Call for candidates to participate as partners in the network established as part of a "Sustainable Neighbourhoods" project, INTERREG IVB
Foreword

The Walloon Region (Directorate-General for Spatial Planning, Housing and Heritage - DGATLP, Division of Planning and Urban Development)¹ and the Union of Cities and Municipalities of Wallonia² intend to participate in a forthcoming call for projects by the Secretariat of the INTERREG IVB North West Europe (NWE) Programme.

1) General context

In anticipation of the second call for projects for the INTERREG IVB Programme, to be issued by the North West Europe NWE) Secretariat in spring 2008, the Walloon Region (DGATLP) and the Union of Cities and Municipalities of Wallonia are seeking Belgian and foreign municipal partners interested in setting up a network and implementing a project on sustainable urban development, and more specifically on sustainable neighbourhoods³.

The INTERREG IVB Programme follows on from INTERREG IIIB with the aim of promoting transregional cooperation. The programme is co-funded by the European Commission under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) (www.nweurope.org).

2) Description of the project

Throughout Europe, and in the rest of the world, the sustainable development of cities has become a vital necessity, particularly as cities experience exponential growth. Taking into account the European Union's Lisbon and Gothenburg objectives, it is imperative to address urban management from the standpoint of sustainability.

The neighbourhood level is increasingly relevant in the drive to make urban management more sustainable, in concrete terms. It is the level closest to people, to inhabitants, which allows for the overall stakes of sustainable development to take root locally. The project objective will therefore be to develop (rather than to define⁴) the concept of sustainable neighbourhood, by introducing in the partner municipalities new methods of governance and transversal management of sustainable urban planning issues.

More specifically – and herein lies the originality of the project – it will address, in cities, the renovation of existing neighbourhoods developed before the 1960s, from a sustainable perspective. The project will not concern the creation of totally new sustainable neighbourhoods, a relatively more widespread practice. In contrast, the project aims to:

- work from the existing urban heritage and analyse its strengths and weaknesses;
- propose practical, realistic and transferable solutions to a maximum number of other cities in the North West Europe zone, many of which have relatively old settlements on their territory.

² http://www.uvcw.be.
³ Since 2004, the Walloon Region has headed up an Interreg IIIB project on sustainable urban development (Sustainable Cities, or Sus-Cit – http://www.sus-cit.org), for which the Union of Cities and Municipalities of Wallonia serves as coordinator.
⁴ A definition of sustainable neighbourhood could be developed at the conclusion of the process.
It is consequently the concept of **sustainable urban renewal** that is at the heart of the project, a complex concept but within which numerous innovative ideas may be developed.

### 3) Specific objectives and expected results

The specific objectives and expected results will be worked out in detail with all the partners selected, so that each will play a part in formulating the project and thus assume responsibility for it. Listed below are some of the areas for action that could be encompassed by the project:

- How can these neighbourhoods be renovated both in their built-up surfaces and in their functioning?
- How can the rehabilitation process serve to reduce the social divide and promote the social integration of different groups (ages, cultures and/or income levels)?
- How, in the framework of existing built-up surfaces, can local and global environmental impacts be limited, with regard to water and waste management, energy and mobility?
- How can citizens and the different services of the local authorities concerned be involved in order to guarantee a real take-up of the changes?
- How can local know-how and resources best be exploited?
- How can we encourage citizens to become environmentally responsible through a change in behaviour and mentalities?
- How can optimal use be made of technical innovations in the area of environmental protection (use of appropriate environmentally friendly materials, etc.)?
- How can quality public areas be developed?
- How can sustainability and energy standards be introduced in urban planning regulations?
- Etc.

Clearly, the idea is to adopt a multidimensional approach, which aims to be:

- **participatory**, by ensuring that citizens take up the project to guarantee its sustainability; this means they must be included upstream in the reflection process;
- **integrated**, by linking the different challenges;
- **long-term and forward-looking**, by adopting a vision of what the target neighbourhood should be like in the future;
- **adaptive**, by opting for ongoing assessment, which enables a project to evolve.
4) Description of the partners' characteristics

The potential partner(s) must at least:

In terms of project content:

Prior to submission of their complete application

1) have identified an old neighbourhood (built before the 1960s) for which they have conducted a recent, qualitative analysis. The data should preferably be collected from the population concerned in a participatory way;

2) have identified the areas of action to be implemented in the neighbourhood selected.

After establishment of the network

1) agree to pool their analyses/diagnoses in order to develop an over-arching analysis for the network;

2) agree to work on the basis of a participatory approach with the population concerned and the other partners;

3) agree to extend the actions selected to the entire neighbourhood;

4) agree that the project represents only the first stage of the process and agree to continue the process after conclusion of the project so that its full potential can be tapped.

In terms of coordination and administrative management:

1) appoint an internal coordinator with the required skills, who will be in charge of coordination and administrative management of the project (estimated working time equivalent to a half-time job);

2) this coordinator must at least demonstrate an active knowledge of French or English and a passive knowledge of the other of these two languages in order to participate in meetings of the steering committee, in which other nationalities will participate;

3) appoint an elected official who will take responsibility for the process and, as necessary, participate in key meetings;

4) identify internally the resource people with technical skills in the field of urban planning, who may provide subsequent support for the project;

5) agree to participate financially in the project, which will be 50% financed by European funds; the partners will thus have to contribute 50% of the funding for each of their activities and investments;

6) agree to participate in the financing of coordination and the joint activities for the entire network of partners (communication, dissemination, translation, interpretation, etc.).
7) agree to participate actively in the development of the project, particularly by taking part in regular meetings in Brussels between now and spring 2008.

5) Calendar and documents to be submitted

Municipalities interested in the project are invited to contact the Union of Cities and Municipalities of Wallonia without delay.

On dates to be agreed, they must submit:

- their signed official expression of interest, by post;

- subsequently, a complete application, in four copies, which will include:

  a. an official letter in which the municipality accepts the general conditions for participation and to which it attaches a list of the names, titles, profiles and contact details of the elected official and administrative coordinator in charge of the project in the municipality;

  b. a copy of the study on the neighbourhood being considered for the project;

  c. a detailed explanation of the choice of the neighbourhood;

  d. the most complete list possible of the proposed areas of action;

  e. a summary of points b., c. and d. in English and French.

6) Procedure for establishment of the future network

The administration of the Walloon Region and the Union of Cities and Municipalities of Wallonia will review in greater detail with all interested municipalities their possible participation in the network.

The following criteria will be taken into account for the choice of the future partners:

- the selection of the neighbourhood,

- the progress of the analysis of the neighbourhood,

- the availability of the required staff,

- the general acceptance of the participation conditions.

The final decision on the composition of a basic partnership is expected to be taken in late 2007 or early 2008.

7) Contacts

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