

Cities Climate Transition Framework

C4O
CITIES

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Introduction

The Cities Climate Transition Framework (CCTF) aims to guide cities' climate action planning efforts. A Climate Action Plan (CAP) is a strategic document (or series of plans and documents) that demonstrates how a city will deliver on its commitment to address climate change in the context of the Paris Agreement, by reducing GHG emissions, improving climate resilience and socio-economic equity.

The CCTF builds upon developments in the climate action space and responds to practical experience gained since the release of C40's 'CAP Framework'. The CAP Framework was originally published in 2018, to provide a contemporary and flexible framework to support cities with developing their climate action plans and was aimed at applicability in any city context. The CCTF builds upon the work of the original CAP Framework and sets out evidence-based criteria for a robust climate action/transition plan aligned with the ambition of the [Paris Agreement](#). However, it also has new and enhanced focus on several new areas in line with current global best practice.

New and strengthened focus areas in the Cities Climate Transition Framework

The Cities Climate Transition Framework condenses the 30 criteria included in C40's original CAP Framework into 16 criteria. These criteria continue to have the same high ambition and focus as the original CAP Framework but now also include several strengthened and new focus areas. These focus areas respond to five years of learnings of supporting cities develop and implement CAPs using the C40 CAP Framework and also incorporate the recommendations of *Integrity Matters for Cities, States and Regions* and the *IPCC 6th Assessment Report*.

Strengthened or new focus areas covered in the CCTF include:

- **Mainstreaming** of climate action across city decision-making
- Qualitative and **quantitative adaptation targets**
- **Sector strategies** to provide a stronger connection between targets and actions
- Use of all available powers to **end the use and support for fossil fuels**
- Reducing emissions from **urban consumption**
- **Monitoring**, Evaluation, Reporting and Learning

The Cities Climate Transition Framework (CCTF)

The Cities Climate Transition Framework is split into 6 components deemed essential for climate action planning aligned to achieving the objectives of the Paris Agreement. The 16 criteria sit within the core components of the CCTF.

Figure 1 provides a high-level overview of the 6 components of the CCTF within which the 16 criteria sit. C40 cities will be expected to demonstrate that they have planning processes in place that cover all the 16 criteria in order to remain part of the ambitious C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group network.

In line with best practice climate planning principles, as part of the CCTF, climate leaders need to make a commitment to taking climate action and present a clear vision, as well as outline goals, targets, sector strategies and actions in the public domain in a way that meets the needs of the local context, and transparently reports on progress.

The CCTF acknowledges that cities' climate action planning processes are both iterative and cyclical and as such, cities may start where it is appropriate to do so for their specific context. Whether the city is developing a new CAP by gathering evidence to inform goals, targets, sectoral strategies and actions or is using the CCTF to evaluate and update their existing CAP, the updated CCTF guidance aims to be equally relevant. Cities can present climate action in one central document, or multiple documents. However, mitigation, adaptation and inclusion should be considered and addressed in an integrated way.

Using a range of City powers

The capacity for a city to deliver climate action is dependent on the structure, functions and powers of city government departments/agencies to control or influence assets or services, as well as their legal relationships with other levels of government within wider state and national jurisdictions.

The Cities Climate Transition Framework aims to inspire cities to employ their formal and informal powers to maximise the effectiveness of climate action and benefits. Understanding what powers the city holds can help identification and overcoming of barriers to urban climate action through advocacy and influencing of national regulation and finance - and to deliver actions using the powers that cities have to improve services in the city.

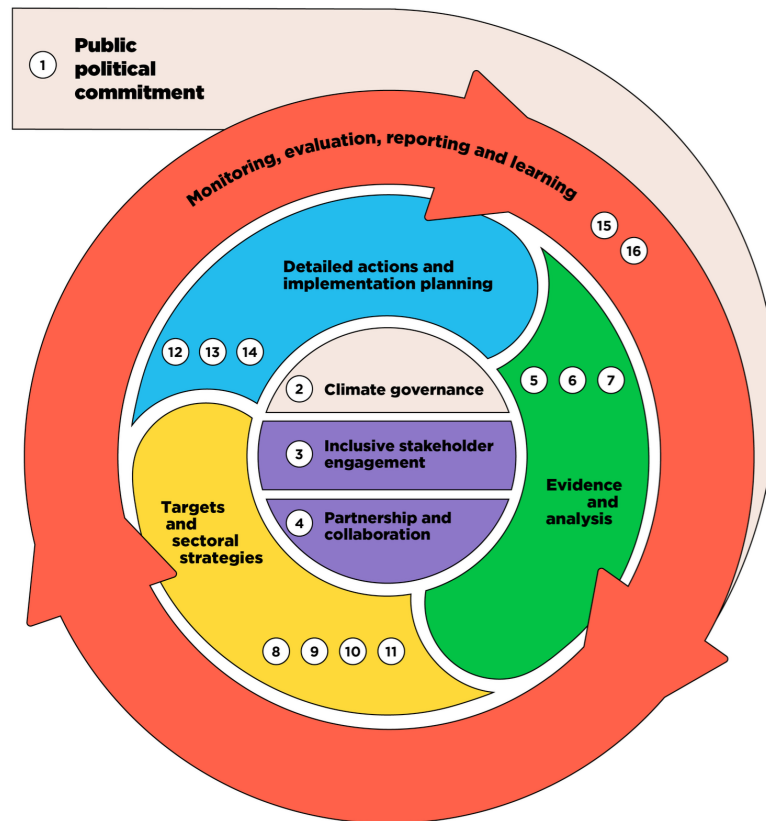


Figure 1: High level overview of the 6 core components and the 16 criteria of the Cities Climate Transition Framework.

The CCTF can also be used to support and inspire ambitious climate action planning in cities beyond the C40 network. In Denmark virtually all municipalities have adopted climate action plans in alignment with C40's CAP framework supported by the long-term partnership Klimaalliancen (DK2020) between, Realdania, Local Government Denmark, CONCITO and C40, and future updates will be in alignment with the CCTF.

The Cities Climate Transition Framework has been developed in collaboration with member cities in C40. We especially thank all cities that were members of the CCTF City Advisory Group, which consisted of Accra, Amman, Buenos Aires, Cape Town, Chengdu, Freetown, Paris, Phoenix, Rio de Janeiro, Sydney and Washington DC.



Commitment, governance and mainstreaming

1. Public commitment by the current mayor (or city leadership) to achieve net zero emissions and strengthen climate resilience consistent with the highest ambition of the Paris Agreement (1.5°C)

Why is this criteria important for cities?

Setting a positive vision to deliver climate action in line with the objectives of the Paris Agreement is important to build buy-in and support across government branches, business and civil society, for ambitious climate action in the short and long term and to successfully deliver transformational change.

What is required to achieve this criteria?

The current Mayor and/ or city leadership's ambition and willingness to take urgent inclusive and transformational climate action to contribute to achieving the Paris Agreement must be current and evident in the public domain. The commitment should communicate the importance of action on climate change and benefits of building a climate resilient city.

It is also important for cities to note the powers of the city and the need for multi-level governance to deliver action on climate change with the urgency required. The CAP should present how the city will use its direct powers as well as soft powers and influence. It should also outline how the city will work with other actors, mapping the power of city change makers (government, business, civil society) and/or influencers and networks (sports, faith, youth leaders and networks) to understand who can affect change in the areas where the city does not have direct power.

A city should be able to demonstrate that the thinking/"mapping" of powers and change makers has been done and that this has informed the plans - evidenced through the specific actions identified.



Commitment, governance and mainstreaming

2. Climate commitments and considerations are embedded into internal governance and decision-making structures, processes and functions, ensuring that climate impact is considered and included as part of other city priorities

Why is this criteria important for cities?

Acting on climate change is not just the responsibility of the climate/environment department. Cities need to mainstream climate commitments and considerations into their internal governance processes and functions to ensure all departments leverage their existing mandates and harness available expertise, resources, skills and budget to accelerate the delivery of the city's climate commitments.

What is required to achieve this criteria?

Cities need to demonstrate that they have mainstreamed climate commitments and considerations in city governance and decision making protocols to ensure cross institutional responsibility, accountability and reporting on delivery of climate actions across all relevant departments. This will not be a one-off process; it will require ongoing monitoring and adjustments until climate becomes part of normal governance mindset and daily decisions.

Climate 'mainstreaming' can be defined as the systemic integration of climate commitments and considerations in governance and decision-making which institutionalise action on climate change. Making sure every decision, process and/or action taken within a city is done through a climate lens. This includes broader decision-making processes than only those specifically aimed at reducing emissions or increasing resilience.



3. Engagement with diverse stakeholders to inform climate action planning as well as advocate and build public support for climate action

Why is this criteria important for cities?

The inclusion of a diverse range of stakeholders - such as communities (including those who are vulnerable, historically marginalised or disadvantaged), workers, unions, businesses, civil society and community/climate groups, among others - throughout the climate action planning and implementation process allows for affected and affecting parties to have a voice, and for a diverse range of perspectives and insights to inform the development and delivery of appropriate climate actions. This helps build broad support, buy-in and/or co-ownership of transformational climate actions.

What is required to achieve this criteria?

Cities must demonstrate that a diverse group of stakeholders, including those most impacted by climate change and climate actions, as well as those with the power, influence, and potential to decrease emissions and climate risks, have been engaged in the planning process, their perspectives have informed the development of climate actions and implementation planning, and they inform the monitoring process.



4. Collaboration and partnerships are established with external stakeholders to advocate for, prioritise and implement climate action across the wider city community.

Why is this criteria important for cities?

Many of the most impactful climate actions are beyond cities' formal powers, therefore it is important that cities use all of their available soft powers and influence, via incentives, advocacy, collaboration and partnerships to build multi-level, cross-sectoral policy and action, giving city-level action a broader scope.

External stakeholders include, but are not limited to: other levels of government, financial institutions, public authorities, business, community organisations and the general public.

Empowering stakeholders to advocate, take action and get involved in climate action through the establishment of partnerships and/or sharing ownership for implementing climate actions can accelerate progress to net zero emissions and climate resilience.

What is required to achieve this criteria?

Cities must demonstrate that reasonable efforts have been made by the city to use available powers to collaborate and set up partnerships with external stakeholders, including other levels of government, financial institutions, business and community organisations and the public.

Partnerships and collaboration should target:

- Delivering major transformational actions
- Access to data and finance
- Advocacy for climate actions and/or policy reform needed at national level e.g. to end support for fossil fuels and/or minimum building codes/standards.

Cities should prioritise strategic advocacy and collaboration with partners that have the power and mandate to act, influence and/or support the implementation of the CAP and/or unlock barriers and benefits, targeting risk reduction and high impact emissions reduction actions identified in the evidence base.



Evidence to inform goals, targets, strategies and actions



5. Evidence and analysis to support the identification of adaptation goals, targets, strategies and actions that collectively support the city build climate resilience and reduce vulnerability to the impacts of climate change.

Why is this criteria important for cities?

Effective and impactful adaptation requires a robust assessment and a holistic understanding of climate risk across all city systems.

Adaptation goals and targets not based on robust evidence risk ineffective action, maladaptation, and costly malinvestment. In addition, cities face a potential loss of opportunity to capitalise on the benefits that well-defined adaptation actions can bring to a city.

Scientific data and information, city specific context, and city powers mapping should inform the development of the evidence base. This evidence enables a holistic understanding of risk, and supports the development of appropriate adaptation goals, targets, strategies and actions to address the priority climate risks.

What is required to achieve this criteria?

The city must develop a robust, holistic qualitative and quantitative evidence base to enable the identification of city sectors, systems and population groups deemed to be most at risk from the impacts of climate change. This evidence can help identify where the highest possibility for building resilience and reducing vulnerability lie.

The evidence base should be based on the most up-to-date scientific data and information currently available.

The evidence base must include:

- A clear overview of the probability, frequency, intensity, timescale and spatial distribution of significant current and future climate hazards, taking into account the city's historical trends as well as future scenarios up to 2050.
- An assessment of the current and potential impacts and consequences of identified hazards on city sectors, systems and services, as well as vulnerable population groups.
- An understanding of the capacity of each system to adapt to the identified impacts.
- A prioritisation of key climate risks, to inform the action development process.

In addition, the city should also ensure the following:

- The data and evidence used should be based on the most up-to-date scientific data and information currently available and should not be more than 10 years old.
- At least every 5 years, cities must update the evidence base, OR review and assess the validity and relevance of existing evidence, and the need for updating their climate adaptation evidence base
- Prior to updating a CAP / Adaptation Plan, to ensure that the city is considering the most recent/relevant evidence base for action development, a city is required to either update or review their CCRA (by completing a self-assessment).

Cities should aim to transparently report the evidence base, to enable knowledge sharing across different stakeholders.

In addition, cities should consider incorporating a system of monitoring and reporting extreme weather events and assessing changes associated with climate risk, impacts and vulnerable communities and critical infrastructure.





Evidence to inform goals, targets, strategies and actions

6. Evidence and analysis to support the identification of mitigation strategies and actions to achieve city-wide net zero and to contribute to net zero globally by reducing emissions from urban consumption.

Why is this criteria important for cities?

It is essential to develop greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction goals, targets, sectoral strategies and actions based on a robust evidence base, or risk 'GHG emissions and air pollution lock-in', costly malinvestment, ineffective actions, and missed opportunity to capitalise on the benefits of mitigation action.

To achieve net zero emissions, the city must consider all emission sources and sector pathways, addressing emissions occurring in the city as well as those created elsewhere from urban consumption (to serve consumer demand in the city); this will help to equitably address the city's relative global climate impact and responsibility in the global context.

What is required to achieve this criteria?

The city must develop a robust quantitative and qualitative evidence base that provides a clear overview of how the strategies and actions in the plan deliver on the city's mitigation targets and goals of the Paris Climate Agreement.

Mitigation evidence and analysis must include:

- A data management system for gathering activity data and emissions factors required for compiling GPC compliant GHG inventories and for calculating indicators for major emissions sources, air quality and consumption emissions. All relevant indicators should be included in the city's Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Learning (MERL) system (see criteria 15 of the Framework).

- A GHG emissions inventory must be reported at a minimum of 4-year intervals based on data sources that are not older than 3 years, and according to the [GPC \(GHG Protocol for Cities\)](#) accounting principles of: Relevance, Completeness, Consistency, Transparency and Accuracy.
- Modelled emissions trajectories that forecast emissions and demonstrate how the strategies to reduce emissions occurring in the city as well as those created elsewhere (to serve consumer demand in the city) deliver on the city CAP targets.
- Qualitative analysis to demonstrate how the city is using available powers, as well as identification of any key barriers to reaching net zero emissions by 2050 and what the city will do to overcome them.
- City's must develop a quantitative and/or qualitative evidence base that provides an overview of the city's consumption areas, with enough detail to inform targeted strategies and actions where the city has an opportunity to maximise impact in at least two major consumption categories e.g. food systems, embodied emissions in the built environment (buildings and infrastructure) and mobility, and retail.

Note: A Consumption-Based Emission Inventory is not required, but can be used to understand the emissions impact and provide evidence to inform action and monitoring and reporting.





Evidence to inform goals, targets, strategies and actions

7. Evidence that sectoral and socio-economic data, with a focus on equity, have informed decision making on targets, strategies and actions.

Why is this criteria important for cities?

Climate action should be tailored to the social, environmental and economic contexts of the city. Socio-economic data and information should inform the development of inclusive and appropriate adaptation, mitigation and equity goals, targets, strategies and actions.

What is required to achieve this criteria?

The city's planning must consider the current socio-economic context, challenges and opportunities, including detail on current governance, environmental quality, quality of life, social inequities, as well as future trends. Socio-economic context and/or indicators should be monitored regularly to provide an ongoing understanding of trends relevant to climate action and city decision-making.

Data and information should include as relevant, including where possible disaggregated by age, gender, income, race, disability, etc:

- The administrative boundaries of the city and/or jurisdiction; mapping of city governance and powers, alongside those of other levels of government and influential stakeholders and institutions.
- Socio-economic status and trends: demographics; health and wellbeing; education, literacy, industry and technical skills; economic growth and prosperity - including income/wealth inequality; urban consumption trends; housing affordability, energy demand/access/poverty; employment rates; access to essential public services; travel patterns; age profiles and immigration; city infrastructure and systems including quality/age of critical assets such as buildings, transport, utility and communications infrastructure; emerging technologies and innovation enabling transformational action.
- Environmental trends: for example, air quality, energy sources, water quality, noise pollution, waste management, food security, physical geography of the city as relevant to climate change (e.g. topography, elevation, watersheds).

City-wide goals and targets, supported by sectoral strategies



8. Short-, medium- and long-term city-wide adaptation goals and targets to build resilience and reduce vulnerability, informed by the evidence base and latest climate science.

Why is this criteria important for cities?

A city-wide adaptation vision supported by goals and targets set the adaptation trajectory, building and strengthening the city's overall resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Detailed adaptation goals and targets that break down the city's adaptation ambitions by hazard, sector or city system can guide the development of focused adaptation actions to reduce vulnerability to the impacts of climate change in specific areas, assets or populations.

What is required to achieve this criteria?

Cities must have an overarching adaptation vision which provides a realistic picture of adaptation trajectory for the city.

The city must also include both qualitative and quantitative adaptation goals and targets which outline what the city wishes to achieve in the short, medium and long term through to 2050. The adaptation goals and targets should be set for the city as a whole, addressing key climate risks the city has identified and/or address each of the city sectors, city systems and population groups within the city that are found to be most at risk.

Collectively, adaptation goals and targets should reduce the risk or impact of identified climate hazards on city systems, sectors, infrastructure and/or people, as well as build the adaptive capacity and resilience of the city.



City-wide goals and targets, supported by sectoral strategies

9. Short-, medium- and long-term city-wide net zero emission reduction targets, and visions and/or targets for urban consumption to contribute to net zero globally, informed by the evidence base and latest climate science.

Why is this criteria important for cities?

Ambitious city-wide targets have a galvanising effect on climate action among city stakeholders. By setting a credible science-based pathway to net zero emissions, the city can create business opportunities, catalyse demand in sustainable markets and create green jobs while improving city services and wellbeing outcomes.

What is required to achieve this criteria?

Cities must have city-wide GHG emission reduction targets informed by the plan's evidence base and a fair-share proportion of IPCC/IEA net zero emission pathways ^(1, 2) that limit global climate heating to 1.5°C, reaching net zero by 2050 or sooner, with ambitious interim targets ⁽³⁾.

Mitigation targets are linked closely to urban consumption and the use of fossil fuels, which is explored in more detail in Criteria 13. Transitioning away from fossil fuels by increasing efficiency, deploying renewable energy and switching electrified solutions is the only way to halve greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and reach net zero by 2050.

C40 cities must also set a strategic and local vision for how the city will reduce emissions from urban consumption using a range of powers

¹ IPCC Special Report, Global Warming of 1.5C

² IEA Net Zero Roadmap: A Global Pathway to Keep the 1.5C Goal in Reach (2023)

³ Integrity Matters: Net zero commitments by businesses, financial institutions, cities and regions (2022)



City-wide goals and targets, supported by sectoral strategies

10. Short-, medium- and long-term goals and targets to ensure that climate action improves social, environmental and economic equity.

Why is this criteria important for cities?

Setting short-, medium- and long-term goals and targets ensures that climate action can focus on improving social, environmental and economic equity. This will help to embed climate action within city priorities, leveraging resources from across local government institutions, delivering actions to maximise and share benefits equitably, and avoiding disproportionate burden on underserved communities.

What is required to achieve this criteria?

Cities must be able to demonstrate that climate action will be delivered in ways that secure wider social, environmental and economic benefits (e.g. health, air quality, employment) and ensure that these benefits improve equity in line with the city's socio-economic priorities, as well as avoid any unintended negative impacts on populations.

Goals and targets for climate equity should be informed by the analysis of the city's socio-economic context, particularly the most pressing inequities and injustices residents face in the context of the climate crisis (see criterion #7) as well as other socio-economic development plans such as for SDGs, poverty reduction or economic development.



City-wide goals and targets, supported by sectoral strategies

11. Sector-specific strategies that together achieve the city-wide adaptation, net zero GHG emissions, urban consumption, and equity goals and targets.

Why is this criteria important for cities?

Sector strategies connect the individual policies or actions in the city's climate action plan with sectoral targets and strategic objectives that can galvanise action by different actors within and across sectors. Updating sector strategies to align them with the city's climate action plan is an important mainstreaming mechanism to detail the drivers and barriers specific to mitigation, adaptation and equity goals and set clear outcomes and benefits the city is striving for.

What is required to achieve this criteria?

Sector strategies must include sector-specific targets that contribute to the city's overarching mitigation, adaptation and equity goals and targets. Sector strategies must be presented for sectors identified as a priority in the evidence-base, including urban consumption sectors, and focus on where the city has power/influence (i.e. high impact/opportunity sectors such as: water, buildings and land use/city planning, energy supply, transportation & mobility; and for urban consumption it includes sectors like food systems, embodied emissions in the built environment (buildings and infrastructure) and mobility, retail, tourism, and circularity.

They should also equally consider mitigation and adaptation opportunities to build resilience to the city's major climate risks (such as flood, heat, air pollution) across hard and soft urban infrastructure. This will help maximise benefits across health & wellbeing, jobs and economy, emergency response & readiness for the city's most vulnerable groups.



Evidence-based actions and implementation planning

12. Adaptation and mitigation actions that are directly linked to the evidence base, goals and targets, and demonstrate use of all possible city powers, partnerships and influence.

Why is this criteria important for cities?

Developing a set of actions that use all city's powers and leverage the city's influence by incorporating partnerships and coordination with other levels of government, businesses and the wider community builds broad support and streamlines implementation.

The IPCC notes that demand-side action has the potential to drive 40-70% reduction in GHG emissions by 2050 and points to cities' key role in delivering action to avoid, improve and shift high carbon lifestyle choices, reshaping production systems beyond the city boundary to reduce emissions from urban consumption and improving city services and health and wellbeing of residents.

Detailed actions with identified owners enable implementation and help cities deliver their vision, goals and targets, and stay accountable to their residents.

What is required to achieve this criteria?

All actions should aim to improve equity and include, as a minimum:

- Action title and description
- Indicative timeframe
- Action owners
- Anticipated impact and benefits

Adaptation actions should be focused on building resilience and reducing vulnerability in the sectors, city systems and population groups identified as the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and/ or considered a priority.

- **Short-term adaptation actions** should focus on (1) low cost projects that reduce current vulnerability and risk and have significant benefits and/or minimal negative effects, (2) policy/regulatory activities that address critical gaps in the city, (3) building adaptive capacity and implementing systems required to enable long-term resilience in the city and, (4) ecosystem restoration activities.
- **Medium to long term actions** should ideally address (1) building long-term resilience of all city systems (people, economy, nature), protecting and restoring city assets & infrastructure, and (2) large and high cost adaptation projects that require detailed planning, investment and engagement.

Mitigation actions should be focused on the sectors that have been prioritised in the evidence-base, for the short, medium and long-term to achieve net zero emissions. Short term actions that secure policy/action in windows that may soon close e.g. zero carbon mandates on new buildings, replacement of fossil fuel equipment to renewable energy infrastructure must be prioritised. Actions must not include Carbon Capture and Storage that legitimises fossil fuel electricity supply, or new 'waste to energy' capacity (incineration of solid waste) that has the perverse effect of disincentivizing waste avoidance, resource recovery and recycling.

Cities need to consider adaptation and mitigation in an integrated way, identifying interdependencies to maximise efficiencies and minimise investment risk.

As per UNSG 'Integrity Matters' Recommendations, actions must:

- avoiding ecological impact and the loss of remaining natural ecosystems by 2030 and
- deter unplanned, unmanaged urban expansion that leads to higher resource consumption and emissions or hazards, particularly if occurring in locations prone to climate risks, and/or into high productivity agricultural land; and
- promote more efficient use of land through denser development that allows better and equitable access to existing and new infrastructure networks, and which protects, restores, and integrates natural ecosystems.

All actions, as far as possible, must support sustainable and equitable urban living and be designed in an inclusive way i.e. developed in consultation with a broad range of stakeholders to ensure fairness and accessibility in design and delivery, ensuring equitable distribution of social, environmental and economic benefits to communities.



Evidence-based actions and implementation planning

13. Actions using all available powers to end the use and support for fossil fuels.

Why is this criteria important for cities?

The use of fossil fuels is deadly for cities, causing loss of life, pre-term births, asthma and other health conditions.

A rapid, equitable phase-out of coal and fossil gas in favour of renewable, zero-carbon technologies could create millions of jobs, boost resilience, expand energy access and improve affordability. It can also help cities avoid the huge healthcare and economic costs associated with fossil fuels.

This is a prerequisite for avoiding climate breakdown. The IPCC states that: ‘the achievement of long-term temperature goals in line with the Paris Agreement requires the rapid penetration of renewable energy and a timely phasing out of fossil fuels ⁽⁴⁾. This also means a halt on new fossil fuel supply infrastructure, including for fossil gas (known as natural gas and LNG exports).

What is required to achieve this criteria?

Cities should demonstrate a range of creative, ambitious, equitable actions that aim to end the use of fossil fuels and transition to cleaner, healthier renewable fuels and more sustainable urban consumption.

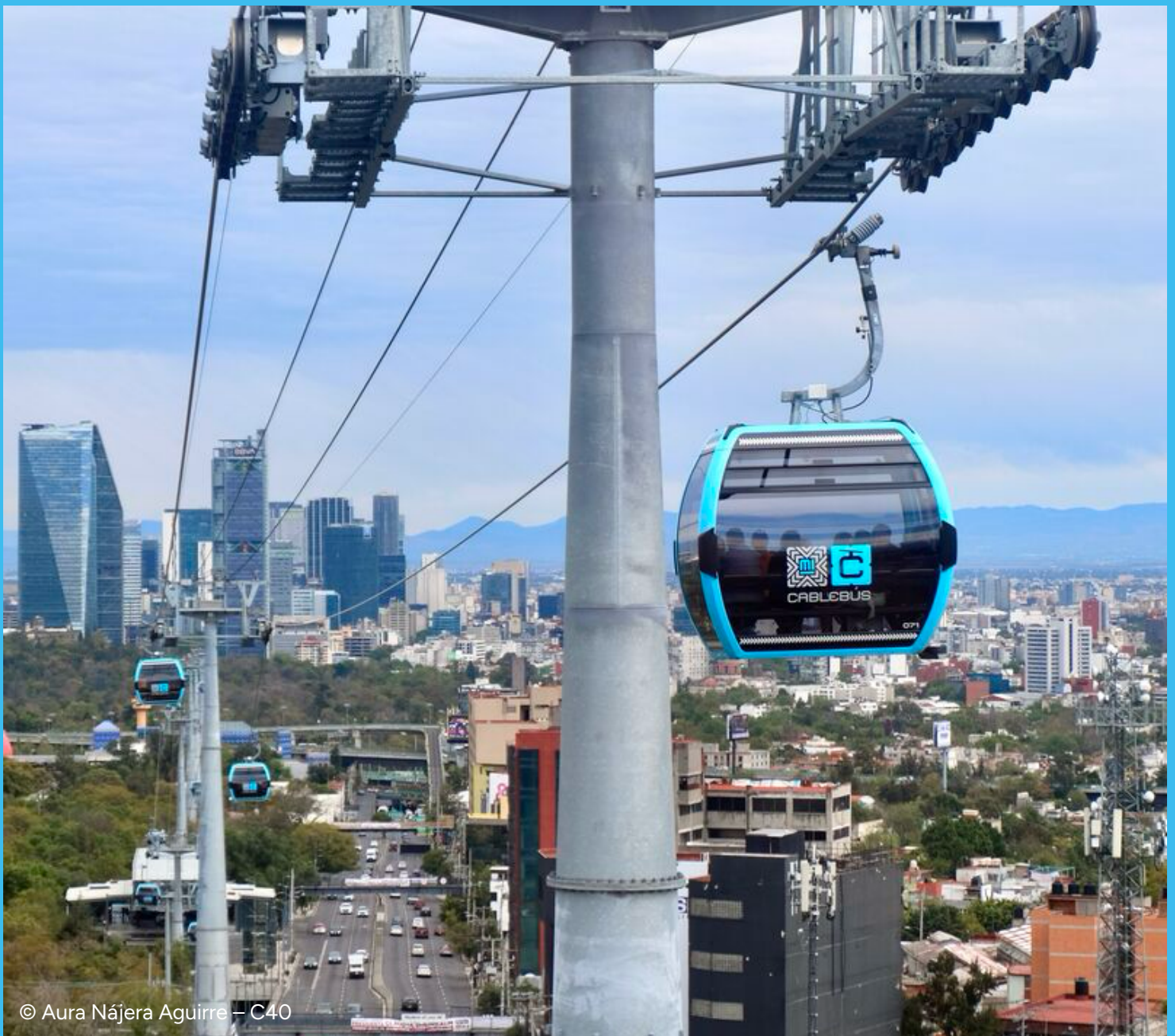
Actions should cover the use of fossil fuels in power supplies, vehicles, buildings and operations within the city as well as fossil fuel infrastructure like refineries, pipelines, power plants and more, and city income and investment revenues linked to fossil fuels.

Cities may not have direct control of these systems, but should consider all their political influence, advocacy, partnership and other powers to push a switch towards clean fuels.

All actions should be designed to support a just transition for workers and residents, ensuring that existing inequalities are not exacerbated, the most vulnerable are protected, and everyone can participate in climate action planning.

The following are the main topic areas that city actions should cover:

1. Use political leadership to influence others to phase out fossil fuels
2. Drive a just transition away from demand-side fossil fuel use in the city
3. Take actions to phase out fossil fuels from the broader energy system
4. Don't support fossil fuel infrastructure
5. Phase out fossil fuels in city-owned assets and activities
6. Phase out financial links with fossil fuels



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Evidence-based actions and implementation planning

14. Implementation planning for priority short-term actions.

Why is this criteria important for cities?

Implementation planning identifies the steps, considerations and processes that are needed to deliver a just transition to a climate resilient net zero emissions city.

Prioritising and detailing actions with the greatest impact and benefits for short term implementation planning provides the necessary level of detailed information needed to finance and implement projects and programmes. It can also inform strategic advocacy to bring stakeholders together to update and reform policies or build alliances and partnerships for transformational change.

What is required to achieve this criteria?

To remain accountable for the delivery of their climate commitments Cities must demonstrate detailed implementation planning for prioritised actions that have the highest potential to build resilience and reduce vulnerability to the impacts of climate change; the highest emission reduction potential; and have the highest chance to deliver or enable a just and equitable transformation. An analysis of barriers to implementation as well as opportunities to accelerate implementation, as well as resourcing and finance should be included as part of prioritisation considerations for implementation planning.

Implementation planning for priority short term actions includes at the minimum:

- Detailed actions, sub-actions timeframe & milestones
- Delivery mechanism/s (policy, programme, advocacy, partnerships etc.)
- Quantification or qualification of estimated impact
- Details of action costs and financing and funding approach
- Barriers and strategies to overcome them
- Action owners/leads, partners, allies and adversaries
- Affected stakeholders
- Quantification/qualification and distribution of benefits
- Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Plan with indicators and communications and outreach plan

Note: Detailed cost benefit analysis is not required.



Monitoring, evaluation and reporting progress, with a focus on learning

15. A system for monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning (MERL) which includes a set of indicators to assess progress towards meeting goals, targets and implementation of actions.

Why is this criteria important for cities?

An effective MERL system reports real progress against the city's climate action plan, with a view to continuous improvement, accountability and transparency, acknowledging the diverse range of actors and influences that affect the delivery of urban climate action.

Understanding progress, successes and challenges in the delivery of a city's climate actions will help to enable the city to capitalise on the successes of its implementation and make informed decisions on actions that need adjustment, support, extra finance, collaboration etc. The MERL system also enables transparent communication of progress and challenges to becoming a net zero emissions and climate resilient city, building awareness and engagement on climate change in the city communities.

What is required to achieve this criteria?

The city's MERL system must work in line with existing city reporting structures, to create accountability across departments, and include key performance indicators (KPIs) to track the delivery of priority actions, and inform CAP reporting and update process.

Cities must frequently report progress towards climate goals and targets publicly. This contains thorough evaluation of implementation and barriers, to ensure the city stays on track to deliver its goals and targets. Cities should report on how they are progressing on actions under their direct power/control, as well as on actions they don't control, but can influence.

Maintaining consistent and robust information and data to inform MERL against the city's baseline evidence allows for longitudinal analysis in line with social and economic events. Action level evaluation should assess: implementation, impact, risk and benefits, and stakeholder concerns, to inform the adjustment of actions.



Monitoring, evaluation and reporting progress, with a focus on learning

16. Regular public communication and reporting of the status of climate action implementation and progress towards the city climate goals and targets based on the MERL system.

Why is this criteria important for cities?

Public reporting on progress to the city's goals and targets creates accountability and transparency of implementation and increases awareness of climate change and trust in city government.

Reporting consistent, regular and robust information and data from MERL will also help the city make sense of disruptive events such as pandemics and extreme weather. This will allow sharing of progress even when major disruptions impact delivery, allowing the city to credibly assess performance against baselines and targets over time.

Clear and transparent reporting will be increasingly important given growing external stakeholder interest in urban climate action, availability of climate finance for cities, public concerns around new reforms, the increasing need for accountability, as well as to continue to build the case for climate action.

What is required to achieve this criteria?

Cities must be able to demonstrate targeted communications, outreach and advocacy aimed at keeping stakeholders (e.g. general public, vulnerable communities, institutions, other tiers of government, business, civil society) informed and engaged to ensure that there is growing understanding, participation and support for inclusive action on climate change.

Cities should have a clear communication and outreach plan, including the identification of target audiences, reporting frequency and engagement platforms

Cities must report progress to CDP which allows cities to communicate to multiple audiences, including the UNFCCC Global Climate Action Portal.

Annex 1: OVERVIEW OF CHANGES

Criteria	Explanation
<i>Criteria 1</i>	Simplification of language.
<i>Criteria 3</i>	Addition of emphasis on including those impacted by climate change and climate action, as well as those with the power, influence and potential to decrease emissions and climate risks. Addition of clarification on what is included in a diverse range of stakeholders.
<i>Criteria 4</i>	Simplification of language
<i>Criteria 5</i>	Addition to identify the capacity of each city system to adapt to the identified impacts. Addition of prioritisation of key climate risks to inform the action development process Addition of information on timelines for updating CCRA evidence base in relation to CAP updates.
<i>Criteria 6</i>	Rephrased the text to clarify the requirements for urban consumption.
<i>Criteria 7</i>	Addition of data disaggregated by age, gender, income, race, disability, etc. where possible
<i>Criteria 8</i>	Addition to clarify the need for both qualitative and quantitative adaptation goals and targets.
<i>Criteria 9</i>	Rephrasing to clarify reaching net zero by 2050 or sooner, with ambitious interim targets. Addition to include the need to set a strategic and local vision for reducing emissions from urban consumption.
<i>Criteria 10</i>	Additions to emphasise goals and targets should be informed by the analysis of the city's socio-economic context.
<i>Criteria 11</i>	Clarification of the need for sector strategies to address urban consumption, including explanation of the different urban consumption sectors.
<i>Criteria 12</i>	Rephrased to clarify the requirements for urban consumption.
<i>Criteria 13</i>	Rephrased to provide the addition of six main topic areas that city actions should cover.
<i>Criteria 15</i>	Simplification of language, including the need to report annually replaced by frequently as per city processes.
<i>Criteria 16</i>	Changed the need for the cities to demonstrate a clear communication and outreach plan from <i>must</i> to <i>should</i> .

Annex 2: GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS:

Actionable data indicators	Actionable data indicators are used to plan and measure actions intended to help reduce emissions. These indicators support understanding emissions from consumption activities and patterns in cities. ADIs help cities to develop baselines and set targets for specific consumption types, and guide cities to plan and implement strategies, and measure changes related to actions and policy interventions over time.
Adaptation	In human systems, the process of adjustment to actual or expected climate and its effects, in order to moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities. In natural systems, the process of adjustment to actual climate and its effects; human intervention may facilitate adjustment to expected climate and its effects.
Adaptive Capacity	The ability of systems, institutions, humans and other organisms to adjust to potential damage, to take advantage of opportunities or to respond to consequences
Business as Usual	Describes a scenario that assumes no additional policies beyond those currently in place and that patterns of socio economic development are consistent with recent trends.
CAP	A climate action plan is a strategic document (or series of plans and documents) that demonstrates how a city will deliver on its commitment to address climate change in the context of the Paris Agreement.
Carbon Credits	A carbon credit represents a metric ton of CO ₂ equivalent that is avoided or sequestered outside the GHG accounting boundary, which can be used to compensate for a metric ton of residual GHG emissions occurring within the accounting boundary
Carbon lock in	Future emissions that are caused by decisions made today, often over the life cycle of a given product or technology
City Boundary	A geographic boundary that identifies the spatial dimensions of the assessment boundary. In the case of GHGs, this geographic boundary defines the physical perimeter separating in-boundary emissions from out-of-boundary and transboundary emissions
Climate Budgeting	Climate budgeting is a governance system that mainstreams climate commitments and considerations into decision-making on policies, actions and budget through integrating climate goals and targets from the Climate Action Plan (CAP) in the financial budget process and assigning responsibility for

	implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting across the government.
Consumption based emissions	Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions deriving from the demand for and use of goods and services (such as food, clothing, buildings, electronic equipment, etc.), including those created anywhere in the world from materials, manufacture, distribution, retail, and use. In some accounting methodologies, emissions from disposal and recycling are included and in others they are not. City emissions inventories traditionally estimate emissions from waste management in city boundary emissions inventories.
Collaboration	Broad term to encompass interactions of various kinds including advocacy, dialogue as well as the development of partnerships
Climate	Climate is usually defined as the average weather -or more rigorously, as the statistical description in terms of the mean and variability of relevant quantities- over a period of time ranging from months to thousands or millions of years. The classical period for averaging these variables is 30 years, as defined by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).
Climate change	A change in the state of the climate that can be identified (e.g., By using statistical tests) by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties and that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer.
Climate crisis	Serious problems that are being caused or likely to be caused by changes in the world's weather, in particular the world getting warmer as a result of human activity.
Climate projection	Simulated response of the climate system to a scenario of Future emissions or concentrations of greenhouse gases (GHGs) and aerosols and changes in land use, generally derived using climate models.
Decarbonisation	Human actions to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from human activities.
Emissions lock-in	Future emissions that are caused by decisions made today, often over the life cycle of a given product or technology
Equity	The principle of being fair and impartial, and a basis for understanding how the impacts and responses to climate change, including costs and benefits, are distributed in and by society in more or less equal ways.

Fair share	Refers to the 'Equity Principle' in Article 2 of the Paris Agreement of "common but differentiated responsibilities" based on equality, historical responsibility for emissions and the capacity for mitigation.
Fossil Fuels	Fossil fuels are carbon-based fuels from fossil hydrocarbon deposits, including coal, oil (including diesel, petrol, gasoline or gas oil), liquefied petroleum gas (LPG or propane), liquefied natural gas (LNG) and fossil gas. This includes fossil fuels used within a city in buildings and vehicles, as well as those contributing to consumption emissions e.g. within product supply chains.
Fossil gas	We use the term 'fossil gas' to refer to fossil methane, which is also called, or is the main component of, 'Natural' gas, Pipeline or Piped Natural Gas (PNG), propane, butane, Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) or Compressed Natural Gas (CNG). We avoid referring to 'natural gas' to underscore the fact that it is a fossil fuel and to put an end to the misleading idea that gas is a 'natural' and 'clean' fuel that can be used as a 'transition fuel'. This false narrative has even been included in EU taxonomies, despite opposition from experts. The combustion of fossil gas still results in GHG emissions and deadly air pollution.
Greenhouse Gas	Gaseous constituents of the atmosphere, both natural and anthropogenic, that absorb and emit radiation at specific wavelengths within the spectrum of radiation emitted by the Earth's ocean and land surface, by the atmosphere itself and by clouds. This property causes the greenhouse effect. Water vapour (H ₂ O), carbon dioxide (CO ₂), nitrous oxide (N ₂ O), methane (CH ₄) and ozone (O ₃) are the primary GHGs in the Earth's atmosphere.
Good, green jobs	Good, green jobs include work that helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG), protects nature and improves wellbeing, while aiming to provide fair wages, safe working conditions, and stable employment. Good, green jobs can vary across regions due to cities' unique economic conditions; what works for one city and its residents may not be suitable for another. Good, green jobs are found in various sectors like construction, transportation, energy, waste management, healthcare, and other emerging industries.
Hazard	The potential occurrence of a natural or human-induced physical event or trend that may cause loss of life, injury or other health impacts, as well as damage and loss to property, infrastructure, livelihoods, service provision, ecosystems and environmental resources.

Impacts	The consequences of realised risks on natural and human systems, where risks result from the interactions of climate related hazards (including extreme weather/climate events), exposure, and vulnerability. Impacts generally refer to effect on lives, livelihoods, health and well-being, ecosystems and species, economic, social and cultural assets, services.
Inclusion/Inclusivity	The practice of including relevant stakeholders and communities, particularly marginalised groups, in the policy making and urban governance process, in order to ensure a fair policy process with equitable outcomes despite their different needs. An inclusive policy ensures that everyone's voice is represented in decision-making, especially those suffering from inequalities, and that policies are designed and evaluated on the basis of their direct impacts and the distribution across the population.
Just transition	A Just Transition means greening the economy and developing climate actions in a way that is as fair and inclusive as possible to everyone concerned, creating decent work, skills building and re-skilling opportunities and leaving no one behind. It involves maximising the social and economic opportunities of climate action, while minimising and carefully managing any challenges – including through effective social dialogue among all groups impacted, and respect for fundamental labour principles and rights.
Mainstreaming	The systemic integration of climate commitments and considerations in governance and decision making which institutionalise action on climate change. Making sure every decision, process and/or action is done through a climate lens. This includes broader decision making processes than only those concerning climate action specifically aimed at reducing emissions or increasing resilience.
Maladaptation	Actions that may lead to increased risk of adverse climate related outcomes, including via increased greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, increased or shifted vulnerability to climate change, more inequitable outcomes, or diminished welfare, now or in the future. Most often, maladaptation is an unintended consequence.
Mitigation	A human intervention to reduce emissions or enhance the sinks of greenhouse gases.
MERL	Mechanisms put in place to respectively monitor, evaluate and report on efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and/or adapt to the impacts of climate change with the aim of systematically identifying, characterising and assessing progress over time and lessons learnt.

Multi-level governance	The dispersion of governance across multiple levels of jurisdiction and decision-making, including, global, regional, national and local as well as trans-regional and trans-national levels.
Net Zero Emissions	Condition in which metric-weighted anthropogenic greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are balanced by metric-weighted anthropogenic GHG removals over a specified period.
Offsets	Emissions removal occurring beyond an organisation's boundaries resulting from an action implemented by another actor, used to counterbalance residual emissions to net zero
Pathways	Modelled trajectories of emissions over time to demonstrate various levels of policy implementation
Resilience	The ability/capacity of a system to successfully cope with, adapt to and/or manage the impacts of climate change
Resilience Building	Building the ability/capacity of a system, to ensure that it can successfully cope with, adapt to and/or manage the impacts of climate change to support sustainable development for all.
Risk	The potential for adverse consequences for human or ecological systems, recognising the diversity of values and objectives associated with such systems. In the context of climate change, risks can arise from potential impacts of climate change as well as human responses to climate change. Relevant adverse consequences include those on lives, livelihoods, health and well-being, economic, social and cultural assets and investments, infrastructure, services (including ecosystem services), ecosystems and species.
Scenario	A plausible description of how the future may develop based on a coherent and internally consistent set of assumptions about key driving forces (e.g., rate of technological change (TC), prices) and relationships. Note that scenarios are neither predictions nor forecasts, but are used to provide a view of the implications of developments and actions.
Science-based targets	Targets are considered 'science-based' if they are in line with what the latest climate science deems necessary to meet the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement – limiting global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.
Strategies	Refers to a technological or system transformation, with a quantified objective, that may achieve multiple goals of the city and may contain multiple individual policies and projects. Examples of technological changes may include transitioning

	from diesel to electric buses, or switching from gas boilers to electric heat pumps to heat and cool homes. System changes would include better urban planning to reduce distance travelled, shifting journeys from private vehicles to sustainable transport, or increasing recycling rates.
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Timeframes	
Short term	0-5 years (within mayoral term, or now until 2030)
Medium term	5-15 years (or 2030 - 2040)
Long term	15+ years (or 2040-2050+)

Urban consumption	The greenhouse gas emissions associated with all the consumption activities (materials, energy, transport, goods and services) of residents, tourists, commuters, governments, and businesses in a city, regardless of where the emissions are created.
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Vulnerability	The propensity or predisposition to be adversely affected. Vulnerability encompasses a variety of concepts and elements, including sensitivity or susceptibility to harm and lack of capacity to cope and adapt.
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ABBREVIATIONS

C40	C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group
CAP	Climate Action Plan
CCRA	Climate Change Risk Assessment
CCTF	Cities Climate Transition Framework
CDP	CDP, formerly known as the Carbon Disclosure Project
CH4	Methane
CO2	Carbon Dioxide
GHG	Greenhouse Gas (CO2, CH4 and N2O)
GHGI	Greenhouse Gas Inventory
GPC	Global Protocol for Community-Scale Greenhouse Gas Inventories
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IEA	International Energy Agency
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
MERL	Monitoring, Evaluating and Reporting and Learning
N2O	Nitrous Oxide
SDGs	UN Sustainable Development Goals
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change