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AND MANAGEMENT OF OLYMPIC EVENTS”**

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## **Master's Thesis**

**Boston 2024 and Olympic Bidding in the Modern Era**

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## Glossary of Terms

<b>IOC</b>	International Olympic Committee
<b>NOC</b>	National Olympic Committee
<b>USOC</b>	United States Olympic Committee; the National Olympic Committee of the United States
<b>Boston 2024</b>	The official committee for Boston’s bid to host the 2024 Summer Olympic Games
<b>Twitter</b>	A popular ‘micro-blogging’ social media platform through which users can publish short messages that can be tagged using its hashtag (#) feature.

## **I. Introduction**

The International Olympic Committee's (IOC) Candidature Process for hosting the Summer and Winter Olympic Games, also known as its "Bid Process", has become increasingly competitive and scrutinized over the past several decades. The process of cities vying to host the Olympic Games has revealed the priorities of the cities themselves via their bid committees as well as the more far-reaching priorities of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) itself.

This thesis will examine the expression of these priorities throughout the IOC's candidature procedure. Using Boston's unsuccessful campaign to host the 2024 Summer Games as a case study, this analysis will show how the Boston public and its bid committee expressed their priorities via the Olympic bidding platform. This will be done by analyzing both traditional and new (or "social") media reports of the Boston 2024 campaign from its official nomination in early 2015 through to its bid withdrawal in July 2015. In reviewing these news items, there were distinct changes in public opinion about hosting the Games in general and specifically how the bid committee responded to these shifts in opinion.

This case study is relevant to current Olympic Games management. As the IOC enters a new era with the recent adoption of its 'Agenda 2020' reforms, it is important to see how a given public perceives the requirements of hosting Olympic Games and how a committee should or should not react to these concerns. The case of Boston 2024 also brings up larger implications about mega-event bidding politics in the modern age. The success of the strong, organized opposition in Boston illustrates the lessening of governing bodies and city officials in making the final bid decisions about these mega-events, and the importance of public opinion of hosting the Games. Boston 2024 also marked a change in how online and social media play roles in modern bid processes, specifically in how open

online forums give bid committees and opposition groups voice during the unofficial public vetting of each bid.

To demonstrate this, discussion of the literature in chapter two will first be divided into distinct bid “eras,” followed by a review of other sources by category. Eras will be marked by different Summer and Winter Games and the historical events surrounding each. For instance, the time before and after Los Angeles’ unprecedented financial success in 1984 marked the divide between the Pre- and Post- Los Angeles Eras and the bidding scandal revealed during the selection of Salt Lake City as an Olympic host marks the beginning of the Post-Scandal Era. Each of these time periods are further distinguished by IOC reforms adopted by the IOC at the time or changing approaches to the bid process. Literature related the Olympic bid process also covers more recent trends in the field. Such trends include cities using the Olympic bidding process as a means to further a city’s development goals or the emergence of public opinion as a criterion for host site selection. The significance of these phenomena within the Olympic Movement will be discussed and specific trends, namely the importance of public opinion, will be revisited during the discussion of Boston 2024.

From here, research will more closely examine Boston’s unsuccessful campaign to host the 2024 Summer Games. The methodology followed for the two concurrent content analyses, parts of a larger Boston 2024 case study, will be explained in chapter three. The first analysis will deal exclusively with coverage from The Boston Globe as a traditional news medium. A separate analysis of new media will be completed using data from Twitter to gauge the most popular bid-related topics discussed online. Data from each analysis will be

presented both individually and in composite to reveal reoccurring themes that are further discussed in chapter four.

Such themes will also be connected to the priorities of a potential Olympic host and Olympic governance. For potential hosts such as Boston, these priorities are predominately driven by the city's business interests. These specific goals may vary by city, but the fact that Western bid committees are often funded and led by figures in local businesses in cooperation with local politicians is revealing (Burbank, Andranovich, & Heying, 2001, p. 159). Burbank, Andranovich and Heying find that cities' given motivations for pursuing the Games were "strikingly similar" to one another, with perceived benefits falling into two categories. Candidate cities (via bid committees) believe that becoming an Olympic host would: 1) boost the city's tourism industry; or 2) enhance the city's the image and visibility on an international level (2001, p. 160). As for the priorities in Olympic governance, the goal is singular: to administer successful Games. Within this success, however, there are several factors to consider for each city. As Humphreys and Van Egteren explain: "The IOC does not have the option of not awarding the rights to hold the Games if no high-quality bids are made" (Maennig & Zimbalist, 2012). The IOC and its own interests are reliant upon an adequate host city every two years. Therefore, it must encourage the submission of quality bids, prioritize the criteria that determine the quality of each bid and select the most qualified host.

The expression of these interests will be shown through the case study lens of the Boston 2024 campaign. Through these traditional and social media data, the study will examine what matters to the people selecting an Olympic host city, and those living in a potential host city.

## II. Literature Review

As an event-driven phenomenon the Olympic Movement, through its Games and corresponding bids, provides distinct guideposts for discussion. The selection of each host city gives a glimpse into the priorities of the IOC Membership at a given time every two years. Most sources point to the 1984 Los Angeles Summer Games as a turning point in the selection, functioning and role of the Games. The unprecedented economic benefit of these Games are linked to an increased interest in hosting that has continued to today. Burbank et al assert that the 1984 Games' success "put the Olympics in a new light for city leaders across the nation" (2001, p. 81). The "considerable profits" seen in 1984 are the reason that the number of submitted candidatures for subsequent Games increased, according to Chappelet and Kübler-Mabbott in their study of bid submission rates (2008, p. 86). This coincides with Toohey and Veal's assertion that: "Since the 1980s cities and nations have vied with one another to host the Games largely because of their hoped-for economic benefits" (2007, p. 143).

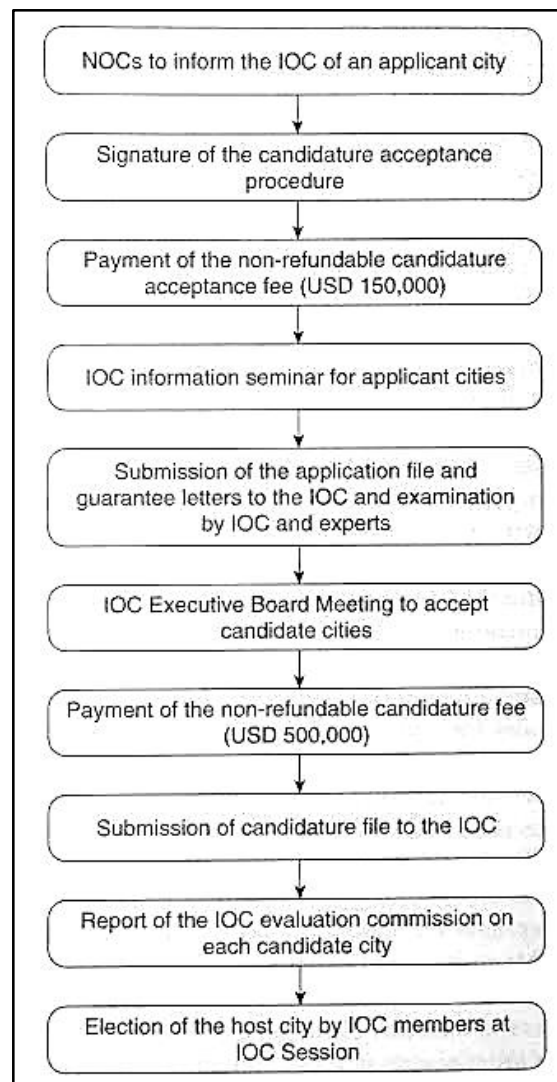
In order to create a foundation for content analysis of Boston's modern day bid, this discussion will begin with an analysis of the so-called "Pre-Los Angeles Era." After a review of this period, the focus will shift towards the subsequent Post-Los Angeles and Post-Scandal (Modern) Eras. These periods are not only marked by changes in the political landscape of the Olympic Movement, but also codified by the reforms adopted by the IOC. The causes of these reforms will be explained, as will their implications. Exploration of these studies, along with the history of the bid process' evolution, will serve as context for a later discussion on the IOC's priorities for future host cities. The priorities of the Modern Era in



Olympic bidding policy will be explained and used as a framework for discussion of Boston's campaign for the 2024 Summer Games.

### ***Descriptions of the Candidature Process***

Like many other sources, Theodoraki provides a basic description of the bid process. She outlines its phases, its committee structure and the composition of these committees. Her outline of the Host City Selection Process (*Figure 1.1*, 2007, p. 116) presents its fundamental steps and is similar to other sources that illustrate the process in brief:



**Figure 2.1: Theodoraki 2007, p.116: Host City Selection Process**

In her analysis of this process, Theodoraki describes the role of National Olympic Committees (NOCs) in the creation and function of bid committees. She writes: “great emphasis is placed on the role and responsibilities of the NOC which is expected to supervise and be jointly responsible for the actions and conduct of the applicant city in relation to its application” (Theodoraki, 2007, p. 116). She later downplays this role: “The local NOC obviously plays a strong role in the bid formulation but it is mostly the local politicians and business representatives that lead Olympic bids” (Theodoraki, 2007, p. 120). Although these excerpts provide varying descriptions of the role of NOCs, they hint towards the political complications also present in this structure. This shifting dynamic will play a role between the Boston 2024 bid committee, local politicians and the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) in the case study.

Theodoraki notes the differences in bid committees structures based on the political system of the bidding country. She compares the Vancouver 2010 bid committee structure with that of Beijing 2008 and Sochi 2014. Each committee structure reveals varying levels of political involvement at the local, regional and federal levels. Vancouver’s 2010 Candidature Committee membership consisted of diverse representation from local businesses, government authorities, community organizations (including labor and tourism interests) and key members from Canada’s Olympic sport infrastructure. The reach of government extends further with the Sochi 2014 Bid Committee, where the committee is headed by the Deputy Chairman of the [Russian Federation] Government and includes several high level Russian Ministers (i.e. - Finance, Economic Development and Trade, Transport, Foreign Affairs) and the Mayor of Sochi (Theodoraki, 2007, p. 118). With the Beijing Olympic Games Bid Committee, political involvement not only included governmental leadership and funding from the Chinese Central Government, but also the ability for the committee to act as its

own sort of municipal agency, with signing authority granted by the Beijing Municipal Government (Theodoraki, 2007, p. 119). These structures show marked differences in how governments, from Canada's democratic system to China's Community Party, can approach these bid committees. Despite varying levels of governmental involvement, Theodoraki concludes that the composition of each body "reveals the strong local political control" present in all bid committee structures (2007, p. 118).

Jennings dives deeper and more critically into the political implications of the bid process. He describes the Olympic Games in terms of risk and the varying levels taken on by its stakeholders. The Games, deemed "the archetypal mega-event of modern times" (Jennings, 2012, p. 23), are distinguished from many other events by their competitive and international bid processes. Putting the process along a spectrum of risk, he asserts that the amount of risk when planning for the Games does not increase or decrease over time but rather the type of assessed risk changes. Specifically, the "earlier phases tend to be subject to risks associated with the bid to host the Games itself, cost controls and infrastructure delivery, whereas later stages of the project lifecycle tend to be more associated with operational and security risks" (Jennings, 2012, p. 56). With his focus on risk comes a scrutiny of how both the IOC and potential host cities rely on estimates and, more importantly, overestimations to assess and win bids.

The seven years between site selection and the Games themselves can represent a gap in both time and reality. By nature of the bid timeline, committees must rely on construction cost and time estimates as far as nine years out from the start of the Games. This could predispose committees to overestimate the length of time which certain projects may take while simultaneously underestimating projected costs in order to put forward a more salient bid; therein lies the risk. Jennings draws from concepts in urban planning and

statistics to describe this reliance, citing what statisticians would term as ‘confidence intervals’ when gauging the risk of bid estimates and assumptions. Further concepts include the threats of *optimism bias* and *the planning fallacy* in bidding cities – both of which describe the degree to which cities can rely upon what Dick Pound would call “the most beautiful fiction” in bid materials. The ultimate warning that Jennings brings is forward is clear: "Because bid dossiers represent the first attempt at the evaluation of risks and benefits, this can lead to systematic error in the planning process" (2012, p. 73).

These sources can provide background to a more strictly procedural analysis of the bid process. These management analyses are useful in outlining the overall procedure and how it works as an apparatus of the Olympic Movement. As seen in Figure 1.1, authors like Theodoraki are able to present a clear image of the inner workings of the Olympic Movement. Such sources cited for this review, including the work Chappelet and Kübler-Mabbott, provide an administrative context that is vital to connecting each part of this analysis. However, the depth of these descriptions can be limited because they are often part of a much larger discussion of Olympic governance and do not provide the context needed to analyze the motivations behind the IOC’s administrative functions, such as its host city selection criteria. For this information, more detailed historical explanations of bid processes and host city selections must be referenced.

### ***Pre-Los Angeles Era***

A full history of Olympic bids prior to the 1984 Summer Games is beyond the scope of this thesis, but it is important to note the culture and process in place at the time Los Angeles was selected as host site. The years leading up to the 1978 selection saw an Olympic system very much in turmoil. Sources on the economic side of mega-event hosting provide context of the financial situation in the 1970s, as do historical summaries. Humphreys and Van

Egteren help connect the high costs and risk associated with the Games to host site selection. After the terrorist attacks that took place during the 1972 Summer Games in Munich, the unprecedented security costs now associated with hosting the Games sharply increased, tripling the overall projected cost for the subsequent 1976 Winter Games in Denver (Humphreys & van Egteren, 2012, p. 24).

In an early example of public intervention in Olympic hosting, a public referendum was held in Colorado that led to Denver's withdrawal as 1976 host. With only four years before the Games were slated to begin, the entire Olympic mechanism was disrupted. The IOC was forced to bypass its normal process and led the IOC to award the Games to Innsbruck, Austria (Humphreys & van Egteren, 2012, p. 24). The 1976 Summer Games in Montreal further compounded economic pressures in the pre-Los Angeles era. In his review of systemic underestimation of Games-related costs from 1968 onward, Andreff emphasizes Montreal's "financial mess" (2012, p. 37). He directly links the debt-laden Games to a decrease in the number of cities willing to serve as Olympic host in the years following 1976 (Andreff, 2012, p. 37). Toohey and Veal confirm the impact of "the excesses of Montreal" and make an important link between this overrun and the unopposed campaign for Los Angeles just two years later (Toohey & Veal, 2007, p. 270)

Such a period of sustained unrest in the Olympic system set a series of changes in motion at the IOC level. In his previous assessment of bid-related Olympic risk, Jennings terms this turning point in Olympic bidding as the "Los Angeles exception" (2012, p. 173) in 1984. He writes: "With no obvious alternatives for hosting the Games, the IOC possessed limited leverage for exerting influence over plans and preparations of the Los Angeles organizers" (Jennings, 2012, p. 173). Los Angeles won the bid in a very atypical and uncompetitive fashion. Further distorting the dynamic that remained before Los Angeles

was the fact that these were the first ‘private enterprise’ Games, in which their rights were contracted directly with a private enterprise, rather than a host city (Toohey & Veal, 2007, p. 270).

The “Los Angeles exception” provides a scenario in which there was ostensibly no competitive bid process and extremely limited IOC leverage. Interestingly enough, these Games ushered in a much more rigorous review process and an unprecedented exertion of IOC regulation. Chappelet and Kübler-Mabbott also confirm the Los Angeles Summer Games’ role as a turning point in bidding interests. They attribute a sharp increase in profits from these Games to a resulting increase in the number of cities bidding for subsequent Games (Chappelet & Kübler-Mabbott, 2008, p. 86). This surge of interest resulted in the IOC creating a review process that was not only more ‘stringent,’ but more complicated than the previous one in which the IOC “had only requested response to a vague questionnaire and some architectural sketches” (Theodoraki, 2007, p. 118). The new process required candidature files of unprecedented length and thoroughness, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

The Los Angeles Games also marked a sea change in Olympic politics. “1984 marked a return to competitive bidding for the hosting rights, and a shift in the balance of political power to the IOC” (2005, p. 207), writes Booth. In *Lobbying Orgies*, he describes this political shift as two-fold. IOC members had unprecedented significance in visiting candidate cities with the intent of determining the successful bid and, accordingly, bid committees put an unprecedented emphasis on courting them. The new status of the IOC membership – which had gone from “invisible, nondescript, and inconsequential sports administrators into international dignitaries, luminaries and power brokers” (Booth, 2005, p.

203) – shifted the entire dynamic of the bid process. Post-Los Angeles bid strategies centered on cities cultivating relationships with IOC members at the personal level (Booth, 2005, p. 208).

These relationships would not only demand additional IOC hospitality, but Booth explains that the so-called ‘lobbying orgies’ or duchessing of IOC members added an entire layer to the bid process. The process now became: 1) Preparatory Phase (Member Research); 2) Influence Phases (Lobbying); and 3) Final (Voting) Phase (2005, p. 208). The selection, which was considered “exceptional” due to its lack of competitive bid process, would establish a new norm of increased size, cost and competition for the Games.

### ***Post-Los Angeles Era***

In the years following the Los Angeles Games, there was a renewed interest in sponsoring, hosting, and being related to the Olympics at a level never before seen. Although Los Angeles figured most prominently in shaping IOC priorities of the time, the memory of Pre-Los Angeles events still had an effect on the changes taking place in the 1980s. The 1976 Montreal Games, which had by then become a “byword for gargantuan extravaganzas”, still impacted the public and IOC perceptions of hosting. Kidd describes this effect during the planning for Canada’s next Games, the 1988 Calgary Winter Games: “...as the cost and complexity of staging the Olympics continue to rise, the necessity for a democratic discussion and decision on whether and how to stage Games might well be Montreal’s most important legacy” (1996, p. 159). An increased public awareness of how the Games are run and how much they cost is an important development for this discussion. Democratic discussion about the city’s commitments as Olympic host is still central to the modern bidding process, as will be discussion in relation to Boston 2024.

The Post-Los Angeles Eras also saw changes at the IOC level. Although the increased number of bids submitted at this time led to the IOC's Olympic Charter being amended to include a "more stringent" procedure for technical evaluation and inspection ahead of the 1992 Summer Games bid process (Chappelet & Kübler-Mabbott, 2008, p. 86), Booth suggests that: "The real difference between pre- and post-Los Angeles eras was the introduction of third party and, especially, reward power" (2005, p. 218). This surge in the importance of rewards led to further IOC reforms in 1992 that limited gifts to IOC members. In 1994, the so-called 'Hodler Rules' were adopted, establishing a two-phase selection procedure. The duchessing culture, however, persisted and culminated in the 1999 expulsion of six IOC members after having been found guilty of accepting bribes. This would dramatically change the quid pro quo culture that thrived in the years after 1984, effectively ending the lobbying orgies.

Chappelet and Kübler-Mabbott confirm that 1992 specifically was a pivotal moment in this era, as it marks both the creation of a commission to evaluate the candidatures and the addition of ethical rules (2008, p. 87). Gold and Gold also confirm that both the 1984 and 1992 Summer Games were important in re-establishing the desirability of hosting the Games (2008, p. 275).

Dick Pound's insider description of the IOC and its bid process as an IOC Member is valuable when assessing this era. He illustrates what other sources have described as a time marked by 'immoral behavior' and sheds light on the priorities of IOC Members:

Numerous selection criteria are considered, not all of which are equally important or perceived similarly by individual members of the IOC. We have a membership that be likened to the standard bell curve used in statistical analysis. At one extreme of the curve might be the sport technocrats, who base their decisions almost entirely on the technical components of the bid: the facilities; the experience of the candidate city



in organizing international competitions; travel times and distances for athletes; weather conditions; and so forth. At the other extreme are members who have little, if any, technical qualifications and who are likely to decide almost entirely on geopolitical considerations. In between are the great majority of members, who consider a broad range of criteria, from technical to geopolitical (2004, p. 198-199).

Pound's descriptions underline the subjectivity of the IOC Membership and lack of a unified strategic approach by the IOC when selecting a host city. Pound traces this shift back to the selection of IOC members, writing: "Until [19]99, members were chosen "for their particular personal characteristics" but have since been chosen to be more reflective of "principal constituencies" (2004, p. 201). He later concedes that not making the wrong decision for an Olympic host city is more important than making the right decision: "There is no scientifically demonstrable right choice.." (Pound, 2004, p. 201). This description shows not only a shift in IOC protocol, but also in its culture. A shift towards a more objective approach to selecting IOC members was not only necessary for a more representative membership but it also minimizes the opportunity for corruption. Overall, though, these accounts illustrate the IOC's mechanism for choosing host cities as both inconsistent and unscientific in method.

The end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century also marks another turning point in Olympic bidding: the bribery scandal involving the Salt Lake City bid committee for the 2002 Winter Games. This event would change the new Host City Bidding structure that had been put in place after the Los Angeles Games. Entire works such as Wenn's *Tarnished Rings* are dedicated to this scandal alone. While the details of this scandal are not entirely relevant to this discussion, it is important to note that issues of bid committee largesse and the IOC acceptance of gifts would re-shape the bid process yet again. Wenn describes the IOC's organizational shift under the Samaranch administration. Samaranch, who had ushered in a new era of private funding during the Los Angeles era, would need to lead a series of reforms to preserve the

(perceived) integrity of the IOC and how it chooses host cities for the Games as a result of the scandal (Wenn, 2011, p. 19). If the ‘post-Los Angeles’ era revealed “how much IOC was historically disposed to immoral behavior” such as fascism, sexism, corruption, etc. (Booth, 2005, p. 221), the following years would confirm this disposition.

### ***Post-Scandal (Modern) Era***

In December 1999, new IOC reforms were put into effect for the 2006 Winter Games, some of which related to the bid process. Pound explains these changes, which included:

- IOC Member lifetime term reduced to 8 years
- Age limit of IOC Members reduced from 80 to 70
- More formal nomination process w/screening
- Each new Member nominee submitted by secret ballot
- Maximum number of Members set to 115
- Specific quotas of Members to be selected using different categories (IFs, NOCs, etc.)
- Prohibition of IOC Member visits to Candidate Cities (2004, p. 205)

According to Pound, these changes made the overall bid process more cost-effective and produced the “right” finalists, but severely limited contact between bid committees and the IOC (2004, p. 227). Additionally, the new ‘bid-acceptance’ phase in which Applicant Cities were reviewed for their ‘organizational capacity’ before becoming official Candidate Cities added an entirely new step to the process (Jennings, 2012, p. 175). A new phase meant new criteria and new strategies for bid committees if they were to reach the next phases in the candidature process.

Like Pound, subsequent insider accounts confirm the significance of IOC lobbying in the candidature process. Lee, who helped lead London’s successful bid for the 2012

Summer Games, states unequivocally: "The most important aspect of Olympic bidding is gaining the trust and confidence of IOC members. This is far more important than the pages and pages of technical plans and promises which bidding cities provide to the IOC" (Lee, 2006, p. 73) Lee provides great detail on Post-Scandal bid strategies, outlining the lengths to which contact was limited between his group and the IOC and the measures by which informal and unofficial communications could happen. By highlighting the IOC's emphasis on intangibles, such a trust, his account confirms the unscientific method of host city selection put forward by Pound.

Similar to Booth's description of so-called lobbying orgies, Lee describes how committees are still able to circumvent IOC rules to build relationships with IOC members. Expanding upon Booth's three-phase process, Lee describes a lobby "fought on six key fronts" including diplomacy through the UK's Foreign Office and contact with International Federation (IF) Presidents (2006, p.73). Such strategies lead Mackay to compare the Olympic bid process to 'Foucauldian' discourse and "a process of institutionalized discursive warfare" (2012, p. 412).

The Post-Scandal reforms provide a framework for discussion of the bid process (see p. 51). In more recent sources on mega-events, trends have emerged about the rationale for practical applications of the bid process for cities worldwide, such as bidding as a means of catalyzing urban development. This overlap of the bid process with the planning of public works will also lead to a discussion of public opinion of hosting the Games.

### ***Bidding for Development***

When explaining the IOC's more tangible priorities, Pound writes about the importance of tying bids with urban development plans: "The great advantage of tying infrastructure enhancement to the Olympic Games is that a project of that magnitude provides an opportunity for overall assessment and planning that might not otherwise exist" (2004, p. 204). Gold and Gold suggest that this is a trend set during the planning for the 1996 Atlanta Games. They posit that focus on 'sustainable legacy' and environmental reforms stem from bid materials for these Games (Gold & Gold, 2008, p. 276). Literature from 1996 through today investigates the idea of the Games and bids as tools for development. Gold and Gold also refer to the "the supreme malleability of the Olympic festival" (2008, p. 277) and how it leads to the phenomenon of successful and unsuccessful bids frequently being used to fit developmental goals after the mid-1990s.

In their investigation of American host cities after the Los Angeles era, Burbank, Andranovich and Heying conclude: "Even though the specifics of launching an Olympic bid differed in each city, the broader pattern that emerged from all three cities was quite clear: Olympic bids are initiated and sustained by elements of the city's growth regime" (2001, p. 158). While other sources have emphasized the dependency on intangibles for winning bids, Burbank et al focus on the need for concreteness in successful bids. They liken a bid to a "tangible manifestation of a city's growth regime" (Burbank et al., 2001, p. 158) that requires a unique cooperation between Olympic, business-related and governmental stakeholders. Drawing from the experiences of Los Angeles, Atlanta and Salt Lake City residents, they summarize public motivation for the pursuing the Games were consistent and fell into two

aforementioned categories: 1) hosting the Games would drive high numbers of visitors to the city, boosting the tourism industry; and 2) the host city would enjoy increased visibility and prestige (Burbank, 2001, p. 160). This study is useful in analyzing both public and private motivations for hosting the Games and relevant to the popular discourse surrounding Boston 2024.

The 2014 work of Abebe, Bolton, Pavelka and Pierstorff on cities that use Olympic bids as catalysts for urban development confirms many of these assertions. They, too, discuss the necessary overlap of a city's Olympic plans and pre-existing master plans in the bidding process. Whereas other sources discussed cities that successfully bid for and hosted Games, *Bidding for Development* also profiles cities that are able to leverage *unsuccessful* bids to meet development goals. Abebe et al stressed the need for cities to submit bids that realistically and creatively translate pre-existing development plans into the IOC's vision for a given Games (2014, p. 32). They identify an advantage for bid committees that use the Games (or at least the bid) to address the infrastructure and transportation needs of their city (Abebe et al., 2014, p. 32). This is also one of the few sources that cite specific sections of the candidature files as being more significant than others. They write: "Transportation is a key component in several other sections of the candidate bid documents including the environment section, given the links between environmental sustainability and public transportation" (2014, p. 24). These priorities are consistent with other literature that also discusses an emphasis on transportation and sustainability in the post-Los Angeles era and reflects the primary concerns of Bostonians to be discussed in our case study.

The importance that the IOC now places on sustainable Games and their long-term legacies also becomes apparent when analyzing the process itself. The IOC justifies the two-

phase process created in 1999 as way of vetting serious bidders. Cities that reach the second Candidate phase would have invested significant resources in planning for these Games at the municipal level and would in turn become the best hosts for the Games. Beyond purely financial commitments, these cities (if selected) are required to guarantee that certain projects are completed in time for and sustained beyond the Games (Abebe et al., 2014, p. 21). The IOC's recent offering of the Transfer of Knowledge (TOK) program after the Sydney 2000 Summer Games can be viewed as another means of legacy promotion through pre-selection planning (Abebe et al., 2014, p. 21). This is one example of the institutional ways that the IOC tries to maximize the bid experience for cities and ensure that potential hosts are adequately prepared. However, full preparation for hosting the Games is not always the primary goal of applicant cities.

### ***Bidding to Bid***

A phenomenon in recent Olympic bids has been cities that enter the candidature procedure without the actual intention of winning the bid. These cities can benefit from the increased visibility, catalysts for development or the procedural knowledge that comes with submitting an Olympic bid. Gold and Gold cite Prague as an example of a city that is “bidding just to bid.” Prague’s recent submissions have given the city attention at the international level and laid the groundwork for future bids (Gold & Gold, 2008, p. 22). Short-term benefits of bidding also include the revamping of infrastructure. This is the primary motivation also identified by Abebe et al for the recent string of bids submitted by Manchester and Istanbul. Manchester is described as a prime example of a 'beneficial' bid for residents (2014, p. 37), leading to citywide revitalization and a successful bid for the 2002 Commonwealth Games

(2014, p. 47). The Manchester bids are also said to have served as a foundation for the successful London 2012 Summer Games campaign. While Istanbul's recent bidding history has not led to Turkey hosting the Games, it has used Olympic bids to address the needs of the sprawling city (Abebe et al., 2014, p. 50). This strategy is so deeply embedded in Turkish politics that an "Olympic Law" has been adopted to fund and facilitate the bid process (Abebe et al., 2014, p. 50).

Clark provides a thorough analysis of the "benefits of bidding but not winning," in which he lays out the steps for preparing an unsuccessful mega-event bid that is in line with a city's goals and how these may be implemented when a bid is submitted and subsequently rejected. He writes: "It is inaccurate to conclude that bidding for an event will only yield benefits if the bid is successful. This is especially true for cities looking to progressively and rapidly their events and internationalization strategy..." (Clark, 2008, p. 159).

This generic approach may be adequate for approaching a bid from a developmental standpoint, but creating a bid that is perfectly suited for Olympic host site selection is less predictable. Abebe et al. state that a specific formula or template for successful Olympic bidding would be impossible (2014, p.30). To account for each city's unique set of strengths and weaknesses, they propose a framework to identify these, fit them into the IOC-designated format and align any resulting projects with the city's urban development goals (Abebe et al., 2014, p. 50). However, such a framework has not been widely adopted. Because of the series of reforms adopted through 2014, the IOC's highly regulated procedure has resulted in a homogenization of submitted bids. All cities are required to submit their plans using a generic candidature file template, resulting in generic answers (Jennings, 2012, p. 175).

Candidature files now constitute the entirety of an Olympic bid. In its three volumes, information is included on everything that can possibly relate to a city's candidature. A bid committee must provide detailed plans on its proposed venues, operations and corresponding budgets. Outside of the Games, they must also provide context for the city's political climate as well as its physical climate and meteorology. These files are as in-depth in content as they are controlled in format. The IOC's current bid guidelines regulate every aspect from physical presentation (“soft-cover and glued binding”) to the length at which approved themes can be discussed (International Olympic Committee, 2014, pp. 1–5). Though they maintain a certain quality of bid materials, this limits any chance for a truly unique presentation or diversity in results. IOC President Thomas Bach has confirmed this homogenizing trend in recent bid materials, saying: "From most of them (it's) always the same answer because they all answer the way they think we want to hear" (Associated Press, 2013).

However, the need for greater bid differentiation can also lead to inaccuracy in costs and feasibility. Jennings warns: "All this leads to a paradox where riskier, more over-confident bids tend to flourish under the candidature process." (2012, p. 92).

### ***Public opinion***

Baade and Sanderson provide a primer on public support of the Games during the bidding process during his description of Chicago's bid to host the 2016 Summer Games. Citing public support of the Games as “an important variable for the IOC” (2012, p. 102), they describe several key factors in play during the Chicago 2016 campaign: 1) a formal opposition group (“No Games Chicago) that aligned against the Games through community



forums and preservation groups; 2) a longstanding “legal skirmish” between the USOC and the bid committee; 3) waning public support for the Games driven by financial concerns; and 4) turnover in leadership at the USOC and committee levels (2012, p. 102).

Because the International Olympic Committee does not specifically require ballot approval for host city designation, research for this thesis did not uncover a consistent history of how public support has figured into the bid process prior to Chicago 2016. Since Denver’s rejection of the 1976 Winter Games, there has not been direct political action concerning the selection or implementation of the Olympics in the United States. Therefore, we can only rely on research of non-Olympic sports referenda within the country as well as international stances on the Games for historical reference.

There is some research on (non-voting) public opinion of the Games in other Western democracies (i.e. Deccio and Baloglu, 2002; Guala, 2009; Preuss and Solberg, 2006) but extensive studies of public approval/disapproval for the Olympics exist only for Calgary ’88, Atlanta ’96, Torino ’06 and Vancouver ’10 (Hiller & Wanner, 2011). This most recent study from Hiller and Wanner is closest to Boston 2024 in both time and location, but does not offer insight on how public support can vary throughout a bid’s lifetime.

Instead, Brown and Paul’s study of the success rate for the sport-related referenda is more relevant here. They reviewed the public support of all sports stadia and franchises in the United States from 1984-2002 and charted their results. Although their results are outside the Olympic realm, they describe commonalities with Boston 2024 in each of these referenda, including: 1) each referendum was framed as a catalyst for development; 2) taxpayer burden was said to be kept to a minimum; and 3) these initiatives were seen as a way to promote the city’s image (Brown & Paul, 2002, p. 260). Boston’s varying public approval

rates provide an important thread to connect each part of this bid process. This will be used as a gauge for bid viability in our content analysis of traditional and new media during the Boston 2024 campaign.

### ***Conclusion***

Throughout the evolution of the bid process, there have been distinct changes in the operation and perception of the Olympics. Most literature concerning the IOC's bid process can be categorized as either historical or management analyses of the process itself. The management sources of the bid process are straightforward accounts the bid procedure via its process, its phases and how these fit into the larger scheme of Olympic administration. Often these explanations are only parts of larger works, providing context for broader discussions about bid-related themes within the field, such as sustainable development or legacy planning. The sources from the discipline of history illustrate relevant politics leading up to the selection of certain Games, rather than the broader implications of these selections. The successes and failures of Games in Montreal and Los Angeles, or reactions to scandal in Salt Lake City, have spurred reform. Due to the reactionary nature of these changes, it is impossible to gauge how the IOC would have shaped the future of its bid process without external pressure to do so.

The current Olympic Bid Process is an amalgam of all the history and recent trends seen here, intended to simultaneously choose the most adequate candidate and avoid abuse of the system (See **Appendix A** for current IOC regulations). However, a mechanism in which a public can voice its concerns about hosting the Olympics during the bid process has yet to be standardized by the IOC. History has shown that explicit approval of hosting the Games has never been required. Rather, Boston 2024 will show the concerns of a potential Olympic host and how these concerns can be informally expressed via the media.

### **III. Methodology**

Given this background on the Olympic bid process, we will explore the current priorities of both the IOC and a potential host city relative to the 2024 Summer Olympic Games ("Games"). Using a case study of the city of Boston as the given "public" we can examine how idea of hosting the Games is perceived through a concurrent analysis of traditional news reports, social media activity on Twitter and the timeline of events between when Boston's bid was first nominated by the USOC and eventually withdrawn. Through these official and unofficial accounts of the Boston 2024 campaign, we will be able to better determine the current concerns of a potential host city and how these concerns align with those of Olympic administrators - namely the USOC and the IOC.

To investigate these views, two separate content analyses were completed. The first covered the bid-related content published in the Boston Globe and the second featured social media content related to Boston 2024. Krippendorff explains that a content analysis “allows researchers to establish their own context for inquiry, thus opening the door to a rich repertoire of social-scientific constructs by which texts may become meaningful in ways that a culture may not be aware of”(Krippendorff, 1989, p. 404). Such an explanation is appropriate for our purposes, as we will be able to discuss the larger implications for the Olympic Movement by analyzing the formalized media reports seen in Boston as well as the informal interactions on a social media platform. The methods used for each analysis differed slightly to account for the differences in content format and these differences will be explained later in this chapter. Each method will meet the content analysis benchmarks of being both replicable and valid, as set by Krippendorff (1989 p.403). By meeting these standards, these models may be used for further research of cities bidding for the Olympic

Games as it provides insight into the discussions and topics that take place throughout the bid process.

After describing the steps involved in each analysis, our discussion will center on the findings of each study. These analyses provide conclusions of their own but even further insight can be drawn from a comparison of both. Here we will be able to how the two data sets relate to one another and to the events that occurred during Boston's bid process. This composite picture of Boston 2024 as a whole will help illustrate the priorities of key stakeholders in the modern era of Olympic bidding.

The findings of these content analyses will comprise a case study on Boston 2024. As the question of what matters to potential Olympic hosts is answered, it is important to consider what is being said about the topic in as complete a way as possible. A case study is a research approach used in many situations to contribute to the knowledge of individual, group, organizational, social, political, and related phenomenon (Yin, 2014). Case study research involves using a single or small number of cases to capture in-depth understanding of a phenomena, and its environment (Skinner et al., 2015). Because of its pliability and viability when approaching complicated topics, this methodology is appropriate for this discussion. In his review of its methodology, Yin writes that “the distinctive need for case study research arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena” (Yin, 2014, p. 8).

The complexity of this thesis comes from the overlapping of interests from several parties at once. In this case, the city Boston is made up of different parts, many of which are at odds with one another. When a “*public opinion*” is referenced, it includes all factions of said public, all of which may all opine differently. Members of the same public make up the local government, its local businesses, the No Boston Olympics opposition group, and the

Boston 2024 partnership. As members of civic-minded groups, they all should all (in theory) share the same goal of a prosperous Boston. However, their visions of this and their priorities in achieving their vision may differ. At the same time the interests of the IOC, and the entire mechanism supporting it, is overlapping with that of Boston. In its pursuit to understand the complexity here, this case study will venture to map out the conversation happening around Boston 2024. The topics, themes and overall tone of this public discourse will provide context for the current state of Olympic bids and insights for future candidate cities.

### **Analysis 1: The Boston Globe (Newspaper)**

#### ***Design***

The aim of this content analysis, specifically a *media content analysis*, is to organize the data mined from the Boston Globe and study it in a way that reveals the bid-related issues important to the city of Boston via its flagship newspaper as well as its readership. This kind of study can help create or conceptualize meaning for a given subject by creating a regimented order by which phenomena can be analyzed (Shoemaker and Reese 1996 p.31). To ensure rigor in this regard, a mixed method was used. In his summary of this specialized sub-category of content analysis, Macnamara recommends such an approach with media content analyses, writing: "Any research exploring media content for both what influence it may have on and for how it might reflect society...should use a combination of quantitative and qualitative content analysis" (Macnamara, 2005, p. 6). This is achieved through the multi-level process of collecting data, organizing it quantitatively and making qualitative links

between the given text and its perceived meaning (Macnamara, 2005, p. 5). By employing both methods, a more thorough understanding of each data point – in this case each published news item – and its implications can be achieved.

An analysis of media content would not be complete without acknowledging the capacity of media to exert influence. McCombs and Shaw describe the ability of mass media to set agenda, asserting that a given readership will not only get its information from a news source but also attach varying levels of importance to news topics based on the amount of information in a story and its position in the publication relative to other items (McCombs & Shaw, 1972, p. 176). This explanation speaks to both media impact and the need for thoroughness in media research. It is not simply enough to know *what* news outlets are reporting, but *how much* they are reporting and *when*. A certain topic, or aspect of a larger phenomenon, that is presented repeatedly from the same source in a certain period of time and more often than others becomes what McCombs would call more a ‘salient’ topic. He explains the link: “Newspapers provide a host of cues about the salience of the topics in the daily news... These cues repeated day after day effectively communicate the importance of each topic” (McCombs p.1). This relates directly to Macnamara’s view on this thesis’ chosen methodology, where he writes that media content analysis “allows examination of a wide range of data over an extensive period to identify popular discourses and their likely meanings” (Macnamara, 2005, p. 6), or rather: how much a topic appears in a given medium relates to how much it matters to a given people.

Relative to Boston and its bid to host the Games, it can be hypothesized that the salience of bid-related topics will mirror that of previous campaigns in other cities. As we have seen, bids have failed to gain public support due largely to concerns over taxpayer (financial) burden, sustainability and/or political concerns. Apart from the quantities and

timing of the topics presented, the sentiment of the published items will also be explored. Visualizing which items have been tagged as “positive,” “negative” or “neutral” based on their content will be especially useful when comparing these results with those gleaned from Twitter in the second analysis. In both instances, we will be able to determine the popular discourses that took place during the Boston2024 campaign. The large amount of articles provided by the Boston Globe during the sample period (376) has provided a foundation for thorough quantitative and qualitative analyses.

A common criticism of media content analyses is that they lack an objective or intersubjective viewpoint because, in theory, the bias of the researcher can be projected onto the analyses. In practice, this could occur when researchers set criteria as they go in order to fit a pre-determined inference rather than first identifying the key themes to be applied the content (Macnamara, 2005, p. 8). To avoid this subjectivity, Macnamara’s model was used in the media content analysis. An *a priori* design was established by way of comprehensive coding system that involved a list of themes or tags that could be applied to each news item that appeared in the publication. This list functioned as a codebook that categorized the aggregate data into smaller, more feasible subcategories. Codes covered two main areas: 1) topics (i.e. “Bid Committee” and “Boston”) that could be further broken down into the issue-specific subcategories (“cost overruns,” “infrastructure,” etc.); and 2) sentiments (“positive,” “negative,” and “neutral”). The details of these categories will be further discussed and it is important to acknowledge that all categories served as consistently measured units of analysis that provided the project with a reliable framework throughout the research process (Macnamara, 2005, p. 9).

In finalizing the design of this study, McCombs and Shaw’s research on the media’s capacity to set agenda provided the theoretical underpinning for Macnamara’s approach to

media content analysis. McCombs and Shaw's assertion that "*Which* aspects of an issue are covered in the news – and the relative emphasis on these various aspects of an issue -- makes a considerable difference in how people view that issue" (1972, p. 7) shaped the quantitative research of the Boston Globe. "*Which aspects of an issue are covered in the news*" relates to which topics related to Boston 2024 are published in the newspaper and "*relative emphasis on these various aspects*" correlates to the number of times some published topics appear in relation to others (McCombs & Shaw, 1972, p. 7).

### ***Sampling***

Sampling for this study followed the three basic steps for media content analysis put forward by Newbold, Boyd-Barrett and Van Den Bulck (2002). They propose:

1. **Selection of media form(s)**: The Boston Globe (or "the Globe") was chosen for its prominent position in Boston journalism. It boasts the widest readership in the New England region (The Boston Globe, 2015) and published a large number of articles about Boston's bid for the Games. It was heavily involved in the public discussion surrounding the bid, as indicated by its co-sponsoring of a televised debate of Boston's bid in July 2015 that included panelists from the Boston2024 partnership as well as the No Boston Olympic opposition group, in addition to other experts in the field (Arsenault, 2015).
2. **Selection of issues or dates**: Although the first mention of a grassroots initiative specific to hosting the 2024 Summer Games appeared in the Globe in June 2013, the operative date range for this analysis does not start until January



2015. This is when, on January 8, the USOC selected Boston from a pool of four ‘shortlisted’ cities (San Francisco, Washington D.C., Los Angeles and Boston) to be its 2024 candidate. Articles about this bid initiative were published between 2013 and 2015, however they were written without the certainty that Boston would be put forward as a candidate by the USOC and were therefore outside the scope of this study. The date range ended on August 1, 2015, shortly after Boston’s bid was withdrawn on July 27. The “buffer” dates at the start and end of this range (January 1-7, July 27-31) were included to ensure consistency in full monthly units and to demonstrate any data trends leading up to the bid’s nomination and in the days following its withdrawal.

- 3. Sampling of relevant content from within those media:** From within this selected date range, all types of news content related to the Boston 2024 bid were included. The census consisted of news articles, editorials, columns and letters to the editor. To specify items related to the bid, the search terms “Boston 2024,” “Olympics” and “Olympic Games” were extracted from Globe’s Digital Archives and sorted by date. All units within this sampling frame were then tested for relevancy. Items that were tagged automatically by the archive database with “Olympic Games” were included with one exception<sup>1</sup>; other peripheral news items (i.e. - TV Listings, unrelated sports updates) were also excluded. The remaining items comprised our sample.

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<sup>1</sup> New events added to Winter Olympics for 2018, a Globe article by John Powers with that was published on June 9 with the “Olympic Games” tag was omitted from this study as it centered on the 2018 Winter Games in Pyeongchang and future FIFA World Cup events.

This method of sampling provided a sufficient amount of data to cover the breadth of bid-related topics that have appeared in the Boston Globe in 2015. A full census was of all possible data in the Globe was not conducted because of the sheer volume of news items since 2015 and the aforementioned fact that all mentions of a Boston 2024 were just speculative until January 8. Given that this sampling was conducted in a consistent and objective manner, reliability was maintained (Macnamara, 2005, p. 13).

### ***Coding***

Creating these topic categories and determining their overall sentiment as “positive,” “negative” or “neutral” required careful attention to qualitative research methods.

Macnamara, when citing Berger and Luckman, concedes that even the most scientific methodologies cannot produce results that are totally objective because “media texts are open to varied interpretation and, as such, analysis of them cannot be objective” (2005, p. 2). Despite this concession, the goal of this analysis was to provide a description of the news about Boston’s bid process that was as objective or intersubjective as possible given this field of research and other limitations that will be discussed. While complete objectivity might not have been possible, consistency, i.e. reliability, was. In order to minimize any bias, the analysis relied on a consistent use of codes already provided by the Boston Globe and bid-related topics determined by the research from the previously examined historical and management literature about the bid process.

## ***Level 1 Coding***

### *Topic Analysis*

First, units of analysis were determined by **topic**. Each unit pulled from the sample was coded by pre-determined categories from the Boston Globe's Digital Archives when possible. When this was not possible, codes were determined by the researcher based on relevant literature and context. A complete list of these codes, and their original iterations, is included below:

### **Codes Assigned by Source (Boston Globe)**

- Appointments & personnel changes
- Architects
- Athletes
- Colleges & universities
- Community support
- Consulting firms
- Corporate sponsorship
- Cost estimates
- Economic development
- Entrepreneurs
- Feasibility studies
- Human trafficking
- Infrastructure
- Innovations
- International Relations
- Leadership
- Operating costs; Construction costs
- Parks & recreation areas
- Polls & surveys
- Public opinion
- Public relations agencies
- Roads & highways
- Site planning
- Tax rates
- Urban planning

### Codes Assigned by Researcher

- Arts & Culture
- Bid 2.0
- Bid Committee
- Bid Process
- Catalyst
- Committee Composition
- Committee Expenses
- Committee Goals
- Community Groups
- Community Meetings
- Consultants
- Critic
- Economic Impact
- Education
- Employment
- Environment
- Environmental Impact
- Environmental Sustainability
- Facilities
- Federal Funding
- Financial Concerns
- Financial Guarantee
- Funding
- Fundraising
- Housing
- Human Trafficking
- Insurance
- International Relations
- IOC Priorities IOC Relations
- Legacy

### *Continued*

- Local Politicians
- Marketing
- Media
- Non-Boston
- Non-profit Sector
- Olympic Movement
- Operating Costs
- Opposition Group
- Other Boston Events
- Other Olympic Cities
- Parks & Recreation Areas
- Political Support
- Private Interests
- Public Funds
- Public Meeting
- Referendum
- Risk
- Security
- Site Selection
- Social Media
- Supporter
- Tourism
- Transportation
- Urban Development
- USOC Priorities
- USOC Relations
- Venues
- Weather
- Winter Olympics

In some cases, codes were consolidated in effort to cut down on redundancy. For instance, the Globe-assigned codes of “Tax incentives,” “Tax increases,” and “Tax increment financing” became simply “Taxes”<sup>i</sup>. Other Globe-assigned codes such as Olympic games or cities that would not provide enough differential value for a case study of a potential Olympic Host City were assigned more pertinent codes, such as “Legacy or “Referendum” that targeted more specific bid-related themes. Key factors in the Olympic Movement, such as the United States Olympic Committee (USOC), were tagged accordingly (USOC Relations), as were specific bid-related terms cited in each article (Cost Overruns, Opposition Groups).

**Transformed Codes**

- “Politics; Cities; Mayors” became “Local Politicians”
- “Tax incentives; Tax increases; Tax increment financing” became “Taxes”
- “Public relations agencies; public relations” became “Public relations”
- “Public Opinion; Polls & Survey” became “Public Support”
- “Appointments & Personnel Changes; Committee Composition” became “Appointments & Personnel Changes”

**Discarded Codes**

- Olympic games
- Cities

Each selected item that appeared in the archived was assigned at least one topic code and entered in a database that organized data by topic and sentiment. An example of this organization is illustrated in the below diagram:

Date	Type	Title	Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3
1/18/15	News	They Picked a Good Time: Better relationship between IOC and USOC could benefit Boston	USOC Relations	IOC Priorities	
1/18/15	Letters	This bid could be made into a major jobs program	Employment		
1/18/15	News	Planner sees local gains if Boston hosts Olympics	Economic Impact		

**Table 3.1: Level 1 Coding Scheme**

These news items and their corresponding topic codes were then categorized into three themes: A) Bid Committee Plans; 2) Boston; and 3) Olympic Movement (See Table 3.2 below):

**Table 3.2: Topic Categories Assigned by Researcher**


<b>Bid Committee Plans</b>		
Appointments & Personnel Changes	Consulting Firms	Insurance
Architects	Corporate Sponsorships	Leadership
Arts & Culture	Cost Estimates	Legacy
Athletes	Facilities	Marketing
Bid 2.0	Feasibility Studies	Media
Bid Committee	Financial Guarantee	Operating Costs
Catalyst	Funding	Security
Committee Composition	Fundraising	Site Planning
Committee Expenses	Housing	Site Selection
Committee Goals	Human Trafficking	Transportation
Construction Costs	Infrastructure	Venues
Consultants	Innovations	

<b>Boston</b>		
Colleges & Universities	Private Interests	Community Support
Community Groups	Public Funds	Education
Community Meetings	Critic	Employment
Economic Development	Public Meeting	Entrepreneurs
Feasibility Studies	Public Opinion	Environmental Sustainability
Federal Funding	Public Relations	Public Support
Supporter	Public relations agencies	Environment
Local Politicians	Referendum	Environmental Impact
Media	Roads & Highways	Financial Concerns
Non-Boston	Economic Impact	Opposition Group
Non-profit Sector	Taxes	Risk
Other Boston Events	Tourism	Social Media
Parks & Recreation Areas	Urban Development	Weather
Political Support	Urban Planning	
Polls & Surveys	Advocates	

<b>Olympic Movement</b>		
Bid Process	IOC Relations	USOC Priorities
International Relations	Olympic Movement	USOC Relations
IOC Priorities	Other Olympic Cities	Winter Olympics

These categories cover the internal policies and plans generated by Boston 2024, their connection on Boston as potential host and their larger connection to the Olympic Movement; data could be coded under more than one topic category. The Bid Committee Plans category contains all news items that pertain the plans put forward by the committee and/or decisions that were within the bid committee’s control. Examples from this category include “Cost Estimates,” “Site Selection” and “Appointments & Personnel Changes.” Items in the Boston theme related to news in the Boston area related to the bid but outside of the committee’s control. This would include topics such as “Local Politicians,” “Public Opinion” and “Colleges & Universities.” Lastly, news about the greater Olympic Movement and its various parts were put into a third group. Topics in this category include: “IOC Priorities,” “USOC Relations” and “Bid Process.” This coding was completed for the 376 published news items that comprised the sample (See **Figure 3.3**, below):

## Boston could benefit from better relationship between IOC, USOC



KYLE TERADA/USA TODAY SPORTS

USOC chairman Larry Probst and CEO Scott Blackmun paved the way for Boston’s bid for the 2024 Summer Olympics.

**By John Powers** | GLOBE STAFF JANUARY 18, 2015

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The standoff had lasted for years, so long that it seemed that the Rockies would crumble before Colorado Springs and Lausanne were on the same philosophical planet. The International Olympic Committee wouldn’t budge

**Level I Coding**

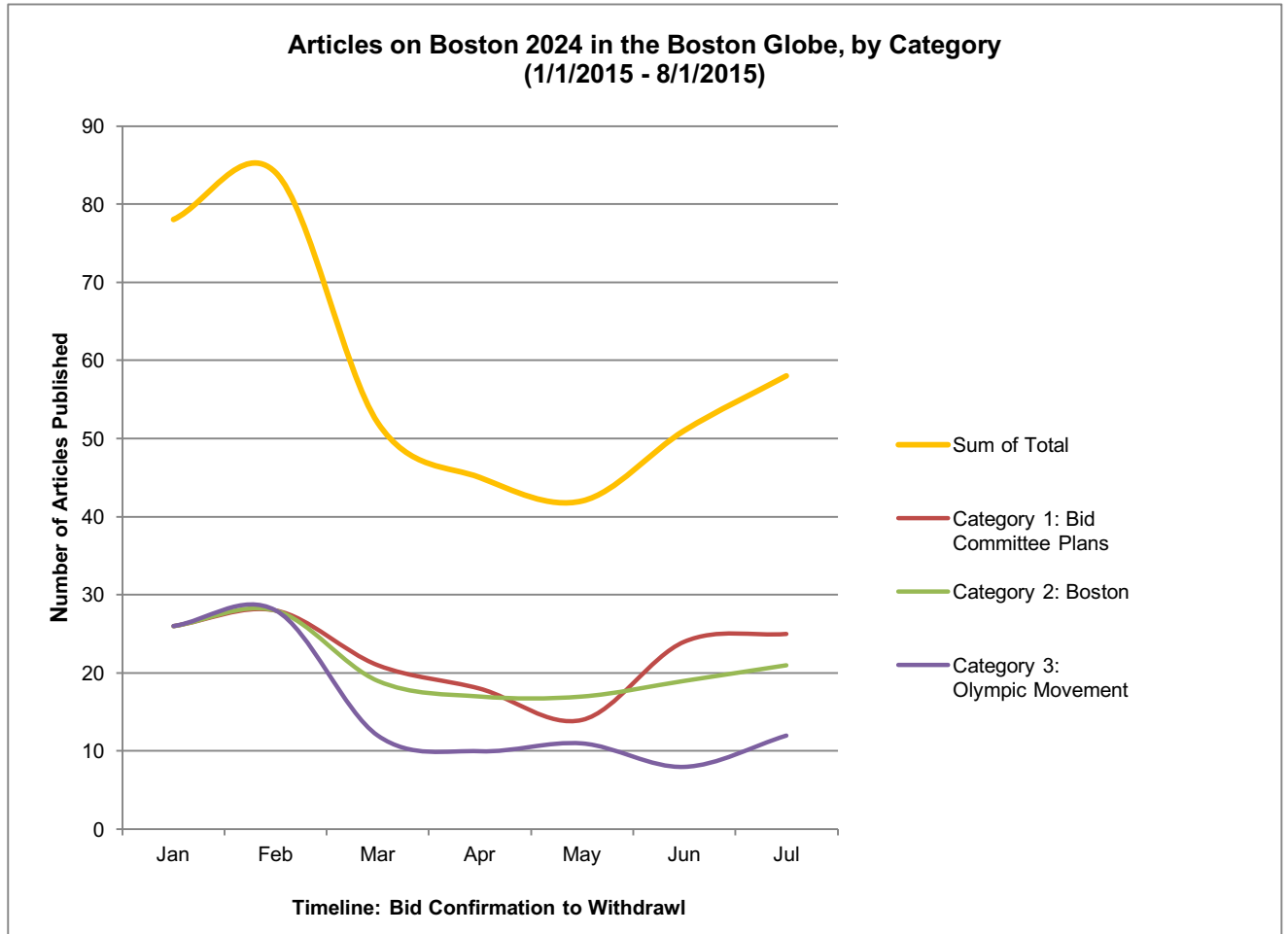
- **Date:** 1.18.2015
- **Type:** News
- **Title:** Boston could benefit from better relationship between IOC, USOC

**Theme:** Olympic Movement

- **Topic 1:** IOC Priorities
- **Topic 2:** USOC Relations

**Figure 3.3: Excerpt, The Boston Globe (Powers, 2015)**

An illustration of these findings in composite can be found below (Figure 3.4).



*Sentiment Analysis*

Next, these units were assigned a second set of values according to sentiment. Each of these items was determined to be “positive,” “negative,” or “neutral” by the researcher based on the context provided by the article and the research already completed on the bid process. At the start of the research, it was inferred that most items would be deemed neutral based on the fact that newspapers, especially those with such a large readership, serve as balanced sources of information. However, in addition to traditional news articles, the sample also included editorial pieces, columns and letters to the editor. These types of news content



contain an interpretation of the news that can be determined as “positive” or “negative.” Before further discussion, it is important to note that the use of the terms “positive” and “negative” here does not necessarily relate to the tone of the article. For instance, if an article is coded as “negative,” it indicates that the unit presents opinions and facts against the hosting of the Games. Conversely, items labeled as “positive” have editorial content that favors Boston 2024. Each news item was also analyzed for key themes that have intrinsic sentiments, such as “Opposition Groups.” Articles that featured the central topic “Opposition Group” were identified as “Negative” as they featured content, arguments from the No Boston Olympics group against the hosting of the Games. An example of a “positive” news items is included in **Figure 3.4** (p.42).

## Boston could benefit from better relationship between IOC, USOC

USOC chairman Larry Probst at the 2024 Summer Olympics.

By John Powers | GLOBE PHOTOS

The standoff had lasted for would crumble before Colorado philosophical planet. The I

### Level 1 Coding

**Theme:** Olympic Movement

- **Topic 1:** IOC Priorities
- **Topic 2:** USOC Relations

**Sentiment:** Positive

on its demand for a bigger share of television and marketing revenues and the US Olympic Committee wouldn't bid for the Games until the dispute was resolved.

The standoff ended three years ago when chairman Larry Probst and chief executive officer Scott Blackmun, the USOC's current leaders, worked out a long-term formula, paving the way for Boston's bid for the 2024 Summer Olympics and ushering in what has been an unprecedented period of cooperation and comity between the committees.

"What happened was that Scott and Larry found a way to make the contract work," said Anita DeFrantz, the Olympic rowing medalist who has served on the IOC since 1986 and is a member of the executive board. "And they deserve credit for that."

After nearly half a century of squabbling the IOC and USOC finally are on the same page, and Olympic insiders say that Probst and Blackmun's understated diplomacy has done much to make that happen.

"Primarily it's given the USOC a human dimension as opposed to being this gigantic money-raising organization that doesn't care about anything outside of the United States," observed Dick Pound, the longtime IOC member from Canada.

In the wake of a dysfunctional decade that was marked by the Salt Lake bidding scandal, embarrassing infighting at the USOC's top-most level, and IOC resentment at what it considered grabby American greediness, Probst and Blackmun dedicated themselves to international fence-mending. "I imagine that he and I are going to be showing up in the same places very frequently," Probst, who was named chair in 2008 and elected to the IOC in 2013, said when Blackmun was hired in 2010.

Figure 3.4: Excerpt, The Boston Globe (Powers, 2015)

Once each item was tagged, it was added as an additional unit of analysis in the database:

Date	Type	Title	Theme 1	Theme 2	Sentiment
1/18/15	News	They Picked a Good Time: Better relationship between IOC and USOC could benefit Boston	USOC Relations	IOC Priorities	Positive

**Figure 2.5: Complete Coding Scheme**

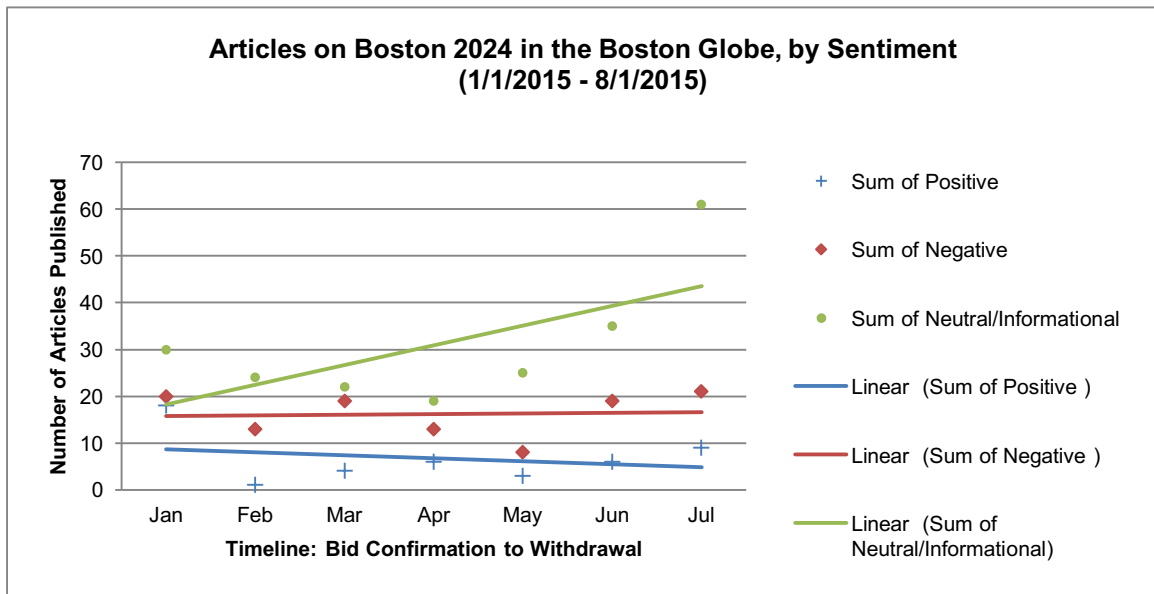
This second level of sentiment coding would be an additional measure for analysis of the Globe's content, and a way to directly compare this traditional media data with the sentiment data provided by Twitter in the second study.

### *Level 2 Coding*

The next level of analysis was completed largely by computer software, based on the data mined and coded during the first two processes. The sample size for such an analysis fits the requirements set by McNamara (McNamara p.9) (Neuendorf, 2002, p. 159) and addresses the concerns that scholars present for this methodology. Krippendorff describes the need to avoid the "statistical biases inherent in much of the symbolic material analyzed" (1989 p. 406). He specifically warns that certain extrapolations should not be inferred from this level of coding, and emphasizes that the opinions of prominent people in a given population (i.e. – Boston's local politicians) are publicized through the mass media more frequently more often than are those of the larger population and will therefore throw off any correlations between the frequency of a given opinion in the news and its presence with the public at-large. He suggests a 'conditional hierarchy' of chosen units of analysis (Boston Globe news items) that should be "representative of the organization of the symbolic phenomena under investigation" (Krippendorff 1989 p. 406).

With this in mind, all organized data was run through the database to measure the frequency of each topic code and each sentiment code. The quantities were then sorted by date and type of news item. From here, the individual topic codes were sorted into the larger category codes (Bid Committee Plans, Boston, and Olympic Movement) for an additional, layer of analysis. To visualize when and how often each code was used, a scatter plot was created (See **Figure 4.1**, p.53 ).

The X Axis shows the bid timeline as represented in our data set and the Y Axis measures code occurrence.



**Figure 2.4: Content Analysis 1: Articles in Boston Globe by Sentiment**

*Limitations*

The data presented here and in the following discussion show the volume of news items in relation to the timeline of events for the Boston 2024 bid. While it seems that many of the major events in this bid’s timeline and shifts in public opinion may coincide with increases in news items about a given topic, it impossible to make this direct correlation. McCombs and

Shaw downplay this impossibility, saying that any argument that refutes the correlation between media reports and public opinion “assumes that voters have an alternate means of observing the day-to-day changes in the political arena” (McCombs and Shaw p.185). Since this was written, however, new forms of media have emerged. Social media provides both a platform for information sharing by news outlets and a sounding board for the public. More recently, McCombs wrote: "The media set the agenda only when citizens perceive their news stories as relevant" (McComb p.8).

## Analysis 2: Twitter (Social Media)

### *Design*

The design of this second content analysis is very similar to the first, but adjustments were made based on the difference in format between traditional and social media. Platforms such as Twitter produce units of analysis that are much shorter in length (a maximum of 140 characters) and therefore contain less information. They do, however, have the capacity to convey the attitudes and perceptions of user on a given issue. Lai and To explain that contextual information from social media can provide valuable insights into the emotions, opinions and reactions of subscribed users (2015, p. 138). This kind of user-generated content is often used by marketing agencies to gauge people's perceptions about certain social networks and can often steer strategic planning decisions within organizations (Lai & To, 2015, p. 138). Returning to the concept that content analyses can help provide meaning to data through the process of organization by pre-determined criteria, this can be applied to Twitter messages (or "tweets"). The same mixed methodology was used in this research, including an emphasis on objectivity/intersubjectivity, an 'a priori design' and a consistently applied qualitative approach (Lai & To, 2015, p. 140).

Unlike news items from the Boston Globe, the limited length of tweets does not allow for enough text or context to tag multiple topics in one message. Therefore, the design of this study centered on a single analysis of sentiment found in all data. Lai argues that sentiment analysis is insufficient to completely regiment and prioritize topics discussed in social media but contends that elements of a "traditional" content analysis can be used to help formulate codes prior to the start of the analysis (Lai & To, 2015, p. 140). That is, certain terms and criteria can be set in order to maintain and objective and consistently

measured study. Although not specific to one platform, Twitter's 'hashtag' tracking feature provides a way to automatically follow an assigned code while minimizing bias.

Many conceptualization decisions about this second analysis involved the assignment of certain sentiment codes based on a given hashtag (#) or a user account. Specific to Boston 2024, several hashtags were created in favor of or against the bid. For instance, all tweets from with #NoBoston2024 or #PulltheBid were labeled as "negative" in the coding scheme. These tags were created by opponents to Boston's bid to start and maintain a conversation against the bid committee or about withdrawing the bid altogether. Conversely, #BringittoBoston and #ImagineBoston were deemed positive as they were created and/or endorsed by the bid committee in support of the initiative. These criteria were applied consistently throughout the study unless there was a conflict where a positive code was included in the same message as a negative one, in which case this tweet would be coded as "neutral."

### ***Sampling***

The sample for this content analysis also used the three steps outlined by Newbold, Boyd-Barrett and Van Den Bulck (2002). Specifically, the following criteria were applied:

1. **Selection of media form(s)**: Twitter's selection as the studied new media platform was based on both its ubiquity in the social media landscape and its prominent role during the Boston 2024 campaign. This was confirmed by Boston mayor Marty Walsh's statement that: "The opposition for the most part is about 10 people on Twitter and a couple people out there who are constantly beating the drumbeat" (Boston Globe 7/27 Annear). The identification of "10

people on Twitter” would become an oft-cited phrase in the final days of the bid and a trending topic (#10peopleontwitter) in its own right by Twitter users. The “constant drumbeat” to which he refers can be quantified by analyzing the content and frequency of tweets in the selected date range.

2. **Selection of issues or dates:** In order to maintain consistency between these traditional and new media content analyses, the same date range of January 1 through July 31 was used. The “buffer dates” of January 1-7 and July 27-31 were included again, as full monthly units were used in all visualizations of this data on this timeline. The days leading up to the nomination of Boston’s bid also provided invaluable data on the overall sentiment towards the initiative – an important baseline for public opinion going forward.
  
3. **Sampling of relevant content from within those media:** Aggregate data within this date range were narrowed down by using Twitter’s hashtag function. Key search terms could be researched without the use of a hashtag (i.e. – a general search for all mentions of ‘Olympics’ and ‘Boston’) but the designation of a specific hashtag indicates the intent of each user to comment on a given phenomenon and minimizes incidental mentions of a topic. The hashtag ‘#Boston2024’ was selected for this analysis. Unlike the innately positive or negative tags already mentioned, #Boston2024 provides a neutral channel of information on this topic. Examples can be found for and against the bid using the tag, and it has been used several times in conjunction with other tags and accounts. Messages using this tag can be found in both the official bid committee account (@Boston2024) as well as the primary account for the No Boston Olympics opposition group (@NoBostonOlympics). The only omissions from



this data set came from a small number of automatically generated and irrelevant advertisements. After these were removed, the remaining items comprised the sample.

### *Coding*

With these parameters, units of analysis were categorized into four primary measures: date, username, tweet content and sentiment. Data for the first three categories were found by entering the criteria into Twitter's search engine and creating a custom programming code that transferred them into a database for further analysis. From here, data was then organized into categories to be coded. An example of this format is seen on the following page in **Figure 3.1**:

Post Date	Username (@_)	Tweet Content	Sentiment
21-Jan-15	NoBosOlympics	#Boston2024 plan shows transit not in bond bill. Claim of needed projects in bond bill not accurate. <a href="http://www.donnews.com/2015/vital-olympic-transit-projects-not-state-bond-bill-%E2%80%A2">@LaurenDezenski</a>	Negative
21-Jan-15	NoBosOlympics	Visits to London museums dropped during 2012 Olympics. Economists have found visitors for Games displace other tourists. #Boston2024	Negative
21-Jan-15	meggienina	Clusters? Seriously? So many possibilities for adaptive reuse with that name. #NoBoston024 #Boston2024	Negative
21-Jan-15	ronisue	28 venues w/ 5.3 km. By comparison Tokyo was 26 venues w/ ~50 km. Massive new housing at UMass Boston. Sea level rise issues? #Boston2024	Negative
21-Jan-15	Boston2024	Additional #Boston2024 renderings presented tonight. <a href="http://pic.twitter.com/9gfw1cUow">pic.twitter.com/9gfw1cUow</a>	Positive
21-Jan-15	Boston2024	Imagine Olympic baseball at historic Fenway Park. #Boston2024 #ImagineBoston <a href="http://pic.twitter.com/fAaJX3Gj7v">pic.twitter.com/fAaJX3Gj7v</a>	Positive
21-Jan-15	DCGirlKayla	@SwimmingWorld @RyanLochte Favorite swimmer, favorite city: GREAT way to promote the #Boston2024 bid!	Positive
22-Jan-15	FortPointer	Housing planned by BRA to abut Channel Ctr condo, now #Boston2024 Satellite Farm (O7) and Transportation Hub (T2/T3). <a href="http://pic.twitter.com/0mACNx7TA2">pic.twitter.com/0mACNx7TA2</a>	Neutral
22-Jan-15	GarrettQuinn	Saudi Arabia, a country that only very recently allowed women to compete in athletics, has a prince as an honorary IOC member. #Boston2024	Neutral
22-Jan-15	GlobeOpinion	@GlobeScotLehigh: Let the public vote on whether Boston should host the #Olympics #Boston2024 <a href="http://ow.ly/HNfbh">http://ow.ly/HNfbh</a> <a href="http://pic.twitter.com/3tov1fizaP">pic.twitter.com/3tov1fizaP</a>	Neutral
22-Jan-15	katiekings	John Fish carries the Olympic torch, sets Boston's agenda -- @Joan_Vennochi for @GlobeOpinion <a href="http://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/2015/01/22/john-fish-carries-olympic-torch-sets-boston-agenda/p310ByCUJ2pDFELISrukL/story.html?event=event25-%E2%80%A2">#Boston2024</a>	Neutral
22-Jan-15	najahbikes	If you are AT ALL surprised by this then you need to read up more on the olympics. <a href="https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2015/01/21/boston-city-employees-told-not-badmouh-olympics/17JfBrq2YgKwGzqP42PQZO/story.html-%E2%80%A2">#Boston2024</a>	Neutral
22-Jan-15	NewBostonFund	Plans released for #Boston2024 Olympic Bid features venues near universities and the waterfront <a href="http://ow.ly/HLoip">http://ow.ly/HLoip</a> via @Zeninjor	Neutral
22-Jan-15	saramariecohen	What do you think? #Boston2024 <a href="http://bostinno.streetwise.co/2015/01/21/boston-2024-olympic-renderings-released-with-bid-in-new-presentation-photos/">http://bostinno.streetwise.co/2015/01/21/boston-2024-olympic-renderings-released-with-bid-in-new-presentation-photos/-%E2%80%A2</a>	Neutral

**Figure 3.1: Level 2 Coding Scheme, Content Analysis 2**

Slight format adjustments were made for ease of sorting, such as the removal of punctuation at the beginning of titles that interrupted alpha or numerical sorting. The organization illustrated here allowed for bulk sorting by category in order for each unit to be coded in Level 1.

## ***Level 1 Coding***

### *Sentiment Analysis*

The first level of coding involved the designation of sentiment based on the source user and hashtag used in each message. Traditionally, content analysis coding was done manually, with each researcher interpreting media content for classification and sorting it into a pre-determined group of categories. Lai confirms that the advancement of analytics software that specializes in semantics now allows for large amounts of data to be objectively interpreted. Statistical tools can create more qualitative information based on this data through their ability to identify recurring themes and factors (Lai p.142). Each hashtag allowed for the processing of larger amounts data with a consistent criterion. By searching for the most often used hashtags, patterns in the data became evident and large classifications could be made.

For instance, when #PulltheBid appeared in the sample, the hashtag – in addition its own overtly negative message – could be observed to accompany negative tweets from users with a history of publishing tweets against the bid. Based on such patterns, extensive classifications could be made based on the tone of a given hashtag and the validation of other corresponding data. The same method applied for Twitter users. If a certain user or an official account demonstrated a history of consistently producing tweets of the same sentiment, these accounts (proponents or opponents) would be categorized as “positive” or “negative” and therefore all of their tweets would be automatically coded as such.

## ***Level 2 Coding***

### *Sentiment Analysis*

The second level of coding involved the manual, qualitative analysis of each tweet to determine sentiment. Although Twitter provides an official function for tagging and tracking tweets. This native ‘Tweet Sentiment Analysis’ software has the capability of sorting tweets into “positive,” “negative” and “neutral.” However, due to this algorithm, approximately 80% of all tweets have been automatically sorted as “neutral.” After a manual analysis of a sample of tweets from different times in 2015, this percentage is not reliable. Therefore, this level of coding mirrored the processed used during the analysis of Globe content, in which each of the remaining items was designated as “positive,” “negative,” or “neutral” by the researcher based on a number of contextual sources, including previous research of bid-related literature as well as the actual content of each tweet.

Unlike the Globe’s content, however, it was not hypothesized most items would be determined to be “neutral.” Given that Twitter is a platform through which users can voice their opinion on a topic, it was expected the sentiment of this data would be much more polarized. There was some overlap in content when a tweet contained a link to Boston Globe article. In these instances, the sentiment on Twitter was based on the already determined Globe sentiment code in an effort to maintain consistency.

All tweets that presented observable evidence against the hosting of the Games, the bid committee and/or against the Olympic Movement itself (including any of its apparatus) were tagged as “negative.” Tweets that included content in support of the Games being hosted in Boston, of the bid committee’s plans and/or in the favor of the Olympic Movement were deemed as “positive.” Any tweets coded as “neutral” included content

determined to be impartial to the success or failure of the bid. Messages that are strictly informational in nature were also coded as “neutral.”

### ***Limitations***

This second analysis was limited by both the availability of certain Twitter content and the procedure by which the sample was selected. Due to the impermanence of Twitter data and the fact that the research was conducted after the date range was completed, it is possible that certain tweets may have been deleted in between the time it was first published and when data was collected for this study. Additionally, not all tweets are available to the public. Only data that was marked for public posting by the user were available for collection; any “private” or “protected” tweets were not included. The reliance on hashtags may have also limited the representativeness of the sample.

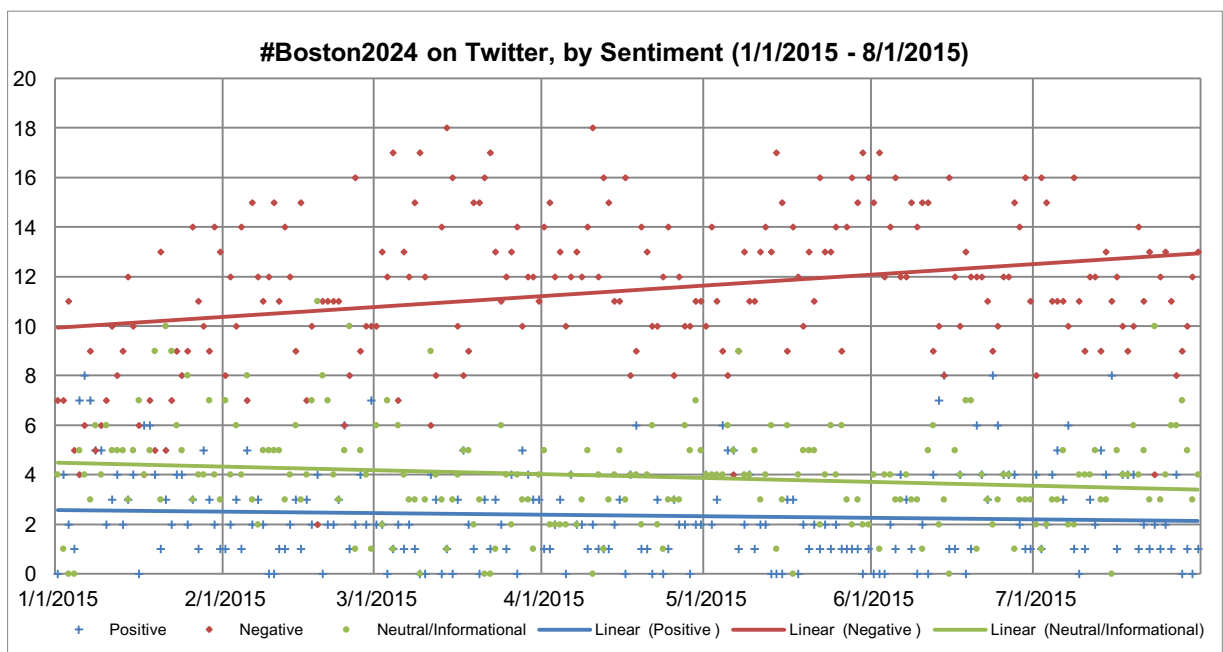
As previously mentioned, searches of plain text (without hashtags) may also be completed through Twitter. Results from these types of searches may not be completely relevant to the central topic but they are more numerous. By limiting the sample in the interests of reliability and validity, a large volume of tweets about Boston 2024 that did use the specific hashtag has been omitted. Overall, however, the use of the hashtags allowed for a more objective approach by referencing pre-determined topics (i.e. #PulltheBid, or #ImagineBoston) instead analyzing semantics or connotations of specific words in a more subjective manner.

## IV. Results and Discussion

### *The role of social media*

Social media's importance in the bid process is made evident by the Boston 2024 case. This centrality to the campaign can be seen both through the volume of tweets on this topic and in the bid committee's repeated acknowledgement and reaction to these concerns. This 'microblogging' platform was the primary mode of communication for many key stakeholders in this bidding process and provided all parties, including opposition groups, an equally accessible platform to voice opinions.

The mayor Boston's statement that the bid was lost because of "10 people on Twitter" gives merit (albeit exaggerated) to the role of social media in this process. When looking at the results from the Twitter content analysis we can see a remarkable gap between the negative discourse surrounding the bid and the neutral or positive tweets in the same sample (See **Figure 4.1** below):



**Figure 4.1: Content Analysis 2, #Boston2024 on Twitter**

These data show us two very significant trends: negative messages are more numerous than the other two classifications and these negative data trend upward throughout the timeline. The linear trend lines illustrated above also show that neutral and positive messaging relative to Boston's bid have a slow and steady regression in the timeline.

Results from Twitter and the Globe data that have already been presented (Page 27) show an increase in the volume and frequency of bid-related content towards the end of the bid timeline. However, the Globe data showed an increase in neutral reporting of the bid while neutral Twitter data declined and negative data continued to climb. This stark contrast between sentiment values seems to confirm the notion that the ongoing, negative-slanted discussion of the bid on Twitter impacted its viability in Boston. Beyond the platform itself, news sources such as the Globe would publish articles about the discussion happening on Twitter. Early on in the official campaign, Payne writes:

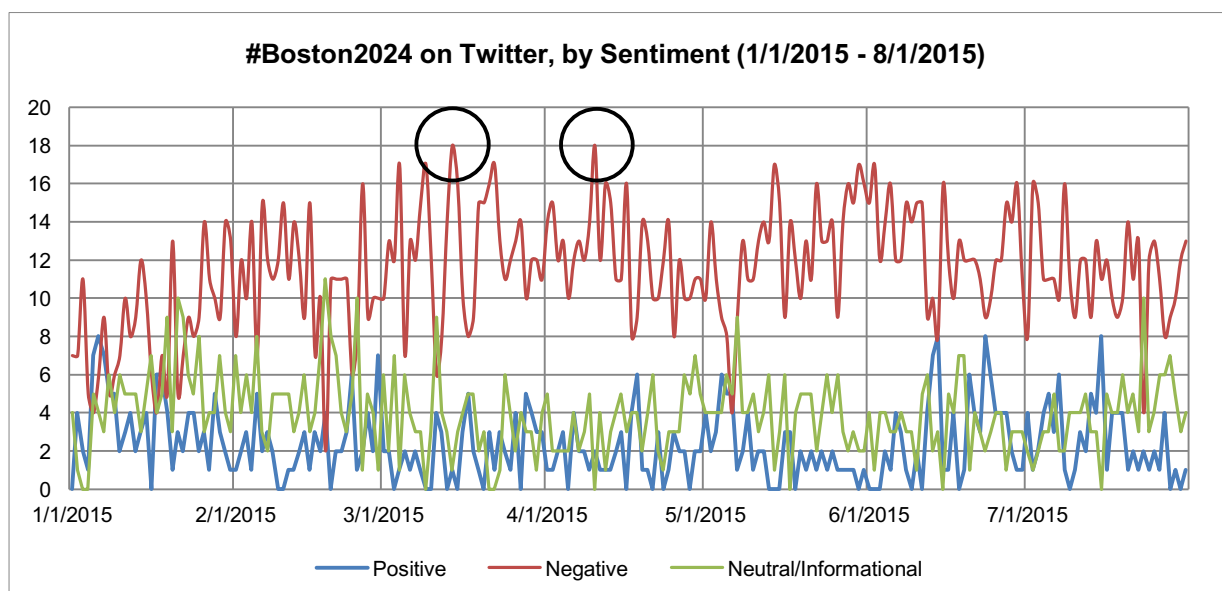
Stop losing on social media. You're getting killed on the Internet, especially on Twitter. It's now more fun to be against the Olympics than for them. Postings from the committee are humorless, self-congratulatory pap. Hire young people to fight back (The Boston Globe, 2015).

Such candor is usually reserved for social media but seeing this type of news, though editorial, published in mass media outlets reflected the far reach of these online discussions. Criticism of the bid committee's social media activity shows an inability of the group to communicate effectively in this media space. Payne urges for a "fight back" that would never come. After this Globe piece, published in March 2015, data show that negative tweets about the bid continued to climb while positive tweets would continue to trend downward despite an increase in tweet frequency from the committee's official account (@Boston2024).

Recent history has shown that opposition groups have been able to successfully form against Olympic bids, as seen in the United States most recently in the Modern Era with

Chicago 2016. Boston’s 2024 campaign differs in how ‘No Boston Olympics’ was able to spread its message. Twitter provided a platform through which it could disseminate information about the bid committee’s plans or its upcoming meetings. This primary online source of information could be easily shared with followers, centralizing this movement. The uniqueness of this situation, however, does not stem from an organized opposition or its online presence; it stems from a much larger, interdependent network. According to the second content analysis, a much larger system of smaller accounts maintained this negative discussion with an average 5-10 tweets against the bid. While the anti-Olympic rhetoric might have been attributed to “10 people on Twitter”, in fact these most vocal opponents were a fraction of the 1,278 unique users that were found to have posted a negative tweet about #Boston2024. This volume of interested parties and the interactive nature of social media channels allowed for a continuous stream of bid-related content, with larger “official” accounts (@Boston2024, @NoBostonOlympics) serving as ‘tent pole’ channels on either side of the movement.

The breadth of Twitter users and their corresponding tweets provides an opportunity to measure reactions to bid-related news at the micro level. **Figure 4.2** (below) demonstrates this continuous social stream and the degree to which these reactions vary:

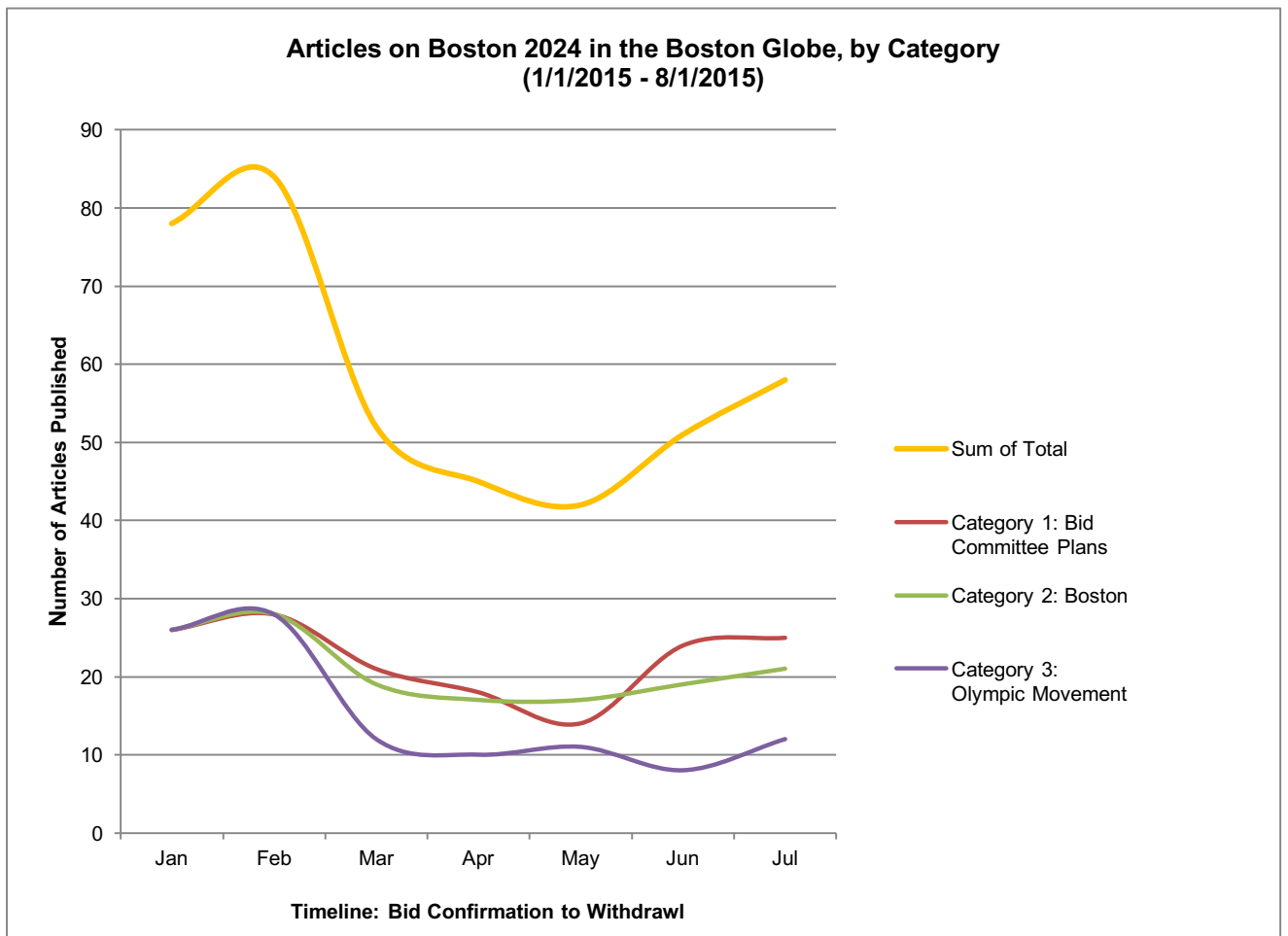


This chart is punctuated by two circles indicating the peak levels of negative #Boston2024 tweets from the sample set. Data from the content analysis can be cited here to determine corresponding topics to these points, which can then be used to infer the motivations of the bid opponents at this time. The selected peak dates (March 14 and April 10, respectively) correspond with two events in the bid timeline. The first date corresponds to the hours and days following the release of a Globe report indicating dropping support for the Games amid a series of snowstorms that caused transportation issues throughout the city (Boston Globe Staff, 2015) and the second date corresponds to news about a change in leadership at the bid committee (Boston Globe Staff, 2015). Although a direct correlation cannot be confirmed, these data can shed light on the topics that sustain this negative discourse on Twitter and drive up the number of bid-related tweets. As Lai and To confirm: “as the number of people who use social media and create content increases, high-quality content has become increasingly available” (2015, p. 140); the Boston 2024 campaign provides an unprecedented amount of high quality information on the topics and sentiment around a modern Olympic bid. This model is especially pertinent to social media due to its time-sensitive and expressive nature. We will see this how these social media fit into the larger scheme later in this discussion.



### *Priorities of Boston*

When these data are re-configured by topic category rather than by time, the topics relevant to the Boston 2024 conversation can also be revealed. Again, due to a difference in content format and length, topics were not drawn from Twitter data but rather topical information was drawn during the media content analysis of the Boston Globe. Illustrations of these topic data (as seen in **Figure 2.2** below), along a time continuum are useful to show how much scrutiny certain topics or categories have received over a given period of time:



**Figure 2.2: Articles on Boston 2024 in the Boston Globe**

However, it may be even more useful to remove the time component and look at the total frequency of all codified topics in the sampling, regardless of larger category. This level of detail can provide insight on the priorities of Boston residents. A breakdown of the top ten most frequently published topics in relation Boston 2024 can be found in the chart below

(Figure 4.3):

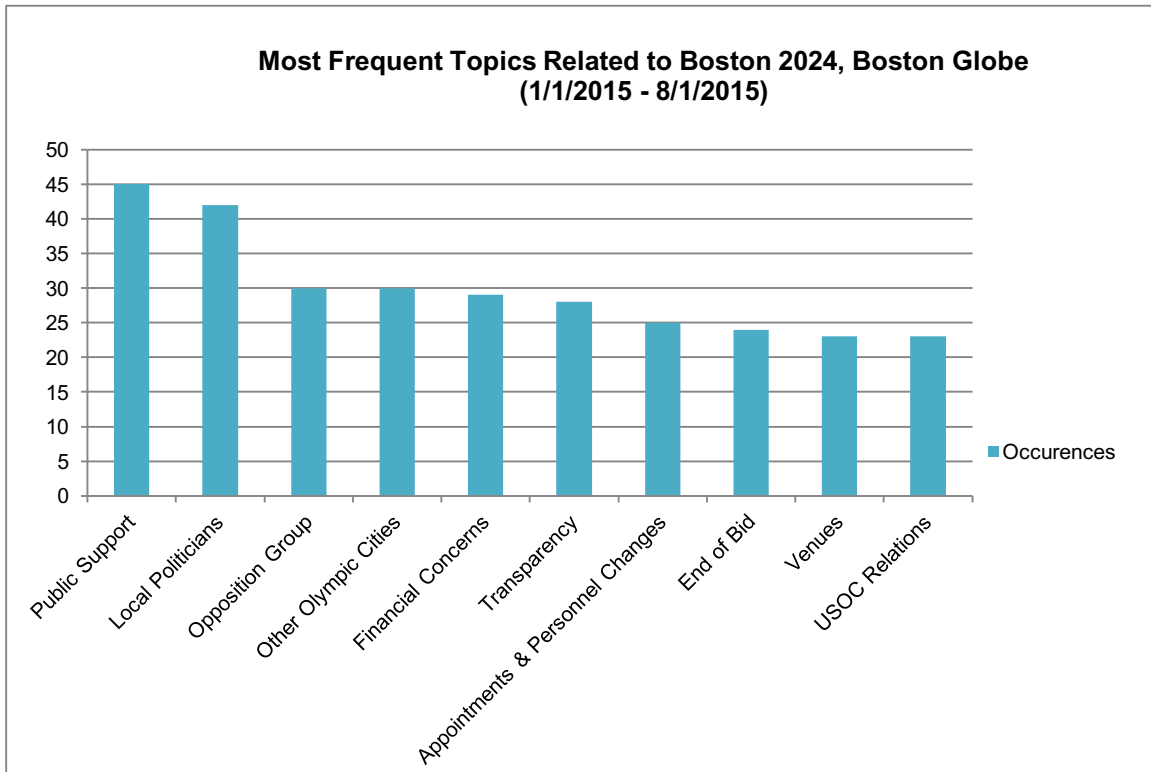


Figure 4.3: Content Analysis 1, Boston Globe Topics

As shown, items related to public support and local politicians have the highest number of published occurrences. Appearances of ‘Opposition Group’ (namely No Boston Olympics) and ‘Other Olympic Cities’ (mentions of Boston’s competitors and previous hosts) occupy the next two positions. Returning to McCombs and Shaw’s findings that: “from the pattern of the total news coverage, the public learns what journalists consider the important issues are and who the prominent public figures of the day are "(McCombs & Shaw, 1972, p. 7), we can begin to the priorities of Bostonians through these frequencies. These topic results are

interesting as they all related to external factors related to the bid and its committee, but beyond that committee's control. The 'Public Support' data can be seen as an amalgam of the rest of the topics combined. How local politicians such as Mayor Walsh handle bid-related issues, how vocal and organized No Boston Olympics becomes and what is happening and has happened in other Olympic cities can all impact public support of Boston 2024. This prominence of secondary, external factors confirms what the literature on the bid process has already: the technical aspects of a bid are not necessarily the most important factors. The public's perception of, and reaction to, the bid committee's plan is what drove media coverage of the bid rather than the bid itself. Only three of these ten topics (Transparency, Venues, and USOC Relations) can be completely controlled internally; any negative impact from the remaining factors can only be contained by a more effective public relations effort.

Overall, this list seems to ignore the larger priorities of the IOC and of the Olympic Movement. Despite his criticism of the Games in general (and later of Boston 2024 specifically), Zimbalist offers that:

A good starting point for future bids by US cities is to ensure that the USOC and the candidate city are following a blueprint that impresses upon delegates the embrace of the values articulated by the Olympic Movement." (2012, p.105)

Even IOC President Thomas Bach offered different priorities than those listed above when describing the Agenda 2020 reforms. He writes:

One of the recommendations we embraced is a new philosophy in the bidding procedure that will enable cities each to target their own different development goals. Bidding will not be a "one size fits all" solution. This is important as the US Olympic Committee considers a bid to host the 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games (Bach, 2015).

These two key stakeholders to Boston 2024 recommend two emphases for an Olympic bid: 1) Olympic values and 2) developmental goals. According to this study's data, the media emphasized neither. This could have been conscious decision of the Boston Globe to omit or downplay these topics in their reporting, but that is unlikely. As sources have shown, there is a connection between what is published and what matters to the public. The relative lack of data supporting the codes for the Olympic Movement category and the infrequency of content supporting development suggest that the bid committee did not effectively communicate how hosting the Summer Games fit into the city's long term development plans.

This also demonstrates of awareness of the Olympic values established by the IOC on the part of Boston media, public and/or bid committee. Had there been more mention of the intangible benefits of hosting the Games, it would have been appeared in either content analysis and - as suggested by Zimbalist – possibly increased public support for the campaign.

### ***Public support***

In order to contextualize how media reports could correlate with public opinion of hosting the Games, secondary research was done through the Boston Globe (Boston Globe Staff, 2015) and another local news source WGBH (WGBH Staff, 2015) to gather all information related to the polls and surveys conducted to gauge public support for the Games. A summary of these data can be found in **Figure 4.4** (p. 61):

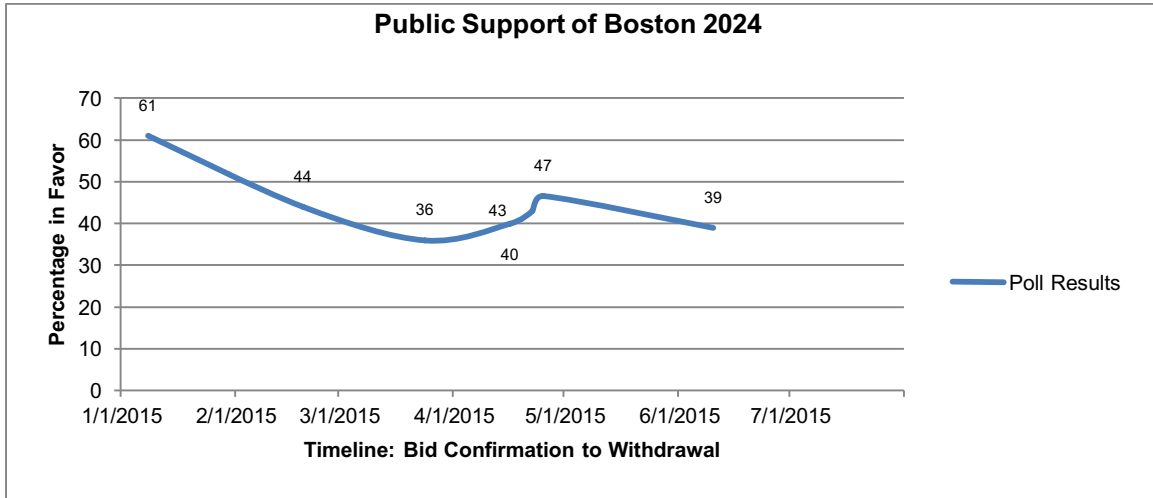


Figure 4.4: Public Support of Boston 2024, Boston Globe and WGBH Polls

As seen here, data could not be found to match the date range of previous analyses (January 1- July 31) because no formal poll was conducted after June 10. However, the data do present a clear illustration of the waning public support from the time the bid was confirmed in January through the following six months of steady decline. In order to gauge the impact this may have on the larger Olympic Movement, it is important to put Boston’s resistance to hosting in the Games in a larger context. This was done by drawing comparisons to other recent Olympic bids.

Recently there have been other examples of failed or withdrawn modern Olympic bids in Europe, centering on the race for the 2022 Winter Games. Krakow’s disapproval of hosting the Games reached 70 percent and Munich was cited at 52 percent disapproval (GamesBids, 2013b). Davos-St. Moritz’s bid was also rejected with 52.66 percent against the initiative and more than 40 percent in favor (GamesBids, 2013a). Such figures were cited in news articles ahead of Boston’s planned referendum in September 2015 (Power, 2015) but these statistics lack the proper context. Larger issues of voter turnout, accessibility and the presence (and funding) of opposition groups have yet to be measured comparatively

between these cities. Governments can also opt to cancel bids before the question comes to a ballot, as seen with Rome for the 2020 Summer Olympics and Oslo and Stockholm for 2022 Winter Olympics. Although Boston 2024's eventual success cannot be determined, its public approval rates in informal polls did not exceed 50% since the campaign's early stages and therefore it is unlikely that it would have advanced to the Candidate stage of the bid process.

The common strand here, besides the Olympic connection, could be that these recent defeats all took place in Western, democratic cities. Although direct comparison of bidding factors across all international competitors is beyond the scope of this study, it is worth noting that the two last contenders for 2022 were Beijing and Almaty, Kazakhstan, whose governments did not submit bids to popular vote. Given the prominent role that local politics played in the Boston 2024 campaign, this is an important layer that could merit further research.

The dynamics of public and governmental support will vary immensely from one type of government to another. As Games shift from democratic and non-democratic host countries it becomes difficult to examine trends. This was seen in the pre- and post- Los Angeles eras, where reaction to deficits in Montreal and surpluses in Los Angeles showed a logical correlation at the public and IOC levels. However, the 1980 Summer Games in Moscow interrupted this thread by creating a void in data. There is very little of evidence regarding public support or dissent towards the Games in the Soviet Union at the time, nor is there reliable financial information. These issues continue to surface in the modern era of Olympic bidding, where varying levels of transparency and opaqueness are still seen.

Perhaps even more difficult to research would be the motivations of voting IOC Members during the bidding process. The reforms, statements and scant insider accounts provide adequate evidence when trying to piece together the motivation being IOC decisions. Though to truly grasp the rationale behind each candidate city's selection, it would be necessary to conduct extensive qualitative research in this area.

## **V. Conclusion**

The data-driven visuals provided throughout this discussion illustrate how certain topics translate through media platforms and how this, in turn, impacts public sentiment and opinion. Through the content analyses of the Boston Globe and Twitter, we can see the priorities of Bostonians and the public at-large about in relation to hosting the Olympic Games. Boston's unsuccessful campaign clearly presented the roles that both traditional and social media in the modern bid processes.

Social media platforms provided an outlet through which the public could discuss information provided by traditional media channels. This allowed for an environment where extensive public discussion could take place both in favor of and against hosting the Games in Boston. The negative discourse about the city's bid was able to gain enough traction to support an organized opposition anchored by No Boston Olympics. Despite the cooperation and endorsement of local politicians, ultimately the public's voice proved to be louder than that of governmental administration or the bid committee.

Boston 2024 also demonstrates broader implications about the bid process in the modern era. The IOC, in this new era of Olympic bidding, must pay careful attention to how a city perceives the requirements of hosting the Games and how a bid committee presents those factors. In this competitive landscape, it is important to consider both internal and external factors. A bid that meets both the city's developmental needs and the IOC's technical requirement has a greater chance for success, as long as the public agrees.



## Appendix A

### Regulations for Election of Olympic Host City, Olympic Charter

(International Olympic Committee, 2015, pp. 72–74)

#### 33. Election of the host city\*

1. The election of any host city is the prerogative of the Session.
2. The IOC Executive Board determines the procedure to be followed until the election by the Session takes place. Save in exceptional circumstances, such election takes place seven years before the celebration of the Olympic Games.
3. The national government of the country of any applicant city must submit to the IOC a legally binding instrument by which the said government undertakes and guarantees that the country and its public authorities will comply with and respect the Olympic Charter.
4. The election of the host city takes place in a country having no candidate city for the organization of the Olympic Games concerned.

#### Bye-law to Rule 33

1. Application to host Olympic Games – Applicant Cities:
  - 1.1 In order to be admissible, any application by any city to host Olympic Games must be approved by the NOC of its country, in which case, such city is considered as an applicant city.
  - 1.2 Any application to host Olympic Games must be submitted to the IOC by the competent public authorities of the applicant city together with the approval of the NOC of the country. Such authorities and the NOC must guarantee that the Olympic Games will be organised to the satisfaction of and under the conditions required by the IOC. 73  
Olympic Charter In force as from 2 August 2015
  - 1.3 Should there be several potential applicant cities in the same country to the same Olympic Games, one city only may apply, as decided by the NOC of the country concerned.
  - 1.4 From the day of submission to the IOC of an application to host the Olympic Games, the NOC of the applicant city's country shall supervise and shall be jointly responsible for the actions and conduct of the applicant city in relation to its application, and, as the case may be, to the city's candidature to host the Olympic Games.
  - 1.5 Each applicant city has the obligation to comply with the Olympic Charter and with any other regulations or requirements issued by the IOC Executive Board, as well as with all technical norms issued by the IFs for their respective sports.
  - 1.6 All applicant cities shall comply with a candidature acceptance procedure, conducted under the authority of the IOC Executive Board, which shall determine the contents of such procedure. The IOC

Executive Board shall decide which cities will be accepted as candidate cities.

**2. Candidate Cities – Evaluation:**

**2.1** Candidate cities are those applicant cities which will be eligible for a decision by the IOC Executive Board to be submitted to the Session for election.

**2.2** The President appoints an Evaluation Commission for candidate cities for each edition of the Olympic Games. These commissions shall each include IOC members, representatives of the IFs, of the NOCs, of the Athletes' Commission and of the International Paralympic Committee ("IPC"). Nationals of candidate cities' countries are not eligible as members of the Evaluation Commission. The Evaluation Commission may be assisted by experts.

**2.3** Each Evaluation Commission shall study the candidatures of all candidate cities, inspect the sites and submit to all IOC members a written report on all candidatures, not later than one month before the opening date of the Session which shall elect the host city of the Olympic Games. Such report shall include an assessment of the opportunities and risks of each candidature, as well as of sustainability and legacy. <sup>74</sup> The Olympic Games

**2.4** Each candidate city shall provide financial guarantees as required by the IOC Executive Board, which will determine whether such guarantees shall be issued by the city itself, or by any other competent local, regional or national public authorities, or by any third parties.

**3. Election of the host city – Execution of Host City Contract: 3.1**

Following the submission of its report by the Evaluation Commission, the IOC Executive Board shall draw up the final list of candidate cities retained by the IOC Executive Board in order to be submitted to the vote by the Session for election. **3.2** The election of the host city takes place after the Session has considered the report by the Evaluation Commission.

**3.3** The IOC enters into a written agreement with the host city and the NOC of its country. At the discretion of the IOC, other local, regional or national authorities, as well as, if relevant, other NOCs and local, regional or national authorities outside the host country, may also be a party to such agreement. Such agreement, which is commonly referred to as the Host City Contract, is executed by all parties immediately upon the election of the host city

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