

KEEPING THE WHITE ELEPHANTS AT BAY: SUSTAINABLE OLYMPICS AND THE US-
HOSTED SUMMER GAMES

by

CAMIE RUSSELL

(Under the Direction of Scott Nesbit)

ABSTRACT

As the Modern Olympic Movement has progressed, the games have grown more complex. In recent years, the International Olympic Committee has received criticism over the games' expansion making them less environmentally and economically sustainable. Current recommendations for minimizing the impact of the games, while also maintaining their legacy, revolve around reusing existing sporting venues within host cities, rather than building new, purpose-built sites. However, reuse alone might not be enough, especially when examining the US-hosted Summer Games. Planning beyond simply reusing sites is the best way to manage possible negative impacts of the Olympics.

INDEX WORDS: Olympics; Olympic Legacy; Sports Heritage; Sustainability; White
Elephants; Summer Games; Olympic Venues; Preservation; Integrity;
Reuse

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The original games, which appeared in history as early as 776 BC, are often referred to as the Ancient Olympic Games.¹ The Ancient Olympic Games were absent in history for around fifteen centuries. They inspired many drives in the meantime to recreate them, including failed attempts by the man who would eventually go on to restart the games.² That man was Baron Pierre de Coubertin. In 1894, in Paris, Coubertin established the International Olympic Committee.³ With this committee, the first modern games occurred in 1896. With those games being held in Athens, Greece saw the Olympics once again.

The Modern Olympic Games continued, with the next game occurring in Paris in 1900.⁴ As the games progressed, they gradually evolved. On average, most games were more elaborate than the ones they followed. They started to include more sports and more competitors. More nations were invited to participate in the games, either as competitors or hosts. The Winter Games, with its own set of sporting events, branched off from the summer-oriented games in 1924.⁵ The arenas grew in size, as did the infrastructure to transport athletes and the audience between each venue. Facilities were constructed to support the temporary influx of people into cities hosting the games.

¹ Buchanan, Ian, *Historical Dictionary of the Olympic Movement / Ian Buchanan and Bill Mallon* (Scarecrow Press, 2001), <https://research.ebsco.com/linkprocessor/plink?id=5f132025-54cf-3d9d-98e3-6fc27aac37f8>, 1.

² Buchanan, *Historical Dictionary of the Olympic Movement / Ian Buchanan and Bill Mallon*, 1.

³ International Olympic Committee, *The International Olympic Committee and the Modern Olympic Games*, 1950, 9.

⁴ Cristiana Pop, "The Modern Olympic Games—a Globalised Cultural and Sporting Event," *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 92 (October 2013): 728–34, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.08.746>.

⁵ Buchanan, Ian, *Historical Dictionary of the Olympic Movement / Ian Buchanan and Bill Mallon*, 2.

As the games expanded, they drew increasing interest from cities looking to sponsor games of their own. What was left behind after the games became a selling point. In 1952, the term “legacy” first appeared within the Melbourne Olympic Games’ plans.⁶ The term was not used heavily again until the early 2000s, when it was more rigorously defined as both the positive and negative remains of the Olympics in a host city. This definition was created after a series of discussions through academic journals and conferences.⁷ Even before the definition was created, host cities hoped for the same lasting outcomes that now fall under the term legacy. Cities went through the bidding process in hopes of getting the opportunity to host the games. Each city who has submitted a bid likely hoped for a positive legacy. However, it was just as likely that the games would have a negative impact. Hosting the Olympics can put several different types of strains on the city and the nation it is held in. The most discussed one is typically the economic burden it can create, however there can also be environmental or social burdens placed on the host city.

Negative environmental impacts of the Olympics have increasingly been discussed. The games have been criticized for increasing CO2 outputs temporarily.⁸ Opponents of the games have also noted their contribution to the degradation of local, oftentimes fragile biomes. Their tendency to inspire otherwise unplanned, large-scale constructions has also been one of their biggest criticisms.⁹ Specifically, critics question the recurring new constructions for the games, and their habit of no longer serving a purpose after the games. Buildings that fail to have a use

⁶ Holger Preuss, “Legacy of the Olympic Games”, *The Olympic Studies Centre*, (June 2024), 4.

⁷ Preuss, “Legacy of the Olympic Games”, 5.

⁸ Angelique Ceccon, Andrew Hargrove, and Jamie Sommer, “Do the Olympics Impact CO2 Emissions? A Cross-National Analysis,” *Global Transitions* 6 (2024): 241–48, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.glt.2024.10.003>.

⁹ Juliet Davis, “Avoiding White Elephants? The Planning and Design of London’s 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Venues, 2002–2018,” *Planning Perspectives* 35, no. 5 (July 1, 2019): 827–48, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02665433.2019.1633948>.

after the games conclude have been referred to as “White Elephants”.¹⁰ White Elephants represent the physical reality of negative legacies. After the games conclude, White Elephants often become an economic burden. In some cases, they have become an eyesore for the city or have arrested otherwise centralized areas in cities in prolonged decay.

Reusing buildings, both before and after the games, has been considered a possible solution to resolving the White Elephant problem. If the venues existed prior to the Olympic Games they are featured in, they are considered more likely to have a continued value for the community afterwards. Reusing existing sites as venues for future Olympics is currently one of the ways the International Olympic Committee plans to address the increasing economic and environmental impacts the games have. Several decades of discussion and recommendations have been amassed on the broader topic of environmental sustainability. This has concluded with the creation of the latest resource materials, Olympic Agenda 2020 + 5, and the IOC’s Sustainability Strategy.

Adopted in 2021, the Olympic Agenda makes recommendations involving five international trends which the IOC has identified as significant.¹¹ Sustainable development is the third trend and is further addressed in the second and tenth of the fifteen recommendations created by the document. The tenth specifically details a need for further collaboration with international organizations like the UN to develop more sustainable sporting events. The Agenda also introduced the IOC’s Sustainability Strategy, which breaks sustainability efforts further

¹⁰ J A Mangan and Mark Dyreson, *Olympic Legacies: Intended and Unintended: Political, Cultural, Economic and Educational* (Routledge, 2013).

¹¹ “Olympic Agenda 2020 + 5: Midway Reports,” Olympics, November 9, 2023, <https://stillmed.olympics.com/media/Documents/International-Olympic-Committee/OA2020plus5/midway-highlights.pdf>, 2.

down into five more categories. Reuse of venues is addressed heavily within the first category, Infrastructure and Natural Sites.

Under the second recommendation of the Olympic Agenda 2020 + 5, past and future legacies of Olympic Games are highlighted. In particular, the recommendation calls for the tracking of legacies after the games. This was expanded within the IOC's Legacy Strategic Approach in 2021.¹² This document called more specifically for a greater focus to be placed on the legacies of the Olympic Movement. It called for more research on the topics of legacies, both broadly and surrounding each game. Beyond calling for a better understanding of Olympic legacies, it also once again suggests the reuse of existing structures over building new ones.¹³ Reuse is suggested here as a way to prolong the lives of venues connected to the legacy, rather than as a sustainability goal, but it falls in line with other IOC-based strategies for sustainability.

Beyond the discussion conducted within the IOC's circles, there have also been academics who have posed questions involving Olympic games and reuse before. Professors Cecile Doustaly and Genevieve Zembri-Mary argued that returning to simpler games was the answer to a more sustainable Olympics. In their research, they examined six Olympic Games. All of the selected games occurred in either Paris or London. The games occurred between 1900 and 2024. Through a historiography of the six games, the two researchers investigated the possibility of a return to what they called "modest games".¹⁴ Modest games were ones that required fewer new constructions. As they were more likely to take advantage of existing

¹² "IOC Legacy Strategic Approach: 2021-2024 Objectives," Olympics, March 2021, <https://stillmed.olympics.com/media/Documents/Olympic-Games/Olympic-legacy/IOC-Legacy-Strategic-Approach-2021-2024-objectives.pdf>, 2.

¹³ "IOC Legacy Strategic Approach: 2021-2024 Objectives", 23.

¹⁴ Cécile Doustaly and Geneviève Zembri-Mary, "Is Urban Planning Returning to the Past in Search of a Sustainable Future? Exploring the Six Paris and London Olympic Games (1900 – 2024)," *Planning Perspectives* 39, no. 3 (May 3, 2024): <https://doi.org/10.1080/02665433.2024.2344590>, 1.

structures, these games were considered more sustainable. Earlier games better reflected the idea of modest games. It also included the time in between, where games were at their most elaborate. In more recent games, there have been attempts to reduce new construction and reuse existing infrastructure. Sustainability initiatives have become practically obligatory in the bid process in recent years.¹⁵ Doustaly and Zembri-Mary's research spanned from the early days of modern games all the way to the newer games trying to regain a similar sense of sustainability.

Other researchers have done similar examinations of the broader idea of reuse in the Olympics, while some have looked more specifically at the individual legacies of games. Of similar relevance, Larry Gerlach examined the legacy of the Salt Lake City Winter Games in 2002.¹⁶ Of particular interest to this research, he discussed the attempts by their organizing committee to manufacture a legacy through the construction of parks and museums. He discussed these new constructions and their failed attempt to act as the conduit for tourism the planning parties had hoped they would become. Gerlach criticized extra expenses for the games. The idea of extravagant games will present itself again in this research.

The IOC's Legacy Strategic Approach has also introduced new materials into this discussion. Primarily, the approach has led to a better understanding of broadly what venues are currently still standing from past games. Beyond this, the approach has also promoted new academic discussion of past games' legacies in the past five years. It has also led to the collection of resources surrounding the games within the Olympic World Library's digital database.

¹⁵ Doustaly and Zembri-Mary, "Is Urban Planning Returning to the Past in Search of a Sustainable Future? Exploring the Six Paris and London Olympic Games (1900 – 2024).", 2.

¹⁶ Larry R. Gerlach, "From Gathering Place to Visitor's Center: Power, Politics, and Salt Lake City's Olympic Legacy Park," *Olympika: The International Journal of Olympic Studies*, 2010, <https://go.gale.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CA268478022&sid=googleScholar&v=2.1&it=r&linkaccess=abs&issn=11885963&p=AONE&sw=w&userGroupName=anon~bb0e9e59&aty=open-web-entry>.

To fit into sustainability guidelines within the IOC and under broader UN recommendations, the Olympic Games should return to a more physically modest design. However, to achieve a greener games and to reduce the number of White Elephants afterwards, host cities will have to go beyond simply reusing existing locations. The IOC's suggestions on venue use are not all-encompassing enough on what can be done to reduce the risk of White Elephants. Reuse alone will have no direct correlation to the maintaining of the structures for years after the games.

There has been a total of four Summer Games held in the United States, and one that will soon be held in 2028. St. Louis was the first US city to host an Olympics in 1906. Los Angeles held the next two in 1932 and 1984. Atlanta was the last host in 1996. Los Angeles will get the opportunity once more in 2028. With the new games, Los Angeles will have the opportunity to reuse venues from the 1932 and 1984 games. The Los Angeles 1984 and Atlanta 1996 games fall into the period of under-researched Summer Games highlighted by the IOC's Legacy Strategic Approach. How have the US-hosted Summer Olympics games incorporated existing structures when planning for the games? How have those same games reused Olympics-built structures after the games ended? Is there a correlation between those reused for the games, and those that remain after?

To determine how the US-hosted Summer Olympic Games fit into the discussion of sustainability and reuse, several records of past and future games will have to be considered. For considering buildings that were reused for the games, the first thing that should be done for each games is to catalog all venues that were used. This first step would include all venues, whether they were built for the games or existed prior to the games.

From there, the next step would be to determine which venues existed before. This would be achieved differently depending on the games. For the earlier games, particularly St. Louis, fewer planning documents and records exist and are available to the public. In those situations, secondary reviews of the games after their conclusion, as well as articles during that time may provide sufficient information on what existed before and was used during the games. For later games, this will be easier, as their planning documents are easier to find online. There are several online archives in particular where documents are made available to the public. Official reports will also be considered, which were written after the games have concluded. They look back at the games holistically, from the medal counts to the dining arrangements. They will be useful in manners similar to planning documents.

Each venue used for the Summer Olympic Games will be identified. The venues will be categorized as either structures that existed before and were used during the games, or ones built for the games that did not have an intended use. From there, it will be established whether each of the purpose-built venue sites were temporary or not. After this, the next step will be to determine if those same venues exist today, and if any temporary sites ended up permanent. The current use of each venue that is still extant will also be identified. This is where the research branches out from current research underneath the IOC's Legacy Strategic Approach. Venue use before and after the games will be considered to evaluate for possible correlations. Beyond the current status of the building, the idea of the integrity of these sites will broadly be applied to each games. While there will not be a heavy focus on each individual site and its integrity, there will be consideration over whether this is an element included when planning for the venues after the games. More broadly, how does the current idea of sustainability relate to methods of

preservation? Are preservation attempts, particularly relating to the integrity of spaces applied, or is the focus simply on saving them from the wrecking ball?

From there, each Olympic games will be evaluated against the greater context of reuse in the Olympics. The sentiment towards reuse in each of the games will be compared with other trends surrounding the games' operations, particularly if they contrast with other themes of sustainability. Trends will also be found that relate to what venues are helpful before the games start, as well as any that make reuse after the games more likely. Overall, this research will determine if the US Summer Games follow the broader themes of the Olympic Games. They will contribute to the discussion of reuse and its value in achieving greener games.

The organization of the chapters will coincide with how the research is gathered. The next chapter, titled "International History of Reuse in the Games", will serve as a collected history of sustainability in the Olympic games. This chapter will cover the broader topic of sustainability, and how it led to the current state of reuse in the Olympic Games. The International Olympic Committee's responses to the rising criticism on the lack of sustainability considerations will also be continued. From this history, a sufficient context of sustainability in the Olympics Movement will be established.

Following the review internationally, the third chapter will focus back on the US. Titled "Using What You Have", this chapter will examine reuse of existing structures in each of the five games. The third chapter will be divided by each game, starting with St. Louis and proceeding chronologically to the future Los Angeles 2028 games. Every venue within each host city will be identified. As mentioned in the methodology, the means for which this information is gathered will differ depending on the particular games, but each section will contain a list of what was reused each time and what was new.

Chapter four, “What Remains” will cover matters of reuse after the games. Local newspapers, websites related to the operations of the site today, and Olympic Reports will guide this research. In some cases, Google Maps will also be used to confirm the location of sites. Planning documentation, particularly bids, will also be reviewed for cases of mentioned reuse opportunities before the games began. Some temporary structures received new uses post-games, and so they would also be included as reused sites.

The final chapter, the conclusion, will place the findings of this research into the context found in the literature review once more. The goal of the conclusion is to highlight the overall objective of the thesis, which is to better articulate the history of reuse in the US Summer Games, as well as what can be learned from this past to help create greener games in the future. It will also determine how this history fits into the broader concept of sustainability in the Olympics, as well as how new calls for environmental sustainability fit into the concept of preservation.

CHAPTER 2

INTERNATIONAL HISTORY OF REUSE IN THE GAMES

Reuse within the context of the Olympics is not a new concept. It has been an element of sustainability efforts within the Olympic Movement since the 1990s. The following chapter will introduce the subject, starting with the concept of Olympic legacies. From there, it will discuss negative legacies and the possible impacts the games can have on their host cities. These impacts have led to criticism by academics as well as citizens of possible host cities. The IOC has addressed those critiques through an evolution of recommendations for future games. From there, this chapter will follow the history of the earliest examples of the sustainability movement and how they led to new recommendations created by the IOC within the twenty-first century.

The Olympics advertise many benefits to possible host cities. Many of the long-lasting impacts of the games are wrapped up together and referred to as the “legacy”.¹⁷ Legacies can be positive for their host cities. They can provide cities and their larger regions with increased tourism, opportunities for sporting ventures, and more locations to host those new sporting events. It provides an opportunity to renew or create infrastructure which will later benefit the host city, even after the torch has been passed on. Games organizers have been encouraged to establish a strong legacy since the 1956 Melbourne games.¹⁸

¹⁷ “Legacy Strategic Approach,” Olympics, December 2017, https://stillmed.olympics.com/media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/Documents/Olympic-Legacy/IOC_Legacy_Strategy_Full_version.pdf.

¹⁸ Pascal Ricordel, “The Switch Between the Traditional Olympic and Paralympic Games Model and the New Paris 2024 Model: A Research Perspective,” 2024, <http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.14044/25944>, 37.

Hoping for a positive, lasting impact for a community, cities have been competing to host the Modern Olympic Games since 1904. The bid process has evolved over time, accommodating the increase in cities wanting to host. Early on, cities who wanted to host future games just communicated their interest in doing so to the International Olympic Committee. The process started to become more formal when Antwerp provided the first plan ever submitted with a proposal for the games. After that, more cities each year submitted official plans along with their proposals in hopes of successfully winning their candidature. In the 1950s, the International Olympic Committee started to require this as part of the bid process.

Currently, potential host cities must follow a more regimented, lengthy process than they did in the past. The bidding process now lasts over a period of years and requires possible cities to submit a plan as well as a completed survey that all potential host cities answer. In the past, promises of spectacular, large-scale sporting arenas in the bidding process often moved cities one step closer to receiving the bid. This has driven the games towards growing progressively larger in size. New stadiums are created to host the events. New events have been added to the agenda over the years. New facilities have become necessary for holding non-sporting and auxiliary services. Over time, the number of sporting venues necessary to host the games has grown from the handful necessary earlier in the Olympic Movement to over three dozen in the most recent games.

Not every Olympic venue existed before the games. The 1908 games in London premiered the first ever purpose-built stadium, White City Stadium.¹⁹ Since then, the games and the venues they create have only gotten larger. In 1932, the first Olympic Village was

¹⁹ Neha Korde and Amit Kumar Jaglan, “Deconstruct, Don’t Demolish: An Overview of Rio de Janeiro in 2016 and London in 2012 as Olympic Host Cities,” *IOCBD 2023*, October 24, 2023, 1–7, <https://doi.org/10.3390/iocbd2023-15183>, 3.

constructed in Los Angeles.²⁰ The largest ever Olympic stadium was constructed for the Sydney 2000 games.²¹ Olympic Stadium Australia's seats were able to hold over one hundred and twelve thousand spectators.

As the games grew larger in size, they were seen more and more as an opportunity for host cities to develop. While the most heavily discussed form of development during the candidature process was the physical development of sporting facilities, some host cities have also used the Olympic Games as a tool to reinvent some aspect of themselves. Perhaps one of the most discussed Olympic Games to do this was the 1936 Berlin Olympics.²² The National Socialist German Worker's Party (Nazi Party) orchestrated the games in hopes of creating a unified and powerful image of Germany. They did this through intentional symbols throughout the duration of the games. They also introduced the Olympic Torch Relay.²³ With a trek stretching from Germany to Greece, organizers of the games hoped to paint an image of a connection between what they considered to be the ancient birthplace of civilization and their nation. As the torch approached the stadium, the bearers were deliberately chosen to be athletes who fit the image Nazi Germany hoped to display all their citizens as.²⁴ Nazi organizers of the

²⁰ Abby Chin-Martin, "The First-Ever Olympic Village Was Built in Los Angeles," PBS SoCal, July 21, 2021, <https://www.pbssocal.org/history-society/the-first-ever-olympic-village-was-built-in-los-angeles>.

²¹ Davis, "Avoiding White Elephants? The Planning and Design of London's 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Venues, 2002–2018," 828.

²² Yoav Dubinsky, "Analyzing the Roles of Country Image, Nation Branding, and Public Diplomacy through the Evolution of the Modern Olympic Movement," *Physical Culture and Sport. Studies and Research* 84, no. 1 (December 1, 2019): 27–40, <https://doi.org/10.2478/pcssr-2019-0024>, 30.

²³ "The Olympic Flame and the Torch Relay," Olympics, accessed April 16, 2025, <https://stillmed.olympic.org/media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/Documents/Document-Set-Teachers-The-Main-Olympic-Topics/The-Olympic-Flame-and-Torch-Relay.pdf>.

²⁴ David Clay Large, "Nazi Games," Google Books, 2007, <https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=Qr0ENI8TNbQC&oi=fnd&pg=PR11&dq=Olympics%2B1936%2Btorch%2Bbearers&ots=FfV5D5-cZu&sig=HX3qGBe0uNcU5Y18H8hsaVU2b5c#v=onepage&q=Olympics%201936%20torch%20bearers&f=false>, 9.

1936 Olympics deliberately planned aspects of the games to reflect the image of Germany that the Nazi Party was pushing.

In a much more recent Olympics, the 2008 Beijing Games were used as a tool to recharacterize the Chinese government from an international perspective. The Chinese Communist Party hoped to use the games to decrease any tensions abroad caused by their increasing economic prosperity and then ongoing conflict with Tibet. Their slogan, “One World, One Dream”, highlighted their hopes to appear as conflict-free.²⁵ They spent forty-four billion USD on creating that image, in part through the construction of purpose-built sites like the Bird’s Nest and the Water Cube.²⁶

Other Olympic Games have tried to recreate or establish their image in a much less aggressive sense than the two aforementioned games. The 1968 Olympics in Mexico City were televised in color for the first time within the context of the Olympic Movement. Mexico City chose to host the games and to deliberately televise the games in color as a way to combat stereotypes surrounding the nation of Mexico.²⁷ Similarly, the 1988 Seoul Olympics were used as a way to show South Korea as a new, advanced nation.²⁸ In 1972, Munich, Germany tried to correct the image of Germany through the games once more as they presented a nation no longer led by the Nazi Party.²⁹

²⁵ Ying Yu, “Olympic Aspirations: Reconstructed Images, National Identity and International Integration,” *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 27, no. 16–18 (November 2010): 2821–41, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09523367.2010.508272>, 2823.

²⁶ Yoav Dubinsky, “Analyzing the Roles of Country Image, Nation Branding, and Public Diplomacy through the Evolution of the Modern Olympic Movement,” 35

²⁷ Yoav Dubinsky, “Analyzing the Roles of Country Image, Nation Branding, and Public Diplomacy through the Evolution of the Modern Olympic Movement,” 31.

²⁸ Yoav Dubinsky, “Analyzing the Roles of Country Image, Nation Branding, and Public Diplomacy through the Evolution of the Modern Olympic Movement,” 33.

²⁹ Christopher Young, “Munich 1972,” *National Identity and Global Sports Events*, 2006, <https://sunypress.edu/Books/N/National-Identity-and-Global-Sports-Events>, 117.

Using the Olympics as a tool to reimagine a nation ends up producing more physical remnants of the games. New stadiums are built to shape the broadcasted image of the nation during the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, like during the 1936 and 2008 games. New facilities open to support the influx of spectators, as a way to show that there is growth and something changing within the nation. All this new construction created for a new public image of a host city generates higher costs.

Between 1968 and 2012, the real cost of the games is, on average, 179 percent higher than the expected cost when planning the games. The highest difference was from planning the Montreal 1976 games, which ended up being a 796 percent difference.³⁰ The Beijing Olympics were the most expensive outright, costing forty-four billion USD.³¹ Those totals did not account for the costs after the games ended. With all of these large-scale stadiums being constructed, their main purpose focusing on a temporary use for a one-time event, they create a burden shouldered by the host cities to support these locations after the games ended. With no intentional, existing purpose after the games, some go unused for extended periods of time afterwards. Some sites even sit empty until they are demolished. This leads to a loss in revenue, especially in cases where the sites are completely abandoned. Even with an inconsistent stream of revenue entering through the new properties, this money may not make the returns necessary to pay off the development of the site. In many cases, such expenses are then placed on the government and indirectly paid for by the tax base. Even if the original costs of construction are paid off, there are still always the issues of the future. Maintaining the building can, in the long

³⁰ Isao Okada and Stephen A. Greyser, "After the Carnival: Key Factors to Enhance Olympic Legacy and Prevent Olympic Sites from Becoming White Elephants," Harvard Business School, 2018, [https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication Files/19-019_0a98788b-6504-4b95-95c5-2e058785e46e.pdf](https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/19-019_0a98788b-6504-4b95-95c5-2e058785e46e.pdf), 4.

³¹ Yoav Dubinsky, "Analyzing the Roles of Country Image, Nation Branding, and Public Diplomacy through the Evolution of the Modern Olympic Movement," 35.

term, be the driving force for why a large-scale space goes unused. Lights have to be kept on and fire codes have to be met for buildings to be used.

What happens to buildings that go unused? The term “White Elephant” is used frequently in literature surrounding the Olympics. A “White Elephant”, in this context, is any site utilized by the games that is later more of a burden to maintain than it is beneficial.³² A “White Elephant” creates a strain, most commonly financial, on its city. White City Stadium of the London 1908 games is usually considered the first “White Elephant”. In 1926, it fell into disuse and was eventually demolished in 1985.³³ White Elephants create a reality where the actual cost of an individual facility extends beyond what is expected. After construction costs, the continued maintenance and operation of the buildings can deepen the financial burden on the city. The larger the structure, the harder it is to find a financially viable use after the games.

Beyond the economic burden they create, “White Elephants” are harmful to the environment. Creating large-scale venues, particularly ones purpose-built for the Olympic Games, can become financially burdensome as well as environmentally harmful through the new materials they use. Construction is a costly business, especially as resources become more challenging to find through environmental and transportation issues. It also impacts the CO2 levels within the city as the projects are being completed.³⁴ Olympic-related facilities often hold space in urban centers, where space is incredibly valuable. A “White Elephant” rusting away in a high-density area forces new development further out. New construction is required further out,

³² Okada, Isao, “After the Carnival: Key Factors to Enhance Olympic Legacy and Prevent Olympic Sites from Becoming White Elephants”.

³³ Doustaly and Zembri-Mary, “Is Urban Planning Returning to the Past in Search of a Sustainable Future? Exploring the Six Paris and London Olympic Games (1900 – 2024).”, 675.

³⁴ Ceccon, Hargrove and Sommer, “Do the Olympics Impact CO2 Emissions? A Cross-National Analysis”, 242.

and higher rates of CO2 are produced from traffic between density centers and new construction.³⁵

The threat of these White Elephants has started to impact the Olympics, particularly increasing criticism against the movement. Fearing the financial consequences the games could have on their tax base, former potential host cities like Lviv, Boston and Krakow dropped out of the bid process.³⁶ Cities like Budapest and Rome dropped out of the race for the 2024 Summer Games for similar reasons. Cities are becoming increasingly hesitant to continue through with their bids, especially after the Montreal games, due to fear of harmful impacts to the economy. The bidding process itself has become so expensive that it forces many newer local organizing committees to drop out.³⁷

Fears of hosting the games locally have expanded beyond the world of economics. The Olympics can pose social threats, primarily to citizens most at risk in host cities. Policing and police brutality within host cities can spike right before and during the games in regions declared ‘unsafe’.³⁸ Rio’s Summer games were an intense reminder of the recurring theme of the games forcing unhoused individuals out of view.³⁹ Beyond that trend, the Olympics have also been criticized for the gentrification they cause, which is often masked as ‘urban renewal’.⁴⁰ Olympics

³⁵ Ceccon, Hargrove and Sommer, “Do the Olympics Impact CO2 Emissions? A Cross-National Analysis”, 245.

³⁶ Ricordel, “The Switch Between the Traditional Olympic and Paralympic Games Model and the New Paris 2024 Model: A Research Perspective”, 39.

³⁷ Chengen Jin and Beakjun Jeon, “Opportunity or Burden? Evaluation of the Factors behind the Decision to Host the Olympic Games,” *Proceedings of the International Conference on Big Data Economy and Digital Management*, 2022, 720–24, <https://doi.org/10.5220/0011238000003440>, 723.

³⁸ Dave Zirin, “Want to Understand the 1992 LA Riots? Start with the 1984 LA Olympics,” *The Nation*, June 29, 2015, <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/want-understand-1992-la-riots-start-1984-la-olympics/>.

³⁹ Livia Gershon, “How Olympics Host Cities Hide Their Homeless,” *JSTOR Daily*, July 8, 2016, <https://daily.jstor.org/how-olympics-host-cities-hide-their-homeless/>.

⁴⁰ Paul Watt, “It’s Not for Us,” *Unlinking the Rings: Cities and the Olympic Games* 17, no. 1 (February 2013): 99–118, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13604813.2012.754190>.

can spur the growth of vacation rental homes in the region, which in turn, can worsen housing options for citizens.⁴¹ The Olympics even pose an increased risk of terror events.⁴²

Fear of the environmental impact of the games might also lead to unease towards hosting them. Carbon emissions are proven to spike leading up to and during the games.⁴³ Large-scale tourism can be damaging not only from carbon emissions from travel, but also to ecological areas where the sporting events take place.⁴⁴ The environment is one of the chief concerns among critics of the games, such as the NOlympics organization.⁴⁵ It was one of the main reasons that, after receiving confirmation from the IOC that Denver, Colorado would host the 1976 Winter Olympics, they declined. This was such a concern that after turning down the opportunity, Colorado State Representative Bob Jackson told reporters that the state should tell the world “We’re sorry, we are concerned about the environment. We made a mistake. Take the Games elsewhere.”⁴⁶

During the last few decades, the International Olympic Committee has started to take steps towards addressing these concerns for the environment. They have entered into the broader sustainability movement discussion, which is often defined as kicking off with the publication of the Brundtland Report in 1987. The report was created to address growing international concerns about the deterioration of the environment. Through this report, the World Commission on

⁴¹ Jules Boykoff, “Airbnb’s Partnership with the Olympics Won’t Help Cities - but Gentrifiers Will Love It,” NBCNews.com, November 25, 2019, <https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/airbnb-s-partnership-olympics-won-t-help-cities-gentrifiers-will-ncna1089936>.

⁴² Steven Vo, “Why Cities No Longer Clamor to Host the Olympic Games,” Georgetown Journal of International Affairs, April 19, 2021, <https://gija.georgetown.edu/2021/04/19/why-cities-no-longer-clamor-to-host-the-olympic-games/#:~:text=While%20these%20reforms%20offer%20the,years%20in%20a%20new%20city.&text=Victor%20Matheson%20is%20a%20professor,%2C%20Hard%20Realities%20>.

⁴³ Ceccon, Hargrove and Sommer, “Do the Olympics Impact CO2 Emissions? A Cross-National Analysis”, 244

⁴⁴ Vincent May, “Environmental Implications of the 1992 Winter Olympic Games,” *Tourism Management* 16, no. 4 (June 1995): 269–75, [https://doi.org/10.1016/0261-5177\(95\)00016-h](https://doi.org/10.1016/0261-5177(95)00016-h), 269.

⁴⁵ NOlympicsLA, “Home,” NOlympics LA, January 21, 2025, <https://nolympicsla.com/>.

⁴⁶ “Denver Olympic Termed Wasteful,” *The Montreal Gazette*, January 12, 1971, 193 edition, 10.

Environment and Development established a series of recommendations. Recommendations were organized into categories based on the level of government operations in which they could be achieved on.⁴⁷

The Brundtland Report led to the meeting of the UN Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.⁴⁸ This discussion led to the Agenda 21, an action plan created for Non-Governmental Organizations to participate in sustainability efforts. In that same year, the Winter Olympics in Albertville, France stirred up criticism about the environmental damage inflicted by the games. Between the criticism the IOC received about the games, as well as the UN discussion, the IOC was inspired to have a similar conversation about sustainability. In 1994, they hosted the Centennial Olympic Congress. This led to the first official appearance of sustainability within IOC documents, a clause added within the Olympic Charter in 1996 for the environment.⁴⁹

Continuing further into the twenty-first century, the IOC has started to address the negative impacts of the games more than in the past. The IOC in 2015 promised to follow the strategies outlined within the Paris Climate Agreement.⁵⁰ In 2016, the non-governing body created the Sustainability Strategy, which highlighted sustainability as one of the three new pillars of the Olympic Games, along with credibility and youth.⁵¹ To focus efforts on improving

⁴⁷ Gro Brundtland, *Our Common Future*, 1987, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5987our-common-future.pdf>, 254.

⁴⁸ “IOC Sustainability Strategy,” Olympics, October 2017, <https://stillmed.olympic.org/media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/Factsheets-Reference-Documents/Sustainability/2017-03-21-IOC-Sustainability-Strategy-English-01.pdf>, 8.

⁴⁹ “IOC Sustainability Strategy” 8.

⁵⁰ Olympic Channel, “Paris 2024: Committed to Staging Climate-Positive Olympics and Paralympics,” Olympics, March 23, 2021, <https://olympics.com/en/news/paris-2024-commits-to-staging-climate-positive-olympic-and-paralympic-games>.

⁵¹ Sylvia Trendafilova, Jeffrey Graham, and James Bemiller, “Sustainability and the Olympics: The Case of the 2016 Rio Summer Games,” *Journal of Sustainability Education*, December 2017, http://www.susted.com/wordpress/content/sustainability-and-the-olympics-the-case-of-the-2016-rio-summer-games_2018_01/, 9.

the sustainability of the games, they created five focus areas. Infrastructure was the first area, which focused primarily on reusing existing structures, or if necessary, implementing temporary constructions that would be removed after the games. The second topic was on the sourcing and management of resources leading up to, during and after the games. Resources such as signage, equipment and memorabilia have contributed to waste in the past. This focus area attempts to minimize waste by repurposing materials used for the games, once the games are complete. Mobility is the third focus area, discussing transportation during the games broadly, including both tourism as well as the movement of people and resources necessary to make the games happen. The fourth focus area titled “Workforce” focuses on the ethical treatment of employees and volunteers working the games, as well as diversifying staff at future games. The final focus is the broadest, focusing on the impact of the games on the climate. It discusses the need for new strategies revolving around carbon reduction, as a way to meet the Paris Climate Agreement. It also discusses a need to prepare for climate change, specifically how the future impacts of the phenomena will impact the look and operation of the games.

The first focus area, “Infrastructure” specifically mentions reuse. Particularly, the main focus is on the reuse of existing structures.⁵² Instead of building whole new venues for every game, the Sustainability Strategy suggests looking at already existing buildings. Sites that exist that can be used as-is would be preferred. However, sites that would only need minor modifications or additions prove to be more sustainable than entirely new constructions.

The reuse of existing buildings is not a novel concept in Olympic games history. Whether intentionally or not, it has been utilized in prior games. One of the most common reuses in the past has been the use of sporting venues that already existed, which might be altered to

⁵² “IOC Sustainability Strategy”, 7.

accommodate larger crowds than usual, or to host sporting events that they do not normally house. Beyond existing sporting venues, other, typically larger structures have been used in the past to hold different elements of the games. Conference centers have been used, particularly for sports like table tennis, which oftentimes do not have large-scale, dedicated arenas already, but are easy to accommodate existing spaces for. Sporting and non-sporting areas in colleges and universities are also often utilized.

More recent games have started to intentionally implement reuse. Instead of acting as a display of the host city's prosperity and dedication to the arts, recent arenas are planned to serve longer lasting purposes than before and as continuously an "aid in the redevelopment of the metropolitan areas that host them".⁵³ Reuse can oftentimes provide some economic relief to the host city. There is no longer the necessary construction costs to factor into the budget. In some cases, if a venue is rented out for the games by the host city, once the games are over, they no longer are financially responsible for the location.

If venues are regularly used after the games, purpose-built or not, they also are less likely to become a financial burden for their host city. Continuous use, particularly by anchor tenants, can improve the revenue coming in through those past venues. In cases where the location was purpose-built for the games, this is particularly impactful, as it helps to alleviate the more recent construction costs. When reusing existing venues, they are more likely to already have a use. They were supported by the use in the past. Reallocating funds away from building new and towards altering the old can also make it so existing venues are less likely to become obsolete.

Reuse is addressed again briefly within the Olympic Agenda 2020 + 5. Within the agenda, there are fifteen recommendations. Although its main focus is broader sustainability,

⁵³ Korde and Jaglan, "Deconstruct, Don't Demolish: An Overview of Rio de Janeiro in 2016 and London in 2012 as Olympic Host Cities," 1.

environmentally, financially and socially, the need for fewer new venues is addressed.⁵⁴ The second listed recommendation mostly focuses on environmental sustainability efforts. The recommendations are included with the provided goal of reaching what the IOC refers to as “climate positive games” by 2030.⁵⁵ It praises the then upcoming Paris 2024, Milano Cortina 2026 and Los Angeles 2028 games for their efforts to reduce the number of purpose-built structures and the plans to instead reinvest in existing infrastructure. Beyond reuse, the recommendations within Olympic Agenda 2020 + 5 also mention utilizing temporary structures, which can be deconstructed after the games. Creating temporary buildings can help prevent the possibility of abandonment found in permanent structures.⁵⁶ In the future, the recommendations include evaluating bid cities for their likelihood and appropriateness of reusing sites or constructing temporary venues, rather than building new permanent ones.⁵⁷ The Agenda also suggested shifting the density of venues outside of the host city, and to existing facilities in surrounding regions when it is appropriate to do so.

Even with the increased focus on sustainability within the IOC, the 21st century has seen several cases of grandiose and costly games. In Sydney’s bid for the 2000 summer games, the local planning committee included a portion addressing the environment, yet they constructed eighteen new venues.⁵⁸ Several of the Athens 2004 venues sit unused to this day, as there was no plan for how they would be used for after the games.⁵⁹ Beijing 2008’s budget was exceeded as

⁵⁴ “Olympic Agenda 2020+5,” Olympics, November 9, 2023, <https://www.olympics.com/ioc/olympic-agenda-2020-plus-5>, 7.

⁵⁵ “Olympic Agenda 2020+5”, 6.

⁵⁶ Sarah Dylla, “Venues and Impact: Planning the Sites of ’96,” Atlanta History Center, December 2, 2020, <https://www.atlantahistorycenter.com/venues-and-impact-planning-the-sites-of-96/>.

⁵⁷ “IOC Legacy Strategic Approach: 2021-2024 Objectives”, 10.

⁵⁸ “Olympic Venues Overview- Sydney,” Olympics, November 20, 2020, <https://olympics.com/ioc/news/olympic-venues-overview-ioc-sydney>.

⁵⁹ Davis, “Avoiding White Elephants? The Planning and Design of London’s 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Venues, 2002–2018,” 828.

the games cost over forty billion dollars.⁶⁰ The city was left with the purpose-built Bird's Nest stadium, which was so large that it has struggled to find a purpose beyond tourism after the games.⁶¹ The Olympic Village of Rio de Janeiro 2016 has been abandoned, as has the one in Athens.⁶²

The Paris 2024 games are the best current representation of the gradual shift the IOC has attempted. The Paris 2024 games established a circular heritage model, as opposed to the previously linear model. Originally, under the linear model, new structures were added to the already existing context of the old. Instead, the Paris 2024 games promoted their heavy use of existing buildings. Ninety-five percent of the venues they used already existed prior to the games. They focused on reusing existing sport sites, in particular, as well as implementing existing cultural sites as temporary sports sites.

Of the five percent that were new sites, most were temporary. Only the Aquatics Center was permanent and purpose-built.⁶³ Locations like the Eiffel Tower saw minimal changes through the use of temporary structures, which were removed after the games ended. Paris 2024's planning shifted away from the traditional model of games development and towards a new method increasingly supported by the IOC. Originally, most games fell into the traditional linear model of planning.⁶⁴ In this framework, new sites are added alongside existing venues to help support the games. The new purpose-built locations are sometimes used as tools to

⁶⁰ Okada, Isao, "After the Carnival: Key Factors to Enhance Olympic Legacy and Prevent Olympic Sites from Becoming White Elephants", 2.

⁶¹ Okada, Isao, "After the Carnival: Key Factors to Enhance Olympic Legacy and Prevent Olympic Sites from Becoming White Elephants", 3.

⁶² Korde and Jaglan, "Deconstruct, Don't Demolish: An Overview of Rio de Janeiro in 2016 and London in 2012 as Olympic Host Cities," 3.

⁶³ Samuel Joseph, "Paris 2024 Venues: Where Every Sport Is Being Held at the Olympic Games," CNN, July 23, 2024, <https://www.cnn.com/2024/07/22/sport/paris-2024-olympic-games-venues-spt-intl/index.html>.

⁶⁴ Ricordel, "The Switch Between the Traditional Olympic and Paralympic Games Model and the New Paris 2024 Model: A Research Perspective, 40.

regenerate local regions of the host city. Beyond the immediate regeneration caused by the sites through their use during the games, little else is considered about potential use in this model.

Paris 2024 was an example of a circular model.⁶⁵ Planning for the Olympics under this model includes the reuse of existing sporting sites for large scale events. It also means temporarily converting non-sporting venues, such as cultural sites like theatres or museum event spaces, into usable locations for large-scale sporting events. The circular model is much more in line with the suggestions made within the current IOC sustainability guidelines.

Will the increased focus on intentional reuse of existing venues be enough to shift the Olympic Games in the direction of something more sustainable? Will that focus even be enough to stop the possibility of white elephants after the games? Looking back on past games might help determine if reuse of existing venues is enough to seriously reduce the number of underutilized facilities post-games.

The IOC's Legacy Strategic Approach, established in 2017, might begin to lay down the groundwork which would make that review possible. The very goal of the policy is to track histories of Olympic legacies, as "understanding the causes of the failures constitutes a useful learning tool for upcoming editions".⁶⁶ The plan to achieve this is through increased research into past legacies of games, both tangible and intangible, to better understand what might help them achieve their goals in future games. The strategy identifies several ways to best guide this research, as well as a few ways that research has been lacking. One way that evaluation of the games needs to expand is within the context of games that have occurred between 1972 and 2004.⁶⁷ Games that fall between these timeframes are currently underrepresented in academia. It

⁶⁵ Ricordel, "The Switch Between the Traditional Olympic and Paralympic Games Model and the New Paris 2024 Model: A Research Perspective", 40.

⁶⁶ "IOC Legacy Strategic Approach: 2021-2024 Objectives", 32.

⁶⁷ "IOC Legacy Strategic Approach: 2021-2024 Objectives", 28.

also suggests a more longitudinal study of legacy, examining it not just within traditional anniversary checkpoints.⁶⁸ By bulking up existing research of the Olympics and their legacies, it might be easier to understand what methods would work towards shifting the games into what the IOC's promises claim they will become.

In total, there have been five Summer Olympic Games hosted in the United States. They have spanned over a century, the first being in 1904 and the latest planned for 2028. Two of the games fall within the 1972 to 2004 timeframe. How have these games fit into the broader history of Olympic reuse? What venues were used during these games that existed prior to them? How did the organizers in these host cities continue to use the venues afterwards? Is there a strong enough correlation between the reuse of existing venues and their continued use after the games to support the concept of reuse contributing greatly to a greener Olympics? Are there other factors, such as who owns the venues after the games or if there is a designated owner of purpose-built venues prior to the games that might impact this correlation?

⁶⁸ "IOC Legacy Strategic Approach: 2021-2024 Objectives", 28.

CHAPTER 3

USING WHAT YOU HAVE

The International Olympic Committee currently suggests that host cities try to reuse existing infrastructure when planning for an upcoming game. As stated in the prior chapter, Paris 2024 is possibly the best example of this new shift away from purpose-built venues. Although the past Summer Olympic games that took place in the United States did not have the same guidelines in place by the IOC, they frequently reused sites for their individual games. Reuse of existing locations was common during US-hosted Summer Olympics. In every games hosted in the nation, the majority of venues used were already in place prior to the games, rather than constructed specifically for them. Atlanta saw the highest ratio of buildings created for the game, but even then, pre-existing infrastructure still held the majority.

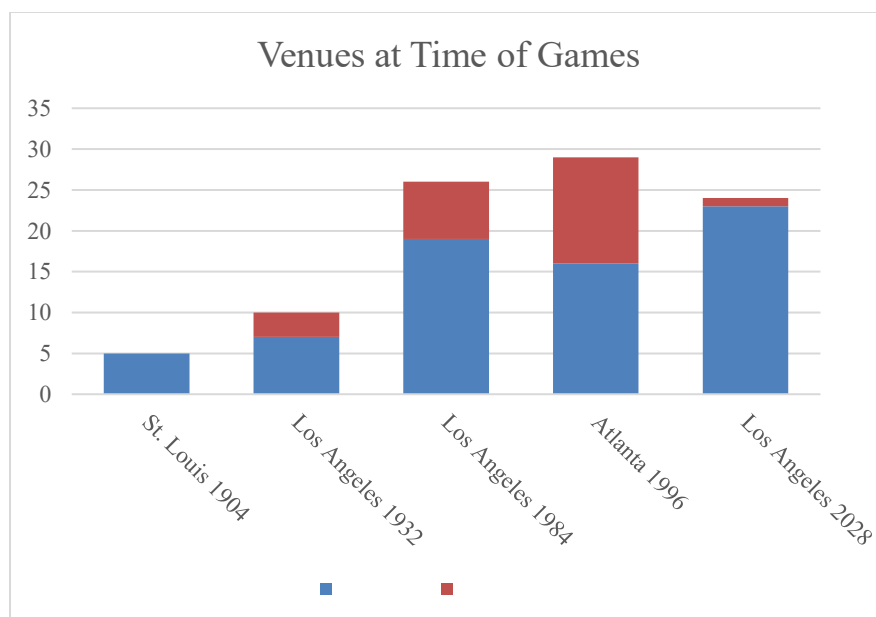


Figure 1: “Venues at Time of Games”,

Methodology

To determine just how common reuse had been in US Summer Games, several resources were used to create a table of all venues during the games. Official Reports are documents that are created after each Olympics which summarize the proceedings of the games, the medal count, and other details for archival purposes. They are available online, and have existed even before official bid documents, dating back to the first Olympic Games.⁶⁹ For this research, Official Reports were used the most to determine what venues were used during each game, especially for later games where the Official Reports became more holistic in their accounts, and did not focus so heavily on just the athletics. St. Louis provided some challenges in this aspect, as their Official Report did not collect as much information on the venues as later games did. For this situation, the St. Louis Sports Commission website filled in any gaps. For the four other US-hosted Summer Olympic Games, the Official Reports were sufficient enough to collect the names and locations of the venues.

Additional research was carried out after the use of the Official Reports. Once the names of the venues were established, it became possible to look at other resources to find out when locations were opened and if they were purpose-built for the games. Especially for more recent games, the Official Reports noted what locations were purpose-built. In some instances, they even included construction dates for pre-existing sites. For other locations, websites tied to those locations, like city park registries or the sites' own official websites, made it possible to obtain construction years. Newspaper articles from the time of construction, as well as more recent ones that comment on the past construction of a venue, also made it possible to obtain construction years.

⁶⁹ "Official Reports," Olympic World Library, accessed December 2, 2024, https://library.olympics.com/default/official-reports.aspx?_lg=en-GB.

Public-facing sites are the main focus of this research. They are spaces where athletes and spectators spend a great deal of their time during the games. This category includes venues for sporting events as well as Olympic Villages. They are the focal point of the games and are oftentimes the greatest contributor to structural waste later on, as those large-scale sporting spaces become obsolete. Other spaces, like offices for IOC officials or press rooms, are oftentimes temporary spaces like tents or converted office spaces. They do not pose the same environmental threats as sporting venues do. They are also not as public-facing and are not expected to orchestrate the same large crowds as sporting venues are. Beyond this, they are rarely ever the subject of discussion on an Olympic Game's Legacy, and are not the structures that become White Elephants with time.

Some venues, particularly ones used for marathons, stretch out across city streets or whole counties. These venues will be noted for the sake of continuity with Olympic documents, but were not evaluated in this research. Locations like these are not structures or buildings, but instead predominantly infrastructural sites or whole geographic regions. Inherently, a county cannot become a White Elephant for itself. A series of streets are also difficult to pinpoint as something so harmful and wasteful to a host city as a White Elephant. They also all required such minimal changes, like temporary signage, that there was little evidence of the sites existing even weeks after the games. For all of these reasons, those sites will not be included in the research, beyond a brief mention.

St. Louis 1904

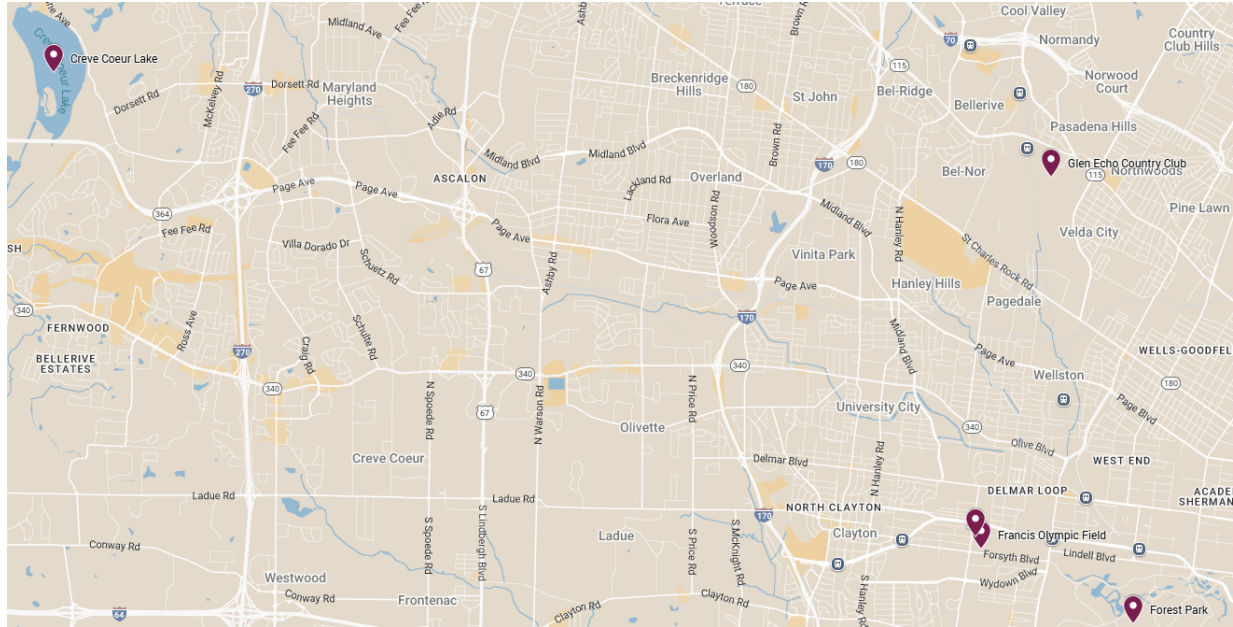


Figure 2: St. Louis Venues Map

After the games in Athens, Greece, and Paris, France, the third modern Olympic Games would be held in America.⁷⁰ Originally, Chicago, Illinois, had been selected as the location of the first ever US-hosted Olympic Games in 1904.⁷¹ However, there were concerns about two events happening in the United States in the same year. Plans had already been made for the 1904 World's Fair to take place in St. Louis, Missouri. That event would have a similar focus on athleticism, which would mean there would be two large-scale sporting events occurring in the same country and in the same year but in different states. Competition for spectators, as well as athletes, might occur.

⁷⁰ Lucas, Charles J.P. "The Olympic Games 1904." Olympic World Library, 1905.

<https://library.olympics.com/Default/doc/SYRACUSE/29697/the-olympic-games-1904-by-charles-j-p-lucas.14>

⁷¹ Sullivan. "The Official Report of the Olympic Games of 1904 ." Olympic World Library, 1905.

<https://library.olympics.com/Default/doc/SYRACUSE/206594/special-olympic-number-containing-the-official-report-of-the-olympic-games-of-1904-comp-by-j-e-sulli.157>

To address the possibility of the second event detracting from the games, Olympic organizers chose to remain in America, but to move the Third Olympiad to the same location as the 1904 World's Fair.⁷² The two organizing bodies reached an agreement. The games would be held in tandem with the fair's events, and would become incorporated along with the "Physical Culture" aspects of the fair.

Location	Existing Prior to Games?	Venue Type				
Francis Field	Yes	Medal Ceremony, Football, Track and Field, Archery, Cycling, Weightlifting				
Francis Gymnasium	Yes	Gymnastics, Boxing, Fencing				
Glen Echo Country Club	Yes	Golf				
Forest Park	Yes	Swimming				
Creve Coeur Lake	Yes	Rowing				

Table 1: St. Louis 1904 Venues Status Prior to Games.

Although not the longest modern Olympics, the St. Louis games were fairly stretched out, as they occurred over the span of four months.⁷³ Despite taking one third of a year to complete, the St. Louis games only had six venues. The first two were Francis Field and Gymnasium. The third venue was Glen Echo Country Club. The fourth venue was Forest Park, and the fifth location was situated on Creve Coeur Lake. The marathon took place throughout the county, which has been considered the fifth venue, but this venue did not meet the criteria for this study.

Of the five venues considered in this research, Francis Field and Gymnasium were the locations used the most frequently. Francis Field's construction finished in 1903.⁷⁴ Originally referred to as "The Stadium" in many documents relating to both the location itself and the Olympic games, the stadium's name later changed to honor the organizer of the St. Louis

⁷² Lucas, Charles J.P. "The Olympic Games 1904." 14

⁷³ "St. Louis 1904 Summer Olympics - Athletes, Medals & Results." Olympic Games. Accessed January 27, 2025. <https://www.olympics.com/en/olympic-games/st-louis-1904>.

⁷⁴ Frank Viverito, *St. Louis' Olympic Legacy* (St. Louis, Missouri: St. Louis Sports Commission, n.d.). 3.

Games.⁷⁵ The Stadium had a memorial gateway over the entranceway for the games.⁷⁶

Construction for Francis Gymnasium wrapped up a year earlier, in 1902.⁷⁷ Together, Francis Field and Gymnasium hosted the Archery, Cycling, Gymnastics, Football and Track and Field events of the 1904 games. St. Louis was the first Olympic games to provide gold, silver and bronze medals to the athletes.⁷⁸ Those medals were also awarded in Francis Field.

Glen Echo Country Club was another venue during the St. Louis games. It was the only venue to ever hold a golf tournament, as this was the only games to ever platform the sport.⁷⁹ Glen Echo Country Club was constructed in 1901.⁸⁰ It was opened as a private club with an 18-hole course, and only after its opening did it become an Olympic venue.

Forest Park was first opened in 1876.⁸¹ It was the location of the Swimming events.⁸² There were extensive changes to its design by landscape architect George Kessler, who was charged with redesigning the area to better suit the Louisiana Purchase Exposition.⁸³ For the Exposition and the approaching games, he reconfigured and added new elements, like the Forest Park Shelter Building in 1903.⁸⁴ Similarly, Creve Coeur Lake existed as a park long before the

⁷⁵ Viverito, *St. Louis' Olympic Legacy*. 3.

⁷⁶ "National Register of Historic Places Nomination - Washington University Historic District." National Park Service: US Department of Interior, n.d.

⁷⁷ "Gymnasium Corner Stone." *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, October 26, 1902, Sunday Morning edition. <https://shsmo.newspapers.com/image/571355605/?match=1&terms=%22Washington%20Gymnasium%22%20>.

⁷⁸ Viverito, *St. Louis' Olympic Legacy*. 8.

⁷⁹ Viverito, *St. Louis' Olympic Legacy*. 7.

⁸⁰ "About Us." Glen Echo Country Club, 2025. <https://www.gecc.org/about>.

⁸¹ Shultz, Chauncy F. "History of Forest Park." City of St. Louis, MO: Official Website, June 24, 1876. <https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/archive/history-forest-park/early.html>.

⁸² Staff, *Riverfront Times*. "The 1904 St. Louis Olympics Were Memorable for a Variety of Reasons." *Riverfront Times*, August 4, 2021. <https://www.riverfronttimes.com/stlouis/the-1904-st-louis-olympics-were-memorable-for-a-variety-of-reasons-photos/Slideshow/37134361/37124464>.

⁸³ "Biography." George E. Kessler, 1989, http://www.georgekessler.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=section&id=5&Itemid=53.

⁸⁴ Kurt Culbertson, "Missouri Projects," George Kessler, 1989, http://www.georgekessler.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=79%3Amissouri&catid=36%3Alocations-by-state&Itemid=61#St.Louis.

Olympics came to St. Louis. Though it did not become a county park until 1945, it has existed as a recreational space since 1881.⁸⁵ Rowing took place in the lake.⁸⁶

Most sites used during the 1904 Olympics existed prior to the games. Many already existed, and were altered to cater to the new uses. Beyond this, the 1904 Olympics were particularly unique to the history of the games. Many of the spaces used during the games were also used for the World's Fair. The III Olympiad was not an event that had a large expenditure available, especially as there were other events occurring at the same time. Sites that existed already were the most profitable to use, especially if they could be used for the two events within the same year. Although this gave the city of St. Louis the opportunity to reduce expenses on venues for the two events, there was some belief that the fair still drew crowds away. Even though the games were moved so that they could be held alongside the World's Fair, some organizers believed it was why crowd sizes were smaller than during the first Modern Olympic Games. For this reason, Baron de Coubertin decided that the Olympics would never be held in tandem with another event of similar scale again.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ "Creve Coeur Lake Park," Saint Louis County - Missouri, accessed December 20, 2024, <https://stlouiscountymo.gov/st-louis-county-departments/parks/places/creve-coeur-lake-park/>.

⁸⁶ Staff, Riverfront Times. "The 1904 St. Louis Olympics Were Memorable For A Variety of Reasons." *Riverfront Times*, August 4, 2021. <https://www.riverfronttimes.com/stlouis/the-1904-st-louis-olympics-were-memorable-for-a-variety-of-reasons-photos/Slideshow/37134361/37124464>.

⁸⁷ Lucas, Charles J.P. "The Olympic Games 1904." Olympic World Library, 1905. <https://library.olympics.com/Default/doc/SYRACUSE/29697/the-olympic-games-1904-by-charles-j-p-lucas>, 17.

Los Angeles 1932

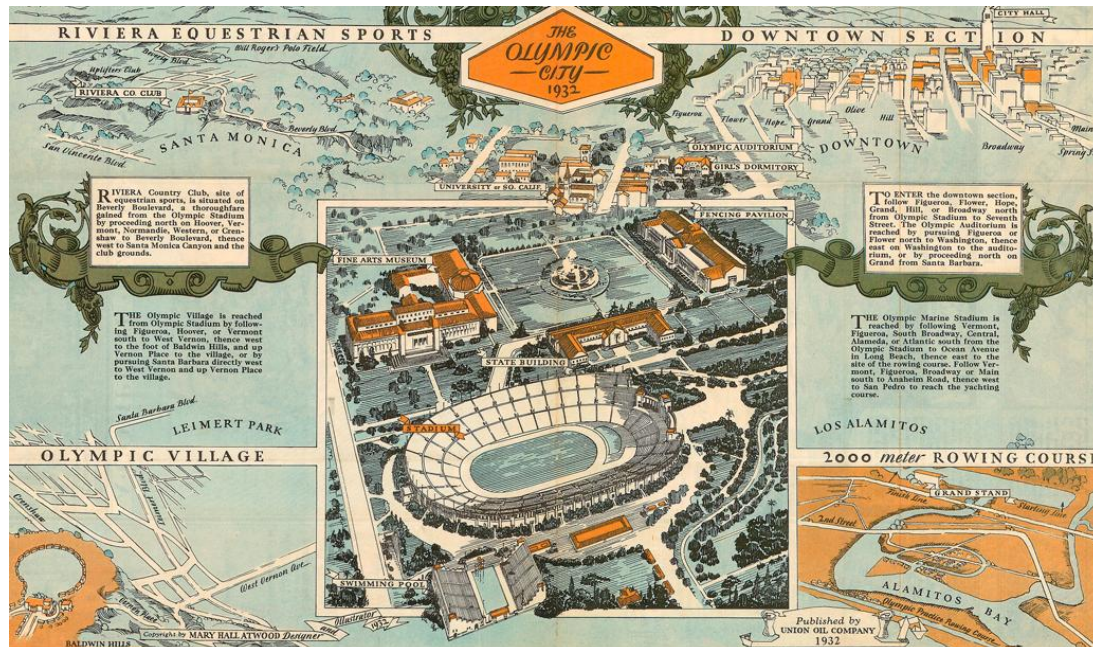


Figure 3: “Section of the “1932 Olympic Map” from the X Summer Olympiad in Los Angeles”,

Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration.

The next Olympics held in America occurred in 1932. Los Angeles, California hosted the X Olympiad. Held during the Great Depression, the games suffered from lower participation, as the funds for the event were limited.⁸⁸ In the Official Report for these games, there is also much more commentary on the sites than had been in prior games. Instead of only focusing on the outcome of each individual event like the St. Louis reports focused on, over thirty pages of the Los Angeles 1932 report included information on the venues and facilities used in the games. Authors of the X Olympiad Official Report remarked that “several existing important sports

⁸⁸ “Los Angeles 1932 Olympic Games,” United States Olympic & Paralympic Museum, August 24, 2021, <https://usopm.org/los-angeles-1932-olympic-games/>.

facilities and establishments, located in Los Angeles, were available to the Organizing Committee”.⁸⁹

Location	Existing Prior to Games?	Venue Type				
Memorial Coliseum	yes	Opening/Closing, Athletics, Field Hockey, Gymnastics				
Rose Bowl Stadium	yes	Cycling				
Marine Stadium	no	Rowing				
Grand Olympic Auditorium	yes	Boxing, Weightlifting, Wrestling				
Los Angeles Police Pistol Range	yes	Shooting, Modern Penathalon (Shooting)				
1932 Pool in Exposition Park	no	Diving, Modern Penathalon (Swimming), Swimming, Water Polo				
Riviera Country Club	yes	Equestrian, Modern Penathalon (Riding)				
State Armory	yes	Fencing, Modern Penathalon (Fencing)				
Sunset Fields Golf Club	yes	Modern Penathalon (Running)				
Olympic Village	no	Olympic Village				

Table 2: Los Angeles 1932 Venues Status Prior to Games.

There were ten venues in total during the 1932 games. Santa Monica Canyon Road was excluded from this study, similarly to the broader county in St. Louis, because it was not a specific site. Instead, it was a broader road. Of those ten, seven existed in some form prior to the games. The Olympic Stadium, the State Armory, Rose Bowl Stadium, Los Angeles Police Pistol Range, Riviera Country Club, Sunset Fields Golf Club, and the Olympic Auditorium were all around before development for the games began.

The Olympic Stadium’s original construction date is in 1923.⁹⁰ Also referred to as Memorial Coliseum, its construction was meant to honor soldiers in the first World War.⁹¹ For the use of the games, it received modifications. Specifically, a one hundred and seven foot Olympic Torch was constructed, as well as a new scoreboard. Alterations also included a rearrangement of seating. They also replaced the existing track in the stadium with one that fit

⁸⁹ *Xth Olympiad Los Angeles 1932 Official Report* (Los Angeles, California: Summer Games Organizing Committee, 1932), <https://library.olympics.com/Default/doc/SYRACUSE/51192/the-games-of-the-xth-olympiad-los-angeles-1932-official-report-publ-by-the-xth-olympiade-committee-o>, 61

⁹⁰ Lindsey Thiry, “USC Trojans’ Home Is Now Officially the United Airlines Memorial Coliseum,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 29, 2018, <https://www.latimes.com/sports/usc/la-sp-usc-coliseum-renovation-20180129-story.html>.

⁹¹ “Historical Timeline,” LA Memorial Coliseum, accessed March 5, 2025, <https://www.lacoliseum.com/timeline/>.

Olympic requirements.⁹² The stadium held the Track and Field, Gymnastics and Field Hockey events, as well as the concluding portions of the Equestrian events.⁹³ It also hosted the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, during which they used the Olympic Torch. Along with the more traditionally considered aspects of Olympic Games, Memorial Coliseum also served as the location for a series of athletic demonstrations. This was the only time the Olympics held an official event that included American Football, though it was just a demonstration, and not an event that awarded a medal.⁹⁴



Figure 4: “Crowds have filled the Olympic Stadium for the 1932 Olympic Games”, Courtesy of Los Angeles Public Library.

⁹² *Xth Olympiad Los Angeles 1932 Official Report*, 66.

⁹³ *Xth Olympiad Los Angeles 1932 Official Report*, 96.

⁹⁴ “American Football in the Olympics,” College Football Hall of Fame, August 2, 2021, <https://www.cfbhall.com/news-and-happenings/blog/american-football-in-the-olympics/>.

Similar to the Olympic Stadium, which existed before the games and went through alterations to better suit them, Fencing took place in a location constructed prior to the Olympics. Referred to as the Fencing Stadium during the games, the State Armory had originally been constructed in 1912.

The Rose Bowl Stadium first opened in 1923.⁹⁵ Hosting the Cycling event, organizers planned for a cycling track to be constructed within the stadium. This addition had been planned to be optionally temporary, and later on it became a gift to the Tournament of Roses Association. They owned the Rose Bowl Stadium, and had the opportunity to either keep or remove the track.⁹⁶

The Shooting events took place in the Los Angeles Police Pistol Range, located in Elysian Park. The gun range was borrowed from the Los Angeles Police Pistol Club, who had first obtained the range in 1931.⁹⁷ There were alterations to the range for the games, specifically altering distances from yards to meters.

The Equestrian events were held mostly at the Riviera Country Club, aside for the last two days, which were held at the Olympic Stadium. The Country Club was the location for the events as it proved the most fitting for the events out of all currently existing facilities in Southern California.⁹⁸ However, the venue ultimately did need a few alterations before it could be used. In particular, additional stables had to be constructed to hold both the horses used for the games, as well as ones that were already housed there, unrelated to the games. Additional seating had to be constructed as well, though the majority of the seats were temporary.

⁹⁵ “2023 Rose Bowl Stadium Guide,” LEARFIELD Digital Publications, 2023, <https://digital.learfield.com/2023-rose-bowl-stadium-guide/full-view.html>, 4.

⁹⁶ *Xth Olympiad Los Angeles 1932 Official Report*, 74

⁹⁷ “About Us,” LAPRAAC, September 21, 2022, <https://lapraac.org/about-us-2/>.

⁹⁸ *Xth Olympiad Los Angeles 1932 Official Report*, 73

The Sunset Fields Golf Club opened in 1927.⁹⁹ It held the Cross-Country portion of the Modern Pentathlon. No serious alterations were required for this event, as contestants ran across the golf course as it was.

The Olympic Auditorium was a particularly interesting case. It opened prior to the games as well, having been constructed in 1924. However, construction was partially funded by the Los Angeles Olympic Committee, who saw the new auditorium as an opportunity for a venue in future games.¹⁰⁰ The auditorium did technically exist before the games, and held fights prior to 1932. However, its construction was in part made possible by the local Olympic Committee, making it an interesting case in these games. In 1932, the Olympic Auditorium still required a few changes to its layout. As it was the location for the Boxing, Wrestling and Weightlifting events, there was an IOC-approved fighting ring installed.



Figure 5: “Los Angeles Memorial Sports Arena”, Courtesy of Columbia.

⁹⁹ Herman Schultheis, “Sunset Field Golf Club,” TESSA Digital Collections Library, 1938, [https://cdm16703.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/photos/id/39684/#:~:text=In%201927%2C%20architect%20William%20P.%20Bell%20designed,Club%20\(AKA%20Sunset%20Fields%20Public%20Golf%20Club\).](https://cdm16703.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/photos/id/39684/#:~:text=In%201927%2C%20architect%20William%20P.%20Bell%20designed,Club%20(AKA%20Sunset%20Fields%20Public%20Golf%20Club).)

¹⁰⁰ Tim Kawakami, “Olympic Auditorium History,” Los Angeles Times, March 4, 1994, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1994-03-04-mn-29943-story.html>.

While the majority of the venues for the X Olympiad existed in some way prior to the games, there were three venues specifically constructed with the games in mind. These venues were the Long Beach Marine Stadium, the Swimming Stadium and the Olympic Village.

Located in Long Beach, California, the Long Beach Marine Stadium served as the site for the Rowing events.¹⁰¹ Its construction focused on supporting the upcoming Olympics. The lagoon that originally took up the location was dredged by the city of Long Beach. From there, the Olympic Committee built several structures on the property. Of note, they created permanent and temporary seating, as well as a boat launch, boat house and dressing rooms. The Judges stand, floats and a starting bridge, all necessary for the competition, were gifted by the Olympic Committee of Switzerland.

Another venue constructed for the games was the Swimming Stadium in Olympic Park. The Los Angeles Olympic Committee originally considered making any venue for Swimming temporary. However, they decided to make the stadium a permanent structure after comparing costs and realizing the possible benefits that might come from a permanent structure to the city.

To sum it up, all sporting facilities not relating to Swimming or Rowing were available prior to the games. Only events that required water had new stadiums and sites constructed on behalf of the games. Of the ones that existed before, many of them underwent some form of alterations to better them for the events they would host. In some cases, like with the seating at the Riviera Country Club, those additions were only temporary. In other cases, like at that same very venue, there were alterations that were meant to better the site after the games. Continuing the example of the Country Club, by installing more stables on the grounds, the possibility for

¹⁰¹ Beatrice Delja, "Long Beach Marine Stadium," California Historical Landmarks, accessed April 16, 2025, <https://www.californiahistoricallandmarks.com/landmarks/chl-1014>.

more revenue was created. More stables allowed for them to take on the housing of more horses later on, after the games had ended.

At the time of the 1932 games, the depression placed a heavy burden on athletes, just as much as it had on organizers. Money for travel, housing and food during the games stood as a boundary of access for many athletes. The Olympic Committee of Los Angeles recognized this early on. To address these concerns, the Committee created a plan for housing athletes which differed from previous Olympic games. The usual way to provide housing was to reserve rooms in nearby hotels for the use of the athletes. Instead, the Los Angeles Olympic Committee established the first Olympic Village. This provided housing which they had control over the prices of. In the Village, they would be able to keep the cost of housing, meals and other essentials down to two dollars per day per athlete.

To see this plan come to life, the Olympic Committee created plans to house male athletes in new, temporary structures. They were built mostly on borrowed land within Baldwin Hills, an area selected as it was around ten degrees cooler on average than other nearby available sites.¹⁰² The selection of a borrowed site influenced how much they could change the landscape, so the plans focused on addressing needs of the athletes now while also thinking of future removal.¹⁰³ Construction of the Village started on April 1st, 1932.¹⁰⁴ Complete plans of the Olympic Village included what would later be referred to as “Olympic Cottages”, as well as thirty one dining rooms and a central Commissary.¹⁰⁵ Water systems and drainage was added to the area, as well as a newly paved road, providing access and water to the temporary community.

¹⁰² Ewan Morgan, “The Olympic Village: A Los Angeles Innovation,” PBS SoCal, June 21, 2022, <https://www.pbssocal.org/shows/lost-la/the-olympic-village-in-los-angeles>.

¹⁰³ *Xth Olympiad Los Angeles 1932 Official Report*, 256.

¹⁰⁴ *Xth Olympiad Los Angeles 1932 Official Report*, 268.

¹⁰⁵ *Xth Olympiad Los Angeles 1932 Official Report*, 276.

The new water and electric networks also supplied a central hospital within the Olympic Village.¹⁰⁶ There were two rooms in each Cottage, each one housing two male athletes.¹⁰⁷ The Cottages were built to be temporary and portable.



*Figure 6: “One of the temporary bungalows, erected at the Olympic Village in Baldwin Hills”,
Courtesy of Los Angeles Public Library.*

Female athletes were provided with a different type of housing. Their housing followed the much more traditional route. Feeling as though “feminine needs could be more completely met in some permanent type of residence”, the Committee instead chose to reserve rooms in an existing location.¹⁰⁸ The Chapman Park Hotel in Los Angeles was selected to house them instead.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ Morgan, “The Olympic Village: A Los Angeles Innovation”.

¹⁰⁷ *Xth Olympiad Los Angeles 1932 Official Report*, 258.

¹⁰⁸ *Xth Olympiad Los Angeles 1932 Official Report*, 292.

¹⁰⁹ Chin-Martin, “The First-Ever Olympic Village Was Built in Los Angeles”.

The Los Angeles 1932 games saw a strong use of existing structures. Only the two venues relating to Rowing and Swimming required new venues, as well as some of the housing for the athletes. Although they were the first games to implement a purpose-built Olympic Village, the 1932 Olympics were still fairly modest when it came to overall number of structures required for the processions.

Los Angeles 1984



Figure 7: “Games of the XXIIIrd Olympiad Los Angeles 1984”, Courtesy of Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps.

Having hosted the games once before, Los Angeles had the unique opportunity to reuse the same venues twice in two separate Olympics. Some venues were reused in 1984, including

ones that had already existed before the X Olympiad. Memorial Coliseum, also referred to as the Olympic Stadium, remained the location for the Olympic Ceremonies for a second time. The Los Angeles Olympic Committee also chose to reuse the Rose Bowl Stadium, though it was instead used as a football stadium, rather than for Cycling.¹¹⁰

Other locations were used during the 1984 games that had not previously hosted Olympic events, but had existed prior to the games. The locations were stretched out across Los Angeles County, the state of California, and even across the nation. In total, nineteen of the twenty-six venues already existed prior to the games. All of the venues that were used outside of the state fall into this category, while most of the ones within California and the county do as well.

Location	Existing Prior to Games?	Venue Type		
Memorial Coliseum	Yes	Athletics, Opening/Closing Ceremonies		
Cycling Dome at CSU	No	Cycling		
Swimming Pool at USC	No	Swimming		
Prado Shooting Range	No	Shooting		
El Dorado Park	Yes	Archery		
Dodger Stadium	Yes	Baseball		
The Forum	Yes	Basketball, Handball		
LA Memorial Sports Are	Yes	Boxing		
Lake Casita	No	Canoeing, Rowing		
Santa Anita Park	Yes	Equestrian		
Fairbank Ranch	No	Equestrian		
Long Beach Convention	Yes	Fencing, Volleyball		
Rose Bowl, Pasadena	Yes	Football		

Table 3: Los Angeles 1984 Status Prior to Games, Part 1.

¹¹⁰ “Los Angeles 1984: An Indelible Legacy,” Olympics, September 12, 2017, <https://www.olympics.com/en/news/los-angeles-1984-an-indelible-legacy>.

Location	Existing Prior to Games?	Venue Type
Stanford Stadium	Yes	Football
Pauley Pavilion	Yes	Gymnastics
Titan Gymnasium	Yes	Handball
Weingart Stadium	Yes	Hockey
Eagle's Nest	Yes	Judo
Coto de Caza	Yes	Modern Penathlon
Los Angeles Tennis Center	No	Tennis
Raleigh Runnels Memorial Pool	Yes	Water Polo
Gersten Pavilion	Yes	Weightlifting
Anaheim Convention	Yes	Wrestling
Long Beach Downtown Shoreline Marina	Yes	Yachting
Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium	Yes	Football
Harvard Stadium	Yes	Football

Table 4: Los Angeles 1984 Status Prior to Games, Part 2.

Aside from the Rose Bowl, three other existing locations were also used for preliminary matches for the Football competitions. The furthest away from Los Angeles was Harvard Stadium. The stadium's construction date is 1903, with its most recent renovation at the time of the games occurring in 1962. It required the most temporary alterations out of the three football venues. A place for the podiums, as well as a new propane system for the Olympic torch, were among those needed to carry out the traditional aspects of the games. Similarly, the Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium also existed prior to the games, as it was constructed in 1959¹¹¹. It also required alterations to maintain the traditions of the games. Stanford, the last stadium also used for the preliminary rounds, was constructed in 1922. That stadium needed electrical alterations, as well as new concession areas and doping control facilities.

Within the larger California area, there were five other existing venues. Anaheim Convention Center, Coto de Caza, Raleigh Runnels, Titan Gymnasium and Santa Anita Park all fall within this category. Wrestling took place in the Anaheim Convention Center, located in

¹¹¹ Al Abrams, "Army Gives \$1107 to Navy Stadium," *Pittsburgh Post Gazette*, November 19, 1957, 27.

Anaheim, California.¹¹² Alterations occurred on this existing venue so that it would be better suited to temporarily host the specific event, as it was not a sporting-focused space prior to the games. Food services were also attached to the venue, but were located in temporary tents.

Coto de Caza is another existing location within California that the organizing committee used for the games. Development of the region started in 1963 with the creation of the Coto de Caza Development Corp.. The next wave of development kicked off when the country club's construction finished in 1970.¹¹³ Although there are traditional sporting areas in this site, the majority of Coto de Caza serves as a gated community. However, in 1984, it briefly transformed into the location of almost all of the events of the Modern Pentathlon.¹¹⁴ The Riding portion of the Pentathlon occurred within an existing riding arena, which had been constructed in 1975.¹¹⁵ Additional temporary seating and toilets were added to the arena, as well as more stables for the unusual volume of horses. For the Fencing events, the area saw alterations again. In particular, carpeting was placed over the usual dirt flooring, and the HVAC and lighting systems were improved. For the Running portion of the competition, around four thousand meters of track were roped off across private lands in the community. Where the track crossed existing roads, dirt was placed down temporarily.

The only new construction involved in the Modern Pentathlon was that used for the Shooting competition. While the practice range was simply modified, the new construction featured the actual event. The bill was entirely paid for by Coto de Caza, and provided the

¹¹² Paul Ziffren, "Official Report 1984," LA84 Digital Library, 1985, <https://digital.la84.org/digital/collection/p17103coll8/id/38881/rec/51>, 153.

¹¹³ Brooke Staggs, "Coto de Caza: Private Ranch to Gated Community," Orange County Register, June 24, 2013, <https://www.ocregister.com/2013/06/24/coto-de-caza-private-ranch-to-gated-community/>.

¹¹⁴ Ziffren, "Official Report 1984," 140.

¹¹⁵ Staggs, "Coto de Caza: Private Ranch to Gated Community".

location with carpeted floors in the range, shaded standing areas for the competitors and shaded areas for spectators.

The Swimming portion of the Modern Pentathlon was the only portion not conducted within the community, as it was located at the Heritage Park Aquatic Complex, which was located in Irvine, California, around thirty minutes from Coto de Caza. At this location, several temporary modifications were added to enhance comfort of the spectators. Swiss Timing also donated a scoreboard.¹¹⁶

In 1975, Raleigh Runnels Memorial Pool finished construction on the campus of Pepperdine University in Malibu, California.¹¹⁷ While the pool already existing in this site, it was not ideal for the Water Polo events it was to host.¹¹⁸ It did not reach the sport's standards for water depth, with one end being especially too short. The planning committee chose to flood the pool up to level with the edge, which was acceptable for the standards. They were also granted permission to make the entire pool one foot shorter than what the standards typically allowed, so the short end could be cut off. Aside from the alterations to the pool, there were also temporary seats added alongside the pool.

Similar to Raleigh Runnels Memorial Pool, the Titan Gymnasium was also leased out by a local college. Prior to the games, the location served as the home gym for California State University in Fullerton's basketball team since 1965.¹¹⁹ For the games, the gym underwent a few

¹¹⁶ Ziffren, "Official Report 1984", 141.

¹¹⁷ "Raleigh Runnels Memorial Pool," Pepperdine University Athletics, 2020, <https://pepperdinewaves.com/sports/2020/10/2/raleigh-runnels-memorial-pool.aspx>.

¹¹⁸ Ziffren, "Official Report 1984", 147.

¹¹⁹ "New Season, New Look for Titan Gym," California State University, Fullerton, 2013, <https://fullertontitans.com/sports/2023/8/22/new-season-new-look-for-titan-gym.aspx>.

modifications.¹²⁰ The largest change was the shifting of seating, so that a handball court would fit within the space typically used for basketball.

The Equestrian events for the 1984 games were split between Santa Anita Park and Fairbanks Ranch. Santa Anita Park was built in 1934. For the games, they constructed a new arena floor over the original one and placed a dirt track on top. Organizers also installed temporary seating, as well as tents near the seating for first aid. Fairbanks Ranch, unlike the other Equestrian site, was built for the games. In total, they constructed a new course built, as well as thirty-five jumping obstacles, to accommodate the Speed and Endurance portions of the Equestrian competitions.¹²¹

Within Long Beach, an area within Los Angeles County, two venues already existed and were ready to use for the games, El Dorado Park and Long Beach Convention Center. El Dorado Park was originally constructed in 1972 and later served as the location for the Archery events for the 1984 games.¹²² There were a few alterations made with the Olympics in mind. In particular, adjustments were made that allowed for an increase in spectator traffic.

Long Beach Convention served as the location for the Fencing and Volleyball events. The Arena, a portion of the Convention Center, hosted the Volleyball events. This section was constructed in 1962. The Arena was used regularly for volleyball earlier, so alterations were minimal. Fencing events were held in another portion referred to as Exhibition Hall, which has a construction date of 1977. Two warm-up courts for volleyball were constructed in this location. Fencing required a wall constructed between its own space, as well as the warm-up area for volleyball, as the sound might prove a problem for the fencers. Many of the accommodations in

¹²⁰ Ziffren, "Official Report 1984", 135.

¹²¹ Ziffren, "Official Report 1984", 117.

¹²² Ziffren, "Official Report 1984", 94.

this location were temporary. The Fencing finals took place in Terrace Theater, originally used for theater performances. Here, just one piste was constructed, as well as an elevated platform near the piste for officials to have a view of the competition. In this specific location, all of the alterations and construction for the event was torn down promptly after the games.¹²³

Inglewood, California is also another area within the larger county of Los Angeles. The Forum is located in this area, and has been since 1967. It served as one of the venues for the Basketball events, as well as a Handball arena.¹²⁴ Originally a basketball stadium, it required changes prior to being used for Handball, but those changes had to wait until after the Basketball events. Alterations to the interior were expected to be completed within twenty-four hours from the conclusion of the Basketball competitions.¹²⁵

Within the city of Los Angeles, there were five existing venues available for use. This included the Dodgers Stadium, Los Angeles Memorial Sports Arena, Pauley Pavilion, Eagles' Nest Arena and Gersten Pavilion. Specifically designed for the Dodger baseball team, Dodgers Stadium's construction concluded twenty-two years before the Olympics.¹²⁶ In order to be suitable for the Olympics, there were a handful of modifications made to the interior which allowed for space for more teams than would normally be in the stadium.¹²⁷

More small-scale modifications were completed on the Los Angeles Memorial Sports Arena, not to be confused with Memorial Coliseum. Located in Exposition Park, the arena's

¹²³ Ziffren, "Official Report 1984", 122-124.

¹²⁴ "The Forum," LA Conservancy, August 23, 2024, <https://www.laconservancy.org/learn/historic-places/the-forum/>.

¹²⁵ Ziffren, "Official Report 1984", 102.

¹²⁶ "Mejias Hits Pair," *The Evening Sun*, April 11, 1962.

¹²⁷ Ziffren, "Official Report 1984", 99.

construction started in 1958 and took a year to complete.¹²⁸ The existing structure only required new paint and a modernization of the HVAC system. Memorial Sports Arena served as the location of the Boxing events.

UCLA provided Pauley Pavilion for the gymnastic events. Of the alterations for the structure, a new bridge was constructed. The bridge connected Pauley Pavilion to a nearby location referred to as the Wooden Center, which was the location of the training center for the gymnasts. The organizing committee purchased a used gymnastics podium from the 1976 Montreal games. Gymnastics podium was removed for the artistic gymnastics events later on.¹²⁹

California State University in Los Angeles also lent out one of their arenas for the games. The Eagles' Nest Arena served as the location of the Judo events. Eagles' Nest Arena had three floors, with the second floor hosting the floor of the event space, and the bleachers existing along that floor as well as the third.¹³⁰ For this space, there were mostly temporary alterations. They added temporary air conditioning through the use of portable trailers. Concessions were also housed in temporary locations outside of the building.

Loyola Marymount University's Gersten Pavilion held the Weightlifting events. Carpeting covered the existing flooring temporarily and air-conditioning abilities were added. They created a temporary warm-up area for athletes through the use of canvas, which acted as walls, and removable carpet flooring.

Some facilities required such heavy alterations that the *Olympic Retrospective* listed them as new facilities. However, for the purpose of this research, they will remain categorized as

¹²⁸ "Los Angeles Memorial Sports Arena Under Construction, 1958," University of Southern California, 1958, <https://digitalibrary.usc.edu/archive/Los-Angeles-Memorial-Sports-Arena-under-construction--1958-2A3BF1OPBITE2.html>.

¹²⁹ Ziffren, "Official Report 1984", 132.

¹³⁰ Ziffren, "Official Report 1984", 137.

existing structures. While there were significant alterations, the overall location and oftentimes the use remained the same for these spaces. One such location was the Weingart Stadium, which was formerly known as the Hockey Stadium at East Los Angeles College, before the Weingart Foundation sponsored its renovations.¹³¹ There were mainly infrastructural alterations, like rewiring of electrical systems and modernization of air conditioning in the facility. The stadium was repainted and the plumbing system was also brought up to the then current standard.

In the *Olympic Retrospective*, Exposition Park is listed as a new construction. Exposition Park existed before the games, even during the 1932 games. However, it was likely listed here because there were such significant renovations to the park that it was practically reinvented. After the games, there was a total of 1.8 million dollars invested in new improvements.¹³² These improvements included new lighting and changes to the greenspace configuration, like the turf being redone and four hundred benches added. There was also a new sculpture added alongside a plaza area in front of Memorial Coliseum.

Similar to the past Los Angeles games, 1984 also saw new, purpose-built constructions. Seven of the total twenty-six locations were built specifically for the Olympics. Those locations were Fairbanks Ranch, Prado Recreational Area, the Velodrome of California State University, the Swim Stadium at USC, Lake Casita, Los Angeles Tennis Center and Olympic Harbor.

Mentioned earlier alongside Santa Anita, Fairbanks Ranch Country Club also served as one of the sites for the Equestrian competitions during 1984. The site had not existed prior to the

¹³¹ Richard B. Perelman, "Olympic Retrospective," LA84 Digital Library, 1985, <https://digital.la84.org/digital/collection/p17103coll8/id/78786/rec/273>, 75.

¹³² Perelman, "Olympic Retrospective," 71.

games. The location opened up just before the games, and hosted an eighteen-hole golf course, as well as the endurance track used for the Olympic event.¹³³

The Olympic Shooting Range in the Prado Recreational Area was also only built for the purpose of the games. Starting in August 1983, construction started within Chino County, California. This project brought to life a new collection of buildings to hold all shooting events aside from trap and skeet.¹³⁴

The Cycling event also required a new venue. In 1981, construction started just outside the California State University at Dominguez Hills.¹³⁵ The velodrome was built with the Olympic Games, as well as future recreational use, in mind. Construction wrapped up in 1982, with only minor changes occurring before the games started. The bill was footed by a LAOOC sponsor, Southland Corporation.

Similarly, the Swim Stadium at the University of Southern California was a sponsored new construction. This time, it was sponsored by the McDonald's Olympic Trust. Construction completed in June 1983.¹³⁶ The pool's construction featured a permanent stadium building, with diving boards and underwater viewing rooms, as well as dressing rooms. There were temporary additions, which were to be removed after the games. These additions mostly revolved around the spectator experience, like the additional portable toilets and tented spaces for concessions.

Construction began in Ventura County in 1983 with the hopes of Lake Casita hosting the Canoeing and Rowing events. The location was graded, with irrigation altered along with the

¹³³ "Bay Club Buys Fairbanks Ranch Country Club," San Diego Business Journal, July 20, 2016, <https://www.sdbj.com/real-estate/bay-club-buys-fairbanks-ranch-country-club/>.

¹³⁴ Perelman, "Olympic Retrospective," 76.

¹³⁵ "Inventory of the Olympic Velodome Collection, 1977-2003," Online Archive of California, accessed February 16, 2025, <https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/tf7v19n90s/admin/>.

¹³⁶ Ziffren, "Official Report 1984", 90.

landscape to better create courses for the competitions. Ramps were permanent constructions, but restrooms, seating and lighting were all temporary.¹³⁷

The Los Angeles Tennis Center also finished construction just in time to hold the tennis demonstration events.¹³⁸ The Tennis Center had a few elements that were intentionally temporary, so that they could be removed after the games. This included temporary seating installation, as well as temporary upgrades to electrical services. Will-call, public information and staff check-in spaces were added, mostly in the form of temporary tents, to the edges of the center. Portable toilets were once more available through trailers, and concessions were available underneath tents.

The Yachting events took place at Long Beach Downtown Shoreline Marina, also known as the Olympic Harbor. The site had been selected prior to the 1983 Olympic Classes Regatta. Organizers used this event as a test of the venue, to see what modifications might be necessary. This resulted in a handful of modifications, mostly temporary to address larger than normal crowds to the area. Cold water showers were available, alongside facilities that existed earlier at the marina. A new, permanent boat hoist was added to the site.

Most of the venues used in the Los Angeles 1984 games were already existing at the time of planning. Around 73 percent of all venues were existing, leaving only 37 percent of venues as new constructions. Though there were a lot of spaces that served as venues in the games, making it one of the largest to occur in the United States, construction costs were kept low through the selection of existing locations. All of the existing venues saw some sort of modification, whether permanent or temporary. However, when compared proportionally to the 80 percent rate of

¹³⁷ Ziffren, "Official Report 1984", 109.

¹³⁸ Emma Coghlan, "La Tennis Center Shares History with 86-Year-Old Tournament," Daily Bruin, July 22, 2012, <https://dailybruin.com/2012/07/22/la-tennis-center-shares-history-with-86-year-old-tournament>.

existing buildings in the 1932 games, Los Angeles 1984 did not have an exorbitant number of new constructions.

Atlanta 1996

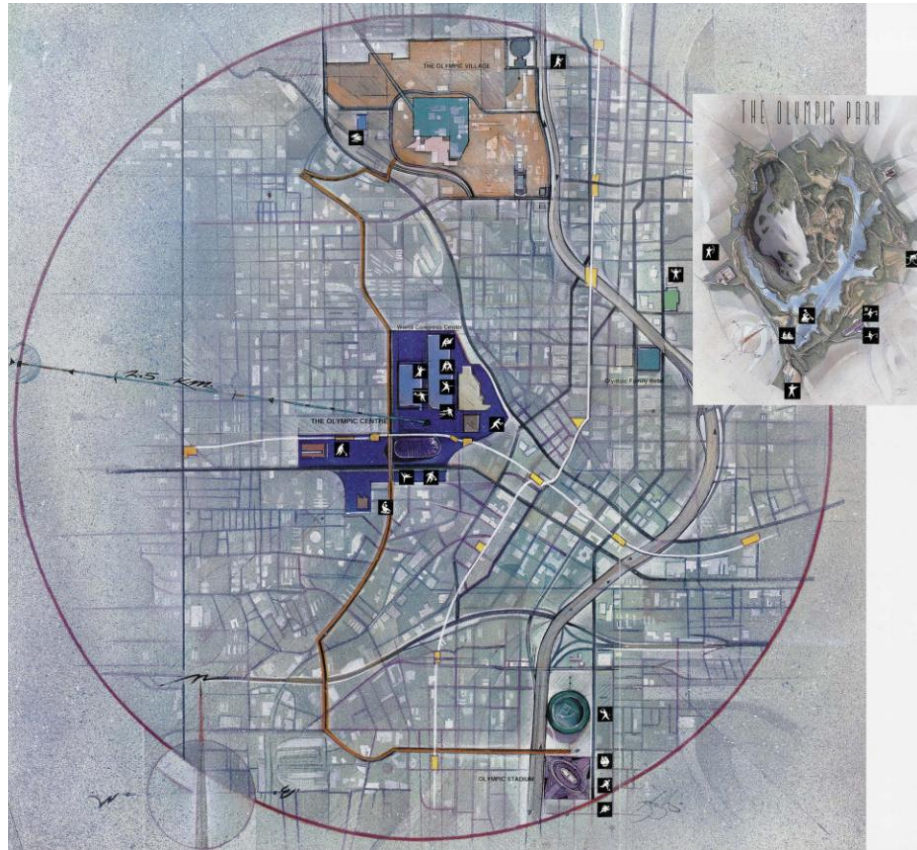


Figure 8: “The Olympic Ring”, Courtesy of The Olympic Studies Centre

The Atlanta 1996 games were the fourth and most recent Summer Olympics to be held in the United States. These games also displayed the most venues out of any seen in the United States Summer Games history, with twenty-nine total venues. Of the twenty-nine, only around 55 percent of the venues were already existing before the time of the Centennial Olympics. With the high rate of new constructions, especially when compared to past US-hosted games, the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games planned new ways to lessen the financial burden the city might experience. Around 75 percent of the spaces the ACOG planned to use were on state-

owned property at the time.¹³⁹ These games also saw sponsorships covering the costs of many purpose-built areas, which made the financial strain of building new buildings less than it would have been in the past.

Road Cycling events were held along the roads of Atlanta.¹⁴⁰ Similar to cases of roads being used in prior Olympic Games reviewed in this research, the streets of Atlanta will also not be included as venues.

Location	Existing Prior to the Games?	Venue Type
Centennial Olympic Stadium	no	Opening/Closing Ceremonies, Athletics
Atlanta Olympic Village	no	Olympic Village
Stone Mountain Velodrome	no	Cycling Track
Stone Mountain Tennis	no	Tennis
Georgia Dome	yes	Handball, Gymnastics
		Fencing, Handball, Judo, Weightlifting
World Congress Center	yes	Wrestling, Table Tennis
Herndon Stadium	no	Hockey
Georgia Tech Natatorium	no	Swimming, Diving, Water Polo
Equestrian Center	no	Equestrian, Cycling Mountain Biking
Morehouse College Gymnasium	no	Basketball
Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium	yes	Baseball
GSU Sports Arena	yes	Badminton
Alexander Memorial Coliseum	yes	Boxing
Centennial Olympic Park	no	Greenspace
Clark Atlanta Stadium	yes	Hockey

Table 5: Atlanta 1996 Status Prior to Games, Part 1.

¹³⁹ “The Official Report of the Centennial Olympic Games: Volume 1 ,” Olympic World Library, 1997, https://library.olympics.com/Default/doc/SYRACUSE/41622/the-official-report-of-the-centennial-olympic-games-atlanta-1996-the-atlanta-committee-for-the-olymp?_lg=en-GB, 115.

¹⁴⁰ “The Official Report of the Centennial Olympic Games: Volume 2,” LA84 Digital Library, 1997, <https://digital.la84.org/digital/collection/p17103coll8/id/34218>, 348.

Location	Existing Prior to the Games?	Venue Type
Omni Coliseum	yes	Volleyball
Wolf Creek Shooting Complex	no	Shooting
Atlanta Beach	no	Beach Volleyball
Stone Mountain Archery	no	Archery
Golden Park	yes	Softball
Wassaw Sound	yes	Yachting
Lake Lanier	yes	Rowing, Canoe/Kayak Sprint
Stegemen Coliseum	yes	Gymnastics, Volleyball
Sanford Stadium	yes	Soccer
Ocoee Whitewater Center	no	Canoe/Kayak Slalom
Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium	yes	Soccer
Marlin's Park	yes	Soccer
Legion Field Stadium	yes	Soccer
Citrus Bowl	yes	Soccer

Table 6: Atlanta 1996 Status Prior to Games, Part 2.

The central-most location within the 1996 games was referred to as the Centennial Olympic Ring.¹⁴¹ This served as the focal point of the games. The Olympic Stadium would be located in this ring, as would be the Olympic Village and several other competition sites. The design would provide spectators and athletes the opportunity to travel to the majority of the venues relatively easily by foot or through mass transportation.

Of the venues in the Olympic Ring, seven were purpose-built. Centennial Park, the Olympic Stadium and the Olympic Village fall under this category. Similarly, four areas located on college campuses, Georgia Tech Aquatic Center, Morehouse College Gymnasium, Clark Atlanta University Stadium and Morris Brown College Stadium, fall in this group.

¹⁴¹ "Atlanta 1996: A City Renewed," Olympics, January 3, 2024, <https://www.olympics.com/ioc/news/atlanta-1996-a-city-renewed>.



*Figure 9: “View of the Opening Ceremonies at the Olympic Games at Olympic Stadium”,
Courtesy of The Atlanta Journal-Constitution.*

Construction started on the Olympic Stadium in 1993. Even with the stadium being a new construction, it featured temporary additional seating. The stadium hosted the Opening and Closing Ceremonies for these games, as well as the Athletics events. Centennial Park was also designed specifically for the games. The park is located between Centennial Olympic Park Drive, Baker Street Northwest and Marietta Street Northwest in downtown Atlanta, and falls into the Olympic Ring region. Through sponsorships from businesses like AT&T and Coca-Cola, US Housing and Urban Development Department redevelopment grants and a Commemorative Brick program, enough funding was amassed to turn a section of land that was formerly public housing into a park space. The park would serve as a pedestrian connection between the Olympic Village and two prominent sporting venues, the Omni Coliseum and the Georgia World Congress Center. The park consisted of greenspace, paved and brick pathways, a water fountain

in the shape of Olympic Rings, the twenty-three flags of the participating nations, and spaces created by sponsors of the park. Several sponsors had their own structures within the park.¹⁴²

The Olympic Village is another new construction within the Centennial Olympic Ring.¹⁴³ A majority of housing space made available during the games occurred through two new buildings for the nearly ten thousand individuals that needed it. An eight-story and thirteen-story building were constructed, both visible from I-85. Both buildings were identical in the individual design of their rooms with apartment style, double occupancy rooms. This location was among the 75 percent of venues placed on state-owned property, as it was located on a college campus.

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Also located within the Olympic Ring, the Georgia Tech Aquatic Center also finished construction in 1996.¹⁴⁵ The only event hosted in the space prior to the grand opening for the games was a test event in 1995 to assure the facilities would be sufficient for the large-scale event. The purpose-built additions hosted the Diving, Synchronized Swimming, Swimming and Water Polo events.¹⁴⁶ The space included an indoor main pool, as well as a temporary pool located outside for Water Polo and an indoor diving well. There was also temporary seating located underneath temporary covering.

During the Atlanta 1996 Olympics, several other new facilities were established close to college campuses within the Olympic Ring. Twenty-six preliminary Basketball games took place at the newly built Morehouse College Gymnasium.¹⁴⁷ All Hockey events were split between two

¹⁴² “The Official Report of the Centennial Olympic Games: Volume 1,” 84.

¹⁴³ “Olympic-Era Residence Hall to Be Transferred to Georgia Tech,” Communications | University System of Georgia, 2007, https://www.usg.edu/news/release/olympic-era_residence_hall_to_be_transferred_to_georgia_tech.

¹⁴⁴ “The Official Report of the Centennial Olympic Games: Volume 1,” 326.

¹⁴⁵ “Atlanta 1996: Georgia Tech Aquatic Centre,” Olympics, January 3, 2024, <https://www.olympics.com/ioc/news/georgia-tech-aquatic-centre>.

¹⁴⁶ “The Official Report of the Centennial Olympic Games: Volume 2,” 272.

¹⁴⁷ “The Official Report of the Centennial Olympic Games: Volume 2,” 326.

new, purpose-built stadiums attached to two separate colleges. Clark Atlanta University Stadium hosted the preliminary rounds of Hockey. The stadium sat across from Morris Brown College Stadium, which served as the location for the sport's finals. That stadium consisted of a few sections preserved from an earlier arena at that location with a construction date in the 1940s. To extend the possible usefulness of the stadium past the games, the elements necessary to make it a Hockey arena were all temporary, so they could be removed later. Between the two stadiums used for Hockey, the ACOG designed a bridge connecting the two properties.

Like other games, Atlanta was able to utilize already existing locations. Six of the properties used within the Olympic Ring were extant prior to the games. Those properties were the Georgia World Congress Center, the Georgia Dome, Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium, the Omni Coliseum, Alexander Memorial Stadium and Georgia State University's Sports Arena.

Existing venues on college campuses within the Olympic Ring were used. Alexander Memorial Stadium, a stadium on Georgia Tech's campus, was opened in 1956.¹⁴⁸ It served as the Boxing venue and only needed minor adjustments.¹⁴⁹ The Badminton portion of the Olympics took place in the Georgia State University Sports Arena.¹⁵⁰ Constructed in 1973, the modifications for the Olympics were kept to the temporary inclusion of three badminton competitions courts.¹⁵¹

The Georgia World Congress Center's construction occurred twenty years before the games in 1976. The Georgia WCC served as the location for multiple Olympic events. In every

¹⁴⁸ "Stop 8: Alexander Memorial Coliseum, Georgia Tech," Atlanta History Center, September 13, 2021, <https://www.atlantahistorycenter.com/programs-events/public-programs/olympic-paralympic-games-celebration/sites-and-venues-of-96/alexander-memorial-coliseum-georgia-tech/>.

¹⁴⁹ "The Official Report of the Centennial Olympic Games: Volume 1," 124.

¹⁵⁰ "The Official Report of the Centennial Olympic Games: Volume 2," 326.

¹⁵¹ "Georgia State Sports Arena," Wayback Machine- Georgia State Athletics, September 29, 2006, https://web.archive.org/web/20120312062238/http://www.georgiastatesports.com/ViewArticle.dbml?DB_OEM_ID=12700&ATCLID=944830.

hall, new temporary seating was added to accommodate the larger-than-normal crowds. It held Fencing in Hall F, on top of five competition pistes.¹⁵² Judo also took place there, though on elevated wood surfaces with two competition tatamis. Hall D held the Table Tennis competition. One could watch the Weightlifting competitions in Hall E. Wrestling was split between two halls, with Greco-Roman style being in Hall G, and Freestyle in Hall H. Both locations were carpeted and hosted three mats. Portions of the Handball Competitions also took place in Hall G, specifically the preliminary competitions, semifinals and placement finals.

The Men's Handball finals were located in the Georgia Dome, which had been constructed in 1992.¹⁵³ Typically, the building served as the home of the Atlanta Falcons.¹⁵⁴ This location also hosted some of the preliminary rounds, as well as the quarterfinals, semifinals and finals for the Basketball competition.¹⁵⁵ For Artistic Gymnastics, only a podium for the routines was necessary.¹⁵⁶ To accommodate for the competitions occurring in the stadium, the dome was divided down the middle by a soundproof curtain.

Along with the Georgia World Congress Center and the Georgia Dome, the Omni Coliseum was part of the Olympic Center. Just like the other two arenas, it also existed before the 1996 Olympics. The Omni was constructed in 1972, and was used during the games as the Volleyball venue.¹⁵⁷ To accommodate this sport, temporary flooring was laid down. Preliminaries, quarterfinals, semifinals and finals all took place on top of this temporary flooring.

¹⁵² "The Official Report of the Centennial Olympic Games: Volume 1," 354.

¹⁵³ Chris Starrs, "Georgia Dome," New Georgia Encyclopedia, May 10, 2019, <https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/sports-outdoor-recreation/georgia-dome/>.

¹⁵⁴ "The Official Report of the Centennial Olympic Games: Volume 1," 124.

¹⁵⁵ "The Official Report of the Centennial Olympic Games: Volume 2," 326.

¹⁵⁶ "The Official Report of the Centennial Olympic Games: Volume 2," 372.

¹⁵⁷ "Stop 13: Site of the Omni Coliseum," Atlanta History Center, September 13, 2021, <https://www.atlantahistorycenter.com/programs-events/public-programs/olympic-paralympic-games-celebration/sites-and-venues-of-96/site-of-the-omni-coliseum/>.

The second time baseball was seen as a sport a team could medal in was in the Atlanta 1996 Olympics. Baseball took place in Atlanta-Fulton Stadium, the existing baseball stadium for the Atlanta Braves.¹⁵⁸ No alterations were needed, as it was already a stadium for the sport which would take place in it, and it fit the requirements necessary to host an Olympics baseball tournament.

Within the broader Metro Atlanta region, there were four properties constructed for the games. Wolf Creek Shooting Range, Atlanta Beach, the venues in Stone Mountain, and Georgia International Horse Park were all in this region. All of these locations were newly built for the games.

Georgia International Horse Park's construction was expressly for the 1996 Olympics. The park would serve as the site of the Equestrian events, and the Riding and Running aspects of the Modern Pentathlon.¹⁵⁹ There were five new barns constructed within this Yellow River Valley location, as well as a handful of riding courses. A covered arena was also built on site. Mountain Biking also took place at the Horse Park, utilizing the equestrian endurance track.

Shooting events took place at Wolf Creek, also constructed in 1996. Similar to the Georgia Tech Natatorium, this location was also built next to existing facilities, but the additions were extensive enough that a new sporting site was created.¹⁶⁰ Overall, three outdoor trap and skeet ranges and three indoor ranges were included in the new construction. Atlanta Beach, similarly to Wolf Creek, was renovated, but the two additional courts for the Olympic Games

¹⁵⁸ "The Official Report of the Centennial Olympic Games: Volume 1," 123.

¹⁵⁹ "History," Georgia International Horse Park, accessed February 10, 2025, <https://www.georgiahorsepark.com/p/about/147>.

¹⁶⁰ "Stop 1: Wolf Creek Shooting Complex," Atlanta History Center, September 13, 2021, <https://www.atlantahistorycenter.com/programs-events/public-programs/olympic-paralympic-games-celebration/sites-and-venues-of-96/wolf-creek-shooting-complex/>.

overwhelmed the existing facilities.¹⁶¹ The location served as the venue for the Beach Volleyball events.



Figure 10: “Beach Volleyball courts, Atlanta Beach”, Courtesy of Stu Foster.

Stone Mountain Park became home to three new constructions. While the park has been open since 1965, the individual venues on the site only finished construction in 1996.¹⁶² Tennis, Archery and Cycling events were assigned to this location, all needing their own unique spaces. The tennis stadium’s seating, similarly to the Olympic Stadium, was planned to be partially temporary.¹⁶³ The entirety of the archery range and Velodrome were temporary, however. Both were planned to be taken down at the end of the games.

¹⁶¹ “The Official Report of the Centennial Olympic Games: Volume 2,” 432.

¹⁶² Debra McKinney, “Stone Mountain: A Monumental Dilemma,” Southern Poverty Law Center, December 3, 2024, <https://www.splcenter.org/resources/reports/stone-mountain-monumental-dilemma/>.

¹⁶³ “The Official Report of the Centennial Olympic Games: Volume 1,” 118.



Figure 11: “Olympic Velodrome”, Courtesy of Stu Foster.

Beyond the Metro Atlanta area, there were also sites located within Georgia. These locations included Lake Lanier, Stegeman Coliseum, Sanford Stadium, Wassaw Sound and Golden Ball Park. In this category, there are no purpose-built permanent structures.

Around half of the new constructions at Lake Lanier were intended to be temporary.¹⁶⁴ Over seventeen-thousand temporary seats floated along the lake edge. Concessions and other spectator resources were housed in tents and trailers, all of which were carted away at the conclusion of the events. Of the permanent structures, there was a new finish tower furnished with a scoreboard, a new boat ramp, two new boat houses and additional on-site storage.¹⁶⁵

Wassaw Sound is located in Savannah, Georgia. The Yachting venue had a design constraint that impacted what could be temporary and permanent. Wassaw Sound could not have

¹⁶⁴ “The Official Report of the Centennial Olympic Games: Volume 2,” 342.

¹⁶⁵ “The Official Report of the Centennial Olympic Games: Volume 2,” 404.

permanent constructions on its shoreline. New, substantial construction had the possibility of impacting the local wildlife in the region.¹⁶⁶ Temporary construction became the solution, mostly through barges. The temporary marina in Wassaw Sound existed on barges. There was another permanent marina located at the existing resort, Sail Harbor Marina, though it was located a little offsite. The Riverfront Marriott, another existing, permanent structure, served as the Olympic Village satellite campus. The courses for the Yachting events were all located offshore, Course A being in the sound, while B-D were further off in the Atlantic. Materials for these courses were also temporary and removed after the games.

Two venues within University of Georgia's campus were used for the 1996 Olympics. Sanford Stadium, usually used for American Football, was the venue that hosted the semifinals and finals of the Soccer competitions.¹⁶⁷ The main alteration required for this venue was the removal of rows of hedges, which were icons of the stadium they were located in. The hedges would prove to hinder operations, so they were temporarily removed from the location.¹⁶⁸ Stegeman Coliseum also already maintained regular use through UGA events. For the Olympics, it temporarily served as a space for additional preliminary rounds for Volleyball and hosted the entirety of Rhythmic Gymnastics.¹⁶⁹ The Coliseum has been in use since 1964. The location was renovated with the games in mind, and part of those renovations included an enclosed practice space.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁶ "The Official Report of the Centennial Olympic Games: Volume 1," 122.

¹⁶⁷ "The Official Report of the Centennial Olympic Games: Volume 2," 366.

¹⁶⁸ William Newlin, "1996 Olympics: A Different Kind of Football in Sanford Stadium," *The Red & Black*, June 28, 2021, https://www.redandblack.com/sports/1996-olympics-a-different-kind-of-football-in-sanford-stadium/article_cb70c4b0-d398-11ea-b6c9-8f9bbd1e9b3c.html.

¹⁶⁹ "The Official Report of the Centennial Olympic Games: Volume 2," 378.

¹⁷⁰ "The Official Report of the Centennial Olympic Games: Volume 1," 124.

Golden Park, located in Columbus, Georgia, also received renovations in 1994 for the games.¹⁷¹ Originally constructed in 1926, it served as a baseball stadium for the community.¹⁷² During the games, it was the location of women's fast pitch Softball. Modifications were done between 1994 and the games to shift use temporarily from baseball to softball. Golden Park served as the first ever venue to host Softball as an Olympic sport.¹⁷³

The Atlanta 1996 Olympics saw venues used outside of the state boundary. All but one of the venues that existed throughout the rest of the country already existed before the games. Ocoee Whitewater Center was the only purpose-built venue outside of the state. Located in Tennessee, this site's alterations permanently created a Slalom event space. The course was carefully planned out and carved out of the landscape through what was considered to be the most federal funding any venue received in 1996.¹⁷⁴

Four existing stadiums were used to host the rest of the Football matches. In Florida, the Marlin's Park and Florida Citrus Bowl were used for preliminary rounds, with the Marlin's Park also hosting quarterfinals.¹⁷⁵ Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama saw the rest of the quarterfinals, as well as a few more preliminary matches. The furthest venue, both in Football and out of the entire 1996 Olympics, was the Robert F. Kennedy Stadium. Located in Washington D.C., the stadium held preliminary matches.

¹⁷¹ "Stop 1: Golden Park: Columbus, Georgia," Atlanta History Center, September 13, 2021, <https://www.atlantahistorycenter.com/programs-events/public-programs/olympic-paralympic-games-celebration/sites-and-venues-of-96/golden-park-columbus-georgia/>.

¹⁷² Chuck Williams, "A Quarter of a Century Later, 1996 Olympic Softball Competition Left Legacy in Columbus," WRBL News, July 24, 2021, <https://www.wrbl.com/news/a-quarter-of-a-century-later-1996-olympic-softball-competition-left-legacy-in-columbus/>.

¹⁷³ "The Official Report of the Centennial Olympic Games: Volume 2," 416.

¹⁷⁴ "Stop 6: Ocoee Whitewater Center: Polk County, Tennessee," Atlanta History Center, September 13, 2021, <https://www.atlantahistorycenter.com/programs-events/public-programs/olympic-paralympic-games-celebration/sites-and-venues-of-96/ocoe-whitewater-center-polk-county-tennessee/>.

¹⁷⁵ "The Official Report of the Centennial Olympic Games: Volume 2," 366.

Unlike the first three US-hosted Summer Olympic Games, nearly half of the venues used during the 1996 Summer Olympics were built specifically for the games. Some spaces did exist before the games and were minimally altered, in most cases temporarily, for the games. Several locations saw new locations that were entirely temporary that were expected to be removed from the games. The Atlanta Olympics saw the most variation in status of venue prior to the games. There were more new constructions overall, as well as more entirely temporary facilities. The 1996 Games have also been noted for the number of sponsorships amassed to cover the expenditure, making it a unique situation financially when it comes to large amounts of purpose-built venues.

Los Angeles 2028

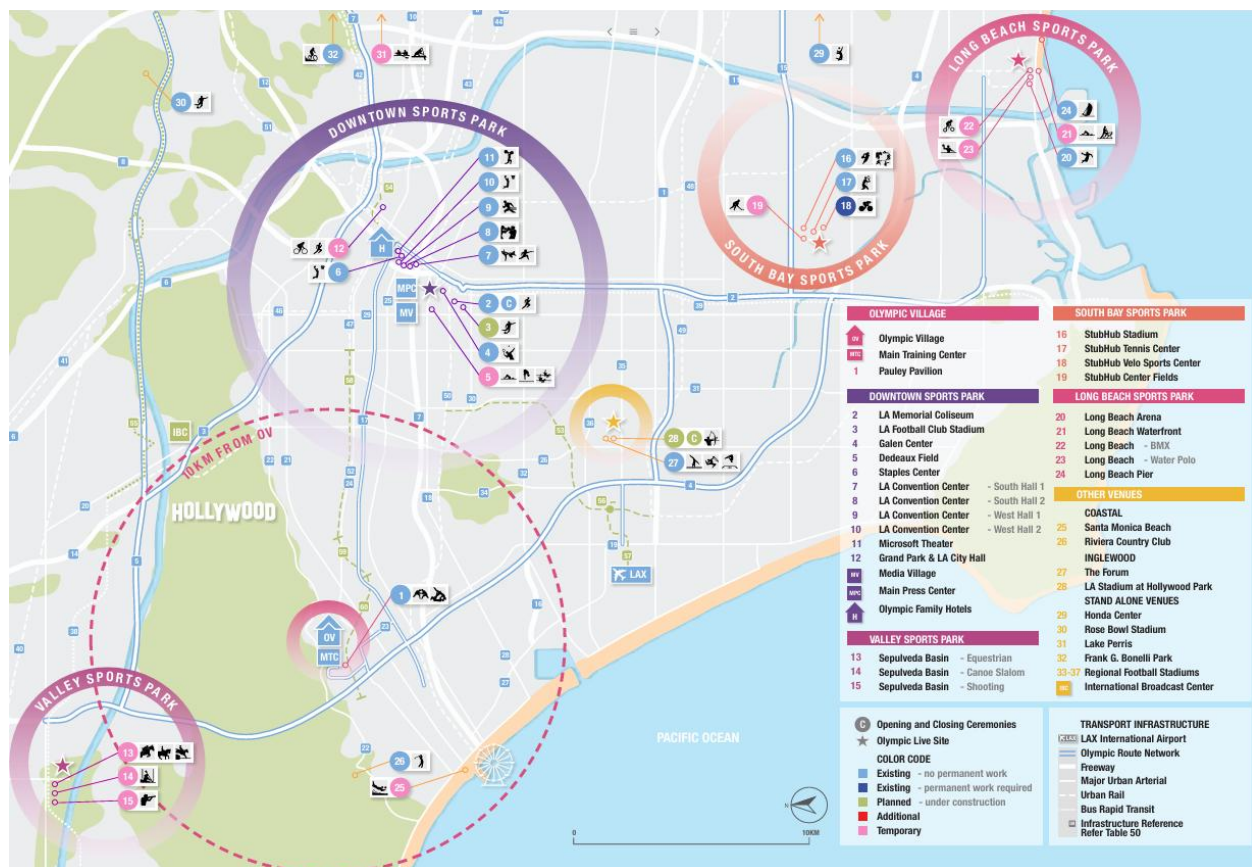


Figure 12: “Map of Los Angeles 2028”, Courtesy of the IOC 2028 Evaluation Commission.

The 2028 Summer Olympics will be held in America, bringing the games back to the states once again. Los Angeles will be joining the exclusive club of host cities, alongside London and Paris, who have hosted the Olympic Games three times. This grants the city Olympic Planning Committee an interesting opportunity where they could possibly reuse some of the same venues that were used in the past two games.

As the plans stand now, it seems definite that the 2028 games will feature some of the same venues as the 1984 and 1932 games did. On their website, they have already made the claim that they will not be constructing any new permanent structures. They currently list a total of twenty-four possible venues on their website.

Among the twenty-four venues, there are a fair number of familiar names from past games. Memorial Coliseum will once again be the main venue space for the games. It will hold the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, as well as the Track and Field events.¹⁷⁶ The Arena in Long Beach, California, previously a fencing and gymnastics space in the 1984 games, will be used this time as the location for Handball.¹⁷⁷ Originally a purpose-built structure for the 1932 games, the 1932 Pool in Exposition Park will be where Swimming, Swimming in the Modern Pentathlon, Diving and Water Polo event will happen.¹⁷⁸

Similarly, Marine Stadium, another purpose-built structure used in the 1932 games, will be used for the 2028 games. Yet another venue used in 1932, the Marine Stadium, will also be used again for Rowing and Canoe Sprints Events.¹⁷⁹ Riviera Country Club, the 1932 Equestrian

¹⁷⁶ “LA Memorial Coliseum,” LA 2028, accessed April 17, 2025, <https://la28.org/en/games-plan/venues/la-memorial-coliseum.html>.

¹⁷⁷ “Arena, Long Beach, CA,” LA 2028, accessed February 17, 2025, <https://la28.org/en/games-plan/venues/arena-long-beach.html>.

¹⁷⁸ “2028 Olympic and Paralympic Competition Venues,” LA28, accessed February 17, 2025, <https://la28.org/en/games-plan/venues.html>.

¹⁷⁹ “2028 Olympic and Paralympic Competition Venues”, n.d.

venue, will instead host Golf during the upcoming games.¹⁸⁰ Since the Riviera Country Club will hold Golf events this time, the Los Angeles 2028 Equestrian events will take place at the Santa Anita Park Equestrian Center.¹⁸¹ Temecula Equestrian Center was not used during past Olympics, but is already an existing venue.

Although not originally a space used for sports in the 1984 games, the Convention Center in Downtown Los Angeles will join the ranks of Olympic sports venues in 2028. The Convention Center was opened in 1971.¹⁸² For the 1984 Olympics, it served as the Main Press Headquarters. For the next Summer Games, it will be the location of Fencing, Judo, Table Tennis, Taekwondo Target Shooting and Wrestling events.¹⁸³ Since the Velodrome used for the 1984 games has been demolished, a newer but existing velodrome located nearby will become the venue for Track Cycling.¹⁸⁴ The newest Velodrome in Carson, California finished construction in 2003.¹⁸⁵

The Arena in Inglewood, California, regularly serves as the home stadium for the local basketball team, the Los Angeles Clippers. In 2028, it will continue to be a basketball stadium, making its debut as an Olympic venue.¹⁸⁶ Another basketball stadium, the Arena in Downtown Los Angeles, will also be used. Currently the home of the NBA Lakers, the WNBA Los Angeles Sparks and the NHL Los Angeles Kings, the venue has hosted both basketball and hockey events

¹⁸⁰ “2028 Olympic and Paralympic Competition Venues”, n.d.

¹⁸¹ “LA28 Celebrates Updated Olympic Venue Plan,” LA28, April 15, 2025, <https://la28.org/en/newsroom/la28-celebrates-updated-olympic-venue-plan.html>.

¹⁸² “1971-2011: A Glance at the Past and a Vision of the Future,” Wayback Machine- LA City Tourism Department, 2011, <https://web.archive.org/web/20180210180253/http://ctd.lacity.org/sites/default/files/LACC%20Annual%20Report%2010-11.pdf>.

¹⁸³ “LA28 Celebrates Updated Olympic Venue Plan”.

¹⁸⁴ “2028 Olympic and Paralympic Competition Venues”.

¹⁸⁵ “Dignity Health Sports Park,” AEG Worldwide, accessed February 23, 2025, <https://aegworldwide.com/divisions/facilities/dignity-health-sports-park>.

¹⁸⁶ “2028 Olympic and Paralympic Competition Venues”, n.d.

in the past. For the 2028 Olympics, it will hold Gymnastic events, namely Artistic, Rhythmic and Trampoline Gymnastics.¹⁸⁷

Long Beach Convention Center has been assigned Artistic Swimming and Water Polo.¹⁸⁸ Temporarily, the space will hold enough water for those two events. Sailing Events will take place on the Belmont Shoreline.¹⁸⁹ Marathon Swimming and the Triathlon events will occur along the Long Beach Waterfront.¹⁹⁰

Sepulveda Basin Recreational Area, which has not been used in past Olympic games, will hold the Archery, 3x3 Basketball, BMX and Skateboarding events.¹⁹¹ Development of the park wrapped up around 1991.¹⁹² Similarly, the Tennis Center in Carson, California, will be used for tennis events.¹⁹³ This site has also not yet hosted any Olympic events, but it finished construction in 2003.¹⁹⁴

Within the greater Digital Health Sports Park of Carson, California, the Stadium in Carson will be the location of the Rugby Sevens competitions. This stadium has seen international sports competitions in the past, as it hosted the Women's World Cup finals in 2003.¹⁹⁵ The Fields, also located on the property, will be the site of a temporary Hockey facility.¹⁹⁶ These areas share the same construction date with the Tennis Center.

¹⁸⁷ "2028 Olympic and Paralympic Competition Venues", n.d.

¹⁸⁸ "LA28 Celebrates Updated Olympic Venue Plan".

¹⁸⁹ "2028 Olympic and Paralympic Competition Venues", n.d.

¹⁹⁰ "2028 Olympic and Paralympic Competition Venues", n.d.

¹⁹¹ "LA28 Celebrates Updated Olympic Venue Plan".

¹⁹² "Sepulveda Basin Wildlife," SepulvedaBasinWildlife, accessed February 17, 2025, <https://sepulvedabasinwildlife.org/>.

¹⁹³ "2028 Olympic and Paralympic Competition Venues", n.d.

¹⁹⁴ Lisa Dillman, "USTA Program Coming to Carson," Los Angeles Times, July 18, 2002, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2002-jul-18-sp-tennis18-story.html>.

¹⁹⁵ "2028 Olympic and Paralympic Competition Venues", n.d.

¹⁹⁶ "2028 Olympic and Paralympic Competition Venues", n.d.

Another location familiar with other large-scale, non-Olympic sporting events that will be used in 2028 is the Stadium in Inglewood. Having hosted Super Bowl LVI, it is the home stadium of the Los Angeles Rams and the Los Angeles Chargers. However, for 2028, it will be turned into a suitable venue for the Swimming events. Also known as SoFi Stadium, this venue recently opened in 2020.¹⁹⁷

Currently a part of the University of Southern California campus, the Sports Center in Los Angeles will be the location of Badminton and Rhythmic Gymnastics.¹⁹⁸ This venue has been open to the public since 2006 and has seen an array of uses, from sporting to music.¹⁹⁹

One future 2028 venue location that does not frequently host sporting events is the Theater in Downtown Los Angeles. Also known as the Regal in LA Live, the site's construction finished in 2010.²⁰⁰ It will temporarily be modified to hold the Weightlifting events.²⁰¹

Not all of the probable venues for the 2028 Summer Olympics are located in Los Angeles, and some are not even in California. Two existing sites have been selected in Oklahoma. The Whitewater Center in Oklahoma City has been used in the past Olympic training, but will become an official games venue as it hosts the Canoe Slalom competitions.²⁰² Softball will also be an event during the 2028 games.²⁰³ The location for those events will be at the Softball Park, also in Oklahoma City.²⁰⁴

¹⁹⁷ "Sofi Stadium: The Story of an LA Icon," Discover Los Angeles, November 8, 2024, <https://www.discoverlosangeles.com/things-to-do/sofi-stadium-the-story-of-an-la-icon>.

¹⁹⁸ "LA28 Celebrates Updated Olympic Venue Plan".

¹⁹⁹ "About Galen Center and Arena History," USC Galen Center, 2023, <https://galencenter.org/sports/2023/11/29/galen-center-arena-about-history.aspx>.

²⁰⁰ "About L.A. Live," L.A. LIVE, 2025, <https://www.lalive.com/visitor-center/about-la-live#:~:text=The%20last%20and%20final%20phase,Carlton%20Residences%20at%20L.A.%20LIVE>.

²⁰¹ "2028 Olympic and Paralympic Competition Venues", n.d.

²⁰² "2028 Olympic and Paralympic Competition Venues", n.d.

²⁰³ "IOC Session Approves LA28's Proposal for Five Additional Sports," Olympics, October 13, 2023, <https://www.olympics.com/ioc/news/ioc-session-approves-la28-s-proposal-for-five-additional-sports>.

²⁰⁴ "2028 Olympic and Paralympic Competition Venues", n.d.

Some of the venues are not set in stone. Some are labeled as pending approval, either at the city or Olympic Committee level. The Equestrian Center in Temecula is an example of this, as is the Convention Center Lot in Long Beach. That means that the venues could change. More existing venues could be added. They could also end up turning towards new constructions. However, as the list stands, the Los Angeles 2028 games are optimizing their opportunities for reuse.

CHAPTER 4

WHAT REMAINS

Every Olympics comes to an end. What happens to Olympic venues after the games conclude can look different in every Olympiad. For the United States Summer Olympic Games, the majority of sites implemented in the games have found a use. While the earlier games were more successful in maintaining a higher ratio of extant to demolished venues after the games, all US-hosted games have kept most of the buildings extant.

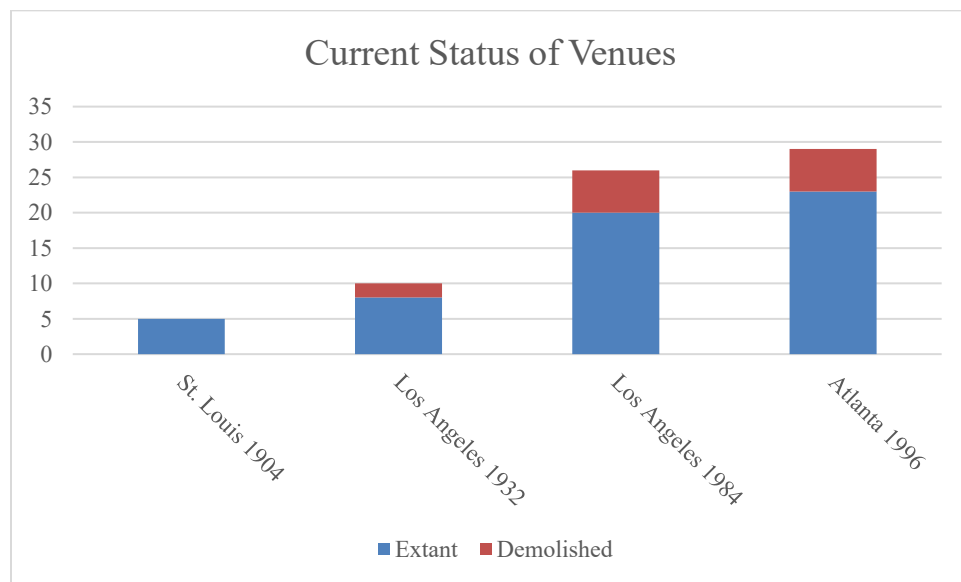


Figure 13: Current Status of Venues

Methodology

For this chapter, the same list of venues from the first four Summer Olympics in the United States were used as in the last chapter. Los Angeles 2028 venues were excluded since the games have not occurred yet and the status of venues post-games cannot be evaluated. To establish what locations are currently extant and what ones are not, several sources of

information were assessed. Documentation made available through the International Olympic Committee's online libraries were considered first, as were documents released by local Olympic Committees. After that, the websites of the venues themselves were accessed. When applicable, this sometimes included the Athletics websites of the universities the venues were owned by. Local news articles were also included to fully understand the status of these locations. When these methods did not prove sufficient, Google Maps acted as another source of information to confirm buildings' status.

Resources were categorized as either extant or no longer extant, with the subcategory of temporary existing under both. Some venues were meant to be removed after the games, but ultimately remained intact as value was found for them after the Olympics concluded. For this research, there has been no integrity assessment beyond considering whether the resources are extant or not.

In situations where use has changed significantly from what its original purpose was, and the form of the structure may have shifted to better represent the function, those buildings have been considered extant. While they have changed in use, they still serve a purpose within their communities. When a venue has some value, sports related or not, within the community, it is less likely to become a burden or a White Elephant. So, for this reason, particular use does not matter, so long as it is still standing and still has a use.

St. Louis 1904

Location	Extant?	Venue Type				
Francis Field	Yes	Medal Ceremony, Football, Track and Field, Archery, Cycling, Weightlifting				
Francis Gymnasium	Yes	Gymnastics, Boxing, Fencing				
Glen Echo Country Club	Yes	Golf				
Forest Park	Yes	Swimming				
Creve Coeur Lake	Yes	Rowing				

Table 7: St. Louis 1904 Current Status

Of the five venues discussed in the past chapter, all five are still currently extant. Francis Field and Gymnasium are both now a part of Washington University's campus, and have been regularly used by the university since they gained ownership.²⁰⁵ Glen Echo Golf Course is also still used regularly by the association country club.²⁰⁶ Forest Park has changed heavily since the games. For example, the St. Louis Zoo has been added to the area, as were several WPA projects in the 1930s. However, the park is still extant, and has received regular use since the games concluded. There have even been additions to the park tied to the Olympic Legacy that were constructed after 1904.²⁰⁷ Creve Coeur is still regularly used by the public, as it had been before the games.

Once again, St. Louis 1904 proved to be a very modest Olympics. The locations were easy to maintain and find use for after the games. There were no constructions so unwieldy in size and cost that they had to be demolished. Despite occurring over one hundred years ago, the 1904 Summer Olympics are the only ones in US history to have all venues still extant and in use.

Los Angeles 1932

Location	Extant?	Venue Type				
Memorial Coliseum	yes	Opening/Closing, Athletics, Field Hockey, Gymnastics				
Rose Bowl Stadium	yes	Cycling				
Marine Stadium	yes	Rowing				
Grand Olympic Auditorium	yes	Boxing, Weightlifting, Wrestling				
Los Angeles Police Pistol Range	yes	Shooting, Modern Penathalon (Shooting)				
1932 Pool in Exposition Park	yes	Diving, Modern Penathalon (Swimming), Swimming, Water Polo				
Riviera Country Club	yes	Equestrian, Modern Penathalon (Riding)				
State Armory	yes	Fencing, Modern Penathalon (Fencing)				
Sunset Fields Golf Club	no	Modern Penathalon (Running)				
Olympic Village	no	Olympic Village				

Table 8: Los Angeles 1932 Current Status

²⁰⁵ "1904 St. Louis Olympics." About St. Louis, accessed February 20, 2025.

https://aboutstlouis.com/local/history/1904-olympics-st-louis#google_vignette.

²⁰⁶ "About Us," Glen Echo Country Club, accessed March 1, 2025, <https://www.gecc.org/>.

²⁰⁷ "Park Navigation," Forest Park Forever, accessed March 3, 2025, <https://www.forestparkforever.org/navigation>.

While not as successful at maintaining a purpose for every venue as the St. Louis games, all but two of the venues from the Los Angeles 1932 games are currently extant. The two that have been removed are the Olympic Village and Sunset Field Golf Club. The Olympic Village, originally a temporary construction built for the purpose of the games, was deconstructed shortly after the games. Sunset Field Golf Club, which had existed for around five years prior to the Olympics, are also no longer extant. Currently, houses in the Crenshaw Boulevard area stand in the former spot of the golf club.²⁰⁸

Eight of the ten sites considered in the prior chapter still exist today. Four of them were used in past games, or are expected to be reused in future ones. Memorial Coliseum and the Rose Bowl Stadium were used in the 1984 games and will be discussed further in that section. The Marine Stadium might be used in the upcoming 2028 games. The 1932 Pool in Exposition Park will also be used, with a few modifications to the existing structure. Both of those venues were originally purpose-built for the games, but have stood for nearly one hundred years. These four locations are still used for sporting events regularly.

The Riviera Country Club, another existing site from the 1932 Olympics, might host other large-scale sporting events. The location was originally intended to host the US Women's Open in 2026. However, after the Los Angeles fires, the location of that competition has been shifted. The golf club has not been destroyed by the fires, and is still slotted to host the US Men's Open in 2031.²⁰⁹

Other locations have not been featured in large-scale sporting events since the end of the 1932 games, but are still extant. The LA Police Pistol Club still regularly uses the Los Angeles

²⁰⁸ Herman Schultheis, *Sunset Field Golf Club, Greens, Baldwin Hills*, photograph (Baldwin Hills, 1938), Baldwin Hills, <http://cdm16703.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/photos/id/39676>.

²⁰⁹ "Riviera Country Club," LA 2028, accessed March 3, 2025, <https://la28.org/en/games-plan/venues/riviera-country-club.html>.

Police Pistol Range in Elysian Park.²¹⁰ The presence of the games at the range has even expanded in later years, as some of the temporary buildings from the Olympic Village were added to the property.

While most of these sites have maintained a use similar to those they held in the games, two of the venues have shifted in use considerably. Exposition Park Armory is currently a public science education and conference center.²¹¹ The most significant change in use occurred at the Grand Olympic Auditorium. After the games, the venue became a significant site in the world of boxing, as well as a cultural hub for Mexican Americans in Los Angeles.²¹² However, this period in its history came to an end after low attendance numbers made it pose a burden on owners and fight promoters. After the location stopped being used for boxing, it briefly became a music venue. Recognizable musicians played in the auditorium, such as Rage Against the Machine, who recorded their 2003 album “Live at the Grand Olympic Auditorium”.²¹³ The Grand Olympic Auditorium did not remain a concert scene. In 2005, ownership and use changed once more. Now, the former Olympic venue is currently the Glory Church of Jesus Christ Korean Church.²¹⁴

²¹⁰ “Home Page.” Los Angeles Police Revolver and Athletic Club, December 30, 2021. <https://lapraac.org/>.

²¹¹ “Our Story,” The California Science Center, accessed March 3, 2025, <https://californiasciencecenter.org/about-us/our-story>.

²¹² “18th & Grand: The Olympic Auditorium,” LA Plaza de Cultura y Artes, 2023, <https://lapca.org/exhibition/18th-grand-the-olympic-auditorium-august-11-2023-may-12-2024/>.

²¹³ <https://www.ratm.com/album/live-at-the-grand-olympic-auditorium/>

²¹⁴ K. Connie Kang, “From Old Boxing Arena to a House of Worship,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 13, 2005, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2005-aug-13-me-belief13-story.html>.



Figure 14: “Grand Olympic Day 6”, Courtesy of Glory Church of Jesus Christ.

Only two of the venues used during the 1932 Olympics have been destroyed. One of those venues was expected to be temporary, and intended to have a minimal impact on its environment. The other venue no longer brought in enough revenue to continue to remain open. It was destroyed and replaced with housing as the needs of Los Angeles changed. Despite the loss of two venues, the 1932 games had an 80 percent success rate in maintaining venues nearly one hundred years into the future. Use has not always remained the same throughout the years, but the eight surviving buildings have been able to provide the community with usable public locations long after the games ended.

Los Angeles 1984

Location	Extant?	Venue Type		
Memorial Coliseum	yes	Athletics, Opening/Closing Ceremonies		
Cycling Dome at CSU	no	Cycling		
Swimming Pool at USC	yes	Swimming		
Prado Shooting Range	yes	Shooting		
El Dorado Park	yes	Archery		
Dodger Stadium	yes	Baseball		
The Forum	yes	Basketball, Handball		
LA Memorial Sports Are	no	Boxing		
Lake Casita	no	Canoeing, Rowing		
Santa Anita Park	yes	Equestrian		
Fairbank Ranch	yes	Equestrian		
Long Beach Convention	yes	Fencing, Volleyball		
Rose Bowl, Pasadena	yes	Football		

Table 9: Los Angeles 1984 Current Status, Part 1.

Location	Extant?	Venue Type		
Stanford Stadium	no	Football		
Pauley Pavilion	yes	Gymnastics		
Titan Gymnasium	yes	Handball		
Weingart Stadium	yes	Hockey		
Eagle's Nest	yes	Judo		
Coto de Caza	no	Modern Penathlon		
Los Angeles Tennis Center	yes	Tennis		
Raleigh Runnels Memorial Pool	no	Water Polo		
Gersten Pavilion	yes	Weightlifting		
Anaheim Convention	yes	Wrestling		
Long Beach Downtown Shoreline Marina	yes	Yachting		
Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium	yes	Football		
Harvard Stadium	yes	Football		

Table 10: Los Angeles 1984 Current Status, Part 2.

Twenty of the venues used in the 1984 games are still extant today. Many of the sites still hold similar uses as they did before and during the games. Eight existing locations are used as they were during or before the games. Prado Shooting Range is still used as a gun range and hosts regular trainings and events.²¹⁵ El Dorado Park still exists today and is run by the city of Long Beach, as is Long Beach Downtown Shoreline Marina. Similarly, Weingart Stadium is maintained by Los Angeles County. Dodgers Stadium is still home to the Los Angeles Dodgers.

²¹⁵ “Prado Olympic Shooting Park,” Shoot Prado, 2019, <https://shootprado.com/>.

Both equestrian parks, Santa Anita and Fairbanks Ranch are still operating as horse parks, though the temporary elements at Fairbanks were dismantled. Anaheim Convention Center has gone through improvements to make it a more flexible event space, but otherwise remains a rentable convention space.²¹⁶

Some locations might see future games, or were used in past ones. Memorial Stadium falls under both of these categories, as it was used for the 1932 games, and will possibly be used for 2028. The Rose Bowl was used in 1932, but has not yet been listed as a possible venue location. However, it is still currently extant. The stadium is used regularly for the College Football playoffs, hosting the Rose Bowl game. It is also the home stadium for the UCLA Bruins Football team. Although it was not used in 1932, the Long Beach Convention Center, much like Memorial Stadium, might be reused in the 2028 Olympics.²¹⁷ Currently, it is owned by the venue company ASM Global.²¹⁸

Similar to the 1932 Olympics, most venues only featured once in Olympic games. Also like the prior games, some venues still exist physically, but their use has changed vastly. The Forum in Inglewood is a strong example of this. Similar to the Grand Olympic Auditorium, the venue served as a religious center at one point. After two local professional sports teams moved to a different arena, the location fell into disuse until it became a church.²¹⁹ However, its use changed again. It is now referred to as the Kia Forum and is used for musical events.²²⁰

²¹⁶ “The Anaheim Convention Center,” Visit Anaheim, accessed March 3, 2025, <https://www.visitanaheim.org/meetings/anaheim-convention-center/>.

²¹⁷ “Convention Center Lot,” LA 2028, accessed March 3, 2025, <https://la28.org/en/games-plan/venues/convention-center-lot.html>.

²¹⁸ “About Us,” Long Beach Convention Center, accessed March 3, 2025, <https://www.longbeachcc.com/about-us/>.

²¹⁹ “The Forum,” LA Conservancy, August 23, 2024, <https://www.laconservancy.org/learn/historic-places/the-forum/>.

²²⁰ “Events Archive,” Kia Forum, 2025, <https://thekiaforum.com/events/>.



Figure 15: “Kia Forum”, Courtesy of PR Newswire.

Colleges have kept up several other past venues whose use has stayed relatively the same. Ten of the existing twenty venues are currently owned and operated by local universities. University of Southern California has maintained and used the swimming pools, also known as Uytensu Aquatics Center, since they were constructed for the games. Their football stadium is the Memorial Coliseum. Harvard’s Stadium is still standing, after a few renovations in 1998 and 2006.²²¹ The Titan Gymnasium is still maintained by Cal State Fullerton, who use the space for basketball games.²²² Cal State Los Angeles’ University Gym was known as the Eagle’s Nest during the Olympics.²²³ The gym currently serves as the home stadium for their basketball and volleyball teams. The Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium underwent renovations, but is still extant today and used regularly by the school’s football and lacrosse teams.²²⁴ Gersten Pavilion

²²¹ “Harvard Stadium,” Harvard University, November 29, 2023, <https://gocrimson.com/sports/2020/5/5/information-facilities-harvardstadium.aspx>.

²²² “Titan Gym,” Cal State Fullerton, accessed March 3, 2025, <https://fullertontitans.com/facilities/titan-gym/5>.

²²³ “University Gym,” Cal State Athletics, accessed March 3, 2025, <https://lagoldeneagles.com/facilities/university-gym/2>.

²²⁴ “Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium,” Naval Academy Athletics, accessed March 3, 2025, <https://navysports.com/sports/2022/5/25/navy-marine-corps-memorial-stadium.aspx>.

is currently home to Loyola Marymount University's basketball teams.²²⁵ Pauley Pavilion, after \$136 million dollars' worth of renovations over the years, is still used by the University of California, Los Angeles.²²⁶ The Rose Bowl Stadium is also located within that campus. The Los Angeles Tennis Center has been regularly used by UCLA since the conclusion of the games.

Not all college-owned locations used in the 1984 games made it, however. Stanford Stadium was demolished in 2006, with a new stadium going up where the Olympic venue once stood.²²⁷ The Cycling Dome, located in California State University, was also demolished in 2003. This location was replaced with a new sports venue as well. A year after the demolition, construction for the VELO Sports Center started.²²⁸ Yet another example of college-owned past Olympic venues being demolished occurred in Pepperdine University. In 2013, Raleigh Runnels Memorial Pool was demolished and completely revamped.²²⁹

Venues not tied to colleges also have had issues keeping open. One non-university related venue was destroyed after 1984. Los Angeles Memorial Sports Arena, the former boxing venue for the games, was demolished in 2016.²³⁰

Two sites were expected to be temporary in the 1984 Olympic Games. These sites were the alterations to Lake Casita and Coto de Casa. Both of the broader locations still exist. The lake

²²⁵ "Gersten Pavilion," Loyola Marymount University Athletics, 2020, <https://lmuathletics.com/sports/2018/5/29/school-bio-gersten-html.aspx>.

²²⁶ "Pauley Pavilion Presented by WESCOM," UCLA, accessed March 3, 2025, <https://uclabruins.com/facilities/pauley-pavilion-presented-by-wescom/11>.

²²⁷ "Stanford Stadium," Stanford Cardinal - Official Athletics Website, accessed March 3, 2025, <https://gostanford.com/facilities/stanford-stadium>.

²²⁸ "Dominguez Hills Dateline," California State University, Dominguez Hills, August 13, 2009, <https://web.archive.org/web/20120715194158/http://www.csudh.edu/univadv/dateline/archives/20090813/campusnews/alookback.htm>.

²²⁹ "Raleigh Runnels Memorial Pool," Pepperdine University Athletics, accessed March 5, 2025, <https://pepperdinewaves.com/sports/2020/10/2/raleigh-runnels-memorial-pool.aspx>.

²³⁰ "Rip Sports Arena: Aerial Shots Capture Demolished Former Home of Lakers, Clippers, DNC," CBS News, September 14, 2016, <https://www.cbsnews.com/losangeles/news/rip-sports-arena-aerial-shots-capture-demolished-former-home-of-lakers-clippers-dnc/>.

still serves as a park and Coto de Casa is still a gated community. However, the significant additions they created temporarily for the sake of the games no longer exist. Lake Casitas' Olympic alterations were removed immediately after the games, as were the changes in Coto de Casa's.

Overall, six venues from the 1984 games did not survive to present day. Around 77 percent of venues used for the games are still used today. Though there were four more venues that were obsolete in these games than there were in the games last held in Los Angeles, proportionally around the same number of sites were lost over time. Los Angeles 1984 saw a leap in the number of venues used overall, but was able to maintain around the same loss rate as it did with the ten sites it used over fifty years in the past. Los Angeles 1984 was the first within the history of US-hosted Summer Games to be part of the overall trend of extravagant Olympics, with sixteen more venues than the games before it. However, the city has thus far been able to maintain a great majority of the locations forty-one years later.

Atlanta 1996

Location	Extant?	Venue Type
Centennial Olympic Stadium	yes	Opening/Closing Ceremonies, Athletics
Atlanta Olympic Village	yes	Olympic Village
Stone Mountain Velodrome	no	Cycling Track
Stone Mountain Tennis	no	Tennis
Georgia Dome	no	Handball, Gymnastics
		Fencing, Handball, Judo, Weightlifting
World Congress Center	yes	Wrestling, Table Tennis
Herndon Stadium	yes	Hockey
Georgia Tech Natatorium	yes	Swimming, Diving, Water Polo
Equestrian Center	yes	Equestrian, Cycling Mountain Biking
Morehouse College Gymnasium	yes	Basketball
Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium	no	Baseball
GSU Sports Arena	yes	Badminton
Alexander Memorial Coliseum	yes	Boxing
Centennial Olympic Park	yes	Greenspace
Clark Atlanta Stadium	yes	Hockey

Table 11: Atlanta 1996 Current Status, Part 1.

Location	Extant?	Venue Type
Omni Coliseum	no	Volleyball
Wolf Creek Shooting Complex	yes	Shooting
Atlanta Beach	yes	Beach Volleyball
Stone Mountain Archery	no	Archery
Golden Park	yes	Softball
Wassaw Sound	yes	Yachting
Lake Lanier	yes	Rowing, Canoe/Kayak Sprint
Stegemen Coliseum	yes	Gymnastics, Volleyball
Sanford Stadium	yes	Soccer
Ocoee Whitewater Center	yes	Canoe/Kayak Slalom
Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium	yes	Soccer
Marlin's Park	yes	Soccer
Legion Field Stadium	yes	Soccer
Citrus Bowl	yes	Soccer

Table 12: Atlanta 1996 Current Status, Part 2.

Atlanta's 1996 games had the most venues out of any US-hosted Summer Olympic Games. At twenty-nine total locations, including the Olympic Village, it beats out the record held by Los Angeles 1984 by only three additional venues. It will likely hold this record, as Los Angeles 2028 is currently only at twenty-four planned venue locations. Of the twenty-nine spots, six are no longer extant.

While Atlanta had one of the largest ratios of new, purpose-built structures to existing sites, many of their new sites had planned uses even prior to being built. Some venues were planned to be used by city or county-level recreation departments. Others were gifted to colleges and universities. However, not all of the venues, new or previously existing, survived. The organizing committee intentionally tried to select uses as a way to mitigate the possible obsolescence of the buildings. If they could not find an existing site that was suitable, they might try to construct a building with an expressly planned purpose afterwards.

Many of the sites used for the Centennial Olympics are now currently operated by county or city governments. The Equestrian Center, Centennial Olympic Park, Wolf Creek Shooting

Range and Atlanta Beach are all extant sites considered in the previous chapter that are run by local governments. The Equestrian Center in Conyers, Georgia is still extant and run by the city. It is now referred to as the Georgia International Horse Park, and has expanded its use to include musical performances as well as equestrian events.

Centennial Olympic Park still serves as a public park for Atlanta. It has undergone a few revitalization efforts since the games, with the most recent occurring in 2024.²³¹ However, many of the elements that connected the public space to the 1996 Olympics are still visible today. The brick paving within Centennial Plaza is still intact, as are structures like the Gateway of Dreams and the Fountain of Rings.²³²

The Wolf Creek Shooting Range is still open, but is currently called the Tom Lowe Shooting Grounds. Regularly used by the public for skeet shooting, the range is currently operated by the Fulton County Department of Parks and Recreation. Atlanta Beach, now referred to as Clayton County International Park, is also a county-run recreational center.

Some locations ended up in the hands of local colleges, even when they were not planned to do so before the games concluded. Georgia State University now owns Centennial Olympic Stadium. Originally the location of the Atlanta Braves and referred to as Turner Field, the stadium was built to host the Braves after the demolition of Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium. However, by 2016, the Braves had moved on. Now the stadium is used by the university for football.

Some purpose-built sites for the games were actually expected to become a part of nearby college campuses. Georgia State University, for example, ended up receiving the Olympic

²³¹ Josh Green, “Splashy Upgrades on Tap for Iconic Centennial Olympic Park Fountain,” Urbanize Atlanta, February 28, 2025, <https://atlanta.urbanize.city/post/centennial-olympic-park-fountain-project-upgrades-images>.

²³² “Centennial Olympic Park,” Georgia World Congress Center Authority, 2023, <https://www.gwcca.org/centennial-olympic-park>.

Village after the games. The Olympic Village was converted into dormitories for the school. They remained under the care of the university until 2007, when they were turned over to Georgia Tech, who also uses them as apartment-style dorms.²³³



Figure 16: “North Avenue North”, Courtesy of Georgia Tech.

Georgia Tech also still uses the Alexander Memorial Coliseum, though they owned this prior to the games. The location is now known as the Hank McCamish Pavilion. The Aquatic Center, now referred to as the McAuley Aquatic Center, has had a few alterations but still stands. Space over the pools was demolished and replaced, but the overall structure still stands.

Morehouse College’s Gymnasium was also purpose-built for the games, and is still used by the university. Although it existed before the games, Georgia States’ Sports Arena, the badminton venue during the games, is also still extant and regularly in use.

²³³ Victor Rogers, “Georgia Tech’s Olympic Legacy,” Georgia Tech News Center, July 18, 2016, <https://news.gatech.edu/archive/features/georgia-techs-olympic-legacy.shtml>.

Of the buildings tied to colleges that existed prior to the games, all four of the spaces used for Football events are still open. Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium, Marlin's Park, Legion Field and Sanford Stadium are all extant. All returned to normal use within their respective universities. Stegeman Coliseum, on the University of Georgia's campus alongside Sanford Stadium, has survived to 2025.

One venue owned by a university has not fared as well as the others. Currently, Clark Atlanta University has ownership of the former Herndon Stadium. The stadium is still extant, but after some legal battles over property ownership, it fell into disuse in 2014.²³⁴ There is now talk that it could possibly be demolished, as it is proving to be an economic burden. Stone Mountain served as one of the hubs for the games. Two of the three venues that were constructed in that area were intended to be temporary. Both the Velodrome and Archery venues were deconstructed after the games, and the site was returned to its original, nature-focused recreational purpose. However, the Tennis courts in Stone Mountain were built for permanent use after the games ended. They were used up until 2007. After being abandoned, they sat until they were finally demolished in 2018.²³⁵ Lake Lanier's Olympic Venue and Wassaw Sound were also expected to be temporary. However, both have elements that are still in use today. Lake Lanier even has a non-profit associated with the Olympic Legacy of the games in that area.²³⁶

Construction for the Georgia Dome started seven years before the Olympics, but it was also demolished in 2017. The Omni's demolition was slated for shortly after the games. The

²³⁴ Jillian Price, "The Past Was Bright but the Future Looks Bleak for Herndon Stadium," *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, February 8, 2024, <https://www.ajc.com/news/atlanta-black-history/the-past-was-bright-but-the-future-looks-bleak-for-herndon-stadium/O52PYZR4UBCKJGUQUIAPUVWQ3U/>.

²³⁵ "Stop 4: Stone Mountain Tennis Center," Atlanta History Center, September 13, 2021, <https://www.atlantahistorycenter.com/programs-events/public-programs/olympic-paralympic-games-celebration/sites-and-venues-of-96/stone-mountain-tennis-center/>.

²³⁶ "Lake Lanier Olympic Park," Explore Gainesville, January 24, 2022, <https://www.explore Gainesville.org/venue/lake-lanier-olympic-park/>.

coliseum had already been dealing with repeated damage to the roof and walls. The Cor-Ten steel that made up much of its construction already had significant signs of decay. That decay caused sufficient enough and consistent expenses for the site to be demolished in 1997. By 1999, the Philips Arena stood in its place.²³⁷

The World Congress Center, another existing site, has had a different fate. After a few renovations, the building has remained extant since the games. Golden Park in Columbus, Georgia, has also stood the test of time. Originally constructed in 1926, it is still used by the city for baseball. However, there are very heavy renovations coming in the next few years that might overhaul the current park.²³⁸

Conclusion

In conclusion, each of the Olympic Summer Games hosted in the United States has been able to maintain a relatively high number of venues after the games have ended. The highest success rate was with the 1904 games, as St. Louis has been able to maintain all of their past venues. However, no Summer Games within the US have fallen below the rate of 77 percent. Reuse of buildings has become gradually more intentional, with Atlanta having the most specific examples of planning for after the games. Intentionally temporary venues were first seen in Los Angeles, and have become an important way since to plan for after the games.

What has survived to the present day is rarely ever exactly as it was during the Olympics. While venue retention rates are overall high throughout the Olympics, the integrity of those sites is never retained. In every surviving example, there have been some modifications to the site that, at the very least, impacts the materials or the design of the site.

²³⁷ Cortlandt F. Luce, *Omni Coliseum*, photograph (Atlanta, 1978), Atlanta, https://dlg.usg.edu/record/geh_luce_171.

²³⁸ Mark Rice, "Golden Park Gets a New Name as Columbus Baseball Stadium Goes Through \$50M Renovations," *Ledger-Enquirer*, June 12, 2024, <https://www.ledger-enquirer.com/sports/mlb/article289175094.html>.

New requirements are placed onto sporting sites as they age. One of the most expected shifts occurs with the alteration of seating capacity. Sites become more and less popular through the years, as the teams who use the arenas frequently fluctuate in popularity. Shifts in seating capacity are one of the most minimal changes a site can make, but even this alteration impacts the integrity of the design of the space. An example of this is Sanford Stadium, which has undergone several phases of additions to its seating capacity. With these changes, the overall form of the stadium has shifted away drastically from what it was originally constructed as and even changed since the 1996 games.

Sporting sites are, by nature, constantly in flux. The idea of integrity of sites often applied to other spaces is not compatible with the current culture surrounding sporting venues. In all the sites used during the US-Hosted Summer Olympics, all surviving venues lost at least some aspects of their integrity over time. This cannot be judged as a success or failure of the International Olympic Committee, or of the individual organizing committees, as the current understanding of integrity is incompatible with sporting sites in general. This is why the matter of integrity will not be considered a requirement of sustainable games in this research.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The US-hosted Summer Games overall reflect the international trends of venue construction. The games prior to and during the Great Depression saw fewer venues used overall, with most already existing before the games. Olympics following the economic crash were more extravagant, using the games as an opportunity to display the wealth and relevance of the host cities. The games then became a way to place host cities on the map internationally, and to possibly shift predetermined assumptions made about the area. Later on, after the IOC became involved in the worldwide increase in sustainability methods, host cities started to focus on reusing existing sites once more, rather than constructing something new.

The earliest games in the United States, the 1904 Olympiad in St. Louis, saw in total the fewest number of venues. All five of the sites that matched the criteria discussed in Chapter 3 were built prior to the games and would have existed with or without the Olympics coming to the city. 1932, which took place in the midst of the Great Depression, also relied fairly heavily on existing structures. Only ten sites were used in total, and of the ten, eight had been used by the community before the games started. These two games represented early patterns of constructing very few venues for the sake of the games, or none at all in the case of St. Louis.

The next batch of US-hosted Summer Olympics continued to follow international trends within the Olympic Movement. The 1984 games saw twenty-six venues used in total for the games. Of those twenty-six, seven venues were built for the games. Los Angeles was the first US-hosted Summer Olympics to heavily implement the financial assistance from sponsorship

deals. Los Angeles used these Summer Games to display their relevance internationally. Hosting the games was an opportunity to televise a curated image of the city worldwide. The construction of new sporting sites served as a way to bring new sporting opportunities to the greater area. New construction could be used as a tangible manifestation of the concept of a growing greater Los Angeles area that the organizers of the games hoped to project to the public.

The 1996 Games are an even stronger representation of this period of the Olympics Movement. Atlanta platformed the most venues out of any of the Olympic Games. Twenty-nine sites were used in total, and nearly half of them were purpose-built. More so than even Los Angeles, Atlanta's organizers used purpose-built structures to move the city towards the image they hoped to manifest. Their newly constructed Olympic Stadium is a strong example of this. The stadium would serve as one of the most heavily televised and visited sites for the entirety of the games. The purpose-built structure would create a vision of a new Atlanta, full of growing opportunities. Expenses were not spared for these games, especially since, similar to during the 1984 games, Atlanta organizers were able to use sponsorship investments.

The upcoming Los Angeles 2028 games best reflects what the IOC has claimed to want from future Olympics. All but one of the proposed venues already exist. There is an emphasis on reusing existing venues, rather than showing off the city through purpose-built sites. Temporary sites will be used when a permanent, existing structure is not sufficient enough. Los Angeles 2028 promises to be one of the most sustainable, when it comes to reuse and holding off on building new just for the sake of new.

Temporary venues are not new within the context of US-hosted Olympic Games. The 1984 games were the first US-hosted Summer Games to have venues who were intended to be fully dismantled following the conclusion of the games. The venues located in Coto de Casa

were very heavily temporary, and they were dismantled shortly after the games. Lake Casitas' venue additions were also temporary, and they were also removed from the recreational space after the games. Atlanta followed suit in 1996 with the temporary sites at Wassaw Sound, Stone Mountain and Lake Lanier. Stone Mountain's Velodrome was deconstructed after the games. Elements of the venues at Wassaw Sound and Lake Lanier, on the other hand, still exist today.

Temporary venues are a way to address the need for a new construction, without having to dedicate the money up front to construct an entirely new, permanent structure. They also cut back on the possibility of White Elephants for the host city, as well as the possible environmental impact a permanent structure might have on its environment. Temporary construction is a route that host cities can take which plans for the venue to go unused, but to do so in a way that will minimally impact the wallet of the organizing committee before the games, as well as the host city afterwards. The construction of temporary sites follows the IOC's most recent recommendations, and will bring Los Angeles 2028 closer to the goals created by the non-governmental organization.

While the specific use of the permanent venues after the games was discussed in the past chapter, overall, the retention rates for US-hosted Summer Games were fairly high. The reuse of buildings varied across the games, and within individual case studies as well. Cities and counties oftentimes reused both already existing and purpose-built venues. Colleges are also frequently the recipients of locations after the games. Beyond those two larger domains, there are also examples of use through local sporting clubs, residential communities and even churches.

Although the games varied heavily on their ability to reuse structures for the purpose of the games, rather than build new, there does not seem to be a correlation between that and the ability to maintain use of venues after the games. In Los Angeles 1932, the three purpose-built

buildings had a 66 percent chance of success after the games, with only the temporary Olympic Village being removed. Similarly, 50 percent of the sites destroyed since the games were already extant at the time of the games. The next games in Los Angeles only lost two purpose-built venues after the games, with those two accounting for six total sites that went unused. The thirteen purpose-built structures in the 1996 games account for exactly 50 percent of the sites demolished, which is proportional when compared with the ratio of purpose-built to total number of venues.

From the case studies found within the United States, it is possible to conclude that there is no direct correlation between the use of existing structures for venues in the Olympic Games and the fate of the venues after the events conclude. The key to greener games might exist through other changes to planning beyond simply focusing on implementing any existing infrastructure.

One of the most obvious opportunities for reuse within the games is through city and county parks and recreational centers. All of the Summer Olympic Games incorporated purpose-built and existing venues into local-level recreational departments. This is oftentimes the go-to when trying to determine how venues should be used after the games. It is also one of the selling points for hosting the games, as the legacy afterwards can leave the city with new infrastructure. However, this form of ownership is also one of the highest causes of concern for possible host cities. It can place taxpayers in danger of footing the bill for possible White Elephants. If cities are the recipients of purpose-built sites, planning for these sites should heavily consider this future. The needs of the city, unrelated to the games, should be considered and addressed, rather than expecting the city to find a use for a venue built for a one-time event.

Centennial Olympic Park serves as an example of this sort of planning for a purpose-built structure after the games. The creation of the park was designed to revitalize an area of warehouses suffering from deferred maintenance.²³⁹ The park was situated on those properties, and has since turned the area into a hub for event spaces and museums. While creating something new for the games, the design also took into account what the city needed addressed. This consideration early on has prevented Centennial Olympic Park from going unused.

Atlanta offers another example of planning for after the games. Around the time Atlanta was bidding for the 1996 games, Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium was starting to become obsolete. The existing design no longer fit the needs of the Atlanta Braves. Aware of the upcoming problems with the stadium, Atlanta submitted within their bid hopes to construct an Olympic Stadium which would serve as the new Braves stadium after.²⁴⁰ As the stadium was constructed, the Atlanta Braves were consulted during the design process. Although this stadium is no longer the home to the local MLB team, it is still regularly used by Georgia State University. The planning early on for after the games helped the stadium find an immediate use. Once that team outgrew it, the stadium was established enough that it was available for another team's use.

Georgia State University is far from the only college to ever end up with a purpose-built Olympic venue. Local colleges often end up with the ownership of new venues. They provide an opportunity to offload some of the responsibility of maintaining those venues after the games. Universities typically provide an already existing need for sporting facilities, as they will

²³⁹ "Stop 12: Centennial Olympic Park," Atlanta History Center, September 13, 2021, <https://www.atlantahistorycenter.com/programs-events/public-programs/olympic-paralympic-games-celebration/sites-and-venues-of-96/centennial-olympic-park/>.

²⁴⁰ "Atlanta 1996- Candidature File ," Atlanta 1996 - Olympic World Library, 1989, https://library.olympics.com/Default/doc/SYRACUSE/30227/atlanta-1996?_lg=en-GB, 61.

typically have a team already existing, or hopes to establish one. Oftentimes, turning ownership over to colleges is also seen as in line with the vision of the games. By doing so, local organizing committees are promoting amateur sports, one of the earliest goals of the Olympic Games.

Beyond the ownership of new, purpose-built sites, already existing college facilities can be used for the purpose of hosting the games. This is one of the largest contributors of existing sites, starting even within the St. Louis games. For many universities, there is already at least one facility used for sports. In large urban centers, there are also often several colleges surrounding the area. In the case of all of the games, there was at least one existing university near the center of the games. Within those universities, there was at least one existing facility that could be used for the purpose of hosting one of the Olympics sporting events.

The United States' universities and their investment within their sports programs might only be applicable within the country. America has a unique interest in college-level sports. There are oftentimes more sporting venues on campuses than might be elsewhere internationally. Purpose-built sites for the Olympics might also be better adapted into regular campus use, as programs are more likely to exist. Some countries are starting to quickly expand their university-level sporting expenditure. In the past decade, China has greatly increased the number of sporting facilities within their campuses as a way to promote athleticism in their schools.²⁴¹ This would leave the country with more opportunities for reuse of existing facilities if they were to host Olympic Games again. However, for the moment, the United States has the best selection of sporting venues tied to colleges.

Several of the twenty-four venues currently declared for the 2028 Summer Games are part of college campuses. The Rose Bowl Stadium, USC Sports Arena and Memorial Stadium

²⁴¹ Zhongfeng Sun, "A Brief Analysis of Sports Venues in Colleges and Universities," *Asian Social Science* 11, no. 16 (June 14, 2015), <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v11n16p114>, 114.

have been owned and operated by local universities prior to the Olympics, for example. Colleges in the United States grant organizers more options for selecting existing venues.

While using college facilities for the games might be helpful, purpose-built stadiums inherited by college campuses might be more at risk of demolition than if they were operated by the city or local sporting organizations. During the 1984 games alone, four venues attached to local universities have been destroyed in order to be remodeled or replaced, accounting for 66 percent of the sites lost from those games. Although not all of those attached to universities were purpose-built, this highlights a trend with university sporting facilities in America. Sporting facilities' importance to the reputation of American schools has been highlighted above. As much as this drives the creation of these facilities, it also can cause their demolition. Sporting facilities are very front facing university sites, as non-students might come to view events there more frequently than they would visit academic buildings. With so many eyes on these sites, their designs might seem to become obsolete quicker and more rapidly in need of replacement.

To counter this, if a facility is constructed with the intention of becoming part of a campus later on, there needs to be an emphasis in creating a flexible design. In the United States in particular, sporting venues are a projection of the university's finances and school pride. By creating a flexible design that is not too baked in the design fads of the times, it is more likely that the building will just face renovations, rather than demolition. Aside from design elements relating to aesthetic features, making the sites more flexible to other uses might also help. Creating sporting sites that are capable of supporting several different sports could help curb future pressures to demolish the building, as even if one particular sport grows out of the site, it could still be used for another.

Flexible spaces might be the answer to saving any purpose-built sites. Several spaces within the past US-hosted games have been converted into uses beyond sporting. One of the most memorable alterations in use has been that of the Grand Olympic Auditorium, used during the 1932 Olympics. This location was a mecca within the world of boxing, but eventually became a music venue. Once it was no longer useful for performances, the site's ownership changed again and turned into a church. Since 2005, the former boxing arena has maintained regular use as a church. The Forum in Inglewood, similarly, also served as a church at one point. However, it is now a music venue. Exposition Park Armory has been used recently as a science education center.

Sites that have not been confined in use to sports are more likely to find and maintain use after the games. This expands the ways they can be valuable to the surrounding community. Using non-sporting spaces has been promoted by the IOC in recent years. The US-hosted games support this idea. One of the more unique examples of this was the use of Riviera Country Club, particularly the parts of the area that were within a gated community. Several conference centers have also been used, primarily during the 1996 games. Los Angeles 2028 will be following this theme, with several conference centers and theaters already selected as venues.

The IOC has stated their belief that non-sporting venues as Olympic venues might be another element that will bring about a greener games. This research supports that. Of all the venues that are not primarily sporting or outdoor recreational focused in all of the listed games, only the Coto de Caza venue was been dismantled. All other spaces have been able to find other uses after the games and remain extant.

Los Angeles will serve as possibly the best example yet of the Cyclical Model Olympic Games. Similar to Paris 2024, the 2028 games will be the third time the city has hosted the

games. There will be some sites that have been used for three Olympics. Los Angeles has the unique opportunity to reuse sites that were seen in past games, and organizers are seizing the opportunity. Unlike the typical existing building, these venues have already stood the test of past Olympics. They have also survived the aftermath of a concluded games. Reusing host cities, not just sporting venues, might be another key to greener games. The infrastructure in place, even if dated, is suited for the Olympics mega-event as well as regular, everyday use. With money invested in updating those sites rather than building new or demolishing the obsolete, this option will prove more sustainable. If the IOC were to focus on rotating between a handful of Olympic host cities, money could be constantly reinvested in a set of venues in each host city periodically, rather than one-time host cities every four years having to scramble to find or create venues for this mega event.

Overall, when examining the US-hosted Summer Olympics, there is no direct correlation between reusing existing structures being enough to save host cities from the possibility of unsustainable, large-scale sporting sites. Though this is an important step that can help move the city closer to reducing that risk, there are several other elements that could be implemented to bring about greener games. The specific buildings being reused must be considered. Beyond that, there also needs to be more emphasis on selecting host cities that are already capable of supporting the Olympics. One of the easiest ways to do this, which has now appeared in some of the most recent Summer Games, is by reselecting host cities multiple times.

Furthermore, the current focus on sustainability is not preservation minded. Once the games are over, the focus turns towards protecting the sites from demolition and finding them a sustained use. While this effort does attempt to save the sites from the bulldozer, it does not take into account the integrity of those sites. For example, in the context of the United States Summer

Olympics, the existing venues spaces have overwhelmingly changed since their last use during the games. Some have experienced near-complete overhauls, primarily to address a shift in their use. Others have had smaller changes, like reflooring. Most of the sites covered have experienced, at the very least, changes in seating numbers. Most of the more recent games had temporary seating, which was removed shortly after the games, but might now have increased their seating capacity since. There is not a site that has gone completely unchanged or has all aspects of its integrity untouched.

However, it is currently difficult for sporting sites not to sacrifice some of their integrity if there is hope of preserving their overall form. As mentioned before, sporting culture currently demands new technologies and amenities at frequent intervals. This change keeps buildings from falling behind, which would put them at risk of demolition. By sacrificing some of the original material of the games, the owners of those sites are able to keep them in use. This is not necessarily a weakness of the current Olympic Games, but instead something that will have to change within the broader world of athletics before it can be addressed by the games.

Integrity is where preservation and sustainability diverge, in the context of Olympic sporting venues. However, the two fields meet again with their focus on maintaining the overall spaces. The two fields, though sometimes at odds in relation to sports culture, are not entirely opposed to one another. Integrity of sites that are as demanding of change as sporting sites needs to be considered at a broader level, beyond the focus of this research and even the context of the Olympics. Once that work is done, the idea might be further applied to the sites examined in this research at a later date.

Most importantly, the overall ethos of the Olympics needs to be better established. The International Olympic Committee needs to address the conflicting values found when bidding to

host the Olympics. Are the Olympics there to create new opportunities and architectural development while also possibly eroding the environment and economy, or are they an act of preserving sporting culture, while promoting connectivity abroad and with the environment?

When considering the US-hosted games, it seems that there is a temporary focus on preserving sporting heritage, but with time that eventually erodes with the growing financial concerns. In each one of the games, Olympic organizers focused some part of their planning on fostering amateur and youth sports. New arenas and stadiums were constructed with the hope of encouraging a growth in athletic participation within the host city. However, after the games end, that focus on sporting heritage oftentimes ended up in the backseat. With the increasing costs of supporting the sites, which is felt universally with aging sporting venues, some were converted to meet other city needs. Others were demolished in favor of cutting costs, or in favor of building something else. The Olympics promise a focus on the preservation of sporting, particularly amateur sporting culture. However, while each games did try to promote this idea at the start, it always ends up no longer the focus of the organizers after the games have concluded.

Oftentimes, even when sporting heritage remains a part of the site, the more specific heritage surrounding the Olympics is lost. While there are some cases where the Olympics are more easily remembered by the public, like Centennial Park in Atlanta, other sites are typically forgotten as Olympic venues shortly after the games, or that fact becomes nothing more than a bit of trivia. Sometimes, the current use of the building heavily outweighs the use in the Olympics in the public's mind. An example of this is the Rose Bowl Stadium, which is more memorable as the College Football Playoff's Rose Bowl host, rather than serving as a location for the Los Angeles Olympics.

In conclusion, the International Olympic Committee's current focus seems to rest on environmental sustainability. Their current outline to achieving sustainability relies heavily on reuse. However, the path to greener games may not be as simple as blindly reusing existing structures. Based on the context of the US-hosted games, the answer may lie within better planning before the games for use after.

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