From its beginnings as a public entity within the city government of Barcelona, the Institute for Urban Landscape and Quality of Life has worked for the protection and improvement of the urban landscape as a common asset.

‘Urban cohesion’, the re-integration of forgotten, degraded or blighted areas into the fabric of the city is one of the mandates of this institute. A programme devoted to the renovation of party walls throughout the city is one of its key urban cohesion initiatives.
TERRITORIAL CONTEXT AND LANDSCAPE FEATURES

The programme functions within the context of the entire extension of Barcelona, a very diverse city made up of multiple interwoven and superimposed urban tapestries. As the city is composed of various neighbourhoods, each with its own strong personality, it therefore has various centres. The succeeding stages of its long history have determined its urban fabric. Concessions made in the past for individual actions and a succession of minor changes in the urban configuration of Barcelona have produced certain discontinuities and ruptures in its urban landscape that this programme seeks to mitigate through integration.
PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

The goal of this programme is to integrate discontinuous segments of Barcelona’s urban landscape into the greater fabric of the city that surrounds them. A special focus of this initiative is the rehabilitation of party walls that have been left exposed during the city’s urban evolution in order to restore these buildings’ diminished identities within the context of the neighbourhoods in which they are situated.

Another objective of the programme is the conservation of the biodiversity present in the urban environment. Every effort is made to respect the existing nesting and roosting places of protected native bird species. Based upon expert advice nesting spaces are incorporated into programme projects whenever possible to maintain the city’s biodiversity.

The programme improves and consolidates the areas in which it is implemented throughout the city by reintegrating small formerly forgotten or undervalued segments of the urban landscape into a greater context. It therefore proposes to dignify the entire surrounding urban environment and restore its lost cultural and social identity.
METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES:

This programme is financed by a combination of public funds, private sponsorships and the compensation derived from outdoor advertising that the Institute authorises as an exceptional utilisation of the urban landscape.

EVALUATION OF RESULTS:

It has been observed throughout the period in which the programme has been implemented that the strategies employed (the implementation of sound, durable, quality architectural projects that are well integrated into their surroundings) have been adopted by professionals whose interventions impact the urban landscape. It is increasing obvious that the programme has had a replicator effect, visible in the similar strategies adopted by developers and real estate promoters who are now aware of the importance of integrating lone party walls into their projects in a manner that is compatible with the overall context of the city.

The project has won the approval of neighbourhood residents who have come to value these interventions as actions that have really improved their quality of life. The current implementation of durable materials and long-term solutions oriented towards quality results has inspired the residents of these neighbourhoods to adopt a conservationist attitude towards the urban landscape that forms their environment.
Singulares Publicidad Medianeras concurso Summary of Activities 2000-2009:

With an estimated budget of 4.2M Euros comprised of both public and private funds, the program has succeeded in rehabilitating more than six hundred party walls. The following is a brief overview of the most singular and emblematic projects carried out during the last ten years.

Singular Interventions

Intensive commercial use of common city spaces is offset by an obligatory financial compensation in the form of the advertiser's investment in the urban landscape. Through this mechanism, a series of singular projects involving the reincorporation of party walls into the social and architectural fabric of the city have been carried out.

Management and Collaboration with the Outdoor Advertising Sector

This activity is centered in the regularization of the party walls for advertising use purposes. The Institute collaborates with the advertising sector to guarantee that after a limited period of commercial use, the advertiser will participate in the wall's reintegration into the city landscape.

Activities in Progress

The positive outcomes achieved by the programme for the years 2000-2009 have in turn generated a greater number of projects currently underway. These activities are taking place throughout the city, creating new landmarks for the collective memories of such neighborhoods as La Barceloneta, Les Corts, Horta and Sants.

Grantsto Residential Building Owners

The Institute fosters collaborations between the city government of Barcelona and the owners of residential buildings. With the technical support and financial incentives offered by the city through its Barcelona, Make Yourself Pretty programme, more than five hundred exposed party walls have been successfully integrated into the city's landscape.

FUNDED PROJECTS

Grants to Management and Outdoor Advertising Partners
The ‘cat’ wall
C. Xuclà 5
Year of project : 2004

Prior to its rehabilitation, this party wall retained discernible traces of the remnants of a demolished contiguous building such as staircases, partition walls and varicoloured patches of paint. This particular intervention evoked the memory of former tenants by means of a colourful mural of the cats who were their pets. The mural has provided a new and popular backdrop for the little square that it presides over whose neighbours have rechristened it ‘The Cats Square’.
The friendly ants wall
Pg. del Born 27 / Rec Comtal
Year of project: 2004

This wall has been visible for many years from the Passeig del Born, a street that connects the church of Santa Maria del Mar and the architecturally significant Born Market. The rehabilitation has given continuity to the architectural elements of the principal facade of the building, by means of the implementation of motifs, colours, materials and techniques of the era in which it was built. A distinctive calligram created by poet Joan Salvat-Papasseit lends a singular character to this wall.
The party wall in the Plaça dels Àngels
C. Elisabet 20
Year of project: 2004

This intervention fits discreetly into its environment but is daring in its relationship to the building it enhances. Composed of juxtaposed pieces of steel of varying sizes and thicknesses that suggest a succession of flat rooftops, rooftop stairwells and antennas that jut upwards, downwards and every which-way from the solid brick wall, it provides a sculptural backdrop offering an abstract representation of the urban skyline.
The construction of a church and a school had created a discontinuity in the alignment of several facades in the Eixample district and had left two party walls exposed face to face. This rehabilitation project respects the materials and colours of the existing facades. The decorative element serves as a support for two visual poems by contemporary authors Joan Brossa and Josep M. Junoy, employing steel sheets to translate works published on paper to a scale suitable for an exterior urban space.
Singular Interventions

Party walls in the Les Corts neighbourhood
Comte Güell 3-4, corner of Travessera de Les Corts
Singular Interventions

Party wall, Sarrià neighbourhood
Major de Sarrià 12
Party wall, Jardins Frederica Montseny
Vinyals 13
Singular Interventions

L’Estudiantil party wall
Plaça Universitat corner of Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes 594
Singular Interventions

Group of party walls
Concepció Arenal 59
The realignment of this street had left various party walls exposed, but one particularly stood out as an eyesore. Its proximity to FC Barcelona football stadium inspired the installation of the calligram ‘FUTBOL’ by Carles Sindreu. This calligram was reproduced in three-dimensional letters against a background whose colours and materials evoke the era in which the building was constructed.
The purpose of this intervention was to create a new facade for a new square in a neighbourhood known by the name of Prosperitat.

After adding thermal insulation to the wall, new window openings were created, a boon for the tenants of the building that also enhanced the appearance of the square.

The installation of a work by the artist Perejaume titled 'To Joan Brossa' provides a poetic significance to this urban space.
An outer facade constructed of vertically positioned wooden slats created a natural cladding for this party wall that faces one of the principal streets of the Sants neighbourhood. The remodelling of this wall included the addition of custom-made nesting spaces for the Alpine Swift, a bird that frequently nests in the wall cavities of our city's buildings.

During the 2005-06 academic year, The Institute for Urban Landscape and the Higher Technical School of Architecture held a competition open to upper level architecture students to provide designs for the rehabilitation of three different party walls in Barcelona. The winning designs were implemented in the rehabilitation of the following three walls:
Party walls rehabilitated in collaboration with the l'Escola Tècnica Superior d'Arquitectura (Higher Technical School of Architecture) of Barcelona

Jardins dels Castellers
Pl. Castellers

Mediterranean squares need facades to be truly complete. In a singular intervention, new openings were made in an old blind party wall to create a facade for this square in the neighbourhood of Clot.
Party walls rehabilitated in collaboration with the l'Escola Tècnica Superior d’Arquitectura (Higher Technical School of Architecture) of Barcelona

Jardins Puigvert
C. Còrsega 507

By creating new window openings in the party wall of an old building, neighbours now have a new relationship with exterior space. The simplicity and viability of the design and the incorporation of 21 nesting sites for swifts are outstanding features of this project.
Regulated Advertising

Ronda del Guinardó 3

Rambla del Carmel
Regulated Advertising

Carbonell 2

Travessera de Gràcia 267

Muntaner 307
Regulated Advertising

C. Homer 11 corner Rda. General Mitre

C. Taulat 30 corner Rambla de Poblenou
Regulated Advertising

Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes 606

Rambla Catalunya 68
Funded Projects

Barcelona, posa’t guapa

Aragó 313, Mercat de la Concepció

Avinguda Diagonal 339

Calàbria 88
Funded Projects

Barcelona, posa’t guapa

Xuclà 15
Funded Projects

Barcelona, posa’t guapa

Passeig de l’Exposició
corner of Blasco de Garay
Barcelona, posa’t guapa

Funded Projects

Doctor Ibáñez 25
Activities in Progress

Jardí Tarradellas
C. Berlín 109
Under construction

This party wall has a strong impact due to its high visibility. A unique intervention is planned for this site that will use live materials to create a vertical garden. A metal structure will serve as a supporting framework for diverse levels of vegetation. The positive transformation of this wall will introduce a new ecosystem that will be a social and ecological asset to the city.
The visual impact of this party wall that faces the maritime promenade of the Barceloneta district and the need to rectify the building’s humidity problems are the motives for undertaking this project. Secondary students attending schools in the Ciutat Vella neighbourhood who participated in the 2009-2010 'Audiència Pública', a civic participation programme of Barcelona city government, are contributing their imaginative ideas to the design of this rehabilitation project.
The winning proposal submitted to the second ‘Public Corners’ competition calls for giving character to the existing wall through a motif that incorporates the acronym of the Ateneu fabricated from a combination of bas-relief letters of various sizes traced in stucco using the sgraffiato technique. An out-sized letter ‘U’ fabricated in steel is an integral part of the design of the emergency door.
Activities in Progress

Winning proposal submitted to the second ‘Public Corners’ competition calls

Bench Planter party wall
Plaça Lesseps
Desing phase
Activities in progress

Party wall, Sagrada Familia neighbourhood
Lepanto 279
Under construction
A total of 10 party walls in the AERI Sants-Badal area of the Sants neighbourhood will be rehabilitated.

The master project plan for this project will utilise a catalogue of construction solutions deemed especially suitable to this particular urban space.

Vegetation will be included whenever site conditions permit and visual poetry will be incorporated into the wall designs to reinforce the cultural significance of the environment.
Activities in Progress

Party walls within the designated ‘Àrea Especial de Rehabilitació Integral (AERI)’ in the Sants-Badal neighbourhood
Constitució 120
Under construction
Barcelona, posa’t guapa

25 ANYS POSANT GUAPA
BARCELONA

Ajuntament de Barcelona

Institut del Paisatge Urbà i la Qualitat de Vida