



## **Town of Ponoka and Ponoka Stampede Association Sign Joint Canada Winter Games Sponsorship**

*(June 26, 2018 – Ponoka, Alberta)* – Excitement is building following the signing of a joint sponsorship agreement for the 2019 Canada Winter Games by the Town of Ponoka and the Ponoka Stampede Association. The Town and Stampede Association have been working together over the past few months to finalize the details of their joint sponsorship for the national Winter Games event being hosted in Red Deer from February 15 to March 3, 2019.

### **Tourism and Economic Development Opportunities**

“Our joint \$50,000 sponsorship agreement gives the Town and Stampede Association valuable tourism and economic development opportunities to showcase the community of Ponoka and our western heritage to a national audience. That audience will include 20,000 visitors from across the country, 400 media reps providing coverage of the Games, and 3,600 athletes, coaches and managers,” says Ponoka Mayor Rick Bonnett.

The joint sponsorship between the Town and Stampede Association offers a wide range of benefits, including the following:

- **An Olympian Visit** – Olympic speed skating champion Catriona Le May Doan will visit Ponoka this week as the Ponoka Stampede Parade Marshal on Friday, June 29. The theme of this year’s Stampede Parade is the 2019 Canada Winter Games. Le May Doan was a member of Saskatchewan’s speed skating team at the 1983 Canada Winter Games and went on to become an Olympic multi-medalist. She holds the World and Olympic records in the 500-metre speed skating event!
- **Corporate Sponsor Visit** – All 2019 Canada Winter Games corporate sponsors have been invited to visit Ponoka this week. The Town and Stampede Association will host a 45-member sponsor group on a bus tour around Ponoka. The tour will highlight the many reasons Ponoka is a great community to live, work, play and invest in. A few highlights of that bus tour will be the new civic building that’s nearing completion on the old hospital site; Ponoka’s scenic river valley; our historic Downtown; an overview of the West Area Structure Plan now being developed to help prepare for future development along our highway corridors; the site of our future fieldhouse for which Ponoka is currently pursuing grant funding; and of course the world-famous Ponoka Stampede which our visitors will attend for the evening.
- **Ponoka Day at the Winter Games** – The Town and Stampede Association will host ‘Ponoka Day’ for up to two days at the Winter Games Festival Pavilion during the Games. Ponoka Day will feature eye-catching displays and fun activities that will showcase and celebrate our community’s western and agricultural heritage and the many advantages that Ponoka offers to visitors, residents and businesses that locate here.
- **Torch Relay** – The joint sponsorship by the Town and Stampede ensured that Ponoka was selected as the final stop on the national MNP Canada Winter Games Torch Relay as excitement reaches its peak just before the Games begin in Red Deer. Additional celebratory activities are being planned for the day of the Torch Stop by the Town and Stampede Association joint sponsorship committee.



- **Advertising Opportunities** – The Ponoka Stampede logo and the Town’s name will be promoted along with other sponsors in Winter Games event publications, on event screens, on signage at the Festival Pavilion, on the Games website, and by mention in Masters of Ceremonies’ speaking notes at the Games.
- **Other special events** are possible as the Town and Stampede sponsorship committee continue planning and working with Winter Games organizers in the months ahead.

Another major benefit of the Winter Games being held in central Alberta is the transfer of knowledge that will occur, says Mayor Bonnett. “The Town will gain valuable knowledge that can be used to potentially host a large sporting event in our community at some point in the future. One way that we can gain that knowledge is by encouraging our community volunteers to get involved as Winter Games volunteers,” he explains.

### **Volunteers Needed!**

“Volunteers will receive valuable training and experience that they can bring back to Ponoka to help our community possibly host a similar event in the future. And it’s an opportunity to see tomorrow’s Olympians compete right here in central Alberta,” says Mayor Bonnett.

The 2019 Canada Winter Games organizers will need 5,000 volunteers to run the Games. To sign up as a volunteer, visit the Winter Games website at [www.canadagames.ca/2019/volunteer](http://www.canadagames.ca/2019/volunteer) or email [volunteers@2019canadagames.ca](mailto:volunteers@2019canadagames.ca).

“The Ponoka Stampede is proud to partner with the Town of Ponoka as joint sponsors of the 2019 Canada Winter Games,” says Ponoka Stampede Association President Blair Vold. “We’re excited by the many tourism and economic development benefits this joint sponsorship offers to the local community. It’s a way for us to give back to the Ponoka community for its support of the Stampede over the years,” says Vold.

### **Joint Steering Committee**

The Town and Stampede Association have established a joint steering committee to plan and oversee all Ponoka-related sponsorship activities that will be happening prior to and during the 2019 Canada Winter Games. The nine-member steering committee is comprised of representatives from the Stampede Association, the Town of Ponoka Economic Development Board, the Town’s Recreation Advisory Committee, Town Council and the Kinette Club of Ponoka.

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