

**Public Launch Event Sat. Jan. 31**  
6:00 pm, UIC  
Additional details below



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Because Olympic cost overruns continue to skyrocket in Vancouver and London  
Because taxpayers deserve the opportunity for public debate and discussion  
Because our communities need better schools, hospitals, and trains – not games

## “No Games Chicago” Forms to Challenge 2016 Olympic Bid

Author, Olympic Expert, and Vancouver Activist Chris Shaw Visits Chicago Jan. 30-31 to Help Launch Local Organization and Discuss the Myths and Realities of Hosting the Olympic Games

**Chicago, IL--** As the February 12th deadline for submission of Chicago's final Olympic proposal nears, news from upcoming host cities London and Vancouver has confirmed many taxpayers' worst fears: municipal bankruptcy, billions in budget deficits, gentrification, and more go hand in hand with hosting the Olympic games.

Chris Shaw, author of *Five Ring Circus: Myths and Realities of the Olympic Games* (New Society) and lead spokesperson for No Games 2010 Coalition made the connection between Vancouver and Chicago. “Chicago is bidding on the 2016 Olympic Games and its citizens are being sold the same collection of half-truths that the people of Vancouver got in 2002. None of the economic forecasts, promises of transparency, or environmental and social promises came true in Vancouver. In fact, in all cases the outcome was the complete opposite. Most Vancouverites now wish they hadn't supported the Games. Chicagoans still have a chance to avoid the mistakes that Vancouver made.”

Yet the Chicago proposal continues to move forward via the Chicago 2016 Bid Committee--an unelected and unaccountable body helmed by retired insurance executive Patrick Ryan--without public hearings or the opportunity for civic discussion of any type. The lack of transparency in the face of mounting and unmistakable evidence of the negative impact on host cities has spurred a group of concerned citizens to form No Games Chicago.

“Unfortunately, City Hall has yet to fully investigate the social and economic costs of hosting the Olympics,” stated founding member Bob Quellos. “And they haven't bothered to ask Chicagoans if they want to host the games. Meanwhile, the Olympics are increasingly associated with housing displacement, cost overruns, and abuses of civil rights.”

Co-founder Ramsin Canon added, “No Games began because the people of the city deserve the loudest voice in this process, but so far have been completely ignored. Chicagoans should be involved in the decision-making before the fact, and No Games wants to ensure that.”

**No Games Chicago will be launching with a public forum and hearing on January 31st at 6:00 pm at the University of Illinois Chicago. Author and lead spokesperson for No Games 2010 Coalition Chris Shaw will present on his book, *Five Ring Circus: Myths and Realities of the Olympic Games* (New Society) and the experience in Vancouver, site of the 2010 Olympics. Ample time will also be given to questions and discussion, alongside brief presentations from education, housing, and southside community activists on how the Olympics will affect Chicago residents and communities. Panelists speaking alongside author Chris Shaw include:**

**Deborah Taylor:** of Southside Together Organizing for Power (STOP) and Lake Park East Tenants Association.

**Karen GJ Lewis:** of the Caucus of Rank and File Educatoors (CORE)

**Willie J.R. Fleming:** of the Coalition to Protect Public Housing and the Chicago Independent Human Rights Council

Background an Olympic Host Cities:

- The overall cost of London's 2012 Games has quadrupled, from an originally projected \$2.35 billion pounds to \$9 billion pounds, while the construction of the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Village athlete housing alone has put the entire City of Vancouver at risk of bankruptcy
- Extreme violations of civil liberties have occurred in numerous host cities: 1984 saw the jailing of thousands of young black men in Los Angeles in the infamous “Olympic Gang Sweeps;” 1996 host Atlanta criminalized homelessness and produced pre-printed citations for African-American males; in Athens in 2004 psychiatric hospitals were compelled by the government to lock up the homeless, the mentally ill, and those who suffered from drug dependency
- On housing: Atlanta’s 1996 games also coincided with the decimation of public housing there; at least 1.5 million Beijing residents were displaced from their homes by the Olympic Games, while Native Americans in Canada are currently facing the development of ancestral hunting and fishing lands

**For more information, visit [www.nogameschicago.com](http://www.nogameschicago.com) or contact Sarah Macaraeg at [sarah@xxx](mailto:sarah@xxx) or 312-315-xxxx to arrange an interview or discussion with No Games organizers or author Chris Shaw.**