



Proposed 30 zone in El Vendre. The zones are designed to improve traffic flow and safety. / CARLES CASTRO

## Slower, safer traffic zones to be tried out in Poble Nou district

*Proposal for new type of traffic area, called "30 Zones", presented at RACC meeting*

### ROBERT KIMPLETON

The Barcelona city council is studying the possibility of implementing a new design for urban areas for which vehicles will not be allowed to exceed 30 kilometres per hour.

The new model, called "30 Zones", will be tried out next year in the streets of the 22@ area of Poble Nou. The city's director of Safety and Mobility Jordi Hereu presented the project at the 9th Barcelona For-

um of Traffic Safety organised by the RACC Automobile Club of Catalonia, where there was a debate on the need for specific regulations for traffic inside cities.

In 30 zones, pedestrians have the right of way and the recommended speed is 10-15 kilometres per hour. The adaptation necessary to create these areas involves widening streets, enlarging pedestrian crossings, and adding bicycle lanes.

The new design is meant to improve traffic flow and increase safety. It has been shown that the probability of being seriously injured in an accident increases by 50% with speeds in excess of 50 kilometres per hour, yet this risk goes down to 5% at speeds of 30 or less.

Hereu explained that the project will begin next year in the Sant Martí district with the adaptation of some streets to the new model, which has

already been implemented in other European cities. According to RACC, this new model is already common in countries such as France, Switzerland, the UK and Italy. Zurich has 120 such zones, which have enjoyed broad public acceptance. Alfons Perona, executive secretary of RACC, said that it is important to design these new areas in such a way as to make it obvious to drivers when they enter them.

## Housing to get more priority under new city budget plan, while metro L9 and AVE lose out

The Barcelona city council is expected to doubling its investment in land to construct new social housing and curtail the budget for new infrastructures.

The city government will designate 50% of its investment budget of about 449 million euros to the construction 10,000 dwellings by the year 2007.

These plans were revealed this week when Mayor Joan Clos presen-



Barcelona Joan Clos recently presented his plan for municipal investments

ted his plan for municipal investments (PIM), a document which sheds light on the budgetary priorities of the city government.

The big losers in the new budget plans are the projects such as the new metro line (L9) and the construction of facilities related to the

arrival of the high-speed train AVE to Barcelona, which will be funded less than before.

The total investment budget up to 2007 is 2.3 billion euros. The investment in new infrastructures, totaling 442 million euros, will be used for housing, facilities and equipment, and improvements to public spaces and the environment. 150 million euros will be reserved for small-scale projects in city districts and for larger projects such as the reform of les Glòries, Lesseps and the partial covering of Gran Via.

160 million will be designated for mobility and safety, and 80 million will go to economic promotion of the city.

Opposition leader Xavier Trias said that it was hypocritical for Mayor Joan Clos to speak of increasing land for housing when the city has sold off more than 150,000 square metres of land since 1991.

## Catalonia needs 1,100 organs for patients waiting for transplants

### ALEX LEFF

While Catalonia is the country with the highest number of donors in the world, it still needs more than 1,100 in order to attend to all the patients currently waiting for transplants.

The number of donations has held steady in recent years. In the last five months, 100 people have donated organs in Catalonia, the same statistic that was registered in 2003, and only six less than there were in 2001.

On 2 June, the health minister Marina Geli pointed out that although Catalonia leads the way in organ donations, it still fails to satisfy the need of all prospective organ recipients. There were 181 kidneys transplants this year, the highest total for five years. But 900 more patients are still on the waiting list.

In an event on 2 June to celebrate the Day of the Donor, the health minister emphasised the need for people to take a decision to donate organs for themselves. Families should not have to make such a difficult decision at a time when a loved-one has died and they are in mourning, she said. This autumn, organ transplant associations are to launch a campaign in universities to increase donor awareness.

The following week, the national transplant co-ordinator, Blanca Miranda, said: "The time that patients are waiting to receive a transplant is getting longer, and mortality among them is also on the rise, however slowly. This calls for more effort to ensure less families refuse consent and so there are more donors."

In accordance with the 1979 Transplant Act, the organisational model for transplant in Catalonia was first spelled out in 1982, when the Catalan ministry of health and social security started the Chronic Renal Insufficiency Care Programme.

Hospitals were quickly overwhelmed by an increased demand for organ transplants. In 1987, it was necessary to set up the Transplant Co-ordination Centre, open 24 hours a day, seven days a week in order to facilitate organ sharing throughout Catalonia and Spain, also making exchanges possible with centres in the rest of Europe.

Given the rise in transplant activity in Spain, the Spanish ministry of health and consumer affairs created the National Transplant Organisation (ONT) in 1989. Five years later in the Catalan Transplant Organisation was created to collaborate with the ONT in organ sharing between Catalonia and Spanish communities.



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