

# Mega events and the legacy it leaves behind tourism essay



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City planners around the world get an opportunity for rapid urban development and regeneration at a large scale through mega-event planning. The Barcelona Olympics of 1991 saw a paramount shift in mega-event planning, where city planners focused on the legacy that the event leaves behind and its impact on the city. The sustainable urban development of the city of Barcelona catapulted it to one of the top cities of Europe in a matter of year.

Following the success of the Barcelona Games, mega-event organizations such as the IOC, Commonwealth Federation, FIFA etc. began focusing on the legacy plan of bidding cities for determining winning bids for such mega-events. An understanding of the effects of various legacy plans and its implementation in bid-winning cities is essential in formulating guild lines for evaluating the success of the legacy plans.

The City of Delhi derived much of its legacy plan from previous bid winners and developed its urban regeneration plan for the city. The intention of this dissertation is to investigate the legacy plan for urban regeneration intended for the city of Delhi through the Commonwealth Games as well as the legacy that the event left behind. A comparison can therefore, be made to determine the extent to which the urban regeneration plan was implemented and how successful it was.

The Macmillan Dictionary defines:

### **Legacy:**

something such as a tradition or problem that exists as a result of something that happened in the past.

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something that someone has achieved that continues to exist after they stop working or die.

The mega-event is by its nature large scale, organized by the social elite in the host nation or city and projects secular values and principles through the creation of an official version of the city or nation's history and contemporary identity. Performance mega-events are typified in the 20th century by the Olympics and represent a populist cultural expression of the achievements of the host city or nation (Roche, 2000). Reinvention of a Mega-event as catalyst of urban development became prominent towards the late 1970s. Reasons for this were the growing awareness of the pervasiveness of deindustrialization led city planners to take action to stimulate new sources of employment and also that urban regeneration by traditional production - based approaches became implausible. This led to alternate strategies that relied on service industries and consumption to supply growth. (R. Gold, M. Gold, 2007)

Mega-events are used by city planners to fast forward the planning and execution process by overcoming problems of urbanism. The recent host cities of mega-events have used it to contain the social disruption arising from rapid urbanization and economic expansion. Host cities use these events to achieve specific local and national goals. The 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games represented an opportunity to redevelop the city using a mix of public and private sector funding that balanced the commercial and social aims. The ' Fantasy City' model (aggressive commercialism and tourist orientation) of the Los Angeles Games were modified and the Barcelona approach emerged as an alternative to obtaining a post-Games regeneration <https://assignbuster.com/mega-events-and-the-legacy-it-leaves-behind-tourism-essay/>

legacy. Since 1992, 'Legacy' has assumed a considerable significance to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) - as its evaluation process has incorporated environmental and other social dimensions - and is now firmly focused upon non-sport related outcomes as a source of legitimation for hosting the Games. The Barcelona - inspired modification of the 'commercial' approach to hosting the Games was replicated by London - with the 2012 bid creating a combination of public and private funding and partnerships to deliver the event and an ambitious social, cultural and economic legacy. (Poynter, 2009). The Government of India also gave a comprehensive legacy plan to the Commonwealth Federation in order to win the bid of the 2010 Commonwealth Games to Delhi, India over Hamilton, Canada. The study of previous Mega-events particularly the Olympics of Barcelona 1992, Atlanta 1996, Sydney 2000 and Athens 2004, their legacy plan and implementation, are key to understanding and analyzing the legacy plan for Delhi post the Commonwealth Games of 2010.

The key findings of the Greater London Authority on previous editions of the Olympic Games of Barcelona 1992, Atlanta 1996, Sydney 2000 and Athens 2004 for assessing the Legacy of the London Olympics of 2012, are as follows:

## **Economic**

### **Legacy Momentum**

In the economic sphere Legacy Momentum refers to the capacity of the city and regional economy to continue an upward growth path following the

immediate post-Games downturn in economic activity. The capacity to achieve momentum relates to several factors.

The Games must complement an already existing regeneration plan that involves new phases beyond the Olympic event.

The knowledge-base derived from the preparation and staging of the event is not dispersed when the Games end but is utilized to promote further innovation with the city and region.

3. The negative consequences and omissions from the Olympic-related regeneration phase are addressed in subsequent urban development projects. Barcelona (1992) is the best example of a host city achieving Legacy

Momentum.

## **The Mega Event and the City Economy**

The impact of the Games on a city economy is both tangible and intangible. The intangible re-branding of a city may have subsequent tangible effects, especially through inward investment and the enhancement of entrepreneurial confidence and expertise (Barcelona 1992). The Games provides a significant catalyst for renewal; accelerating the completion of infrastructure projects (Barcelona 1992, Atlanta 1996, Athens 2004 and more modestly Sydney 2000) but the host city population emerges with a balance sheet of positives and negatives from a process of regeneration that happens to it rather than is shaped by it.

## **Social, Cultural and Lifestyle**

### **Olympic Philosophy: Regeneration**

The IOC commits “ to ensure that the host cities and their residents are left with the

most positive legacy of venues, infrastructure, expertise and experience”

### **Urban Renewal**

All Cities pursue “ hard” legacy gains: infrastructure, the reorientation of city spaces,

improved amenity, new types of land use and economic activity. Barcelona is the

acknowledged success story here.

Planned-in legacy offsets “ white elephant” syndrome in some cases The post-Games use of infrastructure is an important guide to the success of the Games, and in all cases legacy needs to be built into initial conception, design and delivery of Olympic facilities (buildings, but also IT, governance, city brand management, and post Games maintenance contracts). Barcelona Olympic village, Atlanta business tourism, Sydney and Australian tourism and Athens transport systems provide indicative evidence.

### **The Green Legacy**

The first ‘ Green Games’, and its Environmental Audit Legacy- Sydney was the first Games to be audited throughout by Greenpeace, who issued a detailed and fairly positive report. Any future Games’ environmental impact

will be judged according to the Sydney benchmark, and therefore cooperation with NGOs (in information sharing, planning and execution as well as in establishing the principles for construction, raw materials procurement, etc) is vital.

## **Sustainability and poverty reduction**

Environmental sensitivity and sustainable development together form the 'third

pillar' of Olympism, as is fully explained in the Olympic Agenda 21 document of

1999. Sustainable development means engaging with the whole world's needs for

clean air and water, and creating opportunities for personal and social development

worldwide.

## **Hard infrastructure and urban renewal**

- Housing, Olympic Village development (Cashman 2006)

- Transport connectivity and enhancement - greener, cleaner and more efficient (Cashman 2006; Essex and Chalkey 1998)

- Economic success (Preuss 2004; Cashman 2006)

- Telecommunications infrastructure

- Sporting facilities permitting increased sports and other community activities/participation.

- The outward fabric of the city - cleaning and greening

- Hotel and other tourist and leisure venues - including night time

Economy

## **Definition of a Good Legacy**

While each of the past cities can be seen to have pursued many of these aims,

typically each city can be shown to have emphasized in particular instances a

narrower range of ambitions. It is the case that typically cities aim to integrate Olympic-based renewal alongside wider urban development agendas.( Preuss 2004).

## **Notable differences in cities' starting points**

Adapted from McKay and Plumb (2001)

The Barcelona Games (1992) are often cited as a model for London. These Games represented the regeneration of an entire city of three million people, rather than a narrower geographical area within a larger city. It is also worth noting that the Barcelona Games were the most expensive of the recent Olympiads, as a consequence of the large-scale regeneration program.



The Atlanta Games (1996) were not particularly focused on regeneration. Spending was confined largely to sporting facilities (no Olympic Village was built, for instance), and the private funding of the Games left a very limited legacy.

The Sydney Games (2000) were less focused on regeneration than the London Olympics are: the Homebush area was regenerated by the Games, but the residential areas were in fact already wealthier than Sydney overall. Athens Some major regeneration projects (2004) included the Athens metro and road systems. Revivification of Athens as a world class tourist city and assertion of relationships with Europe were key aims.

## **Other Legacies**

Typically, apart from sporting venues, there are four areas of development -

- Transportation: road, rail, tram, air and various interconnections, as well as policy and planning on parking, pedestrianisation and “ modal shift”.

- Telecommunications infrastructure - primarily to service the world’s media, but in the future perhaps also developing Olympic area for WiFi and/or other connectivity for visitors

- Housing, especially the Olympic village urban realm and “ cultural infrastructure” - night time economy, Cultural activities as well as ecological and parkland projects.

There is typically some initial disruption locally, and related concerns about the long

and short term impact of such development on various costs, especially on the

inflationary impact on rents and prices, not only in the short term period of the

Games, when congested transport systems and the prospect of inflated restaurant

prices can jar with local communities, but in the medium and longer term, where

infrastructure investment, especially improved transport links (as well as reputational benefits for the city) can drive up property and rental prices either city

wide or, as is more significant, in certain privileged areas.

The Games are welcomed as a stimulus to and accelerator of such investment and

developmental change in the city, however; transformations leading to gentrification

and house price/rental inflation can rapidly produce divisions. As with any kind of

regeneration project, the Games can contribute to an amplification of socioeconomic

differences, producing new spatial distributions of wealth and well-being and gentrification effects which sometimes polarise local populations in regenerating areas. For instance, Barcelona is understood to be amongst the most successful cities in terms of legacy. As part of its successful development of its image and infrastructure towards becoming a key European hub - and a renewed centre for global tourism and culture, the city has also seen (as a consequence) massive house price and rental inflation (131% between 1987-1992), and the emergence of a large population of wealthy international resident/visitors and property investors benefiting from long term infrastructure investments more directly than some local populations, whose access to housing and jobs may not have significantly improved.

## **Legacy of Sports Infrastructure**

It is possible to identify a range of subsequent legacy uses for sports infrastructure.

The “ afterlife” of the venue is an inaccurate designation, since the short, 16 day

Olympic phase (not including the test and training events that may proceed the

Games proper) while determining many of the features and fabric of the structure,

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ideally ought not, exclusively and definitively pre- or pro- scribe subsequent usage.

Preuss (2004) suggests four main “ follow up uses” of Olympic facilities, to which we

might add a further “ use”, drawing on Cashman’s (2006) account of the importance

of memory and retrospection in informing the subsequent symbolic and soft legacies of the Games:

Follow up usage of Olympic Infrastructure (Table below)

Source : adapted from Preuss, 2004 and Cashman 2005

## **The Requirements**

There is no direct correlation between such increases and the wide variations in the cost of putting Games on, however; such variance is a function of decisions about how and which sporting and other infrastructure will and must be developed, revitalized or replaced in the particular host city.

## **What the Cities Built: Outlining New and Existing Facilities**

Clearly hard legacy, as well as costs, are linked to the proportion of new construction

undertaken for the Games. This work, extensive as it is, represents less investment

than the large capital projects such as roads, rail links and land reclamation leading

to fundamental legacy gains (as well as massive cost – including cost overruns).

However, it is the specifically Olympic buildings and in particular large stadiums that

invite most speculation about future usage.

The degree of new infrastructure development undertaken by different cities varies

(Preuss 2004; Baim 2007; Essex and Chalkey 2003). In part this is a matter of

culture, where specific sports and facilities (such as baseball in the UK) are not

routinely apart of the host nations' sporting habits. Existing development and

intended investment planning largely shape this aspect of hard legacy.

General Facilities Barcelona, Atlanta, Sydney and Athens (Table below)

Source : Adapted from Preuss (2004)

As Carbonnell (2005) suggests, drawing primarily on the Barcelona experience,

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For any city, hosting the Olympic Games is both an honour and a challenge.

Much of the infrastructure required is temporary in nature; it only serves a purpose for the duration of the Games themselves. Barcelona took a very clear-cut approach on this issue: the aim was to undertake ambitious projects which would benefit the city as a whole, convinced that what was good for the city's residents would also be good for the Olympic family (Carbonell 2005).

Accommodating the required numbers of visitors to the host city, and ensuring a

high quality and secure experience for all, over 16 days, is no small task.

However,

the scale of host cities' Olympic projects, especially when thinking in terms of

legacy, must also, and primarily, include consideration of the scale, extent and

quality (in terms of delivery and planning for subsequent use) of the whole

refurbished fabric of the host city, in and around the main Olympic sites, but also

beyond, up and down transport routes and down and through hi-tech telecom and

IT infrastructure.

Indicative changes in Land Use Associated with Olympic Construction (Table below)

Source: Adapted from Preuss 2004

## **Barcelona**

The Olympics were an accelerant to and focus for a number of projects, some long

planned, others specific to circumstances pre-1992. The Games emerged within

transformations involving extensive urban development; of old fish markets, army

barracks, a women's prison and polluted waterfront areas<sup>3</sup>.

- The 1936-built stadium in Montjuïc Park was refurbished and many new venues were built.

- The Olympic Village necessitated a new placement of two rail lines that separated downtown Barcelona from the coastline - formerly an industrial area.

- The industrial section was replaced with beaches, which after the redirection

of the metro line re-connected the city to the sea.

- The sewage system was also modernised

- Four museums and a botanical garden were renovated in preparation of the Games.

- In 2004 Barcelona was the number one tourist destination in Europe.

Observers of host cities in the aftermath of the Olympiad are well used to noting the “white elephants”, the most common characterisation of infrastructure

- One kilometre of beaches in front of the Olympic Village, with a series of piers protecting the sand from the dominant stream that flows in East-West direction. The Olympic harbour with a capacity for 700 boats in the water and 300 ashore, with 75% of public space (bars, restaurants, commercial space etc).

- Seaport promenade. 30 meters wide pedestrian seafront promenade with cafes, restaurant and other facilities.

- Two towers 100 metres high for hotels and offices and other minor buildings.



- Highway. Part of the city system of ring roads, with high traffic intensity (120, 000 vehicles a day).
- Urban nucleus. The basic idea was to link the new residential area with the traditional morphology of the city.
- Some 2, 000 housing units were built to host 15, 000 athletes and 17, 000 inhabitants.
- There was finally an integrated system of parks both for the use of the communities living around and in the nearby neighbourhood. developments which fail, in the medium or long term to find suitable subsequent usage.

The study of Olympic Villages throughout this century is the study of the history of ideas about how to develop the city, how to plan it and how to manage it (Munoz 1998).

It is probably unwise to generalise from either extreme; however, Barcelona is an

instructive instance of a largely progressive and positively received redevelopment

and of imaginative and sustained “ legacy momentum” in the post Games periods.

As noted above in term of infrastructure, the Games certainly offer some

improvements. Truno (1995) tracked both access and facilities in Barcelona preand

post- Games. If the number of installations available in Barcelona in 1982 is compared with those available after 1992, it can be seen that the Olympic and non-

Olympic investment effort resulted in an increase of 75. 8% as far as installations were concerned, and of 126. 4% in the case of sports venues. Altogether, a total surface area of nearly 300, 000 square metres was involved (Truno 1995)

The figures for use of new sports centres created after the Games: in all the installations which accept subscribers or members, there has been an increase of 46, 000 new users. (Truno, 1995)

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Indicative positive legacy developments from Olympic village development - Barcelona(Table below)

## **Atlanta**

Essex and Chalkey (1998) provide a useful summary of the Atlanta infrastructure.

- The centrepiece of the Games was the Olympic Stadium (capacity of 85, 000) constructed especially for the event with private finance. After the

Games, it was converted to a 48, 000 seat baseball park for use by the Atlanta Braves baseball team.

- Other new facilities, such as the Aquatic Center, basketball gym, hockey stadium and equestrian venue, were given to educational establishments or local authorities. The main Olympic Village (133 ha) was located on the campus of Georgia Technical College.

- The other main infrastructural legacy to the city was the Centennial Olympic

Park in central Atlanta, which was intended to be a gathering place for visitors during the Games and later to enhance the quality of life for local residents.

The Atlanta legacy is largely understood to have been committed to business and commercial aims - building the reputation of the city.

Nevertheless as McKay and Plumb (2001) observe,

Atlanta largely used existing facilities to house athletes and as such did not experience the mass residential construction around its Olympic precinct.

The Olympics did, however, have a considerable influence on the location of demand by helping to create a more attractive inner city residential

environment through improvements to transport facilities, retail amenities and public areas, such as parks and pedestrian walkways. The Atlanta office market has continued to grow strongly since 1996, with more than 520, 000 m. 2 of office space absorbed across the metro area in 1998.

INDICATIVE CASE STUDY: Negative Impacts - Atlanta - adapted from Newman (1999)

- Economically deprived African-American areas of Atlanta were affected most by the preparations for the Games.
- Residents were relocated from at least six public housing projects
- For these individuals the preparations for the Olympics were disruptive costing many “ the use value of their homes and neighbourhoods”.
- CODA's neighbourhood revitalisation plans failed, and only those areas closest to Olympic venues received substantial support for revitalisation.

Newman makes a useful point about tendencies relevant in particular to mega

event driven regeneration. He suggests that events such as the Olympics are part of a process of reshaping land use in the city to make room for ‘ urban spectacle and display’ at the expense of the routine aspects of daily life for

urban residents. In public housing projects and in low-income neighbourhoods, many families were moved to make way for the spectacle.

Newman concludes that:

The legacy of newly constructed sports venues and the enhanced image of Atlanta as a ' world city' must be tempered by the continuation of a pattern of

moving low-income residents to make way for growth.

The study suggests that:

Only the most dedicated efforts by business leaders and city government to work with low-income citizens after the Games will change the legacy of distrust the Olympics have helped to perpetuate.

## **Athens**

The main features of the Athens projects included an attempt at revitalising major

tracts of the city precinct.

- Remediation of almost 300 ha. of disused wasteland/quarries, and 250 ha.

of polluted rubbish dumps, as well as 600 ha. of former army camps - deindustrialization and de-militarisation of land use

- Developing park, recreation and environmental education areas covering

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250 ha. of urban space (landscaping of 60 dry and seasonal river beds into landscaped parks)

- The unification and enhancement of major tourist/archaeological sites
- Enhancement of residential districts in the centre and outskirts of the city
- Transport
- Athens International Airport Regeneration
- Athens ring road and designed to take traffic from notoriously congested city
- Athens Metro, with an intention towards encouraging legacy modal shift - necessary in a city well known for congestion problems

## **Sydney**

The main features of the Sydney Olympic regeneration were:

- New sports facilities (inc. Olympic Stadium),
- Telecommunications enhancements,
- Land remediation in Homebush Bay,
- Olympic Village built as new suburb (Newington) with housing - the world's largest solar powered settlement,
- Green redevelopment: international benchmarking on waste reduction,

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water re-use, use of recyclable materials,

- Further sports, retail, commercial and transport facilities; widening of

footpaths and new street furniture, aimed at smartening up central Sydney

- Transport the major policy and planning aims of the Sydney Games were to

ensure public access. This would have also contributed to the green

credentials of the Games. This was achieved practically by:

- Public transport being the only means by which spectators [could]

directly access events at major Olympic sites;

- Satellite car parking venues established in “ park and ride” type

schemes. (see Cashman 2005: 200-1)

- In addition the Games served as catalyst for expansion of

Sydney airport including new rail link and Eastern Distributor road linking the

airport to the CBD;

Cashman, noting in particular that there was a post-Games slump in

enthusiasm for all things Olympic. He identifies a range of factors that should

continue to be tracked, suggesting that (as with Athens) the legacy needs to

mature before some key assessments can be made.

These include:

- Media tracking and analysis of cultural issues – city branding, national reputation, attitudes to multicultural issues within Australia, attitudes to disability and sport
- Business and economic outcomes
- Impacts on Sport – elite performance and everyday participation
- Ecological issues

### The Olympic Village, Sydney

The aim in building the Village was:

- to provide the best possible housing and residential facilities for all athletes and team officials
- to apply the highest possible environmental standards
- to provide a new suburb for post-Games use

The site had previously been an abattoir.

After the Games

- The Village was made into a residential area, a suburb of Newington
- Medium density housing
- 850 three- and four-bedroom architect designed houses and 350 two- to



three-bedroom apartments in 94 hectares.

Cashman offers some examination of “ participation”. These figures are in some sense more clear, however they do not reveal too much detail about “ sports

participation”, rather giving emphasis to generalised Post Games legacy uses -

civic amenity as much as sporting venue nonetheless valuable social assets.

Attendances at the Aquatic Centre in recent years in Sydney (Table below)

Source: Cashman (2006)

## **Overall Assessment**

Source: Greater London Authority ( 2007)