



MEDIA RELEASE

CATCH THE OLYMPIC SPIRIT – AND FLAME – IN WELLAND



For Immediate Release – December 17, 2009 – 4:00 p.m.

Welland – Welland residents anxious to catch the Olympic Spirit will have the opportunity to do so as they line the Torch Relay route to witness the flame coming through the City of Welland, culminating in the lighting of the Olympic cauldron behind Civic Square.

“We are doing our best to encourage participation by residents of all ages in sharing the excitement of the Olympic Spirit and the Olympic Torch Relay Community Celebration Event here in Welland”, states Mike Seguin, Chair of Welland’s Torch Relay Committee. “The City will be alight with excitement on December 21, which will see the hard work of the Committee over the past year come to fruition”, continues Seguin.

To facilitate the exciting events that have been planned by the Committee to celebrate Welland being one of the official stops on the Torch Relay Route across Canada where the Olympic cauldron will be lit, Cross Street (north of East Main), Boardwalk, and Court House Lane will all be closed to vehicular traffic and all parking lots behind Civic Square and the Court House, including spaces along the Boardwalk, will also be closed to permit set up for the community celebration activities and to ensure the safety of those attending the event. In addition, the Olympic Torch Relay convoy will be utilizing the parking spaces along both sides of East Main Street between Cross and King Streets, so on-street parking in that area will be blocked off. Limited parking will be available at Market Square and even though parking is reduced in the downtown area on Monday, the City has arranged for parking and a free shuttle service to run from Notre Dame and Centennial High Schools to Civic Square starting at 9:00 a.m. running until 2:00 p.m. every 15 minutes.

“We encourage everyone to use the shuttle service. Nearly every community that is part of the Torch Relay Route has or will experience the same problem with parking in the area of the celebrations, so we’ve been proactive in ensuring everyone will be able to get to Civic Square by offering the free shuttle service”, says Seguin. “Grab your family, friends, and neighbours and hop on board the shuttle and come downtown to celebrate this momentous occasion in the City of Welland with us!”

The Olympic Torch will make its way through Welland starting at the Welland Hospital Site on King Street at 11:33 a.m. and continue its way north to Lincoln, east on Lincoln to Crowland, north on Crowland to East Main, and west along East Main, where it will arrive at Civic Square at approximately 12:15 p.m. with the City’s final torchbearer **Sabrina Parrotta** running the Torch on the Olympic stage and lighting the Olympic cauldron.

Activities have been planned for before and after the arrival of the Torch in the parking lot behind Welland’s Civic Square on **Monday, December 21, 2009**, starting at 11:00 a.m. with the Torch continuing on its route heading north on Niagara Street as it leaves Civic Square at approximately 1:10 p.m.

- Official Introductions and Welcome – 11:00 a.m.
- City of Welland entertainment – 11:00 to 11:25 a.m.
- RBC and Coke entertainment – 11:25 a.m. to Noon
- Pre-cauldron lighting performance – Noon to 12:10 p.m.
- Final Torchbearer, Sabrina Parrotta, enters Civic Square to light the Olympic Cauldron on the VANOC stage – 12:15 p.m.
- Final Torchbearer interview – 12:20
- VANOC entertainment – 12:25 p.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- Welcome and dignitary speeches – 12:30 to 12:40 p.m.
- Street Pharmacy – 12:40 to 1:00 p.m.
- Vancouver Olympic Committee Team introductions – 1:00 p.m.
- Wrap-up / Thank you / Extinguish Cauldron approximately 1:10 p.m.

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