



# City2City Mission

## Quebec City – Amsterdam

A partnership for transforming mobility in historic city centers

Quebec City, February 23–26, 2026

### REPORT

#### BACKGROUND

Building on the Quebec Collaborative Network on “Management of Tourist Bus Traffic in Historic Centers” the cities of Quebec and Amsterdam launched a focused collaboration. As part of the Organization of World Heritage Cities (OWHC) City2City program, they organized an expert mission to Quebec from February 23 to 26, 2026, led by Mr. Rick Batelaan, Senior Policy Advisor in the Traffic and Public Space Department of the City of Amsterdam.

#### A SPECIFIC PROBLEM

The city of Quebec is facing evolving pressures related to tourist coach travel in its historic center, in a context marked by:

- unique topographical constraints;
- major construction projects impacting access to Old Quebec;
- a concentration of traffic in a dense urban fabric with narrow streets;
- the need to balance tourism appeal with residents’ quality of life.

In this context, Quebec City is pursuing a two-pronged objective:

- in the short term, to implement measures restricting tourist buses;
- in the medium and long term, to develop a vision and a mobility plan tailored to the historic district.

#### LEARNING THROUGH EXCHANGE AND EXPERIENCE

Beyond the transfer of expertise, the exchanges have highlighted that, despite different contexts, the two World Heritage cities face common issues:

- vulnerable historic centers not suitable to heavy motorized traffic;
- pressure from international tourism operators active in multiple cities;
- growing tensions between tourist traffic and habitability.

In this context, cooperation between cities emerges as a key driver for developing innovative solutions and strengthening their regulatory capacity in the face of global actors.

#### MISSION RESULTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

The mission generated concrete results for both cities, both strategically and operationally.

For the City of Quebec, it helped to:



- consolidate the direction of the future mobility plan for Old Quebec, by confirming the need for a comprehensive and structured approach;
- identify short-term measures to better manage tourist bus traffic;
- specify certain implementation conditions, including consultation with relevant stakeholders, the acceptability of the proposed measures, and coordination among the various parties involved;
- explore solutions related to intermodality, out-of-town drop-off zones, and the reorganization of routes in constrained urban areas;
- accelerate internal deliberations by incorporating an external perspective based on an initiative already implemented in Amsterdam.

For the City of Amsterdam, the project made it possible to:

- put its practices into perspective by comparing them with another urban context;
- enrich its thinking on issues related to tourist flows and their integration with other modes of transportation;
- foster technical exchanges with the City of Quebec, which faces similar problematic issues.

More broadly, the mission helped confirm several shared priorities, notably:

- the importance of developing a clear policy vision that integrates restriction measures into a comprehensive mobility strategy;
- the need to rely on data to analyze traffic flows and guide decision-making;
- the central role of alternatives to intercity buses, particularly through intermodality, transit hubs, and active transportation;
- the value of mobilizing several complementary levers for action, such as regulation, land use planning, and taxation.

## CONCLUSION

The cooperation between the City of Quebec and the City of Amsterdam confirms the value of the City2City program as an operational tool for peer-to-peer exchange, enabling World Heritage cities to compare their experiences, test their approaches, and accelerate the implementation of solutions tailored to their specific contexts. By relying on direct exchange, grounded in trust and an understanding of local realities, the mission helped transform shared issues into concrete levers for action.



<sup>1</sup> © [https://www.city.quebec.qc.ca/gens\\_affaires/tournage/galeriephoto/citedistinctive/images/0018\\_VP058HPUB\\_JFBergeronEnviroFotoCOR.jpg](https://www.city.quebec.qc.ca/gens_affaires/tournage/galeriephoto/citedistinctive/images/0018_VP058HPUB_JFBergeronEnviroFotoCOR.jpg)