

SFU

MORRIS J. WOSK
CENTRE FOR DIALOGUE

JUNE · 2021
JUN · 2021

ON THE ROAD TO GLASGOW

Canadian Cities +
COP26

REPORT

OVER — VIEW

The background of the image is a complex, abstract pattern of fine, wavy lines. The colors transition from a deep red at the top left, through orange and yellow, to a vibrant blue at the bottom right. The lines are densely packed and create a sense of movement and depth, resembling a liquid or fabric texture.



SHAUNA SYLVESTER

Executive Director

On behalf of the SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue and our partners, I am excited to forward to you our summary report from the May 13, 2021 session **Cities On the Road to Glasgow**.

I want to thank each of you for attending this session. It was by far one of the fastest moving dialogues I've ever facilitated. By now however, it is likely a distant memory for many of you as you move quickly through other zoom meetings and initiatives. Yet our time together generated some important ideas and we wanted to share them with you.

We have structured the report to reflect the three themes we addressed:

1. The Role of Cities in Canada's National Determined Contribution (NDC)
2. The Race to Zero Campaign
3. The Role of Canadian Cities in the Convening of Mayors at COP 26

Each of these themes highlighted key insights and recommendations for action. There are also important messages for cities leading up to and following COP 26 that we have summarized in the Key Takeaway session. We ask you to look closely at this section of the report and identify ways in which you can advance these recommendations in your work.

As we begin to see some government Covid-19 restrictions lifted, the opportunity to use COP 26 as an important galvanizing moment in the global fight against climate change becomes more prescient. Canadian cities have played an important role in helping to shape the narratives for local action in past global gatherings and to quote Diana Lopez Caramazana of the United Nations Development Program: "If Canadians aren't at the table, some of the important human rights and social policy issues related to climate change don't get raised. We need you there!"

To support Canadian cities in preparing for COP 26, the SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for dialogue commits to amplifying the voice and profile of cities as key actors in achieving net-zero and working with partners to advance the action-steps emerging from our dialogue. Through the Centre's Climate Engagement Team, we will also be working with global engagement leaders across the world to ensure citizens are not left behind in shaping our climate future.

Cities on the Road to Glasgow brought an impressive community of practitioners, elected leaders, key civil servants and activists together to chart the path forward for cities in the fight against climate change. We hope this report captures the spirit of collaboration and accurately reflects the serious and targeted recommendations for actions.

I want to thank the **Yosef Wosk Family Foundation** and **SFU** for financially supporting this work and I want to thank each of you for your contributions during our dialogue. We look forward to continuing to work with you to advance this critical effort.

Best Wishes,

SHAUNA SYLVESTER
SFU MORRIS J WOSK CENTRE FOR DIALOGUE

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NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTION

Local governments are crucial to ensuring that Canada meets, or exceeds, its NDC. A bottom-up approach to action, met with a top-down investment in capacity to deliver, is key.

WHY INVOLVE CITIES?

Canada's NDC is set at a 40–45% reduction in GHG emissions below 2005 levels by 2030. While this new target is an upgrade from the previous NDC, it is not aligned with a fair share of meeting the 1.5°C goal. Canada, like many other countries, needs to accelerate its ambition; including cities† in the NDC process will allow us to act **quickly** and decisively.

Cities are on the frontline of land-use planning, transportation, and managing the built environment. They are the level of government that engages most directly with citizens. They have the ability to move quickly to enact climate solutions. They are well networked and are incubators for climate innovations that can be brought to scale.

SUPPORTING SMALLER MUNICIPALITIES

It is not necessary, or a sustainable use of resources, to require every small municipality to adopt and implement detailed, refined NDC actions and reporting mechanisms like those used by larger municipalities.

However, rural and smaller municipalities do need to have funding and resources to support GHG reductions and ensure equitable and affordable access to clean energy, promote adaptation/resilience, reduce poverty, and stimulate job growth.

HOW TO ENGAGE CITIES

In addition to including local governments in the NDC process, cities require direct funding, resources, and expanded regulatory capacity to enact enduring change.

With these necessary supports, cities will have the ability to further leverage private and civil society support to strengthen the physical and social infrastructure of communities and accelerate climate action.



“*We need to recognize that cities embody their metropolitan regions so that surrounding municipalities are included when developing net-zero action plans.*”

—PARTICIPANT

PERFORMANCE

Funding should be tied to performance, with the necessary resources and support, for local governments to collect data and track their emissions reductions.

EQUITY

Collecting data that assesses action and impacts on various demographics is crucial for a green and just recovery. Investment decisions should be equity-centered.

THE ROLE OF DATA + ASSESSMENT

REPORTING

Investments and changes to policy should be evidence-based and driven by the collection and reporting of data at a local level.

PEOPLE

Cities are well placed to engage citizens and collect qualitative data on the values, trade-offs, and acceptable pathways to climate action.

RECOGNITION

Local governments need to have their actions appropriately recognized and rewarded with investment. Often, these are re-packaged as collective "national" achievements.

INDIGENOUS POWER

Indigenous communities are a powerful force in accelerating the country's transition to a clean energy future. Across Canada, There are between 2100-2500 Indigenous clean energy projects¹ encompassing power generation, heat production, and energy efficiency.

Learning from Indigenous leadership will allow us to raise our NDC ambitions and realize the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Canada.



197
MEDIUM TO LARGE
RENEWABLE ENERGY
PROJECTS¹



2870
PERSON YEARS OF
OPERATING EMPLOYMENT
ANNUALLY¹



\$295m
ESTIMATED NET ANNUAL
RETURN FROM ALL CLEAN
ENERGY PROJECTS¹

THE ASKS

- 1 Incorporate cities, and their metropolitan regions, into the NDC and ensure they are recognized for their contributions.
- 2 Provide federal + provincial funding, resources, and expanded regulatory capacity for cities to advance climate action, including support to intermediary organizations‡.
- 3 Accelerate climate action with support for qualitative and quantitative data collection for cities and intermediary organizations, and evidence based policy formation.

THE RACE TO ZERO

Race to Zero is a **global** campaign to rally business, cities, regions, and investors for a zero carbon recovery that prevents future threats, creates decent jobs, and unlocks inclusive, sustainable growth.

CANADIAN CITIES

Seven cities in Canada have signed on to the **Cities Race to Zero (CRTZ)** campaign. Some cities have concerns about the alignment of this campaign with existing initiatives. To enable a greater presence of Canadian cities in the global effort, civic associations have agreed to educate and promote membership in the campaign.

Cities Race to Zero is **the** global initiative for Canadian cities to demonstrate leadership and highlight the necessity of aligning behind the 1.5°C goal of the Paris Agreement ahead of COP26.

CLARIFYING THE CAMPAIGN

The Cities Race to Zero campaign requires cities to pledge to reach net zero in the 2040s or sooner, or by mid-century at the latest, and set an interim target to achieve in the next decade, which reflects a fair share of the 50% global reduction in CO₂ by 2030.

Cities must report annually on their commitment and actions, beginning no later than 2022. Existing reporting mechanisms in Canada (including **PCP/BARC** and **CDP-ICLEI Unified Reporting System**) are recognized by the campaign. Cities who are not currently reporting can specify this and request support through the CRTZ platform.



7
CANADIAN CITIES HAVE JOINED THE CAMPAIGN



62 MT
GHG EMISSIONS FROM CANADA'S 5 MOST POPULOUS CITIES²



58
CANADIAN CITIES SIGNED ON TO THE GLOBAL COVENANT OF MAYORS



~30
CITIES ALREADY REPORTING ANNUAL PROGRESS THROUGH CDP

“We have become very focused internally during COVID-19. COP26 is an opportunity to raise our eyes up and look globally. Nations can't tackle climate change alone; we need to collaborate across borders.”

-ANDREA REIMER
WORLD FUTURE COUNCIL

CITIES + THE CAPACITY TO WORK GLOBALLY

Municipalities do not have financial tools to work globally, and depend on intermediary organizations and other levels of government to represent their interests. Cities Race to Zero provides a global mechanism for cities to collaborate and work with other sectors in addressing climate change.

THE URGENCY OF ACTION

With COP26 fast approaching, it is important for cities and other levels of government to work together and accelerate their climate action commitments.

In order to present a strong national position in Glasgow, Canada needs to act **now** by aiming to exceed NDC ambitions, and aligning with the 1.5°C goal.

ACCOUNTABILITY + PARTNERSHIP

Cities are leaders in climate action, and willing to join campaigns like Cities Race to Zero, but they would like to see an alignment with federal government actions.

FUNDING

Some municipalities are signatories to a variety of climate solutions initiatives, but these are not often backed by financial support for implementation.

At the **Cities on the Road to Glasgow** meeting, the attendees agreed on the need for an 'urban package' that would help cities deliver on these commitments.

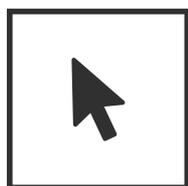
THE ASKS

- 1** Promote the alignment of existing reporting mechanisms like PCP/BARC and CDP-ICLEI with the Cities Race to Zero campaign to encourage more cities to join.
- 2** Create financial incentives for cities (i.e. an 'urban package') to play a more active role in the Race to Zero by focusing on building the capacity of people and communities to take action.
- 3** Use the Race to Zero campaign to galvanize actions in sectors under federal jurisdiction. (Cities' climate efforts are being used to bolster statistics of federal action)

PRINT READERS
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**PLEDGE FORM
+ DETAILS**

BEING AT COP26

Will COP26 be an important moment in revitalizing global action on climate change? How can cities have an effective role in Glasgow?

CITIES AT COP26

BRIDGING GLOBAL - LOCAL

Including cities in Canada's negotiating team at COP26 infuses our country's positioning with local insight and capacity.

During COP26, participating cities can monitor and educate citizens about the relevance of the negotiations.

Cities can also work with citizens to implement agreements made at COP26.

SHOWCASING + NETWORKING

There are Canadian success stories that have received international interest.

The federal government can gain profile for Canada by showcasing examples where cities have been leaders in climate action through planning and program delivery.

COP26 also provides an opportunity for cities to leverage private capital investment for their climate initiatives.

ENSURING ACCOUNTABILITY

Canadian cities have strong partnerships with civic alliances like the Global Covenant of Mayors (GCoM).

Civic alliances provide an important networking opportunity for cities to learn, share ideas, and collaborate. They also hold governments to account when committing to actions and endorsing principles/targets.

PROMOTING EQUITY + JUSTICE

Climate targets must include an equity lens. Climate impacts will vary in effect across communities.

Cities can collaborate with Indigenous Nations and communities in the Global South to learn from local and Indigenous knowledge, and secure the funding and actions necessary to achieve impact.

This will help Canada fulfill its responsibility to support these climate affected communities.



CANADIAN MUNICIPALITIES HAVE DECLARED CLIMATE EMERGENCIES



CITY MEMBERS OF CUSP HAVE DECLARED CLIMATE EMERGENCIES⁴



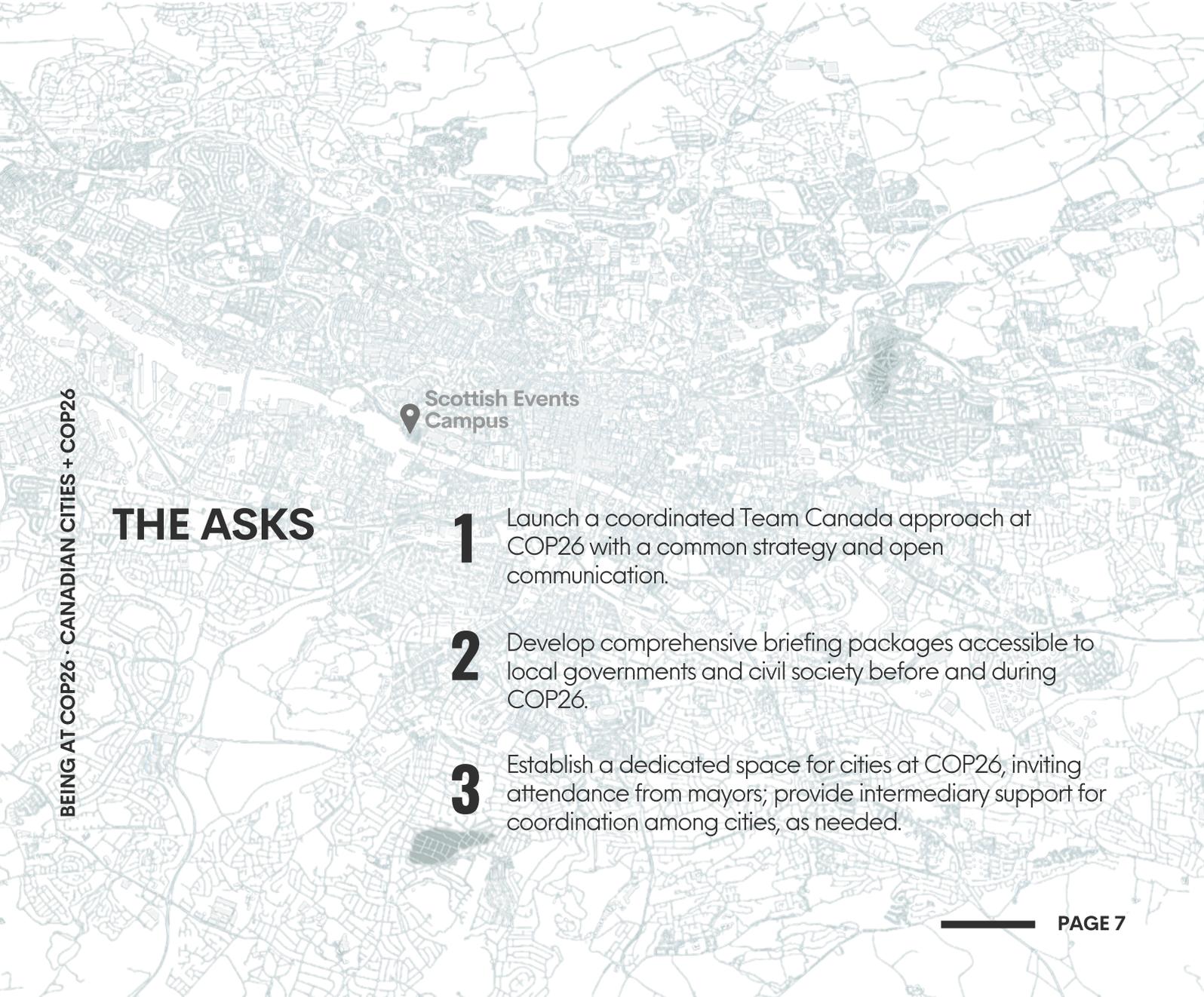
CITIES USE BARC PROGRAMMING⁵

TEAM CANADA

Meeting participants would be interested in a coordinated **Team Canada** approach that targets high level outcomes from COP26 engagements. Resource sharing, event coordination, and networking collaboration can all be improved with a facilitated national effort. Elements of a suggested framework include:

- Position for cities on the official delegation to COP26
- Daily Zoom briefings with the Chief Negotiator for Canadian municipalities + their partners.
- Recognition of the role of cities in Canada's positioning
- Coordinated media opportunities
- Access to Canadian assigned space at COP26 for cities to meet + network
- Ensure Indigenous Nations have a strong presence on Team Canada
- Federal participation in city-focused events led by partner organizations

Glasgow



Scottish Events Campus

THE ASKS

- 1 Launch a coordinated Team Canada approach at COP26 with a common strategy and open communication.
- 2 Develop comprehensive briefing packages accessible to local governments and civil society before and during COP26.
- 3 Establish a dedicated space for cities at COP26, inviting attendance from mayors; provide intermediary support for coordination among cities, as needed.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Cities on the Road to Glasgow convened a key group of practitioners, civil servants, and elected leaders both within and outside of Canada to hold a frank discussion on the role of Canadian cities at COP26 and beyond.

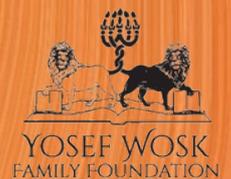
As a result of this discussion, cities proposed an integrated action plan across three key themes:

- 1** Cities need to be formally recognized in Canada's Nationally Determined Contribution with appropriate resources to support climate action, coordination, data collection, analysis and reporting.
- 2** Canadian cities are ready to step up and make the commitment to net-zero (including through the Cities Race to Zero campaign), but in order to achieve that commitment they will need support from other levels of government.
- 3** To leverage the benefits that COP26 presents, cities want to be part of an official Team Canada presence with coordination support, access to consular services and daily briefings that municipalities can access virtually from Canada. COP26 also provides a platform for mayors and city officials to network, share climate strategies and learn from other jurisdictions. Providing support for advance coordination of municipalities and ensuring strong citizen engagement will be key to mobilizing climate action before and after Glasgow.

We would like to thank the participants of this discussion for coming together, bringing their expertise to the table, and developing concrete actions that would support a strong Canadian presence at COP26.

We appreciate the support of the team members at the Global Covenant of Mayors, C40 Cities, CDP, ICLEI Canada, Canadian Urban Sustainability Practitioners, and the SFU Morris J Wosk Centre for Dialogue for hosting this discussion and providing the necessary content and logistical support.

We would also like to thank the Yosef Wosk Family Foundation and Simon Fraser University for generously supporting this initiative.



APPENDIX + GLOSSARY

REFERENCES + NOTES

1. Indigenous Clean Energy. (2020, June). **Accelerating Transition: Economic Impacts of Indigenous Leadership in Catalyzing the Transition to a Clean Energy Future Across Canada.** <https://icenetwork/articles/news/4054/accelerating-transition>
2. Reported GHG emissions (in megatonnes) from Toronto, Montreal, Calgary, Edmonton, and Ottawa.
3. Equivalent to 291 MT, in the above mentioned cities.
4. Out of 17 city members participating in the **Canadian Urban Sustainability Practitioners** network.
5. Refers to programming delivered by **Building Adaptive and Resilient Communities**.

† **Note:** On the usage of 'cities'; This term is used interchangeably to refer to incorporated Cities, townships, villages, or other kinds of local government.

‡ **Note:** On the usage of 'intermediary organizations'; This term is used to refer broadly to non-governmental organizations, programs, or initiatives working within the climate sector.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

BARC: Building Adaptive and Resilient Communities; a program run by ICLEI Canada focused on responding to climate change, supporting adaptation plans, and protecting communities.

CDP: Carbon Disclosure Project; a charity that runs the global disclosure project system for investors, companies, cities, etc. to manage their environmental impacts.

CUSP: Canadian Urban Sustainability Practitioners; works with cities, affiliates, and partners to pursue transformative impact for the equitable and lasting wellbeing of people and planet.

GCoM: Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy, the global alliance for 10,000 cities and local governments representing 900+ million residents.

GHGs: Greenhouse gases; refers to any gas capable of absorbing infrared radiation and contributing to climate change, via the greenhouse effect.

IPCC: The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the UN body responsible for assessing the science related to climate change.

NDCs: Nationally Determined Contributions; refers to GHG reduction pledges made by sovereign nations party to the 2015 Paris Agreement

PCP: Partners for Climate Protection; a program run by the FCM and ICLEI Canada that features a network of 400 municipalities with the shared goal of climate action and reducing GHGs.

UNFCCC: UN Framework Convention on Climate Change; entered into force in March 1994 with the aim "to prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system".

C40 Cities: The network of megacities committed to addressing climate change, that connects 97 world cities and represents 700+ million residents.

COP26: The 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties, hosted by the United Kingdom in Glasgow from 1-12 November 2021.

FCM: The Federation of Canada Municipalities, the national voice of municipal government in Canada representing 2000 municipalities.

GDP: Gross Domestic Product, the total monetary or market value of all the finished goods and services produced within a country's borders in a set period.

ICLEI: Local Governments for Sustainability, a network of 2500+ local and regional governments committed to sustainable urban development.

MT: Megatonnes, the standard unit of measurement in the order of millions (10^6) tonnes and commonly used to quantify GHG emissions output.

Paris Agreement: The 2015 agreement made by 196 countries, signed in Paris, to ensure that global temperatures don't rise above 2°C, and pursue a goal limit of 1.5°C.

SDGs: UN Sustainable Development Goals, adopted by UN member states in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure peace and prosperity by 2030.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The following section includes linked resources that were provided by attendees at the **Cities On the Road to Glasgow** meeting that took place on May 13, 2021.

If you were an attendee to that meeting, and would like further resources to be shared with the group, please contact **Fergus Linley-Mota** at flinleymesfu.ca.

Halifax Regional Municipality

WATCH THE VIDEO

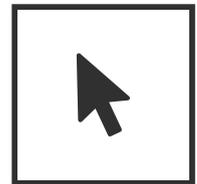


Climate Action Plan (**HalifACT**)

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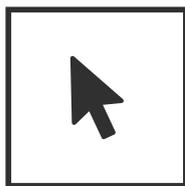
Indigenous Climate Action

Critical analysis of recent Canadian climate policy and plans.

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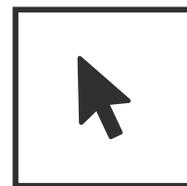
Canadian Institute for Climate Choices

Report on the various choices Canada faces on its path to net zero.

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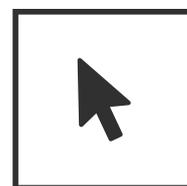
Op-Ed by Andrea Reimer

Why cities must be given the power to act on a green recovery.

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