

## Vancouver Olympics could show surplus: Organizer

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VANCOUVER — The multi-billion dollar 2010 Winter Olympics may show a surplus, Olympics boss John Furlong hinted Thursday.

"Our goal is to leave a positive financial legacy," said Mr. Furlong, after announcing that the Games' massive business plan detailing the nuts and bolts of running and paying for the Olympics will finally be made public on May 8.

The president and CEO of the 2010 Olympic organizing committee (VANOC) further underscored the prospect of a surplus when he told reporters to expect "a few pleasant surprises" in the long-delayed business plan.

Mr. Furlong's rosy outlook comes little more than a year after VANOC had to go cap in hand to the provincial and federal governments for an extra \$110 million to cover rising construction costs.

Since receiving the extra funds, however, VANOC has reported consistently that its venue construction program is on time and within its revised building budget of \$580 million.

All but three Olympic sporting venues in Vancouver and Whistler are due to be completed by the end of the year.

Operating costs of staging the Games have been set at \$1.7 billion. However, VANOC has provided few details on how that figure will be met, other than to say the funds will come from ticket sales, television revenue, and corporate sponsorships.

Pumping Mr. Furlong's optimism may be higher than expected contributions from official Olympic sponsor and a new deal with the International Olympics Committee on sharing television proceeds with VANOC.

"We are very happy with the numbers we have from the IOC," Mr. Furlong said.

The 2010 Olympics business plan has been in the hands of federal and provincial representatives since it was approved by VANOC's board of directors behind closed doors on March 13.

While the plan has not yet received formal government approval, Mr. Furlong said feedback has been positive. "There are no issues between us and our partners."

An earlier VANOC business plan was rejected by both the federal and provincial governments, concerned over its financial accuracy.

Mr. Furlong called the new plan "the lock on the door of the project . . . It will paint a very clear picture of what's in front of us and how we got there . . . It's a massive volume."

Public scrutiny is certain to focus on the blueprint for covering the estimated \$1.7 billion cost of staging the Games, since any shortfalls will have to be made up by B.C. taxpayers.

But the Olympic budget to be unveiled next month will not include the price of providing security for the Games, which is the responsibility of the RCMP, nor Olympic-related projects such as expanding the Sea to Sky Highway to Whistler and building a rapid transit line to Vancouver International Airport.

Mr. Furlong disclosed the date for disclosing the Games' business plan during a speech to the Urban Development Institute.

"It frames the entire project," the VANOC chief told the planning group. "It's a road map to the finish line, to get us from here to there in one piece."

"You will see just how complex everything is . . . There are 53 separate businesses that need to be integrated . . . We are very excited about it."

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