Densification as a mean to implement sustainable urban development

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Goals and structure

1. Present *our motivations* to support the project «Tour des villes»

2. Make *links with federal projects* focused on sustainable urban development and inner urban development

3. Make a short *introduction to urban densification* as a tool to achieve sustainable urban development
1. Our motivations

We support this project because...

• **A goal and theme** closely related to our researches/works:
  • Achieving sustainable urban development of alpine cities through requalification and transformation of the built environment (better urban quality and limitation of land consumption, renovation of public spaces, conversion of empty spaces – brownfields, under- and unused lands)

• **Initiate and foster exchanges of best practices or experiences** in the field of inner urban development with alpine cities facing very specific but similar issues (decline or touristic pressure, limitation of land, climate change, etc.)

• **Focused on case study** to solve problems in a city context
  • Pragmatic scale with a focus on implementation of innovative solutions
2. Links with projects supported by Swiss Federal Office for Spatial Development

• **Program to support innovative projects** for a sustainable spatial development (2014-2018)
  - We finance municipal or regional innovative projects in the field of inner urban development
  - Provide exchanges of best practices
  - It allows the finding innovative solutions and methodologies to solve complex problem

• **Impulsion program** dedicated to inner urban development (2016-2020)
  - Small and medium municipalities don’t have the resources or competencies to face the complexity of inner urban development
  - Providing trainings and advices
  - Organisation of conferences and exchanges
  - Finding and exchanges of best practice
  - Sensitization and communication in the field
3. Inputs on densification issues

- **Densification** is a process…
- **A mean** to achieve public policy goals…
  - urban quality
  - renovation of public spaces
  - building of public infrastructure (schools, etc.)
- **Define the goals** with the stakeholders in…
  - Masterplan
  - Urban planning strategy
- **Implementing the goals through the mobilization** of buildable lands…
  - Lots of reserves of use in existing built environment
  - Use the reserves to implement densification process
3. Inputs on densification issues

- **Question:** *how can we mobilize the reserves of use in the built environment?*

- **Lots of constraints** that hinder the mobilization of reserves of use…
  - **Social** (contestation, negative perception, etc.)
  - **Legal** (property rights, building rules, etc.)
  - **Technical** (lack of objectives over urban development, resources, experiences, etc.)
  - **Economical** (complexity about the financing of infrastructure, lack of economic interest, etc.)

- By *starting from the constraints, defining the goals* and *using densification as mean to negotiate* with stakeholders, we make possible to
  - create added-value in property
  - improve urban quality
  - save heritage sites
  - achieve the renovation of public spaces

- **In this way, densification is an opportunity!**
Using participatory process to define the goals and principles of urban development (renovation of a public space) that can be achieved only through densification.
Using added-value created through densification (blue) to improve public spaces (green spaces)
4. Key messages

- Densification is a mean (process) not a goal in itself!

- Using densification as a mean gives the opportunity to
  - Improve urban quality
  - Create added-value
  - Transform the built environment
  - Achieve sustainable urban development

- Swiss Federal Office for Spatial Development supports innovative projects and exchanges of best practice in the field of inner urban development to foster a sustainable urban development in alpine cities.
Questions?

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