

Reno-Tahoe, Denver try to convince USOC to go after 2022 Games

By Brian Gomez, Gazette

COLORADO SPRINGS – Nearly 40 years ago, Denver gave away the Olympic rings. Now, it wants them back.

The U.S. Olympic Committee has had preliminary talks with Denver about the chance of a bid for the 2022 Winter Games, USOC chief executive officer Scott Blackmun said Friday after his keynote address during the U.S. Olympic Assembly.

It's still undetermined whether the Colorado Springs-based USOC will enter the fray for 2022 – with Reno/Lake Tahoe, Salt Lake City and Bozeman, Mont., also weighing bids – or throw its weight behind a bid for the 2024 Summer Games, in which possibilities are Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, New York, Philadelphia and Tulsa, Okla.

If the USOC tries for 2022, bid books outlining a city's plan for the Games, that would detail whether Olympic competition and practice venues are targeted for the Springs, would be due to the USOC in 2013, when the USOC also would offer an applicant city to the International Olympic Committee. The IOC will announce its short list in 2014 and pick the 2022 Olympic host in 2015. At least 15 other nations have shown interest, the strongest contenders including Barcelona, Spain; Berne, Switzerland; Munich; Oslo; and Ostersund, Sweden.

“I think 20 years is long enough,” Blackmun said in reference to the U.S. last hosting the Olympics in 2002 in Salt Lake City. He added: “It's important that we host the Games in the United States as a way to keep Americans connected to the team. . . . I don't think there are limitations on our ability

to participate in a 2022 bid right now.”

Bid leaders from Denver and Reno/Lake Tahoe are in town for the Olympic Assembly, the USOC’s annual gathering of 400 attendees that ends today with a USOC board meeting.

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