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## **Civic and Community Leaders to Determine Feasibility of an Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games Bid for Denver**

*Private financing, fiscal stewardship and environmental sustainability will be key to the recommendations*

**DENVER (Dec. 15, 2017)** – Mayor Michael Hancock, with the support of Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper, has assembled a group of civic and community leaders from around the State of Colorado to determine whether Denver should submit a bid for a future Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games when the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) issues a call for U.S. candidates.

Denver's exploratory committee will, first and foremost, determine if hosting a future Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games would be good for Denver and Colorado. That includes identifying ways for the Games to be financed privately, while still meeting all of the requirements of the International Olympic Committee (IOC). The exploratory committee will also determine what legacy an Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games would leave for Denver and Colorado, as well as establish the appropriate forums for community input.

"The Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games present the opportunity for our community to evaluate the economic and social costs and benefits of bringing world-class athletes from around the world to our city, region and state in the spirit of competition, friendship and fair play," said Hancock. "Colorado is already a world-class destination for winter sports. This exploratory committee will determine if it is in Denver's and the state's best interests to pursue a bid, and whether there is strong community-based support for the effort."

The committee has been charged with identifying the opportunities and challenges related to a potential bid. They will examine a number of aspects related to hosting an Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, including private financing, environmental impact, community support, venue requirements, protocol, process and timing.

The exploratory committee is chaired by Rob Cohen, chairman & CEO of The IMA Financial Group. The committee's findings will be presented to Mayor Hancock and Gov. Hickenlooper. Any decision to submit a bid for a future Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games will be based on the assessment completed by the exploratory committee, as well as any outcomes related to the IOC and USOC decision-making processes. The USOC is the sole entity that will determine whether to submit a bid for the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, and they can only submit one U.S. bid city to the IOC.

“The exploratory committee takes this charge very seriously, and we will conduct our due diligence in order to provide a comprehensive report to Mayor Hancock and Governor Hickenlooper,” commented Cohen. “I’m enthused to have the opportunity to showcase all that Denver and this region have to offer as a potential host to an Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. Billions of dollars in infrastructure have already been invested in our community – from our airport to our public transportation system to venues ranging from arenas to ski areas – and it will be interesting to determine if they can be adapted to hosting the Games.”

Hosting an Olympic Winter Games would also come with the honor of hosting the Paralympic Winter Games. Colorado has a long-standing commitment to adaptive sports, serving as home to the Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center, the Adaptive Sports Center in Crested Butte and the National Sports Center for the Disabled in Winter Park and Denver, among many others.

“Colorado is a true leader in the outdoor recreation industry. Our state would be an ideal location for the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, and I look forward to hearing more about that possibility from the exploratory committee. An event of this magnitude requires that communities come together to collaborate. That’s our sweet spot in the Centennial State,” said Hickenlooper. “As the home and training ground to some of the world’s top winter Olympians, hosting the games would be a fitting tribute to their dedication.”

A core group of exploratory committee members has been assembled and will continue to evolve. Additionally, subcommittees are being formed to explore aspects of a potential bid such as games operations & venues, finance & fundraising and civic & community engagement. Additional information about how to get involved will be made available in early 2018.

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