



## APPLICATION FORM – CATEGORY I

### Eligibility and Evaluation Criteria

As a CIVITAS “demonstration city” (i.e. you have participated in CIVITAS I, II or CIVITAS Plus), you are eligible to apply for this award. However, you may **not** apply, if you received the CIVITAS award in 2008 or 2009. To be rewarded, your application should evidence:

- Ambitious policy making;
- Consultation and involvement of local stakeholders in policy drafting and implementation;
- Technical competence in a specific policy area;
- Qualitative and quantitative methods to monitor and evaluate policy implementation;
- Clear political support and leadership;
- Active information exchange with other cities.

### Selection Process

The category I award winner will be selected by the CIVITAS Political Advisory Committee, based on the merit of its application. Where an applicant city is already represented within the PAC, they will be asked to abstain from voting.

**Please send your entry via e-mail to the CIVITAS Secretariat at the following address, with “CIVITAS Award Category I” placed within the subject of your message**

[secretariat@civitas.eu](mailto:secretariat@civitas.eu)

**This call closes on September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

### APPLICANT DETAILS

Local authority	City of Gent (Gent City Council)
Country	Belgium
Street / Post box	Botermarkt 1
Postal Code, City	9000 Gent
Name	Ann Plas or Patty Delanghe
Telephone	0032 9 266 29 81 or 0032 9 266 29 82
Fax	0032 9 266 29 97

Email	<a href="mailto:Ann.plas@gent.be">Ann.plas@gent.be</a> <a href="mailto:Patty.delanghe@gent.be">Patty.delanghe@gent.be</a>
Website	<a href="http://www.gent.be">www.gent.be</a> or <a href="http://www.civitasgent.be">www.civitasgent.be</a>
City population	239,000 inhabitants

## JUSTIFICATION

Please answer the following questions using no more than 150 words for each answer.

**Please describe those sustainable urban transport policies your city successfully implemented, and indicate why you consider them to be ambitious (max. 150 words)**

Gent's mobility policy is clearly based on prioritising walking and cycling and using public transport modes. This was made very obvious when, in 1997, a large pedestrian area was created in the heart of the city.

For many years, Gent has been working on the creation of a primary cycle network, a series of functional, connected and safe cycle routes. An absolute advantage is that two way cycling is permitted in 95% of all one way streets. To promote cycling amongst students, a bike rental system has been set up. More than 6,000 bikes are rented annually at a very low price and this number is still growing. In order to solve the bike parking problem at the main railway station, the city is planning to build a garage for over 10,000 bikes.

Public transport is taking a crucial role in the contemporary mobility policy in Gent. Therefore, PT services are being improved on a yearly basis: tramlines extended, bus lines converted into tramlines, P&R sites constructed, Park&Bike systems implemented, PT lanes segregated, longer operating hours, competitive pricing policy...

The city also pays for free night buses, free PT for children under 15 and a taxi service for disabled people.



**Please indicate how clear political support and leadership, and technical competence contributed to the success of your policy measures (max. 150 words)**

In 1994, a Bicycle service was created within the municipality as one of the first measures of the Bicycle plan in 1993. Since 15 years a professional team of specialists shapes the city bicycle policy, which is the heart of the mobility policy in Gent. Very quickly, and parallel with the development of the Mobility Plan for the City Centre, a full mobility department was created in 1998. In 2009, this mobility department grew out to a highly developed, specialized group of about 45 people, working on mobility infrastructure, cooperating with urban planning, implementing a real mobility management with an emphasis on strong communication and sensitization. Together with the Municipal Parking Company, the mobility department is thus able to cope with the most complex mobility problems.

Developing such a specialized department, as mentioned above, is obviously impossible without a clear political vision and support. Since the start of the bicycle plan, the mobility theme is at the top of the

political agenda. In the late 90's the mobility plan for the city centre, was even the main theme of that year's policy. On top of that, the role of the mayor and the alderman responsible for mobility planning as fanatic cyclists is the very best way to further promote and encourage the bicycle use in daily traffic. This clear political and administrative involvement is the source of the mobility planning's success within the city. Apart from that the city of Gent is set forward as a best practice within Belgium and Europe.



**Please tell us how you involved local stakeholders and took into account cultural circumstances in the development and implementation of policies and measures (max. 150 words)**

In the City of Gent, the citizens' participation in local decision-making processes has been an important policy issue for the last 15 years.

Therefore, a cell called 'Community based planning' (CBP) has been set up. Gent is divided in 25 boroughs. One to three people of CBP are responsible for each borough and they interact systematically and intensively with their inhabitants. This results in a bottom-up approach in setting priorities and solutions.

Mobility is an important issue when it comes to hearing people's opinions. Gent developed a coherent mobility vision for the city, but citizens also want to voice their opinion on the policy makers' plans at a time when this is still relevant.

In terms of transport planning and infrastructure, a regular consultation process takes place in line with important infrastructure constructions, urban transport and land use planning. Citizens' participation and feedback in correspondence with all important transport solutions having impact on local, regional as well as national level, is assured by means of project expositions in local institutions, surveys, workshops, conferences and marketing campaigns.



**Please describe those qualitative and quantitative methods used to monitor and evaluate policy implementation (max. 150 words)**

Within the mobility department there is a Traffic Research Cell (TRC) which collects traffic data continuously. The TRC analyses the impact of the (implemented) policies by using Traffic Models, Traffic analysing tools and GIS. The mobility department also works closely with the Data Analysis & GIS Cell (staff department of the city of Gent) to have insight in the liveability of the city and its modal split (3-yearly surveys). Input from monitoring systems of other institutions such as the public transport company De Lijn, the mobility department of the Flemish government, is used by the TRC and the whole mobility department for defining strategic mobility planning and long term traffic planning.



**Please tell us briefly how your city sought to exchange information with other cities engaged in related fields of action (max. 150 words)**

Besides taking part in the Civitas Plus Programme as an active Civitas City, the City of Gent has numerous examples of taking part in other European programmes, always looking for best practices and knowledge. Gent has also taken some interesting memberships in different organisations like Eurocities, Car Free cities in the late nineties, Similar Cities Network... Meanwhile, Gent has an extended experience in several EU projects, apart from Civitas. Some examples are LIFE, Opium, Jupiter 1 and 2, the pioneer role of Gent in the EU-funded Bypad project (Bicycle Policy Audit), and lately, hosting the participants of Velocity 2009 for one day. Gent is also taking part in several Interreg programmes and in other thematic networks like Luci, IFEA, Q-cities... In 2002, Gent organised the ECOMM Conference and in 2004 the city of Gent won a European Safety Award (for technical innovation) with the ISA (Intelligent Speed Adaption) project. Of course Gent welcomes visitors who want to learn about Gent mobility and, vice versa, the Gent City Council stimulates its employees to visit other interesting mobility cities all over Europe.

**Applications will be collected and forwarded to the CIVITAS Political Advisory Committee for evaluation and voting. A decision will be reached by 25<sup>th</sup> September, 2009. You will be informed accordingly, in order to begin preparing for the Award ceremony.**