



Urban strategies and post-event legacy: the cases of summer Olympic cities

Dr. Yawei Chen MSc, Assistant Professor

Department of Real Estate and Housing, School of Architecture, Delft University of technology, Delft, the Netherlands

Email: y.chen@tudelft.nl, 00 31 15 2781272, 00 31 639251385

Abstract

Mega-event strategies and their impact on host cities have drawn increasing interest, as organising large-scale urban events has become part of a deliberate urban policy strategy to promote local economic growth, improve the city image and put the host city on the world agenda. Most cities stressed exploring city marketing and reimagining effect of these mega events, like the construction of iconic flagship projects or large scale facilities and infrastructures; however, limited attention has been paid towards what legacies these strategies have created on host cities' long-term development, like the post-use of event venues, facilities and related infrastructure. Even less attention was paid toward the long-term effect of these mega-events on host cities' economic growth, social development and environmental upgrading.

This research critically examines the use of mega event strategy in urban development process in the Summer Olympic host cities since 1992 and the legacy left after the Games was over. Data has been collected through fieldwork and literature review. The research identifies urban strategies different host cities have adopted on program definition, organisation structure and development process and evaluate their effect on post-event legacy. This paper suggests that, although host cities may emphasize one particular perspective, it is important for host cities to take a more integral approach to guide the whole process from pre-event preparation and event hosting to post-event development. Such approach may take more care of the balance development of the host cities in economic, social and environmental perspectives and have better chances in sustaining mega-event impact. In particular, urban strategies should pay attention to the establishment of economic functions, social integration and sustainable re-use of post physical legacy in the long-term.

Keywords- Summer Olympic Games, urban strategy, post-event legacy, Barcelona, Beijing

Introduction

The Olympics is one of the world's great 'mega-events'. The Games' five-ring symbol alone can be recognised by approximately 90% of the world's population. Given the event's significance, studies have paid increasing attention to the Olympics in recent years. A large-scale undertaking such as the Olympics can act as a catalyst for local – and even regional – economic development, attracting mass investment, tourists and the global media to the host city. Indeed, host cities generally attach great importance to factors such as the Games' economic implications, event-related income, and the development of tourism. A number of studies have looked at the economic implications of staging the Olympics for host cities. Most studies attempt to identify the economic benefits, either measuring the extent to which such benefits offset the costs, or the extent to which such benefits can be sustained in the long term (Preuss 2004; Austrian and Rosentraub 2002; Kasimati 2003; Gratton et al. 2006; Whitson and Horne 2006). Others, meanwhile, focus on the development of Olympic tourism (Pyo et al. 1988; Higham 2004; Gotham 2005; Weed 2008; Van den Berg et al. 2002). In addition to the economic implications, a number of studies have drawn attention to the Games' likely social-cultural and environmental impact. With respect to social factors, there has been particular interest in the Games' social impact on local communities. It has been found, for instance, that while such an event may engender a local community's sense of self-worth or stimulate participation in sport at the community level, hosting the Olympics can also have negative social effects, particularly on housing and tenants' rights and processes of social gentrification (Jones 2001; Olds 1998; Waitt 2003). From an environmental perspective, the relevant studies have not only focused on the technical details of the International Olympic Committee's (IOC's) environmental requirements, but also increasingly link these to the issue of sustainable development.

Although the Olympic Games usually have a great impact on a host city's spatial structure, due to the IOC's requirements regarding the construction of gigantic sports venues and facilities, studies of the Games have been largely concerned with cities' economic or social motivations for hosting the event. In recent years, the Olympic Games have increasingly been viewed as a means of stimulating urban development processes, on the grounds that the erection of landmarks, the development of infrastructure, and urban renewal processes frequently transform an urban space (Chalkley and Essex 1999; Roche 2000; Gold and Gold 2006). The Olympics' role as a catalyst for urban development and regeneration was first identified in a bidding document in 1992, when Barcelona was preparing for its Olympics. Owing to its use of the Olympic legacy, increased capital flows and its improved attractiveness as a city, Barcelona was able to boost its economic growth, enhance its image, and transform itself into a

globally competitive city. Barcelona's success is one indication of the significance that the Olympic Games can have for urban development practices and urban policy in host cities, and equally, the importance of understanding the Olympic Games from an urban development perspective.

With a view to this, the objective of this paper is to review the existing literature on cities that have hosted the Summer Olympic Games, from the perspective of urban development. In doing so, this paper attempt to draw links between the Olympic Games and urban regeneration practices, in terms of motivations, development strategies, and post-event legacy. This paper does not, however, attempt to draw any conclusions as to how cities should capitalise on hosting the Olympic Games, nor does it propose the best strategies for interlinking the Olympic Games with legacy. Instead, the objective of this paper is to provide an overview of the different approaches adopted by the host cities, their underlying motives, and the expected or actual legacy.

The article is structured as follows. It begins by explaining the context of the Summer Olympic Games, and what motivated the cities to make such enthusiastic bids to host the Games in the context of globalisation. It then examines the various urban development strategies that were used to translate the host cities' visions and goals into reality. In the next section, post-Games legacy were examined, followed by the synthesis on the interrelationship between strategies and legacy in the years following the Games. We finally conclude by presenting the results of the literature review. We highlight the contrasts and contradictions provoked by the strategy of using the Summer Olympic Games as a catalyst for stimulating both urban development in host cities and, ultimately, sustainable development.

Hosting the Olympic Games in the context of globalisation

The interrelationship between the Olympic Games and urban regeneration in host cities is often addressed from two distinct angles: those of the Games as a global phenomenon, and their local aspects. The reason for this is that the Games are a global event that unfolds in one particular place (Short 2008). Mega-events such as the Olympic Games have often been described as one of the primary expressions of the globalisation of culture; or, as Roche puts it, as "large-scale cultural (including commercial and sporting) events, which have a dramatic character, mass popular appeal and international significance" (Roche 2000). Roche argues that that such an event's ability to support and adapt to the time structure helps "to coordinate intergenerational cultural, political and economic flows and networks" at the global level (2003, 119). Moreover, the unique feelings of being in a 'global village' and 'one world awareness' that are provoked by the Games have been further strengthened by the emergence of

globally-mediated television broadcasting and advances in communications technology. Horne and Manzenreiter (2006), for example, suggest that exposure to vast global audiences allows a sport-media-business alliance to benefit from the promotion and association of business with sport. In this way, argues Roche (2006: 30), the Olympic Games have become “an element in the development of global culture” on local soil.

A number of factors can shape a city’s motivation for hosting the Games, including its circumstances prior to the Olympics, the key challenges that it faces, and its vision on how the Games can contribute to urban regeneration. With a view to this, studies have often positioned host cities, especially western industrial cities, in the context of deindustrialisation (Gratton and Henry 2001; Surborg et al. 2008). Prior to hosting the Olympics, many of the cities in question had ceded their roles in traditional industries to newly industrialised countries, and were facing significant challenges in the form of local economic depressions, unemployment and urban decay. Recognising the growing importance of the service sector and the creation of new leisure and consumption spaces in the post-Fordist urban economy, these cities chose to host the Olympic Games as a strategy for facilitating urban restructuring and transformation processes (Surborg et al. 2008; Hannigan 1998). Among the host cities since Summer Olympic Games 1992, as Table 1 has summarized, Barcelona, Athens and Beijing the initial motives for the Summer Olympics host cities. For cities, hosting the Games provides an incentive and opportunity for city elites to restructure their cities in an increasingly competitive environment.

Table 1 Olympic host cities: initiatives

City	Initiative stakeholders	Goal	Objectives	Integration with urban vision
Barcelona 1992	Local municipality Leadership under the mayor	New Barcelona	Adopt global opportunities; solve economic crisis; incorporate long-term development projects	Very strong
Atlanta 1996	Private party: Billy Payne and ‘Crazy Atlanta Nine’	International recognition	Establish a higher international profile; invest in deprived areas, revitalize inner city	weak
Sydney	Central government	Global	International tourism; Attract business and	Moderate

2000	and state government of New South Wales	positioning	investment; Green Games	
Athens 2004	Central government and municipal government	Put Athens back on the world map; restore Olympic value	Reurbanise the city; link ancient and modern culture; boost business and tourist market	Strong
Beijing 2008	Central government and municipal government	International recognition; national promotion	Modernization; economic restructuring; Greening the city	Very strong
London 2012	Non-profit organization BOA, supported by municipality government and supported by the Mayor	Create city spectacles	Regeneration of East London;	Strong

In the early days, hosting the Olympics meant little more than assuming responsibility for providing the necessary venues and accommodations for competitions. These activities inevitably led to a stimulus of the local construction industry, employment boost and a tourist boom. Over the time, the Olympic Games grew bigger and larger. The host cities hope to use the adoption of larger, more spectacular and inherently more expensive stadia to make statement about the technological progress and modernity of the host nation (Gold & Gold 2007). Given the Games' multiple dimensions and the broad range of actors involved, the Games' potential legacy can give a city a wide range of motivations, from the economic and the social, to the spatial and the environmental. Baim (2008), for example, distinguishes four primary reasons for host cities to place a bid for the Olympic Games: enhancing tourism; promoting more rapid infrastructure investment than would occur without the Games; promoting entrepreneurial goals; and gain recognition as a global city or nation. Baim also points out that, although no former host cities have exclusively

aimed for only one objective, all cities since 1972 games in Munich emphasized one of these goals more than other.

The Olympics and its catalyst effect of on urban regeneration

When Barcelona seems successfully transforming itself in a short time “from a ‘gray’ industrial city in the midst of a deep economic crisis to an international successful story a decade later” (Calavita & Ferrer 2000: 793), their mega-event-driven urban regeneration strategy became particularly popular. Host cities have routinely integrated the Olympic development with host cities’ long-term strategic planning and hope to result in a package of benefits. These benefits include boosting the urban economy, permanently repositioning the city in the global tourist market, promoting regeneration, allowing the revamping of transport and service infrastructures, create vibrant cultural quarters, and establishing a network of high-grade facilities that could serve as the basis for future bids (Gold and Gold 2008).

While the Olympic Games promise each host city “fast track urban regeneration, a stimulus to economic growth, improved transportation and cultural facilities, and enhanced global recognition and prestige” (Chalkley and Essex 1999), different host cities have taken different approaches to implementing urban regeneration programmes. Some of the main urban development strategies of the six host cities (1992-2012) that are relevant to post-event legacy can be summarized as following in table 2. In comparison with the abundant literature on the legacy of the Olympics, our knowledge of urban development strategies that are able to bridge the gap between vision and reality is rather fragmented. While many studies examine individual cases in particular host cities, only a few offer more general insights into urban regeneration or urban renewal strategies. Chalkley and Essex (1999) identify a general transition in urban development strategy, from an early emphasis on constructing gigantic sports facilities and urban infrastructure, to a much broader notion of urban regeneration and urban restructuring programmes that sees the Olympic Games as a catalyst. In the case of Berlin (1936), Rome (1960) and Tokyo (1964), for example, the host cities reconstructed and expanded existing facilities, constructed landmark buildings, and generally improved existing infrastructure in order to achieve urban upgrading. In the case of Montreal (1976) and Seoul (1988), meanwhile, Chalkley and Essex explore the role of the Olympics as a vehicle for urban change via the development of the Olympic venue. In these two cases, the sports facilities and Olympic Villages were developed in combination with urban renewal, and schemes for “improved traffic management, the enhancement of cultural facilities, an environmental beautification program and actions to ensure

health and hygiene standards throughout the city” (Chalkley and Essex 1999). Furthermore, the development of Olympic sites has been increasingly integrated into host cities’ larger-scale urban development plans, enabling such sites to become sport and recreation complexes, harbour developments, housing, and tourist accommodation, once the Olympics have taken place.

Table 2 Main urban development strategies in Olympic host cities

City	Integration with urban program	Infrastructure upgrading	Post-use legacy strategy	Economic development	Social development
Barcelona 1992	Integrating Olympic plan with long-term spatial planning; Transforming 4 key location, including the redevelopment of the coastline and upgrading of deprived districts; New identity by creating new landmark, improved public space and facilities; Mixing function in land-use	Constructing major ring road and other transportation infrastructure;	The Olympic stadium has been used by a local football club; the stadium is used for hosting mega events; the game training venues were used for public use.	Enhancing tourism throughout the region through rebranding and tourism planning;	Providing housing for different income group

Atlanta 1996	Developing the Olympic Park at a central gathering point; redesigning the street corridors	Expansion of the airport; the MARTA rail system, road network and renovating bridges, telecommunications and sewage systems	The central positioning of the Olympic park aims to create post-use of Olympic venues and facilities; The Olympic stadium would transfer to the new baseball stadium for the Atlanta Braves; Olympic villages would be transferred to become a dormitory for a local university.	Private financial initiatives that focuses on financial liability; Attract new business and US corporations through the beautification of the CBD and installation of an extensive optical fiber cable network; marketing activities and tour to introduce world's leading investors and business with business strategy	
Sydney 2000	Integrating Olympic development into Sydney's urban	A public transportation system that integrated heavy rail, bus, coach and ferry facility, an	The Olympic Park was designed for sport events, such as	Long-term tourism plan; Promotion programs to attract companies	

	<p>structure; Brownfield redevelopment to transform an area of contaminated wasteland into new multi-use center in Homebush Bay for Western Sydney;</p> <p>Beautification of Sydney's central Business District;</p> <p>Green guidelines to govern the design, layout and construction of Olympic facilities.</p>	<p>extensive pedestrian and cycle network, allows easy access to Olympic Park Station from both west and east Sydney;</p> <p>Upgrading of Sydney airport.</p>	<p>the Rugby world Cup in 2003;</p> <p>A shift was towards a greater use of cultural and business events.</p>	<p>to invest in Australia;</p>	
Athens 2004	<p>A scattered model that involves development in 20 different locations throughout Athens, predomina</p>	<p>Massive investment;</p> <p>Upgrading airport; 210 kilometers of new roads and highways;</p> <p>25 km of light rail and two</p>	<p>75% venues were existing buildings; yet 95% of Olympic development was in permanent</p>	<p>Tourism planning and promotion</p>	

	<p>ntly Greenfields ;</p> <p>Renovating historical and cultural sites in inner city to improve the public space in inner city;</p> <p>Rehabilitation of coastline</p>	new metro lines.	form		
Beijing 2008	<p>Integrating Olympic plan with long term master plan;</p> <p>Environmental upgrading by moving about 2000 polluted factories out of city; drastic environmental measures to improve the air quality, including shutting down factories</p>	<p>Massive investment; the construction of the fifth and sixth ring roads, expansion of expressways and railways connecting Beijing to surrounding cities; construction and reconstruction of 318 kilometres of roads and 154.5 kilometres of urban light railway, the construction of eight new</p>	<p>Combination of using existing venue with building of new venues;</p> <p>Locating new venues within university campuses to ensure post usage; downsizing the venue capacities, making venues multifunctional and creating new</p>	<p>Economic restructuring by reducing dominant manufacturing sector and increase service sector;</p> <p>Place promotion;</p> <p>Involving private sector through bidding, BOT and Public-private Partnership model</p>	<p>Sports facilities were created in Beijing's residential communities, along major roads and in residential neighbourhoods</p>

	and construction sites in Beijing and in neighbouring provinces and restricting the use of cars.	urban subway lines and the renovation of the two existing lines, the expansion of Beijing's bus system and the extension of the Third Terminal of Beijing Capital International Airport.	economic functions for the Olympic sites (the Olympic Greens and Olympic villages), and establishing commercial plans for Olympic facilities.		
London 2012	Regeneration of deprived districts		Olympic legacy company to prepare and guide the development of legacy; Downsizing the capacity of Venues.	Tourism strategy to ensure tourism expenditure; Improve skill level of local workforce;	Olympic trust to offer young people and diverse community the opportunity to fully participate;

Barcelona (1992) perhaps offers the most developed example of how the Olympics can function as a catalyst for urban development. Not only was Barcelona's urban structure modified through the development of four Olympic sites in different types of location (such as a low-income neighborhoods, a declining industrial site, and a waterfront area), but many programs that had already been proposed, such as the creation of public open spaces, the general improvement of public transportation, the opening of the city to the sea, the renovation of the city's cultural infrastructure, the landscaping of squares, and the commissioning of new sculptures, could finally be realised; programmes that

might otherwise have suffered long delays, or might have been cancelled altogether (Chalkley and Essex 1999; Marshall 2000, 2004; Monclú 2007; Coaffee 2007). Building on the so-called 'Barcelona model', Sydney (2000) continued the trend of integrating Olympic facilities with the city's Brownfield redevelopment (Chalkley and Essex 1999; Lochhead 2005; Lenskyj 2000). Sydney applied a detailed set of 'green guidelines' to the design, layout and construction of the Olympic facilities in the regeneration of a notorious polluted industrial site for redevelopment into the Olympic park (Chalkley and Essex 1999; 389). Sydney also attempted to achieve long-term vibrancy and variety in the area by mixing functions in its Olympic site development, providing sporting, entertainment, exhibition, commercial and residential facilities in the Homebush Bay. London (2012) uses the Olympics as a force for regeneration of the poorest and most deprived East London. The Olympic site was built on a 600-ha brownfield that has problem of contamination and toxicity,

An important but less well-examined issue is that of Olympic host cities' social regeneration strategies. While some identify the importance of community spirit, and suggest that participation is an essential means of improving community self-esteem and creating social coherence, other see social regeneration in terms of community empowerment, arguing that equipping people with skills through training and education (especially those in marginalised groups) will strengthen community development (Long and Sanderson 2001; Owen 2002; Waitt 2003; Regan 1999). In addition, a number of studies highlight the strategies that local communities can use to harness critical resources. The Games can function as an opportunity for job creation, the development and operation of leisure and recreation service opportunities, the upgrading of open spaces, and improved levels of public health and participation in sport. The existing literature is deeply inadequate when it comes to relating social development to spatial planning or urban renewal, however. The numerous studies on the Barcelona model are an exception in this respect, in that they look specifically at the social aspects of preparations for the Games, in term of housing for low-income groups and community participation (Marshall 2004). This particular strategy focused on how to benefit local communities and increase the welfare rights of low-income- and other vulnerable groups within local communities (such as housing and tenants' rights, job opportunities, and so forth). It is possible that this particular approach was the result of a number of factors, including: the leadership of the Community Party in local government, which stressed social welfare; the relative strength of neighborhood associations in the wake of the Franco regime; and the latter's direct involvement in decision-making processes, representing their own interests.

While most ambitious Olympic hosts use the Games as an opportunity to bring forward long-term plans, to accelerate the pace of change, or to introduce new planning concepts, using major events to achieve long-term urban goals has proven to be a difficult task to manage and implement. Since the end of 1980s, the transition towards a form of governance that gives greater weight to private sector leadership has greatly influenced the organisational structure of mega-events and the ways in which the various stakeholders collaborate. The involvement of the private sector in organising the Olympic Games in Los Angeles (1984) and Atlanta (1996) not only demonstrated the economic benefits and professional knowledge that the private sector could bring to the Games, but also necessitated a more collaborative way of working (Burbank et al. 2002). A number of studies identify particular configurations of public, private, and non-profit sector actors and coalitions that set a city's medium- to long-term urban governance agenda (Surborg et al. 2008). In Barcelona, for instance, a more business-like and less controlled urban intervention approach was introduced to deal with the city's exceptional circumstances, using public capital and a joint venture between local and central government to lure private investment (and especially foreign investment) (Brunet 2002). Acknowledging this trend, Smith (2001,180) notes the irony that in such cases the government, which is meant to be serving the public interest, negates broad social goals in order to focus on entrepreneurial and corporate interests.

The Olympic Games can function as powerful tools for developing cities as brands (Smith 2001; Van den Berg et al. 2002; Surborg et al. 2008). The development of sports facilities, for instance, may provide a city with important visual symbols, provoking memorable and positive images in tourists' minds (Smith, 2001, 136). The media and Games-related publicity may highlight improvements in a city's urban environment, transportation system and general level of organisation, attracting both sports tourists and a more general audience, such as companies, investors and conference delegates. In addition to the new physical icons and transitory spectacles that were intended to rebrand their cities, for instance, both Barcelona and Sydney used broad promotional campaigns that combined place marketing and tourism promotion with business networking (Ward 2007; Waitt 1999; Hall 2001; Yu 2004).

Post-Games legacy

The Summer Olympic Games “allows a rare opportunity for a major restructuring of the built form, a major economic boost, an increased global connectivity, and a profound change in the global image of city” (Short 2008, 339). Host cities

generally experience a number of direct or indirect benefits, but may also suffer from various potential downside.

Potential benefits

Regarding the tangible results generated from hosting the Olympic Games, Sakai (2006) suggests that hosting mega-events stimulates governments to invest heavily in the construction of event venues, tourism facilities and other forms of infrastructure over short time periods. In recent years, the construction of Olympic venues and facilities has been seen as a process of forming urban spectacles, through the creation of new, iconic stadiums and the construction of landmarks (Gotham 2005; Coaffee and Johnson 2007). A number of Olympic stadiums, like Munich's Olympiastadion, Sydney's Stadium Australia or Beijing's Bird's Nest Olympic stadium, have since the Games become new landmarks for their host cities. The development of sports facilities may provide a city with important visual symbols that create memorable and positive images in tourists' minds (Smith 2001, 136). Furthermore, at the urban level, the Olympic project is increasingly used to facilitate the creation of new urban centers with mixed-use service, leisure, business and residential functions. This has resulted in a form of comprehensive strategic planning that combines Olympic site development with the provision and improvement of infrastructure, tourism facilities, the creation of high-quality public spaces, tourism planning and general urban regeneration programs, so as to maximise urban impact. Although a majority of past transportation infrastructure construction has been on roads, host cities and regions have also spent considerable sums on airport construction as well as on the renovation and construction of public transportation systems (Essex and Chalkley 2004). Investment has also been made to building modern telecommunication capacity in Atlanta or renovate the existing telecommunication system, as is the case in Los Angeles.

However awe-inspiring during the Games, many of the heavily cost venues created or modified for the Olympic Games later falls into disuse or are used sporadically without generating a profit and many Olympic Parks remains largely empty and unused. This common problem occurring after the Olympic Games is the creation of the so-called "white elephants" –facilities that are built at great cost and after its initial use for a particular event become less and less used and therefore the cost of it out-scales what it give back to society (When host cities deliver venues or urban areas that are not or under- used after the Game, host cities.

Host cities can expect tangible economic results that are directly related to the Games. The host city can profit from television rights, sponsorship, ticketing and merchandising that is directly related to hosting the Games (Horne & Manzenreiter 2006; Gold 2008). It is suggested that an average of 5.1 million tickets had been sold for the past six Summer Olympic Games to local residents and visitors, generating substantial spending in the lodging, food and beverage sector (Zimbalist 2010: 8). Furthermore, host cities also receive a substantial income from the selling of Olympic television rights, special marketing measures such as sponsoring, licensing and merchandising (Preuss 2004). Preuss (2004) and Gratton et al. (2006), for example, also suggest several important economic aspects of holding the Games, such as those relating to employment, revenue, investment, real estate, tourism and the Organising Committee's expenditure. Increasingly, host cities are gearing themselves towards more long-term, more intangible economic approaches that are intended to sustain such cities after the Olympics have taken place. A substantial number of studies, meanwhile, focus on the development of Olympic tourism and the creation of new business opportunities (Kasimati 2003; Weed 2008).

Although the Olympic Games are often viewed primarily in economic terms, in almost every case, the Games have a significant social impact. Much of the concern expressed in the literature is related to the Games' effects on local communities. This is due to the fact that not only is community support an essential aspect of a successful mega-event, but also that community groups tend to be more vulnerable to, and more affected by, Olympic-led development. Jones (2001) suggests that hosting the Olympics leads to wider participation in sport and greater community access to improved sports facilities. Long and Sanderson (2001, 189) list a number of community benefits that may motivate host cities, including: enhanced confidence and self-esteem; empowerment of disadvantaged groups; improving a community's capacity to take the initiative; increased social integration and co-operation; the promotion of a collective identity; and increased cohesion. The Games not only offers an opportunity to physically renew but also a rare opportunity to re-brand a city, while providing valuable promotional opportunities for both cities and regions (Short 2008). The global media and the general publicity surrounding the Games can be used to highlight improvements in a city's urban environment, transportation system, and organisation, attracting both sports tourists and a more general audience, such as companies, investors and conference delegates.

Potential downside

Despite the important economic impact that sport events can have on their host cities, evaluating this impact remains a complex undertaking (Baade and Matheson 2002; Owen 2005). In general, direct economic cost-benefit

calculations take into account the host city's investment in the building of sport venues, media centres, accommodation, relevant infrastructure, and other tourism-related facilities. This may place an enormous financial burden on the host city and its taxpayers. Poynter (2006) suggests that it is perhaps useful to distinguish the financial costs and benefits derived from staging the event (the 'one-time', primary Games-related impact) from an evaluation of the longer-term structural economic changes that are derived from investing in transport infrastructure, telecommunications, environment, social and sports facilities, and housing (the secondary impact). Ingerson (2001) also suggests that economic impact studies of sporting events should take two key elements into account: the costs and revenues for the event's organisers, and the event's impact on the area in question. As far as the latter is concerned, attention has mainly been paid to the event's effectiveness with respect to job creation, tourism revenue, local real-estate market growth, and local income flows (Gratton et al. 2006; Jones 2001; McKay and Plumb 2001). Furthermore, there is the question of how to justify using taxpayers' revenues to subsidise private enterprises on economic grounds. On this point, Chanayil (2002) considers the evidence to be inconclusive, at best. Gratton and Henry (2001, 311) suggest that many studies had political motives for justifying expenditure on new facilities, and that "the validity of many of the results is questionable". Indeed, in some cases, "such studies have often been methodologically flawed, and the real economic benefit is often below that specified in such studies" (Crompton 2001).

A number of studies have assessed the social impact of hosting the Olympic Games in recent years. While the Games can have a positive social legacy, there is no compelling evidence to suggest that individuals and groups in host cities' local communities receive a just share of the rewards. Despite the fact that community support is vital for staging successful Games, community involvement in the early planning stages seems to be largely lacking. As Horne and Manzenreiter (2006, 13) argue, "sports mega-events have been largely developed by undemocratic organisations, often with anarchic decision-making and a lack of transparency, and more often in the interests of global flows rather than local communities". Furthermore, some analyses suggest that city elites tend to steer the Games towards corporate rather than social goals, thus undermining the social impact on local communities. Olds (1998), meanwhile, draws attention to the importance of guaranteeing housing and tenant rights, particularly for low-income groups, through specific, target-oriented housing programmes. Like all such mega-events, the Olympic Games are an almost exclusively urban phenomenon, requiring high levels of public and private investment, and offering opportunities to both governments and corporations to forge mutually beneficial alliances. As a result of investing scarce resources in Olympic projects, the government may make drastic cuts in health, education or

social housing budgets in order to reduce the level of public debt. The private sector, in turn, may benefit both from a growing market and from public subsidies linked to the Games. This trend, along with “the pursuit of enhanced, or even ‘world class’, status by politician and businesses, raised questions for some analysts about the social distribution of the supposed benefit of urban development initiatives” (Horne and Manzenreiter 2006, 8). Moreover, “which social groups actually benefit, which are excluded, what scope is there for contestation of these developments, and how can social equality be measured are three important questions that are often ignored” (Horne and Manzenreiter 2006, 8) For example, evidence suggests that Olympic developments in Atlanta led to the displacement of homeless people (Whitelegg 2000); and that in Sydney, low-income households, suffering from rent increases in the historically cheap housing area neighbouring the Homebush Bay Olympic site, were forced to move away (Hall 2001). More research is needed into the social value of such events, in order to understand exactly how communities benefit, and how they can use the Games to their advantage.

In terms of the governance of mega-event development, a key challenge is the increasing contradiction between the ideal of an open, collaborative and democratic process, and the reality of a process that is dominated by elite alliances. On the basis of case studies of five European cities, Van den Berg et al. (2002) conclude that mega sports events can be powerful tools for developing a city’s ‘brand’, as is demonstrated by Barcelona’s experience, but that such success requires strong, creative leadership. Burbanks et al. (2001) stress the crucial role that can be played by external actors operating at an international level, whose interests might conflict with those of the city. Roche (2000, 126), meanwhile, argues that mega-events are typically conceived and produced by powerful elites, with little opportunity for locals to contribute democratically to policy-making processes. Such conditions can lead to deeply ironic situations. For example, despite the fact that Sydney had embraced the notion of a ‘Green Olympics’ and adopted sustainable development as a governing principle, in order to provide certainty for developers and meet planning deadlines, the local government went so far as to issue new legislation to relax planning processes. This meant, for example, that environmental impact statements for Olympics-related developments and local community participation in decision-making processes were not required – simply to ensure that most of the facilities would be ready almost twelve months in advance of the opening ceremony (Owen 2002, 332).

Discussion

Sport is increasingly seen as a central strategy for cities to promote their image and global position, undertake regeneration and tackle problems of social exclusion” (Herring 2004). The Olympic Games are particularly attractive to cities, due to the unique impact that the intense media interest associated with the Games can have on a global audience. Existing research acknowledges the complex challenges associated with bidding for and staging the Olympic Games (Emery 2001). The issues examined in this review of the relevant literature can help us to better understand the relationship between the Olympic Games and host cities’ urban development practices. Since the Games are tightly interwoven with urban economies and urban (re)development schemes, how cities indeed harness the Games and create their own Olympic legacies can best be understood by looking at their motivations, the kind of Olympic legacy that they anticipate, and the implementation processes that connect the vision with the expected results. By posing questions such as what motivates cities to stage the Olympic Games, how urban development strategies are formulated and organised in different cities, and the Games’ true impact on a city, we have been able to identify the various approaches taken by different cities to staging the Games. The literature indicates a clear relationship between a city’s motivations, urban development strategies, and expected results (impact). Whilst much is known about the event’s impact, however, there are considerable gaps in our knowledge about the event’s legacy and its social-economic effects. Along with disputes regarding methodology, this means that we lack persuasive evidence to support the claim that the Olympic Games bring social benefits to host cities.

It is also evident that different cities have adjusted their approaches to fit particular circumstances, particularly with a view to temporal demand, purpose, political agendas, and the locality in question. Thus the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, and the 2000 Sydney Olympics had fundamentally different aims and objectives, and took different approaches. Atlanta set out to deliver a commercially successful event at no cost to the tax payer. Barcelona, in turn, aimed to regenerate the city and assert its Catalan identity. Unlike Barcelona, meanwhile, Sydney was not facing an economic crisis, but it did need to find a niche in order to defeat its fierce competitor in the bidding process, Beijing. Sydney thus appealed to the IOC’s concerns about sustainable development, and aimed to achieve an environmental legacy.

Whereas every host city expects to experience some form of short- and long-term impact, or the so-called legacy, it is however difficult for most host city organisers to think beyond the Games in any systematic fashion due to the pressing nature and planning complexity. Therefore, although the post-Games period is by far the longest period that stretches for decades after the Games to

affect a host city, it is “clearly the least-planned period” (Cashman 1998). City leaders may well view the Olympic Games in strategic terms, as an opportunity to gain regional, national and international exposure at a relatively low cost. City leaders also face a gigantic and complex task in addressing financial, spatial and temporal challenges prior to and during the Games, however, not to mention the enormous investment of resources needed, and the large number of actors involved in the development process. Subject to time pressure and without careful consideration of the long-term impact, Olympic venues may become ‘white elephants’ after the Games have taken place, isolated in their city landscapes (Furrer 2002; Cashman 2002). In such situations, rather than economic benefits, the host city may be left with huge debts that take many years to repay. Moreover, the promises of social benefits made to local communities may well prove to be empty, with the circumstances of vulnerable groups potentially worsening, rather than improving. The contradictions and controversies surrounding the Summer Olympic Games may thus have significant implications for the lives of people living in host cities, and are therefore worthy of increased attention on the part of policymakers and planners.

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