

*Miquel de Moragas and Miquel Botella, Editors*

# **The Keys to Success**

*The social, sporting, economic  
and communications impact of  
Barcelona'92*

*Centre d'Estudis Olímpics i de l'Esport  
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona  
Olympic Museum Lausanne  
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# URBANISM

## THE GAMES OF THE CITY

LLUÍS MILLET I SERRA<sup>1</sup>

### INTRODUCTION

In 1992, Barcelona entered into the limited group of cities that have hosted the Summer Olympic Games. Of the approximately 130 cities in the world that are capitals of metropolitan areas theoretically large enough to host an event of this size, only nineteen have done so. In this selective group we find, among others, Athens, Paris, London, Los Angeles, Berlin, Stockholm, Rome, Tokyo, Mexico City, Munich, Montreal, Seoul, all of them cities that we could qualify as among the most important and advanced in the world.

In all of these cases, the Games have been a sporting and organizational success. This success has become more and more clear with the added factor of television. In this positive evaluation of the Games the distant spectator and the inhabitant of the host city both participate. Not even situations as serious and tragic as those of Munich in 1972 were able to distort the Games as an event. In the case of Montreal, the excessive economic difficulties provoked by the inability to pay for the project, were not so great so as to distort the attraction of the Games as something desirable and worthwhile for a city. The Moscow and Los Angeles Games were also successful, in spite of the fact that the universal spirit of the Games was partially broken for political reasons: failure, in these cases, belonged to the countries that ended up boycotting the Games.

As we have seen, sporting and organizational success is practically guaranteed by the very logic of the event. From the initial idea of hosting the Olympics project onwards, however, cities tend to look for another kind of success that would allow them to show the world some special quality or capacity. For this reason, in spite of the fact that the sports program is always more or less the same, all Olympic Games are different and unique, characterized by the specific nature of the city that hosts them. Thus the Munich Games could

1. Lluís Millet i Serra. Architect. Director of the Infrastructures Division of the COOB '92.



be qualified as the success of technology and industrial capacity, the Los Angeles Games as an entrepreneurial and economic success, and the Seoul Games as a political success which recovered the universal character of the Games. The Sydney Games of the year 2000 will probably be the ecological Games. In this sense, it seems that we would all agree that the Barcelona Games represented the success of the City in capital letters, of Civility, of the Polis.

The Barcelona Games will only with difficulty be known as a technological event, in spite of having outdone the levels of quality and complexity of all previous editions. Nor will they be recalled as a commercial success, in spite of the fact that the economic management was considerably more brilliant than in Los Angeles. Nor will they take on a significant political meaning, even though they coincided with historical changes in Eastern Europe, making them the most universal Games in history.

Even though all simplistic and reductionist visions are unfair for these and many other aspects of the complex organization of the Games, everyone would agree —as Miquel Botella has said at the beginning of his paper— that the true success of the Barcelona Games lay in the transformation the city underwent. This success is still with us, not only in the appreciation of what was done, making the citizens of Barcelona proud, but also in the admiration and self-reflection that the city has awakened in many other cities.

In order to try to explain the fundamental and specific traits of the transformation as a result of the Olympic project, it seems correct to continue to ask what would have happened if Barcelona had not been nominated. Would the process of transformation have continued at a slower rate within the same global coherence? Would the operations that would not have been done affected the reconstruction process of Barcelona? Would it have been possible to maintain the scale of intervention?

In this paper I will try to explain the reasons and the process followed in the definition of the strategies of the Olympic project, not just as another episode in the overall set of sectorial projects designed to give form to the same idea of the transformation of the city, but as a qualitatively different project, without which Barcelona would not be what it is today. Furthermore, it seems that the urban project of the Barcelona Olympic Games was an «obvious» project, that is, that there was no other way to formulate it. This is an interesting reflection in that it allows us to ask whether the transformation of Barcelona would have been the same and would have had

the same sense, with the modification of some of the fundamental elements of the Olympic project. This is not a theoretical or speculative exercise, since, as we shall see, there were in fact many proposals for the initial modification of urban schemes which, if they had been successful, would have undoubtedly produced essentially different results both in Barcelona and in other municipalities of the metropolitan area.

## THE GAMES AS AMBITION AND PRETEXT

As the Mayors Narcís Serra and Pasqual Maragall repeatedly stated in the initial years of the candidature process, Barcelona needed a global project that would bring together a great variety of citizens' energies in a similar way, as had happened before in 1888 and 1929 for the Universal Expositions. «Any city grows out of specific platforms, in projects or «pretexts» —if we might use a supposedly negative expression— in the context of which great proposals of change are articulated», affirmed Pasqual Maragall in an interview published in the architecture and design magazine *CAU* shortly before the nomination of Barcelona in 1986.

The first years of «balsamic» urban planning, begun in 1980, had been successful, giving priority to small scale actions, focussed in public spaces —squares, gardens, streets— with the objective of strengthening the local systems of the city that had suffered from the lack of any urban initiative for many years. Narcís Serra referred to this patient and systematic labour as a «patch-up job», pointing to the need to have a global project for the city to allow it to establish more ambitious goals that could be carried out in the medium term.

In turn, the General Metropolitan Plan approved in 1976 had conceived the implantation of a clear urban discipline in relation to the speculative processes that had carried the day in previous epochs, allowing for the attainment of important reserves of land for public spaces, community services, and facilities, and pointing to the bases for territorial coordination of a greater scale, in the attempt to strengthen metropolitan space, as well as make it more balanced in uses and densities. In spite of these intentions, the General Plan was an obligatory reference that nevertheless failed to serve as the adequate instrument to drive forward the project Mayor Serra had called for. The architect Oriol Bohigas clearly pointed out the limitations of the Plan,<sup>2</sup> among them being

2. Oriol Bohigas, *Reconstrucció de Barcelona*, Edicions 62, Barcelona 1984.



«its excessive hardness and inflexibility, the consequence of having used only the repressive measures of former plans, instead of promoting discretion —with norms, needless to say, to avoid arbitrary decisions— which would be more characteristic of the processes and methods of the city's project, as well as the lack of a great enough power given the volume of proposals, thus leading to positions that were contradictory to what would have to be the essential bases of a project's direction». In effect, Bohigas also was calling for a framework for projects for Barcelona in affirming that a city is constructed and controlled through projects and construction and not through the action programs of these positions.

The political direction of the project that the city hoped to get off the ground was expressed with great clarity and technical precision. First of all, it was necessary to vertebrate the city, giving it a road system that would add to Barcelona's relation with other cities of the metropolitan area, and would solve the difficult east-west transit of the city, connecting it to the total urban territory with systems of regional transportation. In the same sense it was necessary to define a new rail transportation system, like the metro, which would tie together the main cities of metropolitan Barcelona.

Second, it was absolutely necessary to provide the city with new facilities. The tremendously low level of public investment that had characterized the period previous to the eighties had made the city poorer, damaging its place as a capital. In the previous twenty years almost no buildings had been built for leisure, culture or sport that were able to add to the capital value of the historical facilities of Barcelona. This fact had allowed for growth only in quantitative terms, since quality was denied by the lack of public space and facilities. This policy of facilities had to be especially directed towards the attainment of large public spaces that would give way to a new perception of the city, opening it to the sea on one side and defining its upper limits with the Collserola Park on the other.

Third, it was necessary to redefine centrality, rethinking the meagre city centre defined until then by the axis that ran from Passeig de Gràcia and Diagonal to Francesc Macià Square. This meant determining the area of service and influence that the city centre hoped to mark out, that is, define an articulated system of this centre and of other cities of the metropolitan area and the region.

Finally, a balancing of the city was needed. The idea was to avoid qualitative growth that would occur mostly in a very specific area of the city in detriment of the other districts. Until then, the majority of public and private investment in

important urban facilities had occurred on Montjuïc, in the districts of Les Corts, and in Sarrià-Sant Gervasi. The sports facilities of F.C. Barcelona, the Royal Polo Club, the Turó Tennis Club or the Laietà Sports Club are examples of the location preferences and strategies that private initiative had followed. Yet the University of Barcelona, the Polytechnical University, the Picornell swimming pools, or the Serrahima Stadium are examples of how «prestigious» public investments followed the same logic. In contrast, the east of the city did not have any representative public or private facilities, and the community services did not come up to the level these neighbourhoods needed.

The instrument needed to supply the necessary energy, consensus and hope to strengthen the transportation system, create facilities, define the central space, and balance out the city, was the project for the Olympic Games.

### BASIC TRAITS OF THE OLYMPIC PROJECT

Starting from these premises and from the knowledge acquired of the city's sports facilities through a number of studies<sup>3</sup> carried out since 1970, Romà Cuyàs, commissioner of the Mayor for the Barcelona '92 project, commissioned me in 1982 to do an initial study of the urban project of the Olympic Games. The problem was to design, in a few months, a territorial translation of the requirements of the Olympic program and confirm what their impact could be on the city. Until that moment, no one was very clear about how many acres of urban land would be required, how many existing sports installations were usable, and how many were lacking. The proposal that we formulated, brought together in the first candidature document,<sup>4</sup> already anticipated the creation of four Olympic areas in Barcelona as well as the decentralization of various sports installations out towards the principal cities of the metropolitan area.

This initial scheme, which was easy to conceptualize and imagine, was not altered in the following ten years. The technical team that drafted it up formed part of the Olympic Office throughout the candidature process, and later entered

3. *Estudio sobre los equipamientos de deportes y de espacios libres para el ocio en Barcelona y comarca*, Comisión de Urbanismo y Servicios Comunes de Barcelona y otros municipios, Barcelona, 1973.

*Guia de l'esport a Barcelona '82*, City of Barcelona, 1982.

4. *Projecte Jocs Olímpics. Barcelona 1992. Primeres aproximacions*, Romà Cuyàs i Sol, October, 1982.



into the Organizing Committee, adding to the conceptual continuity of the project.

Out of these initial schemes, drafted in 1982, the Olympic project came into shape as a re-urbanization project, creating new facilities, and thus intervening in public space by acting upon what already existed through urban renovation projects that would have a strong impact on those parts of the city that had already been constructed.

When we speak of the Olympic project, we are in fact speaking of a great bundle of projects with very diverse characteristics, whose completion was considered necessary to make the city more coherent overall. Basically there were two types of projects: the Olympic parks or areas, with facilities for competitions and training; and the projects that would connect the city, the ring roads and large infrastructures. The administration of the first group of projects was directly carried out by the Games Organizing Committee, while the second group was administered by the *Institut Municipal de Promoció Urbaniística* (Municipal Institute for Urban Promotion) (IMPU), and, later, by *Holding Olímpic S.A.* (HOLSA).

The idea or central scheme of the project rested upon the placement of four large parks —the four Olympic areas— in the corners of the central rectangle of the city. The reference to geometry defined by four Olympic areas maintains a dominant presence after its definition in 1982 in all of the projects integrated in the Olympic «catalogue». Montjuïc, Diagonal, Vall d'Hebron, and the Sea Park now have a clearly central position in relation to the metropolis. If during the 1960s these territories could be considered peripheral or suburban, in our day this is no longer the case, as they have acquired a privileged position as connecting nexae between the centre of the city and the periphery, pointing to the complex qualitative values of the city as well.

The key «piece» of the Olympic project was, however, the road infrastructure operation and, more concretely the construction of the Ring Roads (Ronda de Dalt, and Ronda Litoral), which ring the entire city. The Olympic Games were the excuse to guarantee that the circuit was completed before 1992, as they were necessary for the effective connection of the four Olympic areas. The importance of the Ring Roads as a vertebrating element in the expanding urban nature of Barcelona was unarguable from the opening day of the Games onward. As Jose Antonio Acebillo explains,<sup>5</sup> the new ring ro-

5. «El progressiu canvi d'escala en les intervencions urbanes a Barcelona entre 1980 i 1992», in *Barcelona olímpica. La ciutat renovada*, HOLSA, 1992.



ads served as collecting and distributing roads between regional and local routes, allowing for a more metropolitan interpretation of the urban territory, where geographical barriers and distances were overcome by the road structure formed by large distribution rings and for the entrance and exit roads that connected them with regional transportation systems.

The four Olympic areas and the connecting roads or axes that tied them together define a rectangle that sets out what we could call the central city, occupying the geometrical centre of the map of Barcelona between the Llobregat and the Besòs rivers. Over the past ten years this territory has been submitted to an intense process of urban redefinition which began with the projects to create new faces to the sea and the mountain.

The new maritime facade of Barcelona, from Montjuïc to the Olympic Village and the River Besòs, and, further on, in Badalona and up to the mountain of Montgat, is without a doubt the most spectacular element of transformation derived from the Olympic project. As a parallel, on the mountain side, the line of the Ronda de Dalt ring road, with a changing design according to the urban fabric it passes through, has come to define the limit between urban space and the large central park of metropolitan Barcelona that is Collserola, while resolving problems in the east-west suturing of many neighbourhoods that until recently had formed a de-urbanized periphery, with anarchical planning and a lack of open spaces, facilities and services. This re-urbanizing process did not end with the Olympic areas of Diagonal or Vall d'Hebron, but continued as far as L'Hospitalet and Prat de Llobregat on the one side, and to Santa Coloma de Gramenet and Badalona on the other, completing the Ronda de Dalt ring road's function in providing metropolitan cohesion.

The new geometry of the central space was defined by the axis that connected the Montjuïc mountain to the Diagonal area along Tarragona Street and Numància Street, and continued further up with the Vallvidrera Tunnel, ultimately connecting up with Sant Cugat, Rubí and Terrassa. On the other side of the city another connecting line can be drawn running perpendicular to the coast, between the Olympic Village and the Vall d'Hebron area, along Marina Street and the Rovira Tunnel. In the future, this axis will be prolonged as far as Cerdanyola and Sabadell through the Horta Tunnel, and will improve the relation of the city centre with other cities in the metropolitan area.

Once the edges of this central space were defined, a series of changes confirming the enormous vitality of the city cen-

tre have come about by induction with no direct relation to the Olympic project, though generally generated by private initiative with private resources, though in some cases complemented with public investment. We are speaking of projects for numerous hotels, commercial centres, offices, sports facilities, museums and art galleries, and university centres, all of which have been initiated and developed in a very short period of time, possibly driven on by the inextricable Olympic calendar. We are witness to a dimensional change in the city similar to what occurred in the second half of the last century after the tearing down of the city walls and the Eixample plan of the engineer Ildefons Cerdà. We can no longer refer to the old quarter as a historical city, as all of the Eixample and especially the central rectangle, have become part of the historical city centre.

The Olympic project translated the indications and ambitions expressed by the City of Barcelona to strengthen the metropolitan area by giving the city conditions to compete with the most important capitals of the world, balancing quality of life throughout the total urban space. I believe that the real Olympic project went well beyond what was originally imagined, in the same way that the later impact and consequences of the Games will be much wider than the most optimistic expectations.

Following the methodology and projectual mechanisms used in Barcelona, the Olympic project was extended to the majority of cities which hosted some sporting event as sub-sites. The idea was always to use these projects as tools to rezone and equip strategic urban areas which, by induction, had to offer urban transformations throughout the city in question. This was the case in Terrassa and the project for the Abad Marced Sports Complex, in Badalona with the Montigalà Village and the new Olympic Sports Palace, in Castelldefels and the Olympic Canoeing Channel, in Banyoles with the project for the lake and the consolidation of the park around it, and in La Seu de Urgell with the construction of the Segre Park.

## SPORT AND CITY

I have not wished to speak of sport until now, so as to make it clear that, in my opinion, the Olympic project affected the totality of the city and went beyond a group of projects for sports facilities. I believe, however, that this aspect deserves detailed explanation.

Barcelona is a city with a long sporting history, where a



complex system of sports practices has developed responding to various activities, set out in a heterogenous manner throughout the city.

The program for new sports facilities that the Olympic project had to incorporate had as its starting point the analysis of the existing sports system, which was quite highly evolved and diversified, and had been completed in previous years through the construction of many small buildings designed to provide neighbourhood sports services.

The most evident dysfunctions in the system were not so much quantitative —Barcelona has more than 1,500 sport facilities that in theory ensure an acceptable level of practice— but qualitative. The majority of sports facilities responded to very elemental typologies: football fields, of which there were 95, and multi-use cement courts, with more than 250 in the city. These elemental facilities were distributed quite uniformly throughout the city with the exception of the central districts. At the same time the lack of high level facilities, qualified for elite competition or sports spectacles, was notable: the F.C. Barcelona football stadium was already 25 years old and the Picornell swimming pools —the most recent single constructions— were more than ten years old.

The Olympic project thus had to complete the sports system by constructing a good number of typologically different sports facilities. It also had to be useful in balancing out the quality facilities in the city with new sports facilities to be located in the eastern part of the city. Finally, it was necessary to add to the quality of basic existing facilities, with complex installations of the highest technical and sporting level.

Sports facilities do not need to be distributed homogeneously and equally through the territory, but should form an articulated and structured system of elements with specific functions. Sports facilities are organized on different levels of service and complexity —metropolitan, urban, neighbourhood— and carry out different functions —education, training, competition, spectacles, leisure, maintenance— being administered by institutions and organisms with very diverse characteristics, such as clubs, sports associations, the municipality, or private and public schools.

The logic of the Olympic project fit in perfectly with the conclusions of the diagnosis of the existing Barcelona sports system: complex and highly qualified installations were lacking to serve the urban and metropolitan areas, allowing for Barcelona's character as a sports capital to be reaffirmed. The placement of these new centres had to respond to criteria —maximum accessibility from all areas of service— re-

solving the concentration/dispersion duality. In turn, they had to respond as well to the logic of the administration systems that had been developed, choosing either large complexes or numerous independent units.

The classical solution, adopted by the majority of Olympic cities—Los Angeles was an exception—has been to construct a completely new «Olympic Park» where the majority of the facilities used for the Games are concentrated, forming a monumental group that normally is difficult to digest when it comes to later use.

Barcelona chose an innovative solution; for the first time in history the Olympic Park was divided into four smaller sized areas, placed around the city but at least 5 kilometres from the city centre. The result was that from an Olympic point of view, the territorial solution was the most concentrated to date, best resolving the relation between sport and the city. If, as was demonstrated during the Games, the Olympic festival became a great urban festival, three years later the effectivity of the solution chosen is clear from the point of view of daily use.

All too often after an exceptional event, however, buildings that are excessively large or inadequate for daily needs remain in the city. There are many examples of Olympic constructions that have not been used or have been hardly used afterwards. It has been difficult to pay for them and no one knows what to do with them. In contrast, Barcelona has not built a single structure thinking only of the Olympic Games, but basically in later use. When a use could not be assured, as in the case of minority interest sports or those with minor popularity—wrestling, fencing, weightlifting—the decision was made to hold these competitions in buildings normally used for other functions.

The result of this strategy has been to facilitate the integration of Olympic buildings into the city, and their easy adaptation for «normal» uses, with accessible maintenance costs and profitable spaces. All of the Olympic constructions—both in the four Olympic areas in Barcelona and in all the sub-sites—are used regularly, and their use generally covers maintenance costs. In some cases, the enterprises created to run them have been able to report positive economic results. This reality differentiates the Barcelona Games from the majority of cases that preceded it.

The Barcelona Olympic project has fled from monumentalism and has limited itself to complete the sports facilities system in Catalonia. As we have said earlier, during the ten years preceding the Olympic Games, the evolution of the Cata-



lan sports system was spectacular. The cooperative action of the Generalitat de Catalunya, City Halls and provincial *diputacions*, corrected the majority of accumulated deficiencies of the previous forty years. The sports facilities adjust themselves to the modernization of society, and the practice of sport runs at about 35% of the population, reaching levels equal to or above those in the majority of European countries.

Even still, in Spain and Catalonia it was difficult to hold international level events for a great number of sports in a dignified fashion. The organization of the Olympic Games was a decisive step in completing the most qualified and singular part of the sports facilities system, diversifying the typology of large-scale facilities and rounding out the system throughout the territory. High level facilities were built for many sports: field hockey, baseball, jai alai, canoeing, shooting, badminton, equestrian sports, and volleyball, among others. Each new installation was located near to places where there was a base of activity and tradition in each sport. In this way the pyramidal structure of the sports system was rounded off.

We might make another observation in relation to the planning of sports facilities: their changing character in time and need to be multi-use. Earlier we referred to the diversity and changeability of sports practices; in the planning of spaces for sports it is necessary to keep in mind the necessity for changes and successive adaptations. For the same reason, more and more sports are integrated into other cultural and leisure activities, and thus venues for sports also become the stages of many other cultural and popular manifestations, reaffirming their role in accepting multiple superimposed uses. At the same time, sports invade urban locations that are not necessarily reserved for its practices —unexpected spaces— thus demonstrating a compatibility with the totality of daily public activities.

In this sense, the large Olympic facilities have served as a strong instrument in urban rezoning and have contributed to the definition and reordering of urban territory. Rescuing sports activity from urban marginalization that had been subject to rigorous zoning —with the result of a progressively suburban character for sports— and returning it the centre, to the proximity of other uses, and to diversified activity, has been one of the goals of the Olympic project. The results can be evaluated in two ways. First, they have been able to maintain the Olympic installations in continuous activity: three years after the Games, an inventory could be made of all the events that have been held in the sum total of facilities, and a surprising list of spectacles and activities would be obtained. Reality



has outdone the forecasts. Second, the mutual existence of sports activities with games, leisure, amusements, and activity in commerce and the hotel and restaurant sector allowed for the focussing of an intense urban life around the Olympic Games, so that daily life almost erased the Olympic moment, replacing it with daily spectacle. In spite of having been the «best and most brilliant» Olympic Games in history, the sports structures that were built have not been very «Olympic», but instead very urban, very close to the citizens of the city.

#### BARCELONA WITHOUT THE GAMES, OR WITH ANOTHER GAMES

It is risky to make hypotheses about things that have not occurred. If Barcelona had not obtained the Olympic Games it surely would have been able to find other enlivening projects, but only with difficulty would they have taken on the magnitude of the Olympic Games. Where would we be at this time? It seems clear that the overall investments that were concentrated in Barcelona in the five years before the Olympic Games would have decreased considerably. Said simply, we would at least be four or five hundred million pesetas behind. The situation would probably be the following: only with difficulty would we have finished the Palau Sant Jordi, the first project begun, along with the Olympic Stadium. A modification of the project for this latter was made, in case of not obtaining the Games, which reduced the capacity by 20-25,000 spectators, leaving off the upper deck. The rest of Montjuïc probably would have remained as it was.

Neither would it be an overstatement to say that without the Olympic Games, the maritime coastline of Poble Nou would have evolved very little and the quantity of public funds necessary to initiate the operation would still be under negotiation. The Diagonal Area, in my opinion, would not have evolved at all, since it was not a priority urban problem, and Vall d'Hebron, where all the land was already municipal, certain projects for local improvement could have been developed. Most seriously, however, would have been that the ring roads would still be left to do: in the previous twenty years only four kilometres of ring roads had been built, while in the four years before the Olympics 40 kilometres were built. If we were to look at a complete list of projects in the Olympic catalogue and their budgets beside them, one might make a real hypothesis of what it would have meant to not have made such investments.

Another quite realistic exercise would be to compare the

Olympic projects with others not included in the mentioned catalogue, comparing it with the speed of their evolution. The Convent dels Àngels, for example, which was meant to be the municipal photography archive and press archive, has been under construction for more than twelve years: 800 million pesetas are needed to finish it. For the last ten years the Casa de l'Ardiaca, where the historical archive of the city is located, has required urgent construction to consolidate and adequate it, which 400 million pesetas would be needed to do. The program of the new Auditorium of Barcelona had to be reduced, since the administrations committed to financing it did not have the will to provide the necessary financial resources. The Gran Teatre del Liceu had projects for its reform for many years, which never received adequate economic support before it burnt down. As for the construction on the Museum of Art of Catalonia, in spite of the initial impulse produced by resources and the «Olympic» calendar, the end is not in sight. In citing these examples, which could be supplemented by many others, I would not want to imply any criticism of the administration of these projects. On the contrary, I wish to point to the difficulty in finding sufficient economic resources to finance them.

When one of these unique projects is not finished in time, the city is partially affected, but continues on its way: they are faults or occasional problems that do not affect overall urban identity. In the case of the Olympic Games this would have been different: clearly we are not speaking of a stadium more or a stadium less, but the overall activity of the city, the expectation generated by the Olympic project, and the renewed trust in the city's own capacity for administration and transformation. Without the Olympic Project, Barcelona would not have changed in this respect.

Sometimes people have wanted to explain the recent urban history of Barcelona as a natural process from projects on a local scale to more and more complex projects, until arriving at large-scale interventions. In these explanations, the Olympic project is not even cited or is reduced to an anecdote or a provisional rarity. Without the Olympic Games, I believe that we would still be putting the city together bit by bit and the metropolitan dimension that we spoke of earlier would not have been reached. Without this change in scale we would not be able to speak today of new town centres, the hotel plan, nor the completion of the Diagonal, nor the majority of the induced effects that are still underway.

It remains to respond to the question of whether another project for the Games would have been possible. The answer, clearly, is yes. There is no question that other solutions could



have been imagined. In fact, in the candidature project prepared for the 1972 Olympics, Barcelona co-hosted the Games with Madrid, which though not successful (for obvious reasons), planned to locate all the installations that corresponded to our city —sports port, sailing channel, swimming and diving pools, athletes village, and so on— in the municipalities of Gavà and Viladecans. These were options to colonize new territories, whose impact on Barcelona would have been quite different.

The temptation towards speculative solutions also existed during the candidature process. At a certain time there was a proposal to construct the Olympic village near Castelldefels, adequately rezoning the necessary lands to develop a tourist-residential operation; there was also a study made to place it in Vallés. Fortunately these options were not successful and the idea of the Sea Park was maintained.

Another facility that was highly debated was the sports port. In the first candidature document there was an error that left open the location of the nautical base. This brought about a wave of «disinterested» offers, the wildest of which was of German promoters who offered to produce the sports port in an environmentally protected area of the Costa Brava, in Tossa de Mar.

The sporting world put a lot of pressure on the candidature to change the location of the stadium, since it was considered inadequate to locate it on the top of a hill. The construction of a large sports centre in Vallés was proposed to direct future growth towards Sant Cugat and Cerdanyola. The proposal to hold all the basketball competitions in Badalona was also highly criticized. The international field hockey federation considered the location of Terrassa to be too far away and wanted it suppressed. For other reasons, the sub-site of Sabadell was about to be annulled. The inclusion of La Seu d'Urgell had to be negotiated since the wild water program had not been included in the Olympic calendar since 1972.

As can be seen, the argument for one particular option to locate a certain facility in a particular place could have many reasons, and some locations undoubtedly could have been improved from the point of view of later users. I believe that both the technical responsibilities and the political decisions rightly defended the permanence of the four areas of Barcelona. If one of them had been eliminated —the Sea Park was the most criticized— the territorial model would have been unbalanced and in all probability the current city would continue to favour the western areas. I also doubt that the part of the ring roads on the side of the River Besós would have been

completed. It was also correct to maintain all of the sub-sites initially proposed. It is certain that there could have been a better football stadium than the one in Sabadell, but it did seem a valid priority to defend the system of cities in the metropolitan area. The only weak point in this strategy was the impossibility of finding an appropriate sports program for the city of Mataró, which in spite of this was maintained in a symbolic way as the starting point for the Marathon.

## THE CITY OF THE GAMES, THE GAMES OF THE CITY

I think that the Barcelona of today is the Barcelona of the Games. And it will continue to be so for many years, until new ambitions come along to drive the city forward, allowing for new changes. The city of the Games still has a long history to fulfill: the positions won have to be consolidated, the renovation of Ciutat Vella and the central area should be completed, as well as the numerous already initiated constructions mentioned: extend the urban fabric towards new areas to the east; consolidate productive activities; strengthen the new town centres and the service and commercial areas. It is also necessary to reaffirm the overall group of metropolitan cities and the specificity of each one of them. In this sense there are still projects remaining to strengthen this territory that correspond to public transportation, and especially to the rail system and the extension of the metro system.

Many of these activities have already been initiated, and thus confirm the utility of the Olympic project and the legacy of the Games. The exhibition «Barcelona New Projects» held in the summer of 1993, was a sign of the vitality of the city, where a great number of projects underway were indicated: the completion of large infrastructures for logistics and distribution; the completion of the maritime project; the continuation of the advance of Diagonal to the sea; the creation of new business areas; the development of the renovation of the urban fabric already consolidated in Barcelona; the transformation and improvement of the residential areas of the city. All of these projects and those to come are children of the Barcelona Games.

In this Barcelona, a particular change has occurred, visible from without: the city has become more welcoming, friendlier, cleaner, more athletic, more pleasant, more cultivated, more urban, more Olympic. And all of this is a consequence of having organized the Games of the City.