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## Managing a Public-Private Joint Venture: the PTB Case

### The Crisis

At the end of 2004, Josep M. Ribas, was Chairman of the Board of Directors of PTB, a public-private for-profit joint venture promoting economic development projects in Bages County. One day he read a headline in *Regió 7*, the local newspaper, which proclaimed, “Santpedor to quit PTB”. “What?!” he exclaimed, “Santpedor Town Hall is quitting the joint venture and selling its shares.” He immediately called the company’s executive committee to determine how best to respond to this blow.

### The Origins

Bages County, located in Barcelona Province, Region of Catalonia, Spain, was facing several major developmental challenges. One of these challenges was the increasing use of land by companies that offered little added value in return. A group of people, public institutions and private companies were worried about the direction development was taking in Bages and in early 2002, decided to combine forces to establish a company, *Projectes Territorials del Bages* (Bages Territorial Projects, referred to henceforth as “PTB”). The prime movers of this venture included Manresa Town Hall (a local government), Manresa Savings Bank (a private company) and a small group of leading local entrepreneurs.

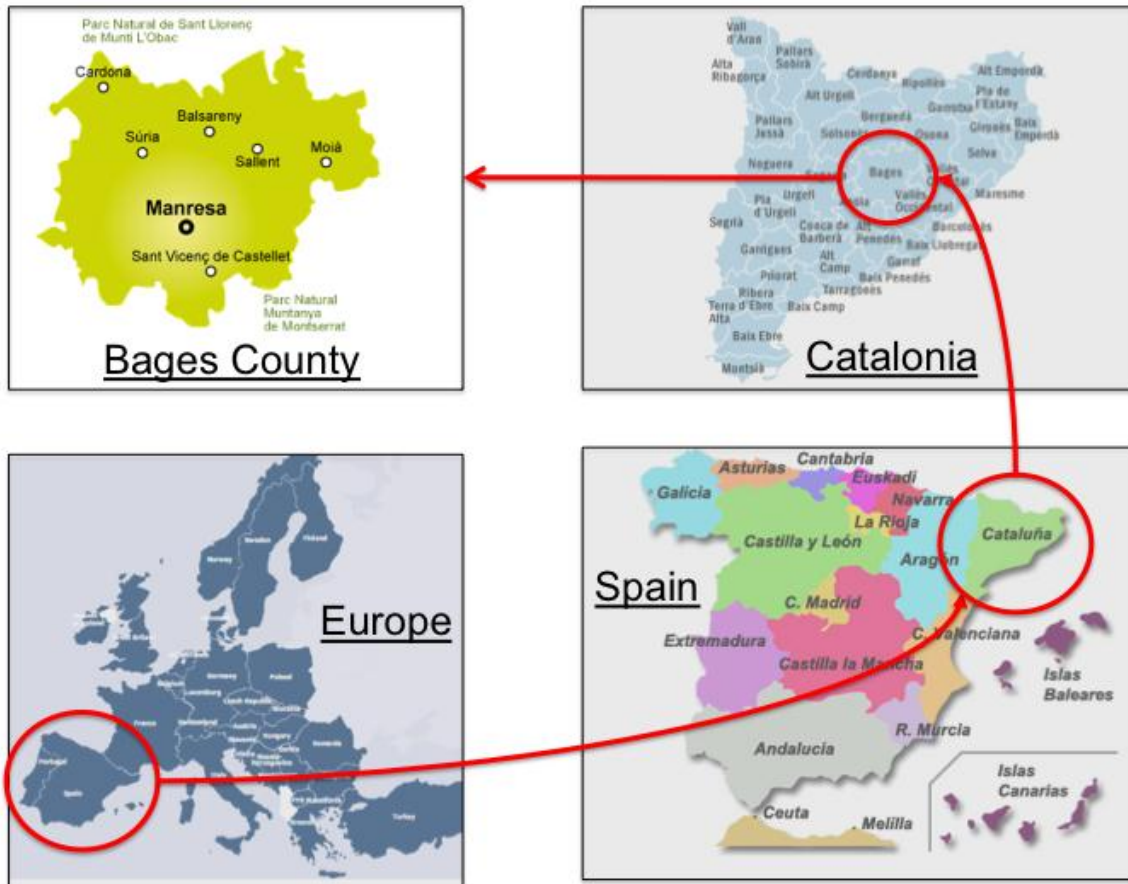
The company’s mission was to develop strategic projects in order to stimulate and foster economic initiatives in Bages County. This would be achieved by making the county an attractive location for innovative, high-tech companies and, thus, economically viable ones. The most significant of these initiatives in terms of its economic and social impact was the Central Technology Park project. The company was open to all via public shares, with a minimum subscription of 30,000 Euros.

This case was an honorable mention winner in our 2009-10 “Collaborative Public Management, Collaborative Governance, and Collaborative Problem Solving” teaching case and simulation competition. It was double-blind peer reviewed by a committee of academics and practitioners. It was written by Angel Saz-Carranza and Albert Serra, of the Institute of Public Governance and Manage, ESADE-Ramon-Llull University, Barcelona, Spain. It was edited by Martha Ketcham. This case is intended for classroom discussion and is not intended to suggest either effective or ineffective handling of the situation depicted. It is brought to you by E-PARCC, part of the Maxwell School of Syracuse University’s Collaborative Governance Initiative, a subset of the Program for the Advancement of Research on Conflict and Collaboration (PARCC). This material may be copied as many times as needed as long as the authors are given full credit for their work.

The county where the joint-venture operates is “Bages”. Located approximately 50 kilometers inland from Barcelona, Spain, Bages encompasses 35 towns, all of which are under 10,000 inhabitants with the exception of its capital, Manresa, population 70,000. Bages County spans 1,300km<sup>2</sup>.

Manresa’s city centre is located on a plain from which with a view of the rocky outlines of the Montserrat Nature Reserve and its mountains. It is an industrial area with textile, metallurgical, and glass industries.

**Figure: map of Bages County**



### Setting up PTB and getting it running

The idea for PTB arose from internal changes in two of the leading institutions in Bages County: Manresa Town Hall and Manresa Savings Bank. In the mid-1990s, a new team under the leadership of Mayor Jordi Valls pursued a knowledge- and technology-based development strategy for Manresa. This was accompanied by a vision of efficiently managing public resources and bringing balanced budgets back to Manresa Town Hall. At the same time, a new management team, led by Adolf Todó, took the reins at Manresa Savings Bank. He aimed to look beyond the bottom line and focus on charitable activities. “Manresa Savings Bank had to make a stronger commitment to the region,” he stated. In this context, the savings bank’s senior managers realized they would be unable to raise profits without the collaboration of leading businessmen in the county, who, until then, had had little contact with Manresa Savings Bank.

Manresa Savings Bank began an internal reflection process on the type of county-level development it needed. The Manresa Savings Bank Foundation Award was instituted in 1996, launching a call for proposals to meet the strategic challenges defined by the savings bank and endorsed by Town Hall. The Award provided the occasion for Todó to dine with the county's leading entrepreneurs and discuss county-level development and other business issues. "The dinners were incredibly useful and helped forge trust," he recalled. Once this trust had been established, the Mayor of Manresa, Jordi Valls, was invited to attend the meetings. As Adolf Todó stated, "If we want to go beyond merely building two or three first-rate industrial parks and draw up a proper regional development policy instead, we need to have the public administration on board." Jordi Valls was aware that different instruments were needed to help entrepreneurs invest in proposals that would otherwise be far too risky, either because the project was too large or because it involved long execution times. "I saw there were some schemes whose size or duration entailed risks that entrepreneurs were unwilling to take. My job was to catalyze change," declared Mayor Valls.

The changes in senior management at the Manresa Savings Bank and Town Hall forged and strengthened links between them. These two institutions had begun to collaborate on other minor projects such as a technology research center and the local hospital.

One of the businessmen who attended the Foundation Award meetings recalled Jordi Valls' words at the first dinner. His intervention was key in establishing the project as a public-private partnership: "Jordi Valls said: *In the long run, town halls will have to participate in mixed companies to fund development projects because property and other taxes are insufficient for this purpose.* That made the businessmen's ears perk up." Adolf Todó also stressed the strong collaboration and participation of Manresa's mayor: "Manresa Town Hall had not only made up its mind to take part but was heavily involved right from the outset." The fruit of these highly constructive discussions between the public and private sectors laid the foundations for PTB.

The findings of the studies that had received Manresa Savings Bank Foundation awards along with various conversations helped reveal the socio-economic forces driving the region. One conclusion of the studies was that much of the county's industrial properties were occupied by businesses offering little added value such as logistics warehouses and other low-tech firms. Another conclusion was that growth in the county was largely unplanned. On the other hand, there was a patent need to protect the picturesque Bages landscape and the environment. "We knew that growth was inevitable and that we couldn't fence off the countryside," said Manresa Savings Bank's CEO. After talks with entrepreneurs and the local administration, the bank's senior managers quickly realized that economic growth in Bages was inevitable given that counties farther south, especially areas closer to Barcelona, were choc-a-bloc with factories and warehouses.

The managers also noted that Bages suffered from brain drain and a steady loss of jobs was foreseeable as firms moved to lower-cost, lower wage areas. Private investors shied away from funding long-term projects in the county and resources were lacking to encourage big initiatives.

By the same token, the public sector faced a shortage of funding for large projects, and there was no overall vision of county-level planning. Instead, each local town hall focused exclusively on its own small patch.

Once the guidelines had been drawn up for the future PTB, Adolf Todó asked Manresa Savings Bank Deputy CEO, Jaume Masana, to draft an introduction to the new firm and define its legal status, objectives, funding, investment policy, governance, etc. The document began as follows:

*Various public and private institutions and businessmen in Bages County are aware of the difficulty in carrying out large-scale county-level development projects. The scope of these projects usually goes beyond a single municipality. At present, it is hard – if not impossible – to get local administrations to agree on and co-ordinate such initiatives.*

This document proposed setting up a company to address the problem. The draft was the fruit of both the award-winning studies mentioned earlier and talks between businessmen and Jordi Valls, Manresa's Mayor. It clearly laid out the company's key features and *raison d'être*. The document was used to draw up a presentation for potential investors and the general public.

Jordi Valls and Adolf Todó were given the job of explaining the future company. Valls focused on the biggest town halls in the county while Todó talked to private investors. A public promotional presentation was held later through the Chamber of Commerce which, as Jaume Masana recalled, "sent out a letter inviting all its members to attend." A document, similar to a stock flotation prospectus, was also drawn up. It set out the kind of investments the firm proposed making, performance targets, business risks, safeguards for minority shareholders, and company statutes.

To get a place on the company's Board of Directors, investors had to contribute €500,000. The aim was to ensure that the businessmen were strongly committed to the project. "Getting a seat on the Board meant digging deep into one's pockets and coming up with half a million Euros. So it wasn't something to be taken lightly; it required genuine commitment," said Josep M. Ribas, one of the businessmen who wagered on PTB from the outset. In order to make the company open to everyone (the minimum contribution was established at €30,000), one seat was provided on the Board of Directors for all minority public shareholders and another for all private shareholders.

PTB was founded on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March, 2002, after several months of public and private presentations. Over forty private investors and five town halls (including Manresa, Sant-Fruitós and Santpedor) were involved. "United for Bages Development" was the headline on page two of the *Regió 7* newspaper the following day. Entrepreneurs and Manresa Town Hall funded the initiative generously. There were various reasons why people soon joined the bandwagon. The President of the Chamber of Commerce, an entrepreneur and PTB Board member representing the private minority shareholders, noted: "Some industrialists joined because they didn't want to be seen as fat cats with no interest in the local economy." Others joined once they discovered who was behind the scheme, Adolf Todó, Manresa Savings Bank's CEO, remarked. He added, "Some harbored doubts but trusted some of the people involved or they said *I want to join what looks like a winning team*." An involved businessman stressed, "Joining was an act of faith. But things also depend on who is in charge. I believed in the project because it was led by Adolf. [...] Furthermore, Jordi Valls is Mayor and [he] is very convincing." Speaking for the public sector, Valls noted: "I believe the private sector got involved because of the vision behind the idea, the credibility of the people and institutions leading it, and the injection of public funds." The result was that 83% of the funding came from the private sector (including Manresa Savings Bank). The second biggest shareholder was Manresa Town Hall which used its public water utility company, Manresa Water, to channel its investment.

PTB's Board initially consisted of eleven members representing the private sector (each with an investment of at least €500,000 for the privilege); two representatives from Manresa Town Hall; two members representing the minority shareholders (one representing the public minority shareholders – the five town halls – and the other, the private shareholders), and an independent advisor. It is worth noting that after the initial stage Adolf Todó handed his responsibilities over to Jaume Masana, the Deputy CEO at Manresa Savings Bank. "Once the company was set up, I felt the job in promoting it was done. Not that I did it all by myself – it wouldn't have gotten off the ground without [many other people]. It was better to hand it over to younger people," said Todó. This was something that several entrepreneurs

stressed regarding PTB's management team. "If you have a company for the future, you don't want it to be led by 70-year-olds," said one of the businessmen involved. Lastly, Todó said that he left his post to loosen his ties with PTB and to dispel any idea that he was using the project to line his own pockets.

PTB's mission, then, was to meet various social and economic challenges that were hindering development and growth in Bages County. "The company is profit-oriented. That's to say, the company statutes declare that we want to make a profit or attain a certain ROR<sup>1</sup> or what have you. But we also want the region to come out winning," stressed one businessman who was an entrepreneur involved from the outset. The minimum profitability for investment projects was set at 10% per annum. This was a modest goal commensurate with the nature of the company but far below the yield sought in most risk capital and real estate investments. In keeping with PTB's *raison d'être*, a long-term horizon was set for its investments, which meant, among other things, a 5-year moratorium on the dividend distribution.

Two governance bodies were set up when the company was founded in 2002: a General Meeting of Shareholders and the Board of Directors. The first body, as its name indicates, brought together all the firm's shareholders regardless of their percentage stake in the company. The Mayor of Manresa was appointed to preside over this body. The Board of Directors represented the key shareholders and was charged with running the company. Two Town Hall representatives also sat on the Board. Jordi Valls, Mayor of Manresa, stated:

*"Our Town Hall has to operate across three dimensions: (1) our Town Hall's position regarding all development plans, traditionally overseen by the Planning Department (within Town Hall); (2) A Town Hall representative on the company Board to defend the administration's shares in the company and vice versa; and (3) a Mayor who provides leadership and lends the project credibility, and who also assumes the Presidency while leaving management up to the private sector."*

Ricard Torras, one of the entrepreneurs who invested the most funds and effort in the company, was appointed Chairman of the Board. An independent advisor with experience in planning issues was hired. He had previously occupied a senior position in the Regional Government's Planning Department. A General Manager, who came from the public Regional Land Agency and was thus well-versed in urban development programs, was also hired. These two experts were recruited in response to PTB's main needs at that juncture, namely to buy and manage land and to deal with the red tape. One businessman stated that recruiting experts with insight into how the public administration worked was of crucial importance. "If we didn't have them, things would have been much harder." Another businessman also indicated: "It's vital to have people who have worked on the inside and know what makes the public administration tick."

Jaume Masana added:

*"I believe the private sector often gets little support from the public sector, especially from its technical staff. We didn't expect to be allowed to break the rules but we did hope for greater collaboration in getting through the red tape. In some cases, it was the other way round. Perhaps some technical staff members thought they would find it easier to get their way in a jointly owned company."*

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<sup>1</sup> Rate of Return

A businessman commented: “The public administration hindered us all the way, from the Department of Industry right through to... well; it was one thing after another. Bureaucracy is a nightmare [here]. I wouldn’t go so far as to call the pen-pushers the enemy, but the truth is [that] the public administration here is very conventional. By comparison, getting the money together is child’s play.”

But for politicians like the Mayor of Santpedor, Manresa’s Councilor for Economic Affairs, and Manresa’s Councilor for Urban Development, regulations had to be applied to the letter to ensure equity and justice for all. The Councilor for Urban Development said:

*“Of course, they [the businessmen] don’t see it that way; they interpret it as the public administration strewing their path with obstacles. They don’t realize that it’s better for everyone if the public administration plays hard but fair.”*

**Figure: PTB’s main players**



**PTB: Setting up the Technology Park and the Agulla Declaration**

The first initiatives taken by PTB after the company’s formation in 2002 were the “Pla” Industrial Area and the “Berga” Highway projects in the Sant-Fruitós municipality. The Pla Industrial Area served to upgrade an existing industrial area and to improve its road access. The Berga Highway projects rearranged roads to various industrial parks in order to provide faster and better road access and reduce traffic.

**Figure: Images of “Pla” Industrial Area and the “Berga” Highway projects**



In 2003, there was discussion regarding what was to prove to be PTB’s star initiative: the Central Technology Park, located next to Agulla Park and between the municipalities of Manresa and Sant-Fruitós. The project was not only intrinsically complicated, but there were also many contextual factors and interests to be taken into account. “I thought it would be very difficult for Manresa and Sant-Fruitós town halls to reach an agreement, bearing in mind that they had been squabbling for years over the restaurant in the park – who it belonged to, who should receive the property tax, and so on,” commented Lluís Piqué, spokesman for the Agulla Park Association and President of the Bages Architects Association.

The Mayor of Manresa, Jordi Valls, also referred to this long-standing dispute between the two municipalities: “There is a beautiful lake in the middle of the park which is frequented by city residents. What’s more, it’s right between Manresa and Sant-Fruitós. In fact, we’ve been fighting with Sant-Fruitós ever since the 14<sup>th</sup> century when they stole some of our Holy relics.”

PTB began to make it known that it was considering investing in the park. PTB entrepreneurs quickly realized the social impact of a project in that spot. “People here began to see the Technology Park project as a key asset in the region rather than just another business investment,” recalled Josep M. Ribas, an entrepreneur collaborating with PTB and who was later Chairman of the Board. However, the project’s high profile and resistance to the initiative from some sections of society led PTB to expand its capital by €4m. Some of these funds were earmarked for purchasing the part of Agulla Park belonging to Manresa. The capital issue was underwritten by 65% of the company’s shareholders. “PTB expands its capital by €4M” read the headline in the *Regió 7* newspaper.

## **Figure: The Agulla Park**



It was at this juncture that the Park Association, made up of fourteen associations in the county (hiking clubs, social entities, professional associations, etc.), was created. This Association brought together various interests. Its mission was to publicize the importance of maintaining the park as a natural space, one which provided services for both residents in the area and the county as a whole. Members were particularly concerned about land speculation and rumors regarding various proposals that would seriously affect the park. These included: building a road which would hinder park expansion; developing of a residential and hotel complex in the Sant-Fruitós section of the park; expanding of a fire station; and purchasing land that formed part of the park. PTB had acquired this land and some thought that the rationale behind the purchase was so that the land could be developed.. Given the uncertainty of the park's future, the Association held a workshop to help determine how best to proceed. This workshop formed the basis for the Agulla Declaration, a document which defined the park's environmental and service values and which also expressed general discontent with the way development was being managed. "Our findings were incorporated into what was to become the Agulla Declaration. This document was sent to various public administrations. We even spoke to various mayors in the county about it," commented the Association's President, Lluís Piqué.

The declaration created alarm at PTB. "The Agulla Park Association was basically saying [that] any development of the park would be over its dead body," recalled Josep M. Ribas.

Meanwhile, PTB forged ahead with the project. Jaume Masana recalled that the top priority was to prevent the building of a road by the Regional Government of Catalonia between the East-West Highway and the Manresa ring road, and to stop any other infrastructure plans interfering with development on the site. The Agulla Declaration, which was drafted after the land had been purchased, was another hurdle. "We wanted to build a Technology Park on this site... However, the Agulla Park Association was worried about the impact of our project on the land bordering Sant-Fruitós. This land, unlike the rest of the site, was zoned for rural use," recalled Manresa Savings Bank's CEO.

Manresa Town Hall then intervened and told PTB that if it wanted approval for the Technology Park it would have to reach an agreement with both the Agulla Park Association and Sant-Fruitós Town Hall.

### **PTB: Times of crisis**

In 2004, in addition to these problems, PTB's Chairman of the Board, Ricard Torras, appeared on the front page of *Regió 7*. Torras had sold land to the Regional Government to build a prison in Bages. "He was treated very roughly by the press," said Jaume Masana, Deputy CEO of Manresa Savings Bank. According to Masana, the press got it wrong: "You know how it is. Politics often involves distracting



voters' attention. That's what happened in Ricard's case and the fact that he was PTB's Chairman no doubt played a role."

What had happened was that Ricard Torras had bought land in the county —on a personal level, not in his capacity as PTB Chairman—which he subsequently sold to the Regional Land Agency. This agency was acting on behalf of the Regional Department of Justice which was planning to build a prison. Torras made a handsome profit but, according to the businessman, he was unaware that the land would be used to build a new prison. He argued this by claiming that he himself lived close to the site and thus would have little incentive to sell that land for the construction of a prison.

The scandal forced Torras to resign as Chair of PTB's Board. He left the project with a chip on his shoulder and his reputation tarnished. His resignation was accepted because, as Jaume Masana put it: "people mix things up – [they understood] this land was owned by PTB or perhaps PTB wanted to buy it..." He added, "PTB suffered the consequences because Torras was the company's Chairman." Businessmen involved stressed that PTB backed Torras: "I don't think we stamped. In fact, we bravely stated our support for Ricard." However, Ricard Torras may have felt that PTB in general – and its public partners in particular – failed to support him. According to Jaume Masana: "Ricard said if the town halls won't support us, maybe it's high time to turn PTB into an all-private venture." Masana noted, "we felt the company had to go on [with the public partners]. Losing Torras was a high price to pay." Jordi Valls added: "It was unfair that Torras was forced to resign, but it saved the project. The fact is, he was put under a great deal of political pressure."

After this crisis in 2004, PTB appointed a new Chairman of the Board and sought closer involvement by the Manresa Chamber of Commerce. Josep M. Ribas now occupied the post vacated by Torras. Ribas was a businessman in the fashion industry and had no property development experience. Because of this, asked for a four-person executive committee to be created to support him. The committee consisted of two businessmen- Manresa's Councilor for Economic Issues and Jaume Masana, Deputy CEO of Manresa Savings Bank. Some of those involved in the project stressed that the commission's good working relationships proved invaluable in solving problems. "When Ribas took over from Torras, Ribas chose a team he felt comfortable with. The team members were all like him – dynamic people in their forties," noted a businessman involved.

Another crisis arose during this period. Jaume Masana recalled reading the following headline in *Regió 7*: "Santpedor Council to quit PTB". This created a lot of buzz in the county. "It's a national drama – or at least a county-wide one," said Laura Vilagrà, the recently elected Mayor of Santpedor. What happened was that after a change in the representative for the five municipalities in PTB, the new appointee, Laura Vilagrà, said in a town hall meeting that she was thinking of leaving PTB. A journalist in the hall took note and the headline hit the press. Laura Vilagrà ruefully remembers some of PTB's initiatives concerning "new urban development schemes in our municipalities. That struck me as unreasonable because, in some cases, they were talking about land that was zoned for non-urban use." According to Vilagrà, this was done without informing the mayors of the municipalities of the proposed schemes.

However, Laura Vilagrà complained, "it was scandalous; the journalist got the information wrong." She stressed that there was a lot of social opposition at the time for numerous reasons; the plans for the prison and Ricard Torras' untimely departure, PTB's disagreements with Sant-Fruitòs Town Hall and opposition from the Agulla Association. "Everything got thrown into the same pot," she stated.

When Josep M. Ribas, PTB's Chairman of the Board of Directors, read the headline in *Regió 7*, "Santpedor to leave PTB", he immediately called the recently convened executive committee to urgently schedule a meeting to craft its strategy in light of these new and surprising developments.

## **Index of characters**

(In order of appearance in the narrative.)

- Adolf Todó: CEO of Manresa Savings Bank
- Jordi Valls: Mayor of Manresa & President of PTB
- Jaume Masana: Deputy CEO of Manresa Savings Bank
- Josep M. Ribas: Chairman of PTB
- Ricard Torras: former Chairman of PTB
- Lluís Piqué: President of the Agulla Declaration (an environmentalist movement)
- Laura Vilagrà: Mayor of Santpedor

# News Headlines

## United for development in Bages (23 March 2002)

Raport - Dins de: 23 de març del 2002 SOCIEDAT - 3

TEMA DEL DIA: L'HOLDING TERRITORIAL

### Units per al desenvolupament del Bages

La nova societat promotora del territori neix amb un ampli suport d'institucions i empreses



El associats de l'holding territorial. Davant l'edifici del centre operatiu de Caixa Manresa, on s'ha de desenvolupar l'acte de constitució de Projectes Territorials del Bages SA.

La societat promotora del Bages ja és una realitat. L'acte de constitució de la nova empresa mixta es va celebrar ahir amb representants de les institucions, empreses i inversors participants

Territorial del Bages és de 9,04 milions d'euros (1.504 milions de pessetes), distribuït entre 18 accionistes. A partir de ara, es farà pública la composició del consell d'administració, amb una vintena de membres. Caixa Manresa i l'empresa municipal Aigües de Manresa són els seus socis més amb dos representants al nou consell d'administració. L'edifici on s'ha de desenvolupar l'acte de constitució de la nova societat ha estat inaugurat per l'empresa Ricard Torres i el president de l'holding territorial, el consell d'administració.

El capital social de Projectes Territorials del Bages SA, Aquiet és el nom oficial del nou holding territorial del Bages, una empresa mixta impulsada per institucions, empreses i inversors privats per al desenvolupament de la comarca. L'acte de constitució de la nova societat va tenir lloc ahir al centre operatiu de Caixa Manresa.

El consell d'administració és format per persones conegudes del món empresarial de la comarca. A continuació s'inclou una relació d'alguns d'aquests consellers especialitzats en el sector o empresa més coneguda amb la qual estan relacionats, encara que no sigui necessàriament l'empresa o sector que representen formalment al consell d'administració: Ricard Torres (empresari, responsable de Metalbages), Josep Triagot (construc-

ció, Constructors D'Ara), Josep Claret (construcció, Cota i Claret), Diego Sánchez (arquitecte, Dues), Poma Saldo (construcció, Construccions Saldo), Enric Torres (fundador de Supercor), Josep M. Valls (construcció, Valls Valls), Josep Casas (arquitecte, Surrua), Mikael Mirquet (comerç, establiment Mirquet) i Joan Antoni Solans (director general d'Urbanisme de la Generalitat).

**JOSEP MIRQUET**  
Sant Feliu de Bages  
Projectes Territorials del Bages SA. Aquiet és el nom oficial del nou holding territorial del Bages, una empresa mixta impulsada per institucions, empreses i inversors privats per al desenvolupament de la comarca. L'acte de constitució de la nova societat va tenir lloc ahir al centre operatiu de Caixa Manresa.

La societat promotora del Bages és la iniciativa de desenvolupament més ambiciosa que s'ha plantejat a la comarca en els últims anys. La resposta de les empreses i inversors privats a aquest projecte és molt positiva i s'espera que les previsions inicials de les institucions promotores (Caixa Manresa, Aigües de Manresa, Carretera de Manresa i els ajuntaments de Manresa, Santpedor, Sant Joan de Vilatorrada, Sant Feliu de Bages i Santpedor).



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# Experts and associations demand the Agulla Park be preserved (27 April 2003)

## MANRESA

### Un petit incendi fa evacuar tot un edifici a Manresa

MARTE JUVÉ/Alfons  
Així, a primera hora de la tarda, es va produir un petit incendi en un habitatge de tres plantes del carrer Santiago Fruitós de Manresa. Segons els bombers, el foc es va desenvolupar perquè se descomponia un objecte i va causar totalment una habitació de matrona.  
Els propietaris de l'immoble, que es trobaven dins, van haver de sortir-ne ràpidament, ja que el fum es va escapar per tota la casa. Tot i que ningú no va resultar ferit, els bombers van decidir evacuar tot l'edifici per prevenir del fum als veïns. En poc temps però, els seus permets tornar a les seves cases, tot i que els veïns del pis on s'havia produït l'incendi hauran de passar la nit a casa d'algun familiar.  
L'unitat dels bombers es va produir a les 5 de la tarda, i el foc va quedar totalment controlat al cap d'un quart d'hora. En el lloc dels fets s'hi va traslladar un vehicle de la policia local i del Mossos d'Esquadra per tal d'investigar les causes de l'incendi, i hi van treballar quatre unitats dels bombers de Manresa i una dotació dels bombers de Sabadell.

### Sant Joan fa una Festa de la Primavera amb aires inaugurals

J. J. / Foto de Josep  
Sant Joan de Vilatorrada celebra un any més la Festa de la Primavera, que aquest any està programada per les inauguracions. Al matí, bon dia d'horra, es celebraran les tradicionals ommunidades i pedrada, que aquest any es faran pel riu de Sant Joan de Vilatorrada. A la tarda, la plaça de les Terres i Jocs de la Festa de la Primavera i el Llobregat a les 8 del matí, quan hi haurà una acompanyada.  
A les 12 del migdia, s'organitzarà una visita pública a la no va detallada del poble, que entrarà en funcionament el matí, amb el polígon Pla del Vinyar, un assaig d'horra. Ambdues activitats hauran de seguir al costat de la carretera de Sòria. Hi haurà un servei gratuït de bus que sortirà a les 11 del matí del carrer Colònia. A la tarda, a les 5, es farà un recorregut a peu des del pont petit pel carrer del Sr. Cardener fins al carrer de Rafael Canova. A les 6 haurà de la inauguració al municipi amb el pas del Fira, situat entre aquest carrer i l'Ampia, i al nou parc de Rivera de Sant Joan de Vilatorrada, un ball i unes festes a primera hora de la tarda.

## Tècnics i entitats reclamen que l'entorn del parc de l'Agulla sigui preservat

L. P. M. / J. M. /

Una direcció de tècnics de col·legi professional, del món de la universitat i de l'òbit dels grups més importants en la preservació del medi ambient i de l'espai natural han elaborat el document «Declaració de l'Agulla», en el qual plantegen que el parc i l'entorn s'ha de preservar fins a la zona del Pòd (a la part de la carretera de Cardener i del Sr. Cardener) fins a l'extrem del Llobregat, on no hi pugui haver noves implantacions ni infraestructura, ni de serveis ni d'habitatge, ni tan sols de les infraestructures. Es considera que l'Agulla i tot aquest entorn són una de les grans riqueses de l'entorn de la ciutat de Manresa, al Coll de l'Agulla, al Centre d'Estudi del Bages, la delegació al Bages de la Universitat Catalana de la Història Natural, el col·lectiu sociològic L'Alzina, l'Associació Unió de Veïns de Manresa (UPC), la Federació d'Associacions de Veïns de Manresa i la del Bages, la Societat Catalana d'Ordenació del Territori, l'Associació d'Arquitectes Urbanistes de Catalunya, el Centre d'Investigació i Recerca, el Centre d'Estudi de la Comarca del Bages i la delegació d'Ordinació General.  
La idea és crear les garanties perquè el parc de l'Agulla pugui ser preservat fins al Coll de l'Agulla. Aquest document conté les condicions que es van acordar de la jornada de debat celebrada el 12 d'abril passat a la Placeta Universitària del Bages que sota el nom «El sistema d'espais lliures. Propostes urbanístiques». L'entorn de l'Agulla va reunir una dotzena d'entitats d'arreu de la comarca.  
La declaració parteix de la base que el parc de l'Agulla ha de conservar-se en el seu polígon verd del Bages. Aquesta idea troba que l'ús de l'Agulla ha de poder conservar els seus atractius, com és el parc, els espais de la Bolba de Sant Joan, el Santuari de Juncadella, la Segura, les veïns del Llobregat, Sant Joan de Vilatorrada i el Llobregat. Per tant, es tracta d'abastir un habitatge que, com a mínim, ha de conservar des del final de la carretera del Pòd fins a la carretera de Vic en el seu tram entre el riu de Cardener i la carretera de la Roca (a Sant Joan). Tot el perímetre d'aquesta zona ha de conservar-se sense veïns de manera que permeti mantenir un corredor sense edificar que vagi des del Sr. Cardener fins al Llobregat.



Un pla amb un nombre de consideracions, el parc de l'Agulla i tot el seu entorn o desenvolupament de forma natural en un punt de trobada i de pas per a tots els habitants de la comarca del seu entorn. «El desenvolupament es una porta de territori del pla de Bages i es a veure se desenvolupa de la qualitat del paisatge, espais del president de la delegació del Coll de l'Agulla, l'Agulla i el Bages».

A partir d'aquestes consideracions s'ha desenvolupat l'anàlisi del territori i s'han establert les condicions d'ús i desenvolupament que per al·litzar aquesta proposta, «que permetria evitar de desenvolupament i desenvolupament de l'entorn de l'Agulla i de Manresa, David Clons, és necessari impulsar diverses accions. Primer de tot, el desenvolupament de la declaració de l'Agulla de manera que es desenvolupament de Manresa, David Clons, és necessari impulsar diverses accions. Primer de tot, el desenvolupament de la declaració de l'Agulla de manera que es desenvolupament de Manresa, David Clons, és necessari impulsar diverses accions. Primer de tot, el desenvolupament de la declaració de l'Agulla de manera que es desenvolupament de Manresa, David Clons, és necessari impulsar diverses accions.

**1 al 4 de Maig 2003**

Exposició del Segle XIX

Antiquaris i Brocantistes de la Catalunya Central

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# PTB cuts off links with prison (29 January 2004)

# Regió7

Tot Esport  
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Reportatge sobre el SAS de Sòria

I TAMBE...



Salvador Aymerich

**Althia fitxa finalment l'esperat cap d'infermeria**

► La basconina Mercè Estrem s'incorpora a la direcció dels hospitals manresans com a responsable d'infermeria, una figura molt reivindicada que Althia es resistia fins fa poc a crear. ► [Pàg. 6](#)

**Berga**

► La ciutat incorpora la Patum al Forum com a acte associat. ► [Pàg. 8](#)

**Puigcerdà**

► Planella diu que el Consell no representa prou bé la comarca. ► [Pàg. 9](#)

**Solsona**

► Entlestit el projecte per ampliar el Centre Sanitari amb 20 llits més. ► [Pàg. 10](#)

**EL9**  
A l'interior

REPERCUSSIONS DEL PROJECTE DE PRESÓ AL BAGES ► [Pàg. 2 i 3](#)

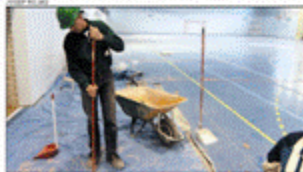
## El PTB talla el seu vincle amb la presó

La junta d'accionistes accepta la dimissió del president, Ricard Torras, cap visible de la milionària operació de venda dels terrenus del centre penitenciari



Vista parcial de la junta d'accionistes de la societat semipública PTB, ahir, amb l'alcaldé de Manresa, Jordi Valls, i Ricard Torras (segon per l'esquerra)

**La remodelació del pavelló de Sùria ja ha quedat completament remodelat. La pràctica esportiva hi va tornant mentre se'n prepara la inauguració.** ► [Pàg. 7](#)



Un operari repassant la pista després de les obres

**El Cros català convoca dos mil atletes a Manresa**

Vint-i-nou anys després de la seva darrera visita, el Campionat de Catalunya de Cros torna dissabte. ► [Pàg. 28 i 29](#)



Calduch i Morató, dos al·licients del cros

# New chairman admits PTB has been unable to communicate its objectives (3 April 2004)

Regió7 | Dimecres, 3 d'abril del 2004

ECONOMIA | 35

## ECONOMIA »

↓ DÒLAREURO  
1.2138 dòlars  
(-0,0062)

↑ IBEX-35  
8.268,79  
(+1781,80)

↓ LIRA/EURO  
0.6662 liras  
(-0,0002)

↑ BORSA BCI  
70736  
(+75,70)

↓ YEN/EURO  
122,36 yens  
(-0,56)

↑ BORSA MADRID  
384,89  
(+15,37)

### TEXTIL

**Els sindicats vetuen un «canvi d'actitud» en la direcció de Galler**

**IRAFIA GORDILLO/Matresna**

El pla de viabilitat presentat per l'inductor comercial del grup tèxtil Galler «té moltes possibilitats de salvar si no toca la planta de la majoria de llocs de treball» de la factoria de l'empresa a Montornès de Calders, després del «canvi d'actitud» dels seus propietaris, el grup holandès Fenway, segons tots els sindicats de CCOO.

En la reunió mantinguda dimecres passat al departament de Treball i Indústria per tractar l'expedient de regulació presentat per l'empresa, els representants de Fenway van acceptar, per primer cop, «millorar» la possibilitat de codir els actius de l'empresa per cocreuar el pla de viabilitat.

Aquesta cosició d'actius era la condició indispensable que exigia l'empresari que avala el pla de viabilitat comentat. El proper 14 d'abril hi haurà una reunió «clau» entre l'empresa, els sindicats i l'autoritat laboral. Segons els sindicats, «se sabrà si Fenway cedeix la majoria o no». L'expedient de Galler afecta tots els treballadors de l'empresa, que disposa de dues plantes, situades a Montornès de Calders i Sant Lloïc de Llobregat.

**El Bages-Berguedà, present a la nova executiva de CCOO**

El nou secretari general de CCOO del Bages-Berguedà, Lluís Vidal Siro, i el responsable de la federació d'indústries tèxtils, químiques i altres (Tiqua), Josep Antoni López, formaran part de la comissió executiva del sindicat a Catalunya. La nova executiva va rebre dijous el suport del 75,64 % al congrés que CCOO va celebrar a Terragona. —Redacció

### EMPRESSES

**El nou president reconeix que «no hem sabut transmetre» els objectius de PTB**

**ROGER HERNÁNDEZ/Matresna**

Més comunicació i nous projectes en àmbits no relacionats directament amb l'urbanisme. Són dos dels principals objectius expressats pel nou president de la societat Projectes Territorials del Bages SA (PTB), Josep Maria Ribas, per a l'etapa que s'obre amb el seu nomenament. L'empresa manté el projecte de fer un parc tecnològic a l'entorn del parc de l'Agulla, però amb modificacions sobre la seva proposta inicial.

«Crec que la feina de «vendre» el PTB és la millor que em pot escapar», ha declarat a Regió7 el nou president, Josep Maria Ribas, un matronès de 37 anys, prové del món del comerç, com a gerent del grup de roba Señor i va ser escollit per unanimitat en una reunió del consell d'administració de PTB celebrada dimecres (vegeu la nostra edició de dijous).

Ribas comenta que un dels motius per acceptar el càrrec ha estat «veure que la gent que va enganyar PTB continua tan compromesa com el primer dia». Aïllats que «són aconseguit «potencialitats molt grans» per haver reunit persones de diferents àmbits, públics i privats, en una iniciativa que vol «desenvallar infraestructures o temes vitals per intentar que la comarca no quedi endarrerada».

Malgrat això, reconeix que «potser no hem sabut transmetre» de portes endins la importància de PTB. Per això demana en primera instància que «tot els accionistes expliquin què és PTB a la gent que Fenway». La societat també organitzarà actes informatius sobre les seves activitats i intentarà arribar a acords amb totes les parts afectades.

Segons Ribas, «el desconecament porta a moltes males interpretacions. El fet que la gent conegui el PTB farà veure que és una cosa que ha de ser positiva per a tothom». Per aquest motiu reitera que la societat ha de comunicar «quins són els projectes que té,

quins són els que necessita el Bages i quins podem encarregar».

Ribas també es compromet a presidir PTB tenint en compte «els diferents semblants» presents al consell d'administració. En aquest sentit, dimarts passat també es va aprovar la seva proposta de crear una comissió de seguiment de caràcter intern, amb la presència dels diferents sectors representats.

**Millora d'accessos i opunt d'atracció comercials**

El parc tecnològic de la zona de l'Agulla i els nous polígons de Sant Vicenç de Castellet i Sant Fruitós de Bages són els principals projectes actuals de PTB. Ribas comenta que «hi ha moltes per veure quin altre tipus de projectes podem desenvolupar», encara que «no estiguem tan relacionats» amb l'àmbit urbanístic.

La idea bàsica és «veure què fa falta a Matresna i a la comarca» per tenir unes infraestructures dignes més activitats d'un alt valor afegit. Segons Josep Maria Ribas, «no es defuig la participació de la societat en projectes relacionats amb la promoció d'instal·lacions (un tema que havia estat desestimada), la millora d'accessos i «dotar Matresna d'un nou punt d'atracció comercial».

El nou president manté que l'entorn del parc de l'Agulla és la millor ubicació per al parc tecnològic proposat per PTB, ja que aquests equipaments «necessiten un entorn natural molt gran». Josep Maria Ribas reitera que els edificis i els accessos seuen respectuosos amb el medi ambient i que el projecte es consentirà amb els ajuntaments de Matresna i Sant Fruitós, que alhora són accionistes de la societat.

PTB està en converses «molt avançades» per ampliar l'àmbit territorial del parc tecnològic fins a uns 34 hectàrees, tot i que prop del 65 % seria de zona verda. El gerent de la societat, Xavier Isart, diu que es faia amb la possible incorporació d'una finca de



José Maria Ribas defensa el projecte de parc tecnològic a l'Agulla

Sant Fruitós de Bages que es destinava a zona verda per consolidar «el corredor ambiental» de l'Agulla amb caràcter definitiu.

Ribas substitueix l'empresari Ricard Torras, que va dimetir per la polèmica sobre la seva participació en la venda dels terrenys que podrien servir per ubicar-hi una presó. El nou president comprèn la dimissió per l'impacte personal de «la pressió mediàtica», però hi afegeix que «no hi pot haver més quelegis» per la gestió que va fer a PTB. Ricard Torras

continua a la societat com a accionista i membre del consell.

Aquestes declaracions es van fer abans que els alcaldes de Sant Vicenç, Castellgalí i el Pont de Vilomara presentessin una proposta de nou punt d'entrada a Sant Vicenç en un indret diferent del que va plantejar PTB en el seu projecte de polígon en aquesta població (vegeu Regió7 d'ahir). Portava de PTB han afirmat que la proposta dels alcaldes «no resol·liria» tots els problemes d'accés a Sant Vicenç.

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Santpedor to leave PTB (8 April 2004)

**ITAMBE**



Buscant un vol d'oferta

**Setmana Santa amb vols barats i viatges clàssics**

► Les destinacions de sempre s'imposen entre els viatgers de la Catalunya central. Els viatges barats contractats per Internet són la novetat, però cal no deixar-se embaïmar. ► Pàg. 21.3

**Berga**

► L'Ajuntament desitja enderrocar el pavelló vell i optar per rehabilitar. ► Pàg. 10

**Solsona**

► El Museu del Ganivet podria obrir per Sant Isidre. ► Pàg. 13

**Demà no hi ha diaris**

Com la resta de la premsa, Regió7 no surt demà. Dissabte tornarem a la nostra cita diària.

GESTIÓ URBANÍSTICA AL BAGES

# Santpedor anuncia que abandona el PTB

► L'Ajuntament es declara disconforme amb el funcionament de l'empresa mixta que pretén impulsar inversions d'interès públic al Bages ► Pàg. 9



**Ensurc per un incendi en un pis a Manresa**

Un pis va cremar ahir a prop de l'entrada de Manresa pel Pont de Ferro, i durant una estona va provocar una considerable commoció al sector. L'habitatge, que, tot i que té entrada pel carrer Alcalde Montardit dona a la carretera de Vic, va quedar seriosament malmès pel foc, que es va originar en una espelma encesa que va prendre en una cortina, segons la versió recollida a l'informe policíac. Eren 2/4 de 3 de la tarda, i durant una estona tot l'edifici va viure una situació d'angúnia, amb un centenar de veïns desallotjats i la carretera de Vic tallada per facilitar la feina dels bombers, que hi van acudir ràpidament amb cinc dotacions. L'incendi no es va estendre més enllà i va quedar controlat en vint minuts. ► Pàg. 5

Un bomber al pis que es va cremar ahir a la carretera de Vic, a prop de l'entrada a Manresa pel Pont de Ferro

**EL9**  
 A l'interior

**Puigcerdà estrena avui un nou pàrquing**

Avui entra en funcionament el pàrquing municipal del carrer Escuelas Pies, amb 90 places. ► Pàg. 11

**Una empresa d'origen francès produirà aliments a Cardona**

Corsa Fabricación SL, (uns 830 milions de pessetes), que permetrà crear entre 35 i 40 llocs de treball. Aquesta implantació esgotarà el sòl disponible al polígon cardoní, just quan ara es compleixen deu anys de la seva creació com a nou motor del poble després del tancament de la mina. Corsa produirà aliments bàsics per a empreses que elaboren menjar per a animals. ► Pàg. 27

**Responsabilitat civil per a administradors de societats**

... perquè les seves decisions estiguin ben assegurades

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