

## How the City of Beijing Transformed Itself for the Olympic Games

One of the highest honors that any city can receive is being selected to host an edition of the either the Summer or Winter Olympic Games. The selection is the result of a long process that can be as grueling and dramatic as much of the competition that takes place in the Olympics! Only after years of consideration and effort can a city finally be chosen to host the Olympic Games, so the honor is no small one at all.

However, once the honor has been bestowed, the real work begins. Each Olympic city must prepare itself for being the sports and cultural epicenter of the entire world for a period of time. They must be ready for a dramatic influx of new visitors, be prepared to host athletes and workers, and have the facilities necessary to stage all of the events that make the Olympic Games what they are: the biggest spectacle in all of sport.

In the case of Beijing, China, many preparations had to be made to make the city "Olympics ready". Many new venues were constructed, all of which are state of the art and incredibly expensive. For years, construction crews and architects worked incredibly hard to construct such venues as Beijing's National Stadium, the National Indoor Stadium, the National Aquatics Center, and other structures that will play host to the 2008 Summer Olympic Games. At a cost of hundreds of millions of dollars for each facility, and with thousands of workers striving to complete the construction involved, the venues finally became a reality. You can bet that officials within Beijing breathed a sigh of relief when the venues were finally revealed: after all, it's not as if the Olympic Games can be postponed if construction takes longer than planned!

The venues themselves will not be very helpful to athletes and spectators if they are not easily and readily reachable through public transportation. The kind of mass migration of people that the Olympic Games inspires is hard for any city to prepare for, but it must be done. City officials must make sure that public transportation is optimized and altered to reflect the influx of people and the change in routes that will lead to more and more visitors going to Olympic venues.

Hotels also have to be on their toes, as the minute that the Olympic Games are announced as being hosted in a particular city, calls will start to come in as fans will want to be a part of the historic action. Even in surrounding areas, hotels will be booked well ahead of time, and hotels will have to be prepared, well-staffed, and ready for anything as visitors from all over the world arrive to be witness to sports history in the making.

The Olympic Games can be a very profitable, if very stressful, time for area

businesses. Restaurants, shops, and other businesses must be prepared for an amount of people that they have never previously seen before. All of the people who come to be a part of the Olympic Games will need to eat, after all! In the months leading up to the games, parking, staffing, and other issues will become important as the time draws near and businesses try to prepare for the chaos that will surely ensue.

Of course, no restaurant owner is going to complain when they double or triple their usual profits as Olympic fans flock to their establishment. Even if the preparation can be stressful, the increase in tourism that results during, and even after each installment of the Olympic Games is a truly wonderful thing for area businesses.

As you can see, there is a lot of work to be done when a city is chosen to host the Olympic Games. The people of Beijing have worked very hard to make sure that their city is a suitable host for such a world stage, and it's likely that they are very excited to show off all of that hard work in the 2008 Summer Olympic games.

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