

# A Look at Luzhkov's Legacy

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Mayor Yuri Luzhkov speaking at the opening of a McDonald's restaurant in 1995. **Igor Tabakov**

Yuri Luzhkov will be remembered by posterity as a fan of newsboy caps, multistory construction, bees and monuments designed by Zurab Tsereteli.

Critics will also link Luzhkov's name to the success of his wife's construction business, tight control over courts, corruption, infill construction, cutting down trees, tearing down historical buildings and harassing sexual minorities.

The former mayor, who turned 74 last week, oversaw an unprecedented construction and economic boom in the capital since being appointed mayor by President Boris Yeltsin in 1992.

Luzhkov promoted easing of restrictions for small businesses; introduced additional allowances for pensioners, teachers, the disabled, war veterans and low-income families; reconstructed the Moscow Ring Road; and created the third and planned fourth ring roads, the monorail road and new metro stations in an attempt to ease traffic movement in the city.

Here is a look at Luzhkov's legacy:

- \* Luzhkov was born in 1936 in Moscow. His father was a woodworker from the Tver region and his mother had worked at a soapmaking factory in Bashkiria during World War II.
- \* A 1958 graduate of Moscow's Gubkin Institute of Oil and Gas, Luzhkov worked as a researcher at the Institute of Plastic Masses between 1958 and 1963 and was a department head at the State Chemistry Committee from 1964 to 1974.
- \* In 1974, Luzhkov was named director of the Design and Experimental Bureau for Automation with the Soviet Ministry of Chemical Industry.
- \* From 1986 to 1987, Luzhkov headed the ministry's science and technology department.
- \* In 1987, Boris Yeltsin, who at the time headed the Moscow branch of the Communist Party, appointed Luzhkov first deputy head of the Moscow City Executive Committee, City Hall's predecessor.

There he met his future wife, Yelena Baturina, who worked as the committee's secretary.

Subsequently, Baturina founded construction giant Inteko and has become Russia's richest woman, according to Forbes, with an estimated wealth of \$2.9 billion.

Critics have linked Luzhkov's name to the success of his wife's business. Luzhkov and Baturina repeatedly appealed corruption allegations in court, winning most lawsuits.

- \* In 1991, then-Mayor Gavriil Popov appointed Luzhkov as his deputy. In 1992, Yeltsin appointed Luzhkov as mayor.
- \* Luzhkov was subsequently thrice elected to the post: in 1996 with 88.5 percent of the vote, in 1999 with 69.9 percent and in 2003 with 79.4 percent.

His opponents in elections included former Prime Minister Sergei Kiriyenko, former head of the presidential property department Pavel Borodin and Liberal Democratic Party Deputy Alexei Mitrofanov in 1999; and billionaire banker Alexander Lebedev and coffin magnate German Sterligov in 2003.

In June 2007, two years after a law abolishing gubernatorial elections took effect, then-President Vladimir Putin appointed Luzhkov for another four-year term, which was to expire in July 2011.

- \* In 1998, Luzhkov founded the political group Fatherland, saying he would run for president in 2000.
- \* In August 1999, Fatherland united with a group of powerful regional governors to form the election bloc called Fatherland-All Russia.
- \* In State Duma elections in December 1999, Fatherland-All Russia came in third, after the Communist Party and the pro-Kremlin Unity Party, winning 13.33 percent of the vote and 46 seats.

\* In February 2000, Luzhkov dropped his plans to run for president and ordered Fatherland to support the candidacy of then-Prime Minister Vladimir Putin.

\* In 2001, Fatherland-All Russia merged with Unity to form a new party that was renamed United Russia in December 2003.

\* In November 2008, Luzhkov angered Medvedev by publicly supporting the return of direct gubernatorial elections, prompting Medvedev to issue a statement saying that "displeased governors are welcome to resign." According to some media reports, Luzhkov then submitted his resignation, but Medvedev rejected it. Several days later, Luzhkov said direct elections should be returned but not in the near future.

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