
Urban regeneration has been widely used in a global context to redevelop areas of cities which have lost their main economic function in the changing world economy. Many inner city areas and former port areas offer exciting opportunities for urban regeneration when the potential for harnessing tourism is recognized. A number of classic studies in urban tourism and regeneration [e.g. Law 1992, 2002] have highlighted successful examples of tourism being linked to economic regeneration, including Manchester and Baltimore, USA. In most cases, the process of regeneration has to be initiated when large areas of private and public land are involved. Figure 21.1W outlines this process, where a lead agency with a public sector lead or public–private partnership stimulates development, typically forming an agency or organization to drive the process. Although tourism is not always involved in urban regeneration, it has had a significant impact in waterfront areas, where leisure and tourism uses often feature as a dominant element.

Where the development process is initiated it often follows a similar direction as that of a product or resort lifecycle: there is a need to constantly reinvest to retain a vibrant development. In particular, at maturity stage, additional intervention may be required to drive the process forward once it has lost impetus. In this respect, Law (2002) highlights the significance of developing a coherent and focused strategy towards redevelopment (Figure 21.2W) to visualize and communicate the purpose of redevelopment, who will be the beneficiaries and the expected outcomes of a regeneration plan. Law (1992) examined the tourism-economic regeneration issue in considerable detail, and Figure 21.2W highlights the critical links between economic, physical and social regeneration in redeveloping an urban area as well as the importance of marketing in developing a new image of the area, to reposition it. One recent and notable example of seeking to harness regeneration to expand and drive redevelopment forward is the New York City 2012 bid to host the Olympic Games (www.NYC.com accessed 19.1.2005), which comprises the New York City Bid Book.

New York City (NYC) is already in a global position as an urban destination, also comprising one of the USA’s leading gateways to the east coast. It has a mature tourism product, with a resident population of 8 million in NYC and 11 million in the metropolitan area, making it a global city. It receives over 39.6 million visitors of whom 34.3 million are domestic and 5.3 million are international. They generate US$15.1 billion in spending and US$220 million in hotel tax revenue, with a hotel occupancy rate of 83 per cent. One strategy which has helped to popularize NYC is its entertainment district (e.g. Broadway) and its harnessing of film tourism. According to the NYC Mayor Office this has led to over 40 000 media shoots in NYC each year. There are around 60–90 on any given day and 100 000 people are employed in the entertainment sector.

The existence of over 578 miles of waterfront and a variety of brownfield sites (i.e. development sites previously developed which will need environmental improvement and decontamination in some cases). Whilst the NYC area has seen over US$1 billion of investments in regeneration schemes directed at waterfront areas, the Olympic bid provides NYC with an opportunity to push these schemes further. Underpinning the NYC bid is an X plan, where three clusters exist: Olympic Square (including areas around Madison Square and other icons), the Olympic Riverfront and Olympic Park, with an Olympic Village positioned at the centre of the X plan. The combination of these areas into a plan for the Olympic Games will:

- expand the business sector in the central business district
- revitalize the waterfront
- lead to the provision of new parks and sport facilities as part of the post-Olympic legacy.

The waterfront adjacent to the Hudson river with old railway yards would be a potential site for an Olympic stadium and feature as part of an integrated sport, tourism and residential redevelopment. The proposed Olympic Village would provide housing after the Olympics and the Williamsburg Waterfront Park would comprise two anchor projects to stimulate redevelopment. The NYC bid expects the Olympics would yield a US$12 billion economic impact for the city, generating 135 000 jobs. What is notable in the NYC bid, in line with the requirements of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), is the inclusion of sustainability principles in its development, operation and legacy phases. It embodies six environmental and sustainability principles which highlight the growing significance of sustainability (see Chapter 20). The six principles are:

- urban transformation, with the environmental transformation of degraded land to new uses such as parkland, sport and leisure as part of the proposed waterfront transformation
- environmental awareness, with the creation of partnerships to make redevelopment environmentally focused
- global partnerships, with redevelopment informed by collaboration with international agencies like the United Nation’s Environment Programme
- sustainable development, with the project conforming to the IOC’s Agenda 21 principles
● innovative technology, which is embodied in buildings (e.g. 40 per cent of the energy to run the Olympic stadium would be from renewable energy sources) so they are environmentally sustainable
● clean air and water, so that any generated effects such as the impact of transport on sustainable (e.g. the use of clean fuel buses) and able to use existing transport infrastructure.

What the NYC bid highlights is the role of the sports tourism in seeking to stimulate and continue the regeneration of NYC’s waterfront area. This is a departure from the experience of many Olympic bids and locations that have hosted the Olympic Games where regeneration has not been sustainable, especially where greenfield sites have been degraded instead of principles of sustainability being embodied. The competing bids for 2012 Olympics include London, Paris, Moscow and Madrid and a comparison of each bid can be found at their respective websites. The successful bid announced in July 2005 was the city of London.

References

FIGURE 21.1W The links between economic, physical and social regeneration in redeveloping an urban area
FIGURE 21.2W The links between urban tourism and economic regeneration