

## International Cities Workshop on Integrating Climate Adaptation & Mitigation Workshop Summary

Representatives of 23 city governments working to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance local climate preparedness gathered at the International Cities Workshop on Integrating Climate Adaptation & Mitigation (the 'Climate Nexus Workshop') in June 2014. This workshop was graciously hosted by the City of Copenhagen. USDN convened this peer learning opportunity to explore how cities are identifying synergies and tensions between local adaptation and mitigation priorities, and addressing both in important urban planning and management decisions.



Workshop participants represented the following cities: Ann Arbor, USA; Asheville, USA; Austin, USA; Baltimore, USA; Berkeley, USA; Boston, USA; Boulder, USA; Cleveland, USA; Copenhagen, Denmark; Flagstaff, USA; Malmö, Sweden; Miami, USA; Minneapolis, USA; New York City, USA; Salt Lake City, USA; San Francisco, USA; San Jose, USA; Seattle, USA; Stockholm, Sweden; Sydney, Australia; Vancouver, Canada; Vejle, Denmark; and Washington, DC, USA.

Presentations, discussions, and site visits were designed to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Identify lessons for resolving tensions and capitalizing on synergies between climate adaptation and mitigation priorities, with respect to specific types of planning challenges, and institutionalizing an integrated approach.
2. Increase cities' understanding of peer efforts to integrate adaptation and mitigation strategies, and identify key stories to share with broader networks.
3. Explore interest in further collaboration around this topic, within and among networks.

Participants from Copenhagen, Stockholm, Malmö, Sydney, New York, Boston, Austin, Ann Arbor, Baltimore, Berkeley, and Cleveland each shared presentations featuring lessons learned about integrating climate adaptation and mitigation strategies. Their stories described challenges that they have faced and continue to face related to:

- Designing climate-resilient, low-carbon transportation systems
- Developing microgrids as climate-resilient, low-carbon energy generation strategies



- Designing neighborhoods and urban form to reduce vulnerability to flooding and heat while promoting walkable, vibrant communities
- Using green infrastructure where opportunities exist to create multiple benefits
- Engaging community members in planning and addressing equity issues
- Integrating adaptation and mitigation into various decision-making processes



Group discussions delved further into common challenges, including:

- Engaging internal departments and building support
- Evolving decision processes to value co-benefits and synergies
- Engaging and empowering community members
- Addressing equity issues
- Developing methods for measuring progress and demonstrating the value of this work;
- Supporting related professional development of city staff
- Institutionalizing an integrated approach

This workshop followed and leveraged a separate meeting hosted by the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, USDN, and the Innovation Network for Communities at which a vanguard group of 17 cities discussed their efforts to pursue carbon neutral (or similar) goals. The Climate Nexus Workshop provided an opportunity for these cities to discuss how long-term GHG reduction and climate preparedness strategies can be mutually supportive and avoid working at cross purposes.

Through survey responses, all participants stated that the workshop was ‘extremely’ or ‘mostly’ successful in increasing their understanding of opportunities to improve the integration of climate preparedness and GHG reduction strategies in their communities. Participants identified more than two dozen near-term opportunities to better integrate these priorities in their work. Through USDN, they are continuing to build on these conversations and exploring new ways to help each other and advance this important field of practice.

