

Celebrate New England sports with The Globies Presented by Mercedes-Benz. Help us pick the winners - click here to vote now.

TEXT SIZE | MANAGE ACCOUNT | LOG OUT

The Boston Globe

NEWS ▶	METRO	
LOTTERY ▶	OBITUARIES	▶
GLOBE NORTH ▶	GLOBE SOUTH	▶
GLOBE WEST ▶	DATA DESK	▶
MAGAZINE ▶	TODAY'S PAPER	▶

probably not soon

E-MAIL FACEBOOK TWITTER  LINKEDIN

31



BOSTON 2024

A rendering of Widett Circle after the proposed Olympic Games.

By **Matt Rocheleau**

GLOBE STAFF JULY 28, 2015

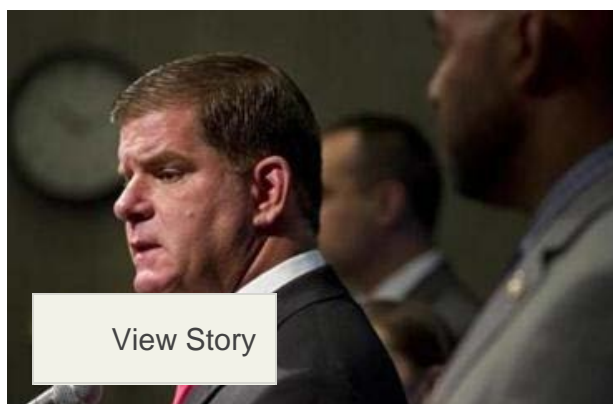
Boston 2024 is dead. So what about Boston 2028? Boston 2032? Boston 2064?

At the moment, it may seem unlikely — even impossible — that Boston would ever again entertain the idea of hosting an Olympics.

But numerous other cities have at first failed, only to later try again. And experts say a future bid for Boston is not out of the question, given the right circumstances.

“Boston could certainly try again, but they would likely need to get prior approval from the public,” said Olympics historian and author Tom Ecker. “You would need to have more of that public support upfront.”

Smith College economics professor Andrew Zimbalist said he expects that getting enough public support to try again will take years, if not decades, for Boston.



[View Story](#)

Boston's Olympic bid is withdrawn

The tumultuous effort was racked by acrimonious debate, public relations blunders, and limited public support.

Reaction to demise of Boston bid

Timeline: Boston's Olympic bid

More coverage of Olympic bid

“I really think it’s something that would have to be far off in the future,” said Zimbalist, a vocal critic of Boston’s bid who has questioned the value of such massive sporting events. “The memory of the Big Dig would have to be far in the past.”

Other cities, including in the United States and Canada, have made multiple unsuccessful tries at hosting the Olympics.

Detroit tried and failed seven times to host the Summer Olympics, ending with a final unsuccessful bid for the 1972 Games.

Chicago made back-to-back attempts to host the Summer Games in the 1950s, then reentered the global contest recently, coming up short in a bid for the 2016 Olympics.

Montreal swung and missed several times before being awarded the 1976 Games.

“There is a precedent for taking that long-term approach,” said Pacific University professor Jules Boykoff, who researches the Olympics. “There is a theory among Olympics mavens that, in a way, cities try knowing that it’s a long game.”

But most times when bids have fallen short, it is not for a lack of public support in the city. Usually bids fail “just because the International Olympic Committee turns them down” in favor of another city, said Zimbalist.

Experts could recall just a few instances in which cities tried to bid again after failing due to lack of public support.

However, Boykoff noted that such examples may be rare because only in more recent years has there been widespread study, skepticism, and debate about the Games, particularly their costs.

Denver was awarded the 1976 Winter Games, only to withdraw its bid after voters in Colorado banned the use of public money to fund the Olympics.

The city later bid again, for the 1998 Winter Games, drawing more local support from the belief that the bid could boost its then-sagging economy. That bid failed — as did a more recent effort by Denver to host the 2022 Winter Games.

Another case that holds some similarities to Boston is Toronto’s bid in 1996.

“

‘I would say the chances of a successful Boston bid anytime soon are dim at best. The hurdles are pretty huge for Boston at this point given what has happened.’

Jules Boykoff, Pacific University professor
and Olympics researcher

The city had previously expressed interest in hosting: for the 1960, 1964, and 1976 Games.

But the city took a two-decade hiatus from the idea after watching its Canadian counterpart Montreal host the 1976 Games, running up debts of \$1.5 billion that took 30 years to pay off.

So when another Olympics proposal was conceived in 1996, Toronto residents were less enthused.

“The message was that the desire to be an Olympic host could not operate above place-based realities and that Toronto could only seek to play host if the bid demonstrated commitments to concepts such as social equity, equal opportunity, environmental justice, and fiscal responsibility,” said a 2011 study of “[Toronto’s Olympic Ambitions](#)” by Virginia Tech professor Robert D. Oliver.

Toronto bid again, for the 2008 Games, getting more local backing thanks to new leadership and because the proposal came “on the heels of a draining recession that forced the city to rethink its economic future,” the report says.

Beijing won the 2008 Games.

Toronto is now considering making yet another bid, as officials there — fresh off the city’s successful Pan American Games this month — weigh whether to enter the 2024 race that Boston just exited.

Officials from Boston 2024 declined to comment about the idea that Boston could bid again someday. In a statement, Boston 2024 chief operating officer Erin Murphy said the group is “winding down” its activities.

Boykoff said any future Boston bid would require the city to regain the trust of the United States Olympic Committee and the International Olympic Committee.

“I would say the chances of a successful Boston bid anytime soon are dim at best,” he said. “The hurdles are pretty huge for Boston at this point given what has happened.”

More coverage on Boston’s Olympic bid →

- **Boston 2024 Olympic bid is ‘over’**
- **Shaughnessy: Loss of Olympic bid a victory for Boston**
- **Vennochi: No Boston Olympics activists are heroes**
- **End of bid gets mixed reaction from residents**
- **Read the statement from the USOC and Boston 2024**
- **Read Boston 2024's letter to supporters**
- **End of Olympics bid gets mixed reaction from residents**
- **Toronto may jump into 2024 Olympics race, as Boston bows out**
- **No Boston Olympics group to celebrate pulled bid**
- **A timeline of Boston's Olympic bid**
- **For Boston 2024, many conflicting constituencies to appease**

- **Mayor Walsh's statement on 2024 Olympics**
- **What are they saying in LA?**
- **Walsh pushes back on USOC agenda**
- **Walsh says Olympics opposition coming from '10 people' on Twitter**
- **Opinion: The Boston Olympics are dead; the year 2024 is alive and well**
- **Deflategate outlives Boston 2024**

Matt Rocheleau can be reached at matthew.rocheleau@globe.com. Follow him on Twitter [@mrochele](https://twitter.com/mrochele).



Get **Today's Headlines** from the Globe in your inbox:

[Privacy Policy](#)

SHOW 31 COMMENTS



Top 10 Trending Articles

Most Viewed

Most Commented

Most Shared

An Auburn child lost amidst chaos and addiction

When did parents get so scared?

Donald Trump was brash, even at Wharton business school

Sexism in science leads to willful blindness

Dan Shaughnessy: Tom Werner breaks his silence on Don O...

Coffee or wine: which is better for you?

Learn more

Four-year-old boy drowns at Dennis beach, half-hour after l...

[SUBSCRIBE](#) [BOSTON GLOBE INSIDERS](#) [EPAPER EDITION](#) [NEWS IN EDUCATION](#)

Stephen Colbert's highly visible transition to 'The Late Show'

MY ACCOUNT

[LOG IN](#)

Ben Volin | Sunday Football Notes: NFL discipline process ...

[MANAGE MY ACCOUNT](#)

[DOWNLOAD CUSTOMER SERVICE APP](#)

Nick Cafardo | Sunday Baseball Notes: As Red Sox GM sear...

CONTACT

[HELP](#)

[FAQS](#)

[GLOBE NEWSROOM](#)

[ADVERTISE](#)

SOCIAL

[FACEBOOK](#)

[TWITTER](#)

[GOOGLE+](#)

MORE

[ARCHIVES](#)

[PRIVACY POLICY](#)

[TERMS OF SERVICE](#)

[TERMS OF PURCHASE](#)

[YOUR AD CHOICES](#)

[WORK AT BOSTON GLOBE MEDIA](#)