

Opinion: Calif. needs to get on board for Tahoe-Reno Olympics to succeed

By Tony Hazarian, Auburn Journal

The Amgen Tour rolls through town in 168 days, bringing thousands of cycling fans and a world television audience in the millions. Is Auburn ready?

The Olympic flame will burn brightly in the Sierra in 4,091 days, if Jon Killoran has anything to say about it. The region should be ready, Killoran said, because the benefits are as broad and deep as the high mountain powder that jump-started this year's ski season.

"This is a game-changing event, and a way to rebrand this entire area," Killoran said Tuesday at the Auburn Chamber of Commerce's weekly public affairs forum. "And no, it's not too early to be talking about it."

Killoran is referring to the 2022 Olympic Winter Games. As chief executive officer of the Reno Tahoe Winter Games Coalition, Killoran is on the road these days sharing his passion and drive to bring the Games back to the Sierra after a 62-year wait.

More importantly, he wants people to understand the 12-year window between now and 2022 is much narrower than it looks.

In fact, the Reno-based coalition has only two years to submit its proposal to the U.S. Olympic Committee, which will decide whether to forward the bid to the International Olympic Committee. The IOC deadline is in 2013, with a final selection made in 2015.

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