



ALCALDÍA DE  
**CUENCA**  
2023 - 2027

June 20, 2024

## Quebec Roadmap: Towards a New Urban Project (2022-2024)

**COLLABORATIVE NETWORK (priority thematic):** Irregular architectural interventions that diminish heritage values

**Pilot city:** CUENCA (Ecuador)

### Action Plan (proposed by the pilot city)

#### Introduction

As "communities of practice", the Collaborative Networks aim to create a space for free and creative reflection and debate that organizes and enables constructive dialogue. It is in this privileged framework that OWHC member cities will be able to learn from each other and find together effective solutions to the four challenges addressed in the Roadmap.

To achieve the objectives of the Roadmap, the Collaborative Networks must organize and implement an Action Plan that responds to at least the following needs during the period leading up to the 17th OWHC World Congress (Cordoba, Spain, September 24-27, 2024).

#### Concept and objectives

The thematic led by the city of Cuenca aims to identify alternative strategies that contribute to the actions already implemented for the conservation and protection of the built cultural heritage in the historical and heritage areas of the canton of Cuenca.

In the perspective of the 17th World Congress of the OWHC (Cordova 2024), the Collaborative Network contemplates the following objectives.

- Explore diverse experiences and knowledge about projects implemented in the participating cities;
- Identify problems and define possible solution strategies;
- Create specific recommendations and guidelines (lines of action, programs, projects or normative elements) that are feasible to be integrated into the Special Partial Plan for Historic and Heritage Areas for subsequent evaluation and monitoring.

#### Presentation of the challenges of the theme

Through the planning in development of the Historic Center of Cuenca, one of the axes is the conservation of the cultural and natural heritage, accompanied by the improvement of the quality of life of the inhabitants and the habitability and redensification of the historic center, the challenge is presented in the balance of the three axes for the sustainable management of the territory.



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In the city of Cuenca, during the period from January 2017 to July 2022, 853 infractions were identified with incidence of irregular architectural interventions representing this data 8.57% of the properties at the level of the historic center in a period of 5 years, which is significant since these are characterized by constructions carried out without proper municipal authorization which, in many cases, cause a negative impact on the conservation of heritage assets; among them: replacement or placement of coverings or elements not allowed in the ordinance on internal or external surfaces of the building, enlargements, non-compatible restorations, partial or total demolitions, constructions that do not respect the approved planning or the ordinances in force, among others. Although, at the administrative and penal level, there is 95% efficiency in the resolution of processes by the municipal administration, there is still a need to seek sustainable strategies to prevent the occurrence of such unregulated interventions and to ensure greater conservation of the built cultural heritage.

In accordance with Strategic Axis 3 of the Quebec Roadmap - " Good governance" which brings a systemic approach to the city", the Priority Theme presented by the city of Cuenca focuses on the search for strategies to prevent the occurrence of unregulated architectural interventions within the historic perimeter, around the discussion of related issues, such as:

- Circumstances that may cause citizens to resort to interventions without requesting or receiving the proper municipal authorizations and strategies to reverse this causality;
- The comprehensive legal framework necessary to prevent the occurrence of unregulated architectural interventions;
- Strategies and incentive policies for the population for the proper conservation of the built heritage;
- Strategies to ensure the adaptability of the built heritage to the needs of the contemporary population without negatively impacting its outstanding universal value;
- Citizen awareness / awareness and ownership / pedagogical approaches / co-management and community participation.

## Program and schedule

The work of the Collaborative Network will be carried out through 2 virtual working meetings of 1.5 hours.

The first meeting is structured as follows:

- Scheduled date: **June 28, from 9:00 to 10:30 a.m. (GMT-5).**
- In the first 45 minutes, the city of Cuenca will have the opportunity to present the objectives, and case studies that exemplify the current state of the city related to the thematic. A summary document of the current state of the city and the objectives of the Roadmap will be sent to the participants prior to the meeting;
- In the second part, participants will have the opportunity to share knowledge and experiences about the management of cultural heritage related to incentives and regulations, where alternatives that contribute to the integral conservation of built heritage will be explored.

The second meeting is structured as follows:

- Date to be defined
- In the first 10 to 15 minutes, the city of Cuenca will recapitulate the observations and comments made during the first meeting.
- In the second part, participants will have the opportunity to share knowledge and experiences on the management of cultural heritage related to incentives and regulations, where they will explore alternatives that contribute to the integral conservation of built heritage.