



MEDIA RELEASE



Welland Selected as CanoeKayak Site for Greater Golden Horseshoe 2015 Pan American Games Bid

For Immediate Release – Wednesday, February 18, 2009

Welland – The Welland Recreational Canal Corp (WRCC) is pleased to officially announce that the Welland International Flatwater Centre and the City of Welland have been selected as part of the Toronto 2015 Pan American Games Venue Plan and Bid.

"This is great news. The hosting of such an important international competition will provide Welland with an opportunity to showcase to all, our world-class flatwater courses", suggested Bob Mahler, Chair of the WRCC. "Equally important, if not more important, is the infrastructure left behind. The planned improvements, including a year round training facility, will benefit all members of our community for generations to come. These improvements will be another piece in the continuing enhancement of our community as a great place to live, work and carry on business", he continued.

Chosen to host the CanoeKayak Sprints as part of the Pan Am and Para Pan Games will mean delivery on the promise of developing a community based, high performance, year round training centre for all the flatwater sports in the community. "I am absolutely thrilled", said Stephen Fischer, WRCC Business & Operations Manager and Director of the Welland International Flatwater Centre. Mr. Fischer went on further to say, "the work behind the scenes, to put the Welland International Flatwater Centre on the map, is coming to fruition and I'm very proud. Having the Recreational Waterway and our plans for the WIFC recognized by persons outside our City, as the best place to host an international flatwater event and have them commit to making this level of investment is unbelievably satisfying."

The Games would bring a total \$1.4 billion injection of federal, provincial, municipal and private funding into sports infrastructure for broad community benefits and long-term athlete development in Ontario for years to come. It would also trigger more than 15,000 jobs in construction, tourism and event support. Welland's portion of the \$638 million in capital improvements works out to \$10 to \$12 million for the Welland International Flatwater Centre, depending on year of construction.

"Since 2005, the support and development of the Welland International Flatwater Centre as part of the City's and WRCC's commitment to delivering on community objectives and on sport tourism opportunities has been stalwart", suggested Mayor Damian Goulbourne. "Inclusion of the City of Welland in the 2015 Pan American Games Bid resoundingly states that we continue to move in the right direction in regards to flatwater sports and their presence on the Recreational Waterway. The efforts of the WRCC and the support of these initiatives by Council, received a great shot in the arm today."

The Flatwater Centre of Excellence, planned for the 2015 Pan Am Games, will deliver decades of community based programming, tourism opportunities, economic spinoffs, and educational synergies.

The official bid will be submitted by the Province of Ontario to the Pan American Sport Organization (PASO) in April of 2009. The awarding of the host country will not be announced until early 2010.

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