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Disconnected innovations : new urbanity in large-scale development projects: Zuidas Amsterdam, Ørestad Copenhagen and Forum Barcelona

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'Re-positioning the city on the map of the competitive landscape (...) [means] reimagining and re-creating urban space, not just in the eyes of the master planners and city fathers or mothers, but primarily for the outsider, the investor, developer, business-woman or -man, the elite culture freak, or the money-packed tourist.' (Moulaert, Rodríguez and Swyngedouw 2003, p.2)

'Junkspace is authorless, yet surprisingly authoritarian....' (Koolhaas 2001, p.417)

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: LARGE-SCALE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS AND NEW URBANITY

1.1 Introduction

Large-scale development projects that try to attract and spatially accommodate flows of international investment money are prominent on the planning agenda of many internationally oriented metropolitan areas in the western world. If we analyze them as a spatial outcome of underlying processes of economic and cultural globalization, we can easily identify ambitious public, private and public/private coalitions that promote these initiatives to 'connect' cities and city-regions to the global market, to foster (foreign) investments and to secure high-quality employment (Moulaert, Rodríguez and Swyngedouw 2003). The universal aim of their initiators seems to be to transform areas into places of *spatial excellence*: exciting new high quality 'world city quarters' with eye-catching architecture, spotless public spaces and attractive amenities. Many of these projects have been studied in detail by planning scholars in recent decades. Some of the most important comparative studies include: Olds (1995 and 2001) on Pacific Rim mega-projects; Moulaert et. al. (2003) and Salet and Gualini (2007) on European integrated large scale projects.

This study builds on some of these previous works, but based on a specific perspective which focuses on the ambition of some of these development projects to become not only a new economic core, but also a new *urban space*. There are several reasons why this specific ambition is expressed in the latest generation of large scale development projects as well as why it is worthwhile investigating this theme.

There are a variety of origins of ambitions for more 'new urbanity' (as we will call it shorthand) in large-scale development projects.¹ From a perspective of spatial quality, they can often be traced back to criticism of the unpleasantness of many large-scale

¹ According to the Oxford English Dictionary, 'urbanity' refers to: "The state, condition, or character of a town or city". We add 'new' to it, since in our opinion it represents a certain innovation compared to existing practices, as we will explain later in this chapter.

monofunctional office development areas being developed in the last decades. On the other hand, mixing office development with housing and other functions is also attracting growing interest due to expected (long-term) economic and social benefits.

However, this is not a study of the advantages and disadvantages of new urbanity in large-scale development projects. The aim is to study the interaction between these ambitions for new urbanity and the governance processes in these projects. The previous research referred to shows that the ambition for new urbanity is often present in the latest generation of projects, but that the step from intentions to actual implementation is often fraught with problems. This challenge becomes particularly intriguing in contemporary large-scale projects that are located outside the traditional urban core of their central city, since they face the difficulty of being developed ‘from scratch’. Although these locations are often strategically connected with prime physical and virtual networks of infrastructure, the realization of classic urban values like density, mixing, specialization and liveliness is not an easy task. Creating urban values in these places not only means innovating existing practices – since they often lead to non-urban places in the traditional sense – but at the same time a critical rethinking of the meaning of classic urban indicators: To what extent can they be transferred to these areas and how can they be shaped in such a place?

Nevertheless, this is not a study into the physical design opportunities of out of town large-scale urban development projects, since we believe there is no lack of imaginative discourse about how new integrated, mixed urban places can be physically and architecturally shaped. Instead, this study focuses on an aspect that seems to be more fundamental, and at the same time more problematic, namely the governance of these projects, and especially the governance conditions that influence or hamper the realization of such a new urbanity.

We investigate this connection in three projects currently being developed and study the conditions that influence the realization of the initial planning ambition of new urbanity in a large-scale development project located outside the traditional core. The comparison between the three cases will also help us to derive lessons on the essential governance conditions for a more successful implementation of concepts of new urbanity in large-scale development projects.

1.1.1 Explaining our interest

Well known European projects like Donaucity in Vienna, Adlershof in Berlin, Euralille in Lille, La Défense in Paris and Docklands in London are examples of projects with the ambition to create new economic *and* urban spaces outside the traditional urban core. For our study we selected three different case studies in which important actors shared such an ambition in the initial phase. The case studies in question are Zuidas in Amsterdam, Ørestad in Copenhagen and Forum in Barcelona. Section 1.7 elaborates on the specifics of these three projects and the reasons for selecting them. First it is important to explain our specific interest in this research topic in more detail.

First of all there is something about the size, sheer complexity and ambitious goals of these projects that caught our imagination. Although we may dislike or sympathize with these projects, it is hard to avoid them physically *and* intellectually. They are important locations (in the making) which are (to be) used intensively by people every day for a variety of reasons and activities, mostly for business or work, sometimes to

change a train or for education purposes or even to shop or live in. They are also major projects funded by tax revenue and pension fund investments. From a planning perspective they are prime examples of complex processes of decision-making between a multitude of actors. On a more strategic level, their origin and development can be linked to a variety of intellectual debates and studies that are relevant to understanding the contemporary process of spatial development and interventions in major metropolitan areas. These include major topics like changing governance processes in metropolitan areas (Salet, Thornley and Kreukels 2003; Herrschel and Newman 2002; Healey 2007 and many others), emerging polynuclear geographic patterns (Kloosterman and Musterd 2001), changing regional and global economic hierarchies (Sassen 1991; Castells 1996) and new strategic planning approaches to this (Newman and Thornley 2005). But at the same time these projects are also related to debates on the increasing role of global ‘trophy architects’ and their bureaus (Olds 1997) and on the contemporary design, use and management of (public) spaces in them (Augé 1995; Hajer and Reijndorp 2001; Graham and Marvin 2001). Large-scale development projects can be seen as the places where these debates are simultaneously fuelled, furthered and materialized. First and foremost they are objects which allow an understanding – in an inductive way – of some aspects of contemporary urban planning challenges for cities and regions and ways to respond to them. In short, because of this *intrinsic* significance they are, in general terms, interesting objects of research for urban planning scholars.

There is also a more precise explanation for our specific interest in projects that strive to create new urban places. In a contemporary geography that is often characterized in the last decades by a movement in the direction of spatial diffusion, dispersion and fragmentation, it is fascinating to study the ambition to realize and accommodate a concentration of different artefacts, flows and people in one specific, geographically contained place.

Another reason is that a predominantly critical discourse about large development projects – which we will cover in more detail later – challenges scholars and practitioners to think beyond the often disappointing results relating to a variety of aspects of current projects. Although these projects are often greatly appreciated and promoted by politicians and business elites, at the same time, there is widely felt unease from a variety of different sources about the processes of decision-making in relation to these projects, their (final) spatial appearance and their functioning in the urban fabric.

Before we introduce the theoretical framework used to study three contemporary large-scale development projects in the second chapter, this first chapter will deepen our general understanding of the subject by investigating several dimensions of academic discussions on these projects. As mentioned before, these projects have to be understood in relation to different intellectual debates. Although covering these debates fully is not a central concern of this research, a shorthand introduction to some of the arguments put forward is needed to build our argument. As a result, section 1.2 identifies some constants and variations in (debates on) large-scale development projects in the second half of the twentieth century. This not only enables us to enrich our view and understanding of these projects, but also help us to define what a *large-scale development project* is in our study. In section 1.3 we address the contemporary ‘generation’ of projects more specifically as a result *and* promoter of changing geographic,

economic and political conditions for urban development at the turn of the century. A critical discourse on the results of these projects in section 1.4 will be followed by our own research focus for the empirical part of the study in the remainder of the chapter.

1.2 Some constants and variations of half a century of large-scale development projects

1.2.1 Defining a large-scale development project

Before addressing some constants and variations in the recent history of large-scale development projects, it is useful to indicate more precisely what we consider a large-scale development project to be, irrespective of historic era and geographic location. In our opinion there are three defining aspects: (1) a comprehensive and large program of spatial investments, in combination with (2) a timeline of investments (of a variety of actors) to realize this program, which is (3) located in a geographically bounded area.

As regards point 1, we would prefer only to consider spatially and temporally contained interventions in our definition of large-scale development projects. This means that famous iconic historic large-scale development schemes, like the one Ildefons Cerdá created for Barcelona, baron Haussmann for Paris, Hendrik Berlage for Amsterdam, or Daniel Burnham for Chicago would not qualify. Although spatially contained, it would be better to consider these famous large-scale schemes as (long-term) frameworks for (a series of) local action projects. We would therefore prefer not to consider them as urban development projects themselves, but as urban *plans*, that is frameworks of action for more concrete investments. An archetypical example of a development *project* is the Rockefeller Center project in New York City, being a relatively compact, spatially contained and distinct investment project within an overall more strategic scheme for the development of Manhattan (Koolhaas 1978).

A definition of the term 'large-scale' is also required. One can argue that this term is nebulous and cannot be defined in precise and quantifiable terms. The three projects we study all have substantial development programs, ranging from the development of 800,000m² of floor space in Barcelona to the development of 3.1 million m² floor space in Copenhagen. However, they were not selected purely on the basis of these figures. In general, 'large-scale' means projects that contain certain *programmatic* features – like size of the building program – in combination with *symbolic* aspects. The latter can be related to their alleged importance in official policy documents regarding the strategic spatial development of the metropolitan area. We are therefore interested in projects that play an important role in programmatically and symbolically reshaping their respective metropolitan area. In our definition, 'large-scale' could therefore also be complemented with the term 'strategically important'. For the sake of brevity we only use the term 'large-scale'.

As regards point 2, a timeline of investments means that the spatial ambition is combined with a set of concrete investment projects and involved actors in order to underline the pro-active character of the project.

As regards point 3, the premises built within the framework of the project should be located within a geographically bounded area.

The aim of the remainder of this section is to give a short introduction to some of the most important *constants* and *variations* of spatial, political and economic aspects of large-scale development projects in the Western world in recent decades to help us identify the specific intellectual and policy questions related to the latest generation of projects.

1.2.2 Some major constants of large-scale development projects in the second half of the twentieth century

A constant (symbolic) importance:

- They symbolize the enduring search for (more) effective integral approaches to urban development by being a strategic device for collective action. They are often presented as a more pro-active alternative to the traditional planning instrument of the Fordist era: the two-dimensional (restrictive) land use plan. While the latter basically provides the (legal) conditions for the (future) development of a particular area, the former is the articulation of an actual development proposal (Hall 1996).
- They have a powerful discursive and symbolic dimension, as (imagined) important incentives to the economic fortunes of cities (and regions), to create civic pride and to attract and mobilize public and private investments. They are a strong manifestation of a belief in a better future (Hall 1996; Moulaert et. al. 2003).
- Especially after the success of waterfront revitalization projects in the US in the Seventies and Eighties and the highly-acclaimed revitalization of Barcelona for the Olympic Games of 1992, the concept of provision of large-scale urban development projects to attract businesses, high earning residents, conventioners and tourists was embraced by politicians and planners as being a successful recipe for the economic and social revitalization of cities. Special cultural or sporting events often function as a trigger for development projects (Frieden and Sagalyn 1989; Hall 1996; Marshall 1996, 2000, 2004; Carrière and Demazière 2002; Hoffman, Fainstein and Judd 2003).

A constant vehicle for private and public investments:

- Visions relating to large-scale urban development projects are often materialized in a masterplan or other imaginative reports that try to stimulate certain joint courses of action between actors. These documents can be seen as an attempt to transcend the individual horizons in scope and time of a variety of public and private actors and move towards a form of collective action (Salet 2007).
- The more interventionist character of urban *projects* (versus urban *plans*) and especially the relation with concrete development activities means that the establishment of (special) forms of governance, particularly in the form of (public-private) partnerships and development corporations, with a view to the effective coordination of the planning, design, decision-making and execution of a project, is a common feature of most development projects (Peters 1998; Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodríguez 2002). Large-scale development projects have always been frontrunners in establishing innovative forms of public-private cooperation and partnerships (Pierre 1998).
- Although they are often associated with private initiatives and investments, a constant factor of most projects has been their link to public spheres. This may take the form of important (up front) public investments, and certainly of public regu-

latory mechanisms in which private investments can be established. Most projects depend heavily on large (up front) public investments in infrastructure and/or favourable tax exemptions during their implementation (Moulaert et. al. 2003; Flyvbjerg, Bruzelius and Rothengatter 2003; Hall 1980).

A constant search for a ‘fashionable’ spatial outcome:

- Although their precise programmatic goals differ due to local political, economic and cultural circumstances, there are remarkable similarities between projects since most are heavily inspired by (or simply copy) ideas relating to fashionable spatial outcomes of other cities. In some cases even the same developers, financiers, architects and urban designers are responsible for projects in different cities, sometimes even in different countries (Olds 1997, 2001; Frieden and Sagalyn 1989).
- Large-scale development projects have always embodied the problematic search for the realization of an adequate spatial fix between important drivers of these projects – local, national and international streams of investment money – and a local cultural and political planning context. Almost by definition, this creates tension with the local planning and governance cultures in which this outcome has to be realized. Tension often builds up around three different aspects of these large-scale interventions, namely:
 - (1) *physical and programmatic*: the sometimes problematic connection or integration of large-scale projects with existing built-up areas, programmatically and architecturally. This was already one of the main forms of criticisms of large-scale inner city (re-)development projects in the Sixties, but was also an issue for later generations (Jacobs 1961; Graham and Marvin 2001);
 - (2) *economic*: criticism focuses, on the one hand, on the huge public sums of money that are invested, and the financial risks that are often taken by the public sector in most of the projects and, on the other hand, on their sometimes questionable, or very partial, economic effects (Flyvbjerg et. al. 2003; Altshuler and Lubertoff 2003). Despite promises that the projects will bring prosperity, new employment and new visitors, they are also frequently accused of having negative influences on the local housing and retail market. When located outside the traditional cores, they are also seen as competing with existing inner city functions.
 - (3) *political*: the frequently criticized closed networks of decision-making in which these projects are mostly decided upon and executed (Moulaert et. al. 2003).

We examine these points in more detail in section 1.4 since they are very relevant to an understanding of the background of academic discussions of these projects.

The aspects we shortly mentioned in this section very roughly typify large-scale development projects and some of the intellectual time and space debates in the second half of the last century. In the next section we examine some of the most important *variations* to help define the specific aspects at stake in the latest ‘generation’ of projects.

1.2.3 Some major variations of large-scale development projects in the second half of the twentieth century

Variation in location and programs:

- Although we remarked earlier that there are strong similarities between projects *within* the same time era, a quick review of the second half of the twentieth century in both the US and Europe shows that we can also distinguish important general variations *between* different periods in time. This relates both to the overarching goals of large-scale development projects as well as to the particular governance settings in which they were embedded. In their study of more than half a century of US ‘mega-projects’, Altshuler and Luberoff (2003) present the following rough distinction between partially overlapping timeframes. This distinction also seems to be relevant to western European projects, albeit with differences and a certain time delay.
 - (1) the pre-1950s: little support from higher governments for mega projects, relatively modest ambitions for large integral urban interventions;
 - (2) 1950-end 1960, the ‘great mega project era’: increasing (national) government support for projects and the initiation of ambitious projects to modernize inner city areas and strengthen Central Business Districts: new (car-)infrastructure (roads, parking garages) and offices are seen as a necessity to enhance the economic position of the inner cities. The ‘great mega project era’ often resulted in quite mono functional, ‘brutal’ developments with little consideration for existing spatial uses. This tendency was the strongest in American, British and Eastern European cities;
 - (3) mid 1960-1970: rethinking of ambitions based on the failures of the previous generation of projects and increased academic, political and social criticism. Attempts were made to increase citizens’ participation in decision-making. A shift in the dominant location and programmatic features of large-scale development projects gradually became evident. In a timeframe in which most industrial uses were leaving downtown areas, there was more emphasis on re-using vacant land from obsolete factories, warehouses, railways and harbours (brown field regeneration) for large-scale development operations. During this period, there was a gradual increase in attention for less one-sided programs of interventions. Some projects experimented with the mixture of office development and other uses (Frieden and Sagalyn 1989). However, although this tendency was new to most American downtowns, it was always more fashionable in most traditional western European cities;
 - (4) mid 1970-now: ‘Era of do no harm’: a new generation of (extremely costly) mega projects that combine development with an attempt to mitigate (some of the) negative consequences. The emphasis in the last decades has shifted slightly from command-and-control functions as the main economic base to creative industries and retail functions, although this was already a conspicuous feature of the early American waterfront redevelopment projects of the 1970s (Frieden and Sagalyn 1989). The changing geographical and economic development of cities is reflected in the locations of large-scale development projects. Although downtown waterfronts and brownfields are still some of the favourite locations, there is a strong tendency towards locations on the fringes of cities or even outside traditional urban cores in order to accommodate large-scale developments, especially when these spaces are well connected to transportation networks. This is a clear reflection of the fact that social and economic activities have started to spread across

metropolitan regions in recent decades, creating new networks, (spatial) concentrations and a changing urban hierarchy, as we will point out in the next section.

In their study, Altshuler and Luberoff do not take account of these large-scale projects outside the traditional urban core. American literature often refers to these places as 'edge cities', a phenomenon that emerged in the States much earlier than in most European countries (see Gottman 1961 for an early account and, for example, Garreau 1991 and Kunstler 1993 for later works on the American situation). Although they were hardly the result of any overarching planning concept, these quickly expanding edge cities surely show some variety in their spatial uses. However, more often than not, there was a strong clustering of certain uses leading to monofunctionality at the micro level of the urban project, resulting in a segmentation of space into office parks, car parks, large retail centres or (gated) housing communities which hardly creates an integrated urban 'experience' in the traditional sense. The same seems to be true for the airport-related developments of the Nineties. These were usually diversifying programs which included office development, hotels and retail complexes, but which hardly resulted in integrated urban spaces (Güller and Güller 2001; van Wijk 2007).

- An important variation is therefore that the latest generation of large-scale development projects has to be understood in a context of (and as a producer of) this very dynamic process of urban transformation that exceeds the safe boundaries of the traditional cities. The consequence is that, while previous generations of large-scale development projects attempted to reinforce the position of traditional urban centres, the latest generation often provides them with a challenge by being effective attractors for major economic functions that previously were located mainly in downtown areas. Although this trajectory is certainly not standard for every metropolitan area, one could argue that, in the current timeframe, the familiar hierarchical relationship between the city centre and the urban periphery is being challenged, a process in which the United States was a frontrunner compared to Europe. This generates questions of development and coordination on a metropolitan scale. We will return to this issue in the next section.
- In relation to this, we have to understand these projects against the backdrop of changing economic dimensions. Large-scale development projects have always been quite directly linked to the economic fortunes of the cities they are located in and the companies that invest or are located there. However, the current generation of projects is oriented, more than used to be the case, around (attracting) investments on a national/international scale. They are becoming more reliant on volatile markets and dependent on location preferences of internationally operating businesses that are willing to pay prime office rents. However, the successful attraction of these firms often extends beyond the sphere of influence of the urban project itself (Swyngedouw et. al. 2002; Majoor 2005; Tordoir 2005).

Variation in attention for failings of large-scale projects:

- The other side of the same medal of high expectations and (real or imagined) importance of large-scale development projects and the subsequent attention that they are creating, is the scholastic and political attention for 'failings' of these projects, due to political, economic, financial, environmental or other reasons. We touched upon this before when describing the problems in the constant search for a fash-

ionable spatial outcome. However, the variation over time lies in the depth, powerfulness and consequences of the more recent attention for failings. While the first two phases in Luberoff and Altshuler's time sequence can be characterized by a (growing) believe in the capacities and benefits of large-scale development projects, in the last decades, the reception of these initiatives has become far more critical. Emphasis on the failings of projects (cost-overruns, failing democratic processes, disappointing spatial form etc.) have become omnipresent and backed by scholastic research (Hall 1980; Flyvbjerg et. al. 2003; Moulaert et. al. 2003). Due to this fact, *reflectivity* on all types of possible consequences of projects and negative impacts on the society and the environment is now often seen as a necessary aspect to be considered in their initiation phase (Beck 1997; Altshuler and Luberoff 2003; Majoor 2001). A material result is that in many countries, official Environmental Impact Studies have become obligatory in an early phase, and become an important aspect in the decision-making for example.² We will elaborate on the critiques on large-scale development projects more specifically in section 1.4.

The aim of this section was to make a general introduction of some issues at stake in the latest generation of large-scale development projects. In summary we can state that the most variation throughout the last fifty years can be found in their predominant location (from inner city, towards brown fields, towards out-of-town development), their programs (from office towards more mixed use, towards out-of-town specialized mono-functional), and their reception (towards a more critical opinion). Self-evidently, there are all kinds of variations when investigating local projects, these will shown in our case-studies.

As mentioned in the introduction, in this study we specifically focus on projects that try to introduce new urbanity outside the traditional urban core. In the next section we will specifically focus on the changing conditions of urban development which influences the development of this latest generation of large-scale projects.

1.3 Large-scale development projects and the changing conditions of urban development

Although a spatial and temporal demarcation is a defining aspect of a large development project, self-evidently they have to be understood as being part of a much broader social, geographic, economic and political context. The tumultuous spatial and economic transition of metropolitan regions into advanced economies in recent decades has been widely covered and analyzed from a variety of perspectives. We wish to touch very briefly on two interconnected fields of knowledge that are particularly relevant for large-scale development projects: the field of economic geography, and the field of

² In some cases there is also the obligation for economic impact studies, traffic impact studies, social impact studies or design, wind and shade impact studies. However, it seems that the width, quality and depth of these studies differs between situations and countries, as well as their influence and legal status. This is related to the independency and power of the agencies conducting these studies. However, the point we want to make here is that today these studies are omnipresent and form an important part in the policy processes of large-scale development projects.

political science. Together, these two perspectives help us to understand the changing conditions of urban development which are relevant to these projects.

Regardless of which perspective we take, the understanding of the latest generation of large-scale development projects in the context of changing multi-scalar (spatial) dimensions is crucial. It is not sufficient to consider these projects solely as a metropolitan planning issue regarding the allocation of spatial investments and uses, since this would mean ignoring most of the relevant project drivers (Tordoir 2005). In a changing economic, political and institutional context it is necessary to adopt a multi-scalar and multi-disciplinary perspective in order to analyze these projects as being embedded in a local (planning) culture, in a metropolitan and regional context and in much wider (inter-)national economic, institutional, cultural and political framework. This approach does not mean that local knowledge is not needed for analysis. However, it supplements this knowledge with a broader perspective.

1.3.1 Economy-geography: a tale of concentration, deconcentration and competitiveness

It is apparent that the majority of larger urban areas throughout north-western Europe have expanded in the last few decades. This expansion has, mostly, not been in terms of numbers of inhabitants, but rather in terms of occupied spatial territory. However, the emerging new spatial-economic geography in these metropolitan areas is particularly more interesting, since it includes both tendencies towards spatial-economic dispersion and spatial-economic concentration. Underlying and fuelling this pattern is an economic transition in which the prime drivers of the economy have developed from the production sector towards the service sector. Businesses in the latter sector face a different set of options with respect to their location (Kloosterman and Musterd 2001). While economic activities that are routinisable show a tendency to disperse, concentration still seems to be the dominant pattern for economic functions that need non-routinisable and face-to-face encounters. This applies to sections of the advanced service economy and the creative industry while the consequences for other economic functions like retail or housing seem ambiguous with both processes of concentration and dispersion happening at the same time (Evers 2004; Bontje 2001).

A deconcentration of major economic activities that used to be located in city centres, combined with increasing incomes and rising car ownership, and stimulated by expanding infrastructure networks, have resulted in complex processes of metropolitan urbanization. The mass suburbanization of housing from the mid-twentieth century was followed by economic activities which helped to create new urban patterns of polycentricity. However, these developments are by no means easy to understand and neither is it easy to compare the developments that took place in different areas. However, it is certain that these processes create interesting patterns of development that overshadow the traditional dichotomy of the urban core with the main economic activities and a ring of suburbs around it. In connection with Amsterdam, for example, traditionally a typical European planned city in accordance with this model, Musterd and Salet (2003b) portray the contemporary geography as one in which economic activities take over the region in a rather unplanned manner, while the inner city changes towards a leisure, culture, retail and high-end housing area. Bertolini (2000) notes that these geographic, economic and social processes have had an impact on the essential questions as to the what, where and when of the city today. In the past, this question could be answered by

referring to the geographical relationship between the city's social dimension (the city as intensity and diversity of social and economic interactions, the *civitas*) and its physical dimension (the city as a density of built structures, the *urbs*). Both used to fit together in a physical 'city' full of human encounters. However, this is increasingly being brought into question since modern forms of transport and (electronic) communication have created opportunities for social and economic interactions to happen without physical proximity (Castells 1996). The largely invisible flows of data and the importance of non-spatial relationships has not made the traditional city as we observe obsolete, but it has created the need for a broader conception of it.

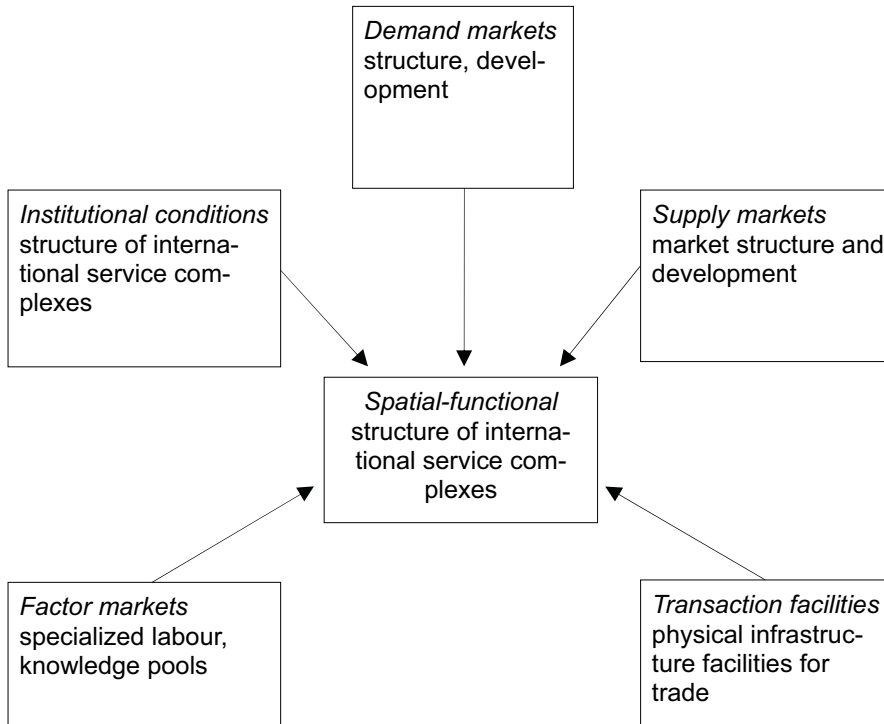
This dynamic geographic setting undoubtedly influences the location and development of new large-scale development projects and their programmatic features. They represent a very visible geographic materialization of these underlying socio-economic processes (Moulaert et. al. 2003). At the same time, these projects are also producers of change themselves, due to their volume and powerful forces of agency (developers, financiers, politicians) connected to them. In this respect, large-scale development projects are often seen as icons or markers in processes of economic globalization (Swynedouw 2005). In most 'world cities' they are part of the standard repertoire of policies to safeguard competitiveness (Newman and Thornley 2005).³ At the same time, however, the same global processes that are important feeders of these projects also make them extremely vulnerable to changing market conditions. Changes in location patterns of the high-end service industry, mergers between large international firms and the capriciousness of real estate markets heavily influence the economic fortunes of these projects. Tordoir (2005) studied the economic factors relevant to the development of international business sectors and constructed the following scheme to identify conditions for what he calls 'international business centres' (see figure 1.1, next page). His findings mirror the interregional, national and international dimension of the development of these places with most conditions applying at the scale level of the region or above.

It is clear that it is impossible to understand large-scale development projects without an understanding of the above-mentioned huge changes in economic structures during the last few decades. However, we choose not to study these processes at a macro level here, but instead via the behaviour of the set of actors involved in these projects. The advantage is that this prevents us from obtaining a very structuralist interpretation of these macro-level processes and the way they influence micro-level situations. Taking actors and their behaviour as a starting point enables one to understand that these

³ Literature on the competitiveness and competitive advantages of cities is flourishing, both in the academic and the consultancy sector. Grosveld (2002) distinguishes six groupings of authors that have studied the competitive position of cities. The first group are the authors or organizations that strive for an integral approach. They use a set of criteria and apply it to all cities without questioning its relevance (e.g. Friedmann, 1986, 1995). The second group is the other extreme, classifying cities based on one specific function. The third group uses only a limited number of criteria to determine competitiveness of cities. Following Sassen's work on the 'Global City' (1991) they maintain that only three functions ultimately determine the place of a city in a global ranking: the presence of headquarters of multinationals, financial institutions and the related management of corporate services. Three other groups use a mixture of aspects from the previously mentioned ones without striving to be comparable. Some business magazines such as Fortune have their own annual lists, but fail to have a consistent theoretical framework.

macro-level aspects are not only conditions in which actors operate, but that they are also deliberately produced (this argument is elaborated on in chapter two).

Figure 1.1: Tordoir's Economic Pentagon: conditions for international business centres



Source: Tordoir 2005, p.102

1.3.2 Political science: a tale of fragmentation and connecting governance

Research into metropolitan governance theory and practices has been the focus of considerable attention in the last few decades. International comparisons show a wide variety of forms of metropolitan governance, even between relatively comparable cities (Herrschel and Newman 2002; Salet et. al. 2003). The large number of contributions on this topic are linked by the observation that metropolitan problems do not fit into traditional governmental boundaries, nor that metropolitan government can only be understood by studying formal government authorities. Barlow (2000) gives three reasons for the growing attention paid to theory and practices of metropolitan governance in post-industrial western cities. First, traditional single-centred metropolises are transforming into multi-centred metropolitan regions, resulting in complex spatial configurations and different nodes of economic concentration. Second, because of processes of decentralization and privatisation, the importance of urban governments has decreased and traditional tasks have been partly taken over by special-purpose bodies and private-sector institutions. Third, because of globalisation, metropolitan regions – as primary units in the world economy – face a continuous struggle to retain their competitive position.

Considering the fragmented field of institutions in metropolitan regions, the most important question is how new forms of collective coordinated action can be established as an interplay between official government authorities, special purpose bodies, private institutions and the civil society (Salet 1994; 1996).

This extremely brief introduction has shown that metropolitan areas witnessed lots of different and dependent spatial-economic and political processes during the past few decades. We have observed spatial and governance fragmentation while, at the same time, processes of spatial concentration have occurred and new forms of connecting governance have been introduced. However, this is not to suggest that adequate forms of intervention in the form of planning responses have been found everywhere to balance these processes against other needs of the metropolitan population. Instead the opposite is in many ways true, namely that traditional spatial planning schemes and methods have, in many cases, become less influential and that the planning profession is searching for new and more adequate tools to intervene in this changing environment (Salet and Faludi 2001; Albrechts and Mandelbaum 2005). For some critical observers, the lack of a (public) planning response to large-scale development projects is a clear example of this situation of unbalance, as we will explore in the next section.

1.4 Critically assessing large-scale development projects

Although large-scale development projects have been an important ingredient in the standard recipe of metropolitan development during the last few decades, they are by no means uncontroversial. Overviews and analyses of contemporary large-scale projects (Olds 2001; Moulaert et. al. 2003; Salet et. al. 2007) reveal a clear imbalance between economic, social, environmental and political aspects in them.

In this regard, the study by a European consortium of researchers led by Frank Moulaert, Erik Swyngedouw and Arantxa Rodríguez is especially relevant (published in different journals and books, amongst others: Moulaert 2000; Swyngedouw et. al. 2002; Moulaert et. al. 2003; Swyngedouw 2005). Their focus is on governance aspects and issues of social injustice in projects. They highlight the contradictory aspects of the latest generation of large-scale development projects that are understood as the outcome *and* producer of neo-liberal economic and spatial policies. Moulaert et. al (2003) maintains that city governments, under the pressure of (hyper) mobile capital, not only adopt an entrepreneurial policy by embracing a narrow economic developmental agenda, but also jeopardize social agendas at the expense of private development. ‘Emblematic’ large-scale development projects are a clear marker of this development. From this perspective these projects are symbolic of all that is wrong with both content and decision-making in an era of ‘neo-liberal’ spatial policies. A timeframe that is ‘increasingly framed in a common language of competitiveness, flexibility, efficiency, state entrepreneurship, partnership and collaborative advantage’ (Moulaert et. al. 2003, p.29). Main consequences are: (1) the greater role of local politics and institutions in staging proactive development strategies: a shift to a business-friendly ‘entrepreneurial city’, (2) the cutting of traditional channels of democratic accountability and the rise of flexible (and often opaque) modes of governance, often by public/private governing ‘bodies’ which, in the case of large-scale development projects, means the primacy of

experts, technical, social and economic elites in a highly exclusionary form of governance far away from public scrutiny, (3) the growing fragmentation within urban areas between rich emblematic ‘world city spaces’ and ‘forgotten’ parts of the city, leading to increased processes of economic and political polarization and social exclusion.

Obviously, one can state that the processes highlighted by these authors are not exclusively tied to large-scale development projects but have a wider application and relevance. Nevertheless, large-scale development projects are certainly one of the most visible spatial objects in metropolitan areas nowadays, and are therefore an understandable source of inspiration for critical scholars.

Another form of criticism which is especially interesting for our study and which is related to this third point mentioned above, focuses on the spatial quality of these projects. Despite their often high spatial ambitions, this is often lacking. Purely economic spatial functions often dominate these projects. High-end offices are a standard feature of every project since they lead to the biggest returns on investment. Sometimes they are supplemented by luxury condominiums, exclusive shopping areas and controlled public spaces. The result is that these projects regularly contribute to a form of spatial segmentation and fragmentation (Augé 1995; Graham and Marvin 2001; Moulaert et al. 2003; Salet and Gualini 2007; Trip 2007a and 2007b). It is very rare for them to be physically connected to other (urban) areas successfully.

Interestingly enough, this is regularly not what project initiators promised. Ambitions relating to all sorts of ‘spatial quality’ are often a feature of planning intentions voiced during the preliminary stage. Nevertheless, the literature referred to provides evidence that the fulfilment of such ambitions is often jeopardized at the expense of (short-term) financial gains when it comes to the concrete (micro-level) building proposals. This critique is often linked to the above-mentioned points about the closed character of decision-making, in which actors that might represent a broader meaning of spatial quality have difficulties accessing and influencing decision-making. A wide range of authors whose approaches range from critical geography to collaborative planning, suggest that elitist ‘neo-corporatist’ forms of governance create conditions in which place qualities are predominately defined from a narrow economic perspective, which qualities conflict with urban ‘use’ values (Swyngedouw et al. 2002; Coaffee and Healey 2003).

1.5 Defining our research perspective: studying new urbanity

The previous two sections have shown that it is vital to have a holistic and multi-scalar understanding of the challenges of contemporary large-scale development projects. They have also shown that there is a lot of unease about the current results of most large-scale projects. These forms of criticism are extremely relevant to this study. Our intention is not to falsify or to underpin these studies with more or other data, or other perspectives. What we want to do is to study a normative planning-oriented objective – referred to as new urbanity – that has been gaining popularity during the past decade and which is presented by its promoters as a way to partly undermine the above-mentioned forms of criticism (Gualini and Majoor 2007). It is a planning concept that aims to quite radically introduce aspects of urbanity, such as building in

higher densities and mixing spatial uses, into contemporary planning efforts. It is, therefore, mainly an innovation in planning content although, as we perceive it, it is also related to innovations regarding predominant planning processes which affect these projects due to it demanding a broader spectrum of voices and powers to be included in the decision-making processes (Majoor 2006a). We labelled it ‘new’ since it is a diversion of many existing practices. However, in a certain way it is also a reintroduction into a new timeframe of very well known urban concepts that have been crucial to the ‘urbanity’ of cities throughout history (Jacobs 1961; Hall 1998).

It is interesting to investigate whether the concept of new urbanity may work as a salient planning concept to counteract the criticism that the planning response to large-scale development projects has so far been very limited (Majoor 2006a). Savitch and Kantor (2002) conclude that, due to institutional fragmentation, (local) governments or other public actors involved often lack ‘bargaining power’ as regards securing certain planning values and democratic aspects in contemporary urban development. This seems to be especially true of large-scale internationally oriented development projects whose multi-scalar nature makes them even more difficult to influence and shape by traditional two-dimensional spatial planning instruments like zoning regulations. Salet (2007) observes that private interests are often quicker and more flexible to anticipate the new spatial-economic reality in metropolitan areas and that, these days, public planners with their toolkit of (regulatory) planning concepts often struggle to keep up.

At the same time, section 1.2 has shown that there are many relevant aspects of change (or development) in the recent history of large-scale development projects. This implies

Figure 1.2: No urban atmosphere in Donaucity Vienna



that these projects *can* also become locations for challenging and changing current development practices. We want to study whether the concept of new urbanity is working like a normative planning concept that fuels this change, as some proponents claim it can (Coupland 1997; Priemus and Hall 2004; Louw and Bruinsma 2006). As we mentioned before, it is interesting that in a timeframe of spatial fragmentation, there is renewed interest in creating spatially consolidated and compact urban spaces. Most of the recent large-scale development projects start with an overwhelming array of optimism and ambitions for such a development. Glossy project folders and flashy websites present an image of development as becoming the opposite of a dull and monotonous place, full of vibrant urbanity. This ambition, as a dimension of agency of a certain constituency in the complex field of actors in a project, is the point of departure for our case study selection.

However, the crucial question is whether the concept of new urbanity is just another planners dream or that it can become a salient argument which affects the policy direction taken by major actors, when difficult decisions have to be made regarding program and finance. Does it influence the bargaining power of public actors vis-à-vis private developers, or are private investors that are willing to create new urbanity blocked by public planning guidelines? These are some of the questions at the heart of this study.

We selected projects in which a concept of new urbanity was introduced to the realm of agency at an early stage. This means that the concept was part of an initial repertoire of wishes of the agents that played an important role in these projects, revealed in early planning reports related to the projects. In the next section we introduce new urbanity by placing it in the context of discussions on quality of place and of creating urban aspects in peripheral areas. In the last section of this chapter we introduce our three case studies.

1.6 Bringing the city to the periphery: defining new urbanity

In the last decade, there has been growing interest in concepts of new urbanity in academic literature (Coupland 1997; Grant 2002; Priemus and Hall 2004; Louw and Bruinsma 2006; Trip 2007a and 2007b). The literature on this topic focuses on two relevant aspects. On the one hand, there is an *analytical perspective* in which ambitions for new urbanity are linked to certain potentially beneficial *conditional aspects* found (or created) in large development projects or other places, and subsequent spatial, social, architectural and ecological *potentials* in these places for this form of development. On the other hand, there is a *political perspective*, with a much more normative dimension.⁴ Some policy actors claim that the introduction of concepts of new urbanity in spatial policies can help reverse several of the negative spatial, social, environmental and aesthetic results of large development projects as well as of low-density scattered

⁴ There has been no agreement, however, on the term used in this literature. Different authors use 'mixed-use development' (Coupland 1997; Grant 2002). The terms 'multiple land use', 'multiple intensive land use' or 'multifunctional land use' have been used quite commonly particularly by Dutch researchers of this planning concept (Nijkamp et. al 2003). Although these terms all have slightly different meanings, their common denominator is (the investigation of) the introduction of policies to more intensively use spaces in a second, third or even fourth dimension (using the same space for different activities during different parts of the day. For a discussion on the different terms see Rodenburg (2005) and Louw and Bruinsma (2006).

urbanisation in general.

The analytical perspective on the *conditional aspects* for new urbanity in large-scale development projects starts with the observation that most of these projects, by their strategic location, often provide excellent accessibility for different means of public and private transportation. Most projects of the latest generation are closely linked to (or located around) transportation corridors and/or transportation hubs. In most cases, attempts are even made to improve the accessibility of these areas. Above we highlighted the fact that the ‘urbanity’ of a place no longer depends on traditional indicators as density and proximity only, but also on ‘post-modern’ indicators like accessibility and interconnectivity (Asbeek Brusse, van Dalen and Wissink 2002). It is in this regard no surprise that interest is growing in studying the urban potential of train stations and airports (Bertolini and Spit 1998; Bertolini 1996; Pol 2002; Güller and Güller 2003; Bontje and Burdack 2005; de Wilde 2006; van Wijk 2007).

This condition provides these areas with an opportunity to take advantage of two of Lynch’s most important notions of urbanity, namely vitality and accessibility (Lynch 1984). Just like Bertolini (2000) observed in the case of station areas, large-scale urban projects also offer (often unexploited) potential for physical, social and economic interaction (Lagendijk 2003). Bertolini expects these (new) nodes to have the opportunity to take advantage of the changing conditions for urban development which he characterizes as a continuing spatial deconcentration supplemented with growing mobility. This would ‘...imply that locations where transport flows interconnect, such as railway station areas, have the highest potentials for physical human interaction’ (Bertolini 2000, p.472). The ‘...equally persistent and selectively growing demand for physical contacts, in both the economic and the social sphere, provides the basis for programmes attempting to realize those interaction potentials’ (Bertolini 2000, *ibid.*). The result is increasing attention, in the literature as well as in practice, for new concepts and tools for deliberately creating new ‘urban qualities’ in essentially ‘non-urban’ places from different perspectives (Coupland 1997; Cevero 1998; Grant 2002; Bertolini and Salet 2003; Knaap and Thalen 2005).

Here, the analytical perspective starts to touch the *political perspective* regarding interventions designed to create (more) preferred land uses. In the Netherlands, for example, the ambition for new urbanity has found its way into official policy reports at different levels of government (Ministerie van VROM 2001; Gemeente Amsterdam 2003). In the Dutch policies on the development of station areas for the future High Speed Train, the concept of new urbanity is even one of the yardsticks which determine the national government subsidy (Majoor and Schuiling 2007). This turn in policies is often supported with a reference to the redundancy in a post-industrial period, of the radical concepts of spatial separation from Modernism era. However, it is exactly this powerful thought, which became strongly institutionalized in planning law and planning practice during most of the twentieth century, which most people see as hampering the introduction of new urbanity in this new timeframe (Salet and de Jong 2000; Teisman 2001).⁵

⁵ The clearest example of such an institutionalization in most countries is the principle of zoning, often supported by (locally) legally binding land use plans. Zoning principles are often quite radically oriented around separating land uses.

1.6.1 Defining new urbanity outside traditional urban areas

The question is how can we define new urbanity outside traditional urban areas? According to Lagendijk (2003, p.83): ‘The precise definition (...) depends on the particular debate or case in which it is used, placed within a wider country/region-specific debate on desired changes in land-use patterns’. We agree that it is important to move beyond a pure morphological (static) interpretation of the concept. We would like to interpret new urbanity in the way Healey (2002) advises when she argues to bring a more multidimensional planning concept of the city to the debate, especially at ex-urban places that are so often dominated by single conceptions: ‘New concepts of the city need to be lodged within a richer shared resource of collective argumentation, more deeply embedded in the mentalities of people in all kinds of situations in an urban area’ (Healey 2002, p.1785).

Once again, therefore, it is not the aim of the research to work with fixed definitions on desirable uses of space or to test the appreciation or economic value of different standard formulas of new urbanity in a quantitative sense.⁶ We use the rather generic header ‘new urbanity’ to acknowledge that the actual meaning, potential and use of this spatial concept is deeply cultural and place-dependent. Nevertheless, a workable definition is required for the sake of clarity. In the case of large-scale development projects outside traditional urban areas, we define new urbanity as:

A (proposal for a) considerable program of spatial functions alongside a program of office construction, plus a certain ambition to spatially integrate and/or connect different uses, either by locating them close to each other, or by proposing the shared use of buildings.

This is a quite morphological interpretation of the concept. However, the following three dimensions of urbanity can act as a guide to understanding the additional non-morphological meaning of new urbanity in our definition: (1) specialisation and exchange (a combination of a plurality of activities and trades), (2) differentiation and opportunities of choice (a variation of activities and uses), and (3) civic expression (symbolic values and identities of places) (Lynch 1984; Salet 1996). Rather than being simply the outcome of a certain formula, new urbanity is formed, in our view, by the character of the images, frames, and discourses evoked by actors in the project that reflect an ambition that relates to these three dimensions. It is a concept capable of enthusing spatial planners, urban designers, architects, residents and politicians by outlining an imaginative future consisting of places where, in the case of large-scale development projects, office development is integrated into high density mixed-use areas with housing, retail, cultural and educational facilities. As a reaction to the over presence of ‘generic’ office parks at the fringes of cities, proponents of this concept describe a desirable situation of liveable places with a strong ‘urban vibe’.

1.6.2 An institutional perspective on the study of new urbanity

The implementation of concepts of new urbanity in reality, via the complex governance processes in which decisions on spatial investments are made, is a huge challenge. Current institutional settings – both rules and practices – seem to lead to decisions that

⁶ A recent example of a more quantitative economic-oriented empirical study on the desirability of new urbanity in a large-scale development project is undertaken by Rodenburg (Rodenburg 2005 and 2006).

result in the monofunctional development of space (Teisman 2001). This leads Salet and de Jong (2000) to perceive a discrepancy between a certain political wish for new urbanity and a reality dominated by monofunctional land use. However, it might not be that simple. We expect the exploration of the complex governance field on projects whose ambition is for new urbanity to result in numerous situations of power struggles and differences of opinion between actors. This is precisely the main reason why we think it is necessary to study this concept via a focus on the institutional aspects of its shaping and implementation in complex governance processes. By adopting such a perspective, we expect to gain a better understanding of practices of interaction in projects and of the effect of the different (changing) conditions we mentioned in section 1.3. This not only helps to explain why current patterns of land use in these projects often lead to forms of monofunctionality, but is also expected to give us the analytical tools that enable us to recommend conditions which are more receptive to the creation of new integrated urban places.

1.7 Three innovative large-scale urban projects

The cases selected for this study are Zuidas in Amsterdam (Netherlands), Ørestad in Copenhagen (Denmark) and Forum in Barcelona (Spain). These three projects were partly chosen for certain practical considerations and partly due to certain shared characteristics *and* certain differences.⁷

The most important aspects that our three case studies have in common are that:

- the project ambition was the development into important areas of economic activity, mainly for the advanced service economy;
- leading actors stated the ambition, in an initial stage of plan making, that the project area would be transformed into more than a new economic centre and that it would also become a place of new urbanity consisting of a mixture of uses in the form of (but not limited to) offices, housing, retail, entertainment and (public) institutions;
- they were all initiated in the mid-Nineties and had an expected development period from 15 to 30 year;
- their building program and economic impact is of considerable importance for their respective metropolitan area;
- they are located outside the traditional urban cores of these cities, but close to new or future infrastructure;
- the areas in question used to be un(der)used for economic and urban activities;
- innovative forms of governance have been set up to make decisions on these projects and to implement them;

⁷ The researcher's home base during the study was Amsterdam. The Zuidas project was relatively easily accessible and by far the most relevant Dutch example. The other two projects had already been visited (and studied) for the collaborative EU 5th framework project COMET on economic competitiveness in the advanced service economy in seven European metropolises (A complete study of all seven large-scale development projects studied for COMET can be found in: Salet and Gualini 2007. See: www.comet.ac.at for information and results of the analyses of the whole COMET project). A network of cooperative academics and practitioners could therefore be used as a basis for in-depth fieldwork at a later stage.

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- although not finished at the time of writing, they all underwent extensive development in the last decade;
- they are located in metropolitan areas which are relatively comparable as regards size and main economic indicators of advanced democratic EU countries.

Self-evidently there are also certain differences between the types of initiatives, for example in the strategic value of their location and their programmatic aspects. Amsterdam and Copenhagen have a strong link with infrastructure networks and the airports. The Barcelona project, on the other hand, is linked to the metropolitan transportation network but does not hold a strategic position vis-à-vis the airport. Programmatically there is a stronger emphasis on office space in Amsterdam, more space for educational facilities in Copenhagen, more emphasis on public space in Barcelona (for a precise more quantifiable overview, see: table 1.1). Important variations can also be found in the governance structures that have been set up to decide on these projects and their implementation, in the institutional and cultural context in which they are framed and shaped, and in the strategic value of their location. We elaborate more specifically on the different connectivity to the metropolitan action space in section 2.2.

Table 1.1: Overview of programmatic aspects of three case-studies

<i>Project name</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Planned mix of uses</i>	<i>Special investments</i>
Amsterdam: Zuidas	Linear green field area alongside southern ring road and rail corridor, in between city centre and airport	1,091,700m ² offices 1,171,700m ² housing 485,020m ² other uses: retail, culture, university, public institutions	Expansion of highway and rail tracks, station for high-speed train, new direct subway line to centre. Proposal for tunnel to cover highway/rail to create air-rights development
Copenhagen: Ørestad	Linear green field location in between historic city centre and airport, new transportation corridor to Sweden crosses through area	1,800,000m ² offices 400,000m ² housing 400,000m ² facilities: university, music hall	New metro system to connect area with city centre, new road and water network
Barcelona: Forum	Brown field area, at the place where Avinguda Diagonal reaches coast, alongside ring road. Area with heavy industrial uses: wastewater treatment, power plant, incinerator.	250,000 m ² housing 167,000 m ² offices 270,000 m ² (approx.) other uses: convention centre, hotels, retail, university	Covering of ring road, new roads, new tram connection, new metro station. Upgrading / restyling of industries in the area, creation of new marina and zoo, large-scale public areas, bathing area