



17. OLYMPIC TORCH RELAY

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Corporate Plan Output: Events	

The purpose of this report is to inform Councillors about the Olympic Torch Relay that is scheduled to run through Christchurch on Monday 5 June 2000 and outline the financial support that is required to host this event.

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND INFORMATION

New Zealand will be the destination of the Olympic Torch relay before it reaches Australia and its stay in New Zealand is for three days. On the morning of Monday 5 June the Olympic Flame arrives in New Zealand where the first of five relays begin. Each relay will take approximately four hours and the schedule for the relays is as follows:

1. Monday 5 June
 - Queenstown
 - **Christchurch, 3.00pm to 6.30pm**
2. Tuesday 6 June
 - Wellington
3. Wednesday 7 June
 - Rotorua
 - Auckland

This will be the first time that New Zealand has hosted the Olympic Torch and more significantly it will be the first time the torch has travelled other than directly to the host nation.

THE STRUCTURE

Sydney Olympic Organising Committee (SOCOG) is the paramount organising body responsible for the Olympic Torch Relay. SOCOG have in turn entered into contracts with the New Zealand Olympic Committee (NZOC) and the New Zealand Government to assist them with organising the Torch's visit to New Zealand.

The "Towards 2000 Taskforce" has invested a third of the NZ\$1.4 million cost of staging the five relays. The Australian Government along with marketing partners and sponsors of the NZOC will meet the rest of the funding.

From here the NZOC set up a National Planning Task Force (NPTF) that invited the Mayors of host towns and cities of New Zealand to assist the NPTF with the following:

- Advice
- Route selection
- Alternative means of travel
- Location of celebration site (Cathedral Square)
- Recruiting of volunteers
- Secure local funding for the staging of the celebration and for all value adding activities within the region
- Assist with and organise local promotional activities

- Assist with local medial liaison
- Arrange suitable crowd control along the 16 kilometre route
- Provide road closures and other statutory approvals
- Liaise at local level with the Police, Customs, Immigration, Roads, Transport and Agriculture
- Identify local retailers who may wish to become involved in the marketing of Olympic merchandise
- Provide any necessary permit/license to enable SOCOG to conduct merchandise vending or hawking activities at the celebrations or anywhere along the route of the Torch Relay.

THE ROUTE

The route is confirmed and starts at the Christchurch Airport and then proceeds around our city streets through Canterbury University, Mona Vale, Hagley Park, along Worcester Boulevard and finishes in Cathedral Square with the “celebration” ceremony (refer to attachment).

There are a number of photo opportunities along the route (ie. The Tram, Mona Vale) that will be broadcast on international television around the world.

THE “CELEBRATION” IN CATHEDRAL SQUARE

An important role for the host towns and cities is to identify and advise on a suitable location for the staging of the “celebration” ceremony within their region. It is recommended that the celebration continue after the actual relay has departed.

It is the responsibility of the host towns and cities *to support and fund the celebration and the activities around the relay*. A typical celebration consists of:

- Short video of the Olympic Torch Relay from Olympia through Oceania
- Mayoral welcome
- National Anthem
- Official welcome from a NOC representative
- SOCOG’s Games music signalling the arrival of the Olympic Flame
- Lighting of the Olympic cauldron
- Reading of the official Olympic Message
- Presentation of gift to the community by SOCOG
- Reading of the Olympic Message
- Presentation of gift to the community of SOCOG
- Extinguishing and departure of the Olympic Flame
- Regional “celebration” continues.

FUNDING

The city is expected to support and help fund the visit of the Torch Relay through:

- Arranging financial support for the “celebration” ceremony.
- Meeting the costs associated with all local statutory approvals, road closures etc.
- Being responsible for crowd control along the 16-kilometre route and the “celebration” ceremony.
- Meeting the costs of any value adding promotions or alternative means of transport ie. City banners, transportation of voluntaries etc.

SOCOG are responsible for funding the travel of the Torch relay, the convoy, the cost of the torches themselves and the cauldron, torchbearer uniforms, the promotion and securing of nominations for torchbearers, the overall event management and logistical arrangements.

THE BENEFITS

Having the Torch Relay in Christchurch on Monday 5 June will greatly benefit our “Olympic City” status. Some of the ways in which extra benefits will accrue and value will be added include:

- A more comprehensive programme of promoting our beautiful attractions and features via international television. For example, Australian Media coverage will likely be on a daily basis through Channel Seven, the official Olympic host broadcaster, and many other Olympic broadcasters worldwide.
- Fifty Christchurch people will be able to physically carry and be involved with the Torch.
- The Christchurch public will be able to join in the excitement and view the World’s greatest sporting icon for themselves.

THE ISSUES

The issues with this event are as follows:

1. The last hour and half of the relay will be in darkness (dusk at 5:15pm) therefore no photo or television opportunities for the city. *We have also been advised that there is no guarantee that following Queenstown the torch will arrive in Christchurch on time – it could be 25 minutes plus late. The date and time of the event can not be changed due to other relay commitments throughout New Zealand.*
2. With the relay not being a mass movement of people around the city the traffic management of this event is dangerous and running at night heightens this danger. *A traffic safety plan has been requested from the Paul Carrad, event organiser, but he says this is the responsibility of the Host City of the relay.*
3. Closing the roads is not a practical option due to the congestion problems encountered with people returning home after the long weekend (Queen’s Birthday weekend – evening of Monday 5 June) and Christchurch Police are not able to provide 170 staff. *City Streets is not prepared to close the roads, especially Memorial Avenue on a public holiday, due to the congestion problems and the staffing demands this will put on the Christchurch Police. The road closure would be in place for approximately 5 hours at peak traffic time. It is important to note that the Christchurch Police will have 40 staff involved with the Christchurch Marathon the day before.*
4. Without a road closure the torchbearer is not legally allowed to run on the road under the Traffic Regulations 1976 (TR 76). *In effect the torchbearers are classed as pedestrians in the Regulation and they must at all times when practicable remain on the footpath if one is provided, or as near as practicable to the edge of the road if there is no footpath.*

5. We must ask the question whether the public would come en masse to view the flame at the “celebration” ceremony in Cathedral Square at the conclusion of a long weekend. *The Monday of Queen’s Birthday, early evening, does not appear an attractive time for people to gather in Cathedral Square.*
6. There is no financial support from NZOC to run this event – estimate cost \$15,000. *Local sponsorship opportunities may be sought but before any approach is made, prior approval must be sought from SOCOG through the NPTF. It is important that there is no conflict of interest with SOCOG’s and the NZOC’s commercial partners.*

Recommendation: For discussion.

Chairman’s

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