of obligations to fixing city ills and can, therefore, place emphasis on issues more appropriate to Olympic size and scope- namely the region.

Renewed Regionalism

169 Bishop.
“Whatever happens to the Washington bid, the fact they’ve gotten Mobil to give out money even though its left the community and [also] AOL and they’ve got everybody working together to do a regional activity with Washington- there’s not precedent for that. This is a very very exciting bid. It’s a significant historic bid and it will have enormous benefits for Washington within the region. They get great credit for having done that.”

-Jay Kriegel, Executive Director of NYC 2012

As a singular and large project, the Olympic bid has the scope and capability that can bring the region together in a number of ways. The regional focus of the Washington DC 2012 Olympic bid capitalizes upon preexisting relations to overcome rivalry, create an invigorated sense of regionalism, and a reality of regional cooperation. The bid’s open and embracing inclusion and centrality of the “regional city” imaginatively responds to specific circumstances of D.C. in modes that challenge IOC limitations and raise important questions about what constitutes a “city.” Never before has an Olympic bid so openly embraced regional reliance as with the Washington 2012 bid. Not only does Washington acknowledge the need of regional land for the staging of the Games, but in an unprecedented move uses regionalism as a major theme of its bid concept. This focus is not only promising in changing IOC notions of its one-city rule and building regionalism, but is also an essential component in the bid’s chances for success.

The International Olympic Committee places demands upon potential hosts of the Olympic Games in that it will only grant the rights to host the Games to a single city. Regardless, in the past many Olympic cities have broken this one-city rule through the practical design of their games, but none have embraced such within the very concept of their plan. Especially with the addition of more and more sports to the Olympic program, cities have needed to rely upon their regions to stage the Games. Regardless, none of these cities’ advertised their

170 Kriegel.
Olympics as anything beyond the city; for example, the Centennial Olympiad was “Atlanta 1996”, not ‘Atlanta and Outlying Areas of Georgia,” even though tennis, softball, soccer, and canoeing, to name a few, took place outside of city limits. Frequent use of areas beyond the actual host city suggests that revision of the single city rule is necessary.

Not only does the need for venue space require rethinking the single city rule, so too do larger trends in urbanism and the shape of cities. Notions of what constitutes a “city” are rapidly changing and yet IOC rules have not changed to allow for variations. Cities are not uniform entities and yet the IOC treats them as such. As a testament to the differences in “cities” and their subsequent ability to host the games, Clarence Bishop, the vice president of the Chesapeake Region 2012 Coalition, points out that “the actual geographic footprint of our Games’ layout is roughly the same size as the Los Angeles games were.”

In attempts to officially legitimate their bid, the Washington/Baltimore bid committee unsuccessfully lobbied for an exception to the single-city rule. Accordingly, the Washington/Baltimore 2012 Regional bid had to comply with IOC rules. In order to do so the bid’s name was changed from “Washington/Baltimore 2012” to “Washington, DC 2012.” In actuality this change was superficial, for the committee found a loophole in the IOC’s single-city designation. So as not to compromise their intense regional focus, a second name-change was created to counteract the first: “At the same time, to reinforce our unchanging commitment to hosting a regional, Games, we [Washington/Baltimore Regional 2012 Coalition] changed our group’s name to the Chesapeake Region 2012 Coalition.”

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172 Bishop.

173 Fisher.

174 Information Booklet
Washington’s selection as the remaining name of the bid does not change the magnitude of the role Baltimore will play in the planning and staging of the Games. In order to be sure that Baltimore citizens understood this and to continue to build their Olympic spirit, an article appeared in the *Baltimore Sun* after the bid’s name change. The author, Barrie Maquire, recognizes the disappointment to Baltimoreans and explains the benefit of having the nation’s capital’s name attached to the bid at the same time that she assures them that “both the city and region would get the same benefits. If the Chesapeake Region 2012 wins this Olympic quest, we would gain enormous economic, transportation, and prestige advantages.” In the face of IOC rules, the committee name changes to evade rather than actually change the regional focus of their bid testifies to the CRC’s commitment to the regional nature of the 2012 Olympic bid.

The amount of emphasis placed on the regional focus of the bid through bid documents, press releases, and news articles indicates the level of commitment to the regional idea, not mention excitement about its potential. John Morton III, chairman of the CRC board, highlights the capability of the bid to augment and improve upon preexisting regionalism- “our Olympic effort can help bring to life the concept of regionalism in a way that has eluded us for too long. While there are exemplary examples of regional cooperation and enlightened leaders who foster a regional approach, regional results are often hard to see.” Bid documents themselves declare that “The Olympic Games are a great uniting force that is helping people rise above parochial interests or past disagreements and work together on planning the 2012 Games.” Notice that this is phrased in the present tense. Regionalism is expected to have immediate benefits, benefits that are irrespective of winning the U.S. selection or the ultimate right to host the Games.

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176 Morton.
The CRC’s ability to gain USOC and IOC-required financial guarantees epitomizes the reality of the bid’s regional promise. The bid committee was able to get an identical piece of legislation through the D.C. City Council, the Baltimore City Council, and the General Assemblies of both Virginia and Maryland in an unprecedented 120 days.\textsuperscript{178} Despite the shared nature of the Olympic proposal, the CRC recognized each body’s individuality in that they did not ask each jurisdiction to give an equal share of the $175 million guarantee. Rather, each jurisdiction’s promised contribution equals the projected percentage of economic development the Olympics would bring. Virginia is expected to enjoy 19% of Olympic-related development and agreed to guarantee 19% of the $175 million; Maryland will be responsible for 53% and the District for 28%.\textsuperscript{179} This early example of regional cooperation and support for the Olympic process is a harbinger of “what our region can accomplish by working as a team.”\textsuperscript{180} Jay Kriegel, executive director of the NYC 2012 committee, attests to the enormity of this achievement for the Washington bid- “Nothing like that has ever happened before. It’s extraordinary!”\textsuperscript{181}

The intense commitment of the CRC and the demonstrated proof of a growing sense of regionalism and cooperation intimates the value of the bid’s imagination regardless of whether the bid wins or loses. In fact the inherent risk that comes with this type of imagination is a part and parcel of the bid’s worth as a process for the city. The press, among other references to the exciting promise of a regional bid, describes it as an “unusual dual-city bid”\textsuperscript{182} and an “unusual

\textsuperscript{177} Information Booklet.
\textsuperscript{178} Bishop; Kriegel.
\textsuperscript{180} Information Booklet.
\textsuperscript{181} Kriegel.
cooperative effort between cities."\textsuperscript{183} Within this context, the unusual nature of the bid and the challenges it poses to the IOC produce a potential barrier to Washington’s ability to win the Games. After all, as Jack Kelly, a consultant for Houston’s bid points out, “The broader the Games are, the harder they are to market to the IOC.”\textsuperscript{184} Nonetheless, the D.C. bid believes that regionalism will be a major benefit of the Games and that “the bid effort has already played the role of a catalyst for a growing regional dialogue.”\textsuperscript{185} In short, the advantages of the regional focus of the D.C. bid justify its risks.

Conversely, the radical nature of the bid’s regional component may contribute to the bid’s potential success. Dan Knise underscores the crucial nature of the regional component when he states, “If we ever lose our regional focus, that would be an obstacle to our success.”\textsuperscript{186} Considering the five-hub arrangement of the proposal such a statement makes sense from a pragmatic standpoint. However, imagination and creativity also play an essential role in the strength of the Washington, D.C. 2012 Olympic bid. As Craig Mosback, CEO of USA Track and Field, points out, “They have an excellent shot at winning because they have a very creative [my emphasis] bid that combines two world-class cities, one of which is that capital of the free world.”\textsuperscript{187}

Although technically an outsider to the Washington bid process, Jay Kriegel perhaps provides the best words to capture the benefits of the imaginative aspects of the Washington, D.C. 2012 Olympic bid process:

\textsuperscript{183} Wilson (Oct. 27, 1999).
\textsuperscript{184} Heath (Aug. 6, 2000).
\textsuperscript{185} Morton.
\textsuperscript{186} Arney (Jan. 9, 2000).
\textsuperscript{187} Heath (Aug. 6, 2000).
“They’ve done an extraordinary job in dealing with the unique historic and geographic positioning of Washington as a federal trusteeship in a large area… Treating Washington as a partner in the region rather than as a castoff is a profound benefit of that bid. They have something different to achieve and I think they’ve done that.”

The last sentence of Kriegel’s statement suggests that the Washington, D.C. Olympic bid process is not just about designing the best possible plan for staging the Olympic Games, but rather that it also incorporates the introduction of new notions about Washington, D.C. as a city. Although it certainly appears as if the CRC ultimately ignores the “local city” of D.C. in the development of the bid at the cost of advancing an enriched integrated view of the “regional city,” the bid actually borrows notions of a hometown in its support of regionalism. Granted, the bid does not incorporate the substance of what I refer to as “hometown D.C.,” (such as the neighborhoods, museums, etc.), but rather the CRC recasts the “regional city” as the new hometown for D.C.

CRC rhetoric presents notions of a regional identity on the back of the bid’s promotional brochure with its proud proclamation in the words of John Morton, the CRC’s chairman, “We can host our own hometown Olympic Games.” (see Figure 11) Additionally, the uniting theme for the bid, “Connecting Communities; Hosting History,” expresses the desire to use the Olympic bid, and perhaps one day, the Olympic Games, to unite the region. The notion of Washington, D.C. as a regional hometown suggests a second and broader identity for Washington. This new definition of D.C. does not negate the city’s local hometown identity, rather it suggests that the region, despite a multitude of political jurisdictions, is bound by far more than shared economics and highways. The Olympic bid suggests and encourages a shared identity across the region.

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188 Kriegel.
189 “Making the Dream Come True.” (promotional brochure)
Conclusion: Reflections of the Bid

As cities constantly involve themselves in the process of shifting, redefining, reimagining, and remaking themselves against diverse and often merged backdrops of local, regional, national, and global, the Olympic bid process provides a single point of reflection for the city. Thus, the Olympic bid represents a valuable thought exercise for the city, which imagination and creative thinking enhance. However, the proscriptions of the IOC and other limitations of the Olympic context do not give imagination and creativity free reign in the development of a city’s bid. The IOC asserts democratic expectations for Olympic bid and host cities and yet, paradoxically, also places demands upon the bid city which limit their very ability to fulfill such expectations.

However, as the case of the Washington, D.C. 2012 Olympic bid shows, these limitations do not ultimately preclude the bid’s possibility for meaningful reflection. Imagination with attention to local circumstance supplies a tool for Washington to challenge Olympic limitations. The radical plan for the opening ceremonies on the National Mall and the honest focus of regionalism question the norms of procedure for the Olympic Games through the suggestion of a more democratic setting for opening ceremonies and the suggestion of a IOC and Olympic procedure which is more responsive towards the realities and differences of bid cities. Therefore, as a single bid, the thought processes emergent from the D.C. bid carry value for the Olympic Movement itself.

In addition to the value of an imaginative bid to the Olympics, the D.C. bid also contains value for the city of Washington, D.C. itself. Despite Olympic limitations, the Olympic bid process is valuable in an examination of Washington, D.C. for it hints at its ever-changing and
complex reality. The Olympic bid process becomes a lens through which to view the city’s multiplicity, as well as its strengths, weakness, and divisions.

The community relations techniques of the CRC uncover the inequity of decision-making in the city and the prominence of elite control. However, the composition of this elite group represents a new dominant force in Washington- the coalescing of elites in the CRC makes an emerging corporate force visible in a city which has been traditionally dominated by the federal government elite. On the other hand, the exclusion of the “local city” from the Olympic bid process does not exclude this component of D.C. from the reflective nature of the bid process. Rather, through omission, the bid process reveals the concerns of the “local city” as more appropriate to smaller-scale change characterized by mayoral involvement and both public and private initiatives. Conversely, the immense symbolic nature and the magnitude of the Olympic Games provide a blueprint for rethinking the “federal” and “the regional city.” Washington, D.C.’s imaginative concept for the opening ceremonies capitalizes upon the symbolic power of the “federal city” and the bid’s intense focus on regionalism responds to the “regional city” through a recognition of its integration, changing character, and the vital role of the related areas of Washington, D.C., Virginia, and Maryland in future development of their shared region.

Even as the Washington, D.C. 2012 Olympic bid reflects upon the city’s present and reimagines its future, it acknowledges the importance of continual redefinition within the life of D.C. and within the Olympic experience itself:
“We think this [the bid] captures much about what our region has been, is today, and can become by 2012. Our bid is about connecting communities and people within our region; but also about connecting people throughout the world. Clearly, we know how to be good hosts and can provide a rich backdrop for the athletes of 2012 to make their own history.”

This last statement shows that the Washington, D.C. bid, through the act of reimagining D.C., does not seek to create an Olympic experience, but rather an environment that allows athletes and spectators to also remake the city for themselves. Thus, the Olympic bid process reasserts the relevancy of Ray Bradbury’s challenge for a “wide-ranging, imaginative and vital culture.”

This examination of Washington, D.C. through the eyes of the Olympic bid process and the parallel examination of Olympic procedure from the perspective of the Washington D.C. 2012 bid show that the Olympics are about more than the actual Games and that the actions of a city cannot alone account for urban value. Via the examination of the Washington, D.C. 2012 Olympic bid, I demonstrate that imagination and thought processes are just as crucial to the examination of a city as concrete actions and hence, should be considered urban values.

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