



Good Practices Database

Concept Note

OBJECTIVES

The *Good Practices* activity aims to build a database to:

- Gather ideas and initiatives mentioned by cities in the context of the *Quebec Roadmap* and the *Cordoba Pathway*, and collect new ones.
- Encourage cities to initiate innovative actions inspired by relevant experiences.

The *Good Practices* that will be included in the database will contribute to the development of the operational framework of the *New Urban Project* (NUP). This process is ongoing and will continue until the eve of the Marrakech Congress. Good Practices will be published as they are validated.

DEFINITION

A *Good Practice* refers to an action, project, program, or initiative focused on *habitability* that contributes to the regeneration of historic centers. The principles of *habitability* that give these good practices their relevance are as follows¹ :

- Promoting heritage as a driver of innovation.
- Designing the city in an integrated manner.
- Making the city a place to live above all else.
- Making public spaces a common good.
- Strengthen environmental sustainability.
- Promoting participatory governance.
- Stimulate an economy that benefits local life.

In short, a *Good Practice* is defined as such when it places quality of life and the needs of residents at the center of all decisions concerning urban planning in historic centers.

¹ See [Briefing Note on the New Urban Project](#)



GOOD PRACTICE VALIDATION AND PUBLICATION PROCESS

1. Identification

The General Secretariat identifies practices that embody habitability and its principles, either from information submitted by cities via the [Google form](#)², or from examples shared by member cities during Collaborative Networks, meetings, CityLabs, or other OWHC activities.

2. Interviews

The General Secretariat organizes a 30-minute interview (Teams, Zoom, or WhatsApp) with the practice leader to gather additional useful information (See Appendix 1 for the content of the interview). The city representative is invited to share supplementary documents (reports, images, data, etc.) and, if the practice is ongoing, to provide follow-up information. The interview consists of three parts:

a. Explanations

The nature of the practice must be clearly described, specifying the following aspects in particular:

- the role of politics (governance, institutionalization)
- transformation of operational frameworks (breaking down silos, processes, changing practices)
- strategic considerations (cross-cutting approach, synergies, holistic approach, stakeholder involvement)
- structural interventions (projects, investments, financial models)

b. Results

The usefulness or scope of the practice is assessed based on:

- measurable results, supported by evidence (data, testimonials, photos, etc.)
- the expected effects that motivated its implementation
- the observed effects

c. Reproducibility

The practice must highlight the extent to which it can be adapted to inspire actions on habitability in other contexts.

3. Analysis

The information gathered during the interviews is processed by the General Secretariat and incorporated in an analysis sheet.

4. Validation

The analysis sheet is submitted to the OWHC Advisory Group, which confirms whether the practice can be presented as a *Good Practice* according to the New Urban Project reference framework.

5. Publication

The General Secretariat summarizes the points raised by the Advisory Group and drafts the Good Practice Sheet (See Appendix 2 for a template, to which one or more images/diagrams may be added), which is submitted to the city concerned before being published on the OWHC website.

² Cities wishing to submit a Good Practice can do so by filling out the [Google Form](#)



APPENDIX 1 - CONTENT OF THE INTERVIEW

Introduction and context: situate the practice in its local environment.

1. Can you briefly describe the practice?
2. What local issue was this initiative seeking to address?
3. What were the motivations or needs that led to its creation?
4. Which municipal actors or departments were behind the initiative?

Implementation and governance: understanding how the practice was carried out and with which actors.

1. How was it implemented? (main stages, coordination)
2. What role did elected officials and municipal departments play?
3. Which services, local actors, or partners were involved (NGOs, universities, private sector, residents)?
4. Has this practice changed certain ways of working (interdepartmental cooperation, governance)?

Results and impacts: document the measurable and lasting effects of the practice.

1. What tangible results can you cite? (Before/after, figures, testimonials, visible improvements)
2. What concrete changes has it brought about for residents or the city? (e.g., urban vitality, attractiveness, inclusion, environment, quality of life)
3. Are these effects sustained over time?
4. Is there external evidence or independent validation (studies, media, awards, external evaluation, etc.)?
5. What are the expected effects of the project/practice/program?
6. Are there any positive effects resulting from the implementation of the project/practice/program?

Innovation and learning: identify what the practice brings that is new and what it teaches.

1. How is this practice innovative? (new approach, method, technology, governance model, financing, etc.)
2. Has it inspired other projects or policies in your city or elsewhere?
3. What key lessons or recommendations would you like to share?



APPENDIX 2 - STRUCTURE OF THE GOOD PRACTICE SHEET



SUPPORTING THE RESIDENTIAL FUNCTION IN COMMERCIAL AREAS OF HISTORIC CENTERS

Financial assistance program for restoration, renovation, construction, and residential recycling in heritage sites - **Québec, Canada**

DESCRIPTION

Quebec City has set up a financial assistance program for owners of old buildings located along a major commercial corridor in the old city (St-Jean Street and Côte de la Fabrique). This program encourages the renovation or improvement of vacant or partially vacant commercial buildings in order to convert them into housing, increasing the residential supply in the neighborhood. By encouraging the arrival of new residents, the program helps to enhance the attractiveness and vitality of commercial arteries throughout the year.

2. CONTEXT THAT MOTIVATED THE PRACTICE

For more than 20 years, funds have been allocated to the restoration of heritage buildings. However, this program responds to a specific need: to rehabilitate old buildings located on a major commercial artery in the historic center, Saint-Jean and Côte de la Fabrique streets. This artery is home to a significant number of vacant or poorly maintained heritage buildings. In the long term, these buildings undermine the integrity of the heritage and the vitality of the neighborhood.

3. APPROACH / METHOD

1. The City identifies a sensitive area for priority intervention
2. The selection of owners who have applied for a grant under the program is based on strict "conditions" and obligations, to ensure that the building will be used for residential purposes.
3. The City supervises the work and, once the renovation is compliant, the grant is paid to the owners.
4. The City ensures that the rehabilitation will not lead to real estate speculation by requiring the program beneficiary remain the owner of the building for a period of twelve months, and maintain its residential function for a period determined by the City.
5. The program includes rigorous inspections and careful monitoring to ensure that the dwellings are occupied by permanent residents.