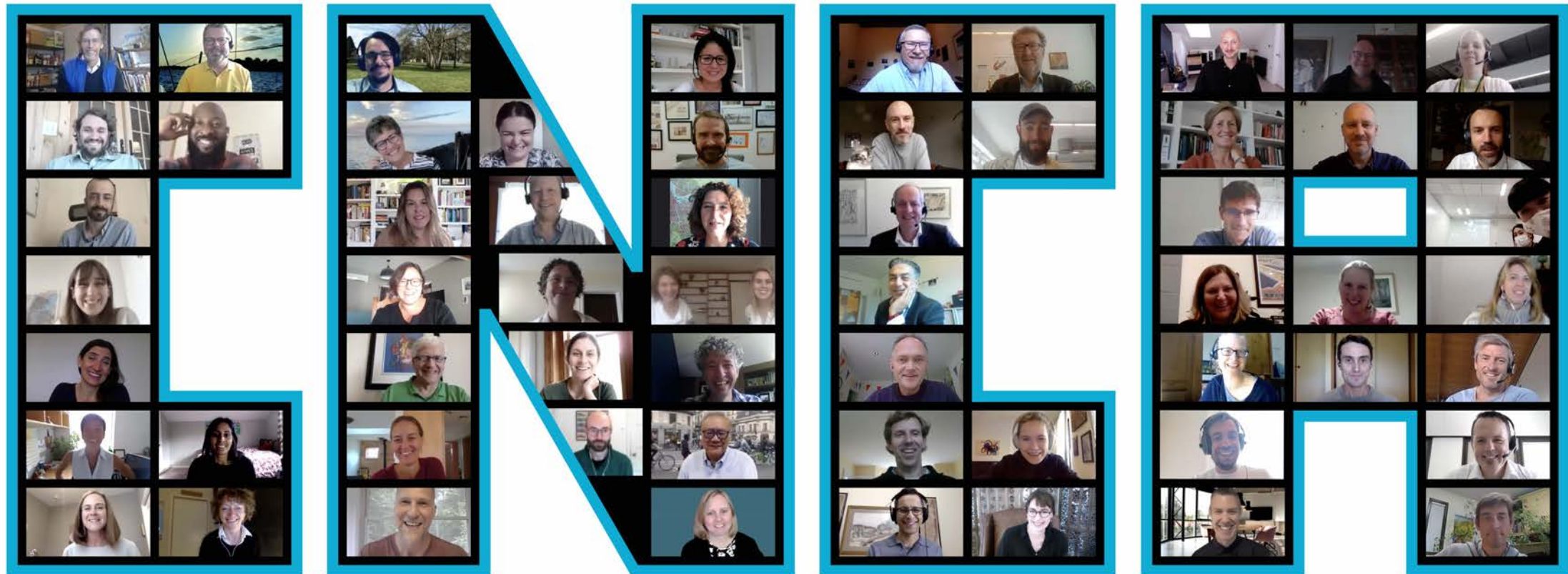




CNCA
CARBON NEUTRAL CITIES ALLIANCE

**City of
Amsterdam**

CNCA 2020 Digital Annual Meeting
14 – 25 September
Meeting Report



Meeting Objectives

While we had to meet digitally this year, we strove to provide an engaging, relevant and fun meeting, filled with deep conversations and examples of what's working and what's not, with plenty of time to roll up our sleeves and figure out what comes next. The objectives of the meeting were to:

- Tackle difficult deep decarbonization challenges and explore implementation strategies, with a focus this year on green recovery and people-centered approaches;
- Explore how CNCA members can collectively influence the global carbon neutrality agenda;
- Discuss and ratify CNCA's 2021-2023 Strategic Plan;
- Witness Amsterdam's deep decarbonization work (and set the stage for the 2021 in-person Annual Meeting); and
- Build our collective capabilities with digital meeting technologies to enhance our work going forward.



Going Digital and Using New Tools for Collaboration

CNCA Annual Meetings are working meetings, where engagement is critical. Moving to the digital space required CNCA to test new tools to support and encourage participation.

CNCA hired a Digital Meeting Facilitator to build CNCA staff and member capacity to facilitate active participation in the meeting using digital workspace platforms like MURAL.

Following best practice guidance on how to keep energy up and keep people engaged over video, we converted what is typically a 3-day in-person meeting into an 11-hour meeting over four days and incorporated plenty of breaks and energizers into the agenda.

Because CNCA's member cities are located across multiple time zones, we held two identical meetings over two weeks. Week 1 was for CNCA members from the Americas, and Week 2 was for CNCA's Asian, Australian and European members.



Agenda

Day 1

- Conference Welcome & Agenda Overview
- Welcome - City of Amsterdam (Deputy Mayor)
- City Round Robin (1 slide, 1 min each)
- Amsterdam Tour #1 (video) and Tour Q&A
- BREAK
- Energizer
- Deep Dive Breakouts #1 - Green Recovery
- CNCA Update & Strategic Plan Review
- Closing Day 1
- Optional Happy Hour

Day 2

- Virtual Small Group Walk
- Brief Agenda Review
- Amsterdam Tour #2 and Tour Q&A
- BREAK
- Energizer
- Deep Dive Breakouts #2: Climate Justice & People-Centered Approaches

- Strategic Plan Discussion and Vote to Ratify
- Closing Day 2
- Optional Happy Hour

Day 3

- Regional Calls

Day 4

- Optional Virtual Small Group Walk
- Brief Agenda Review
- Communications and Messaging
- Game Changer Committee Report Out & Discussion
- BREAK
- Energizer
- Closing Discussion - How are we moving forward?
- Optional Happy Hour

Tuesday, 22 September

- City of Amsterdam Green Recovery Livecast





Welcome from Deputy Mayor Marieke Van Doorninck

“We do not want to go back to what we used to call “normal”. We want to use this moment to really make changes. And I do think that our cities can make these changes.”

Amsterdam’s Deputy Mayor for Spatial Development and Sustainability, Marieke Van Doorninck welcomed and introduced participants to Amsterdam’s climate leadership, underlining the urgency in the work that lies ahead. The current crisis presents many challenges, but also creates opportunities for positive change. Leading cities are bolder than ever. Cities play a critical role in avoiding a return to how things were pre-crisis, and instead using the recovery to move forward and become truly sustainable. By conducting a green recovery, creating green jobs, and utilizing the “Doughnut” economic model, Amsterdam aims to ensure livability for all citizens within planetary boundaries.



Amsterdam Video Tours

The City of Amsterdam invited participants to learn more about Amsterdam's climate leadership through three video tours and discussions with the city's technical experts:



"Circular Strategy and the Amsterdam City Doughnut" –
How Amsterdam is working to become 100% circular by 2050.



"Roadmap Amsterdam Climate Neutral" –
The steps Amsterdam is taking to become climate neutral by 2050.



"Gas Free Amsterdam" –
A detailed plan for how Amsterdam is phasing out gas by 2040.

Two Overarching Themes

Two overarching themes guided this year's agenda: **Green Recovery** and **Climate Justice and People-Centered Approaches**.

Green Recovery Breakouts:

1. What Cities are Doing to Advance Green Recovery
2. City Governance in the “New Normal”

Climate Justice and People-Centered Approaches Breakouts:

3. Embedding Social Justice in Climate Action
4. Decarbonizing Transport: Putting People's Needs at the Center
5. Decarbonizing Buildings: Designing and Retrofitting Buildings Around People's Needs



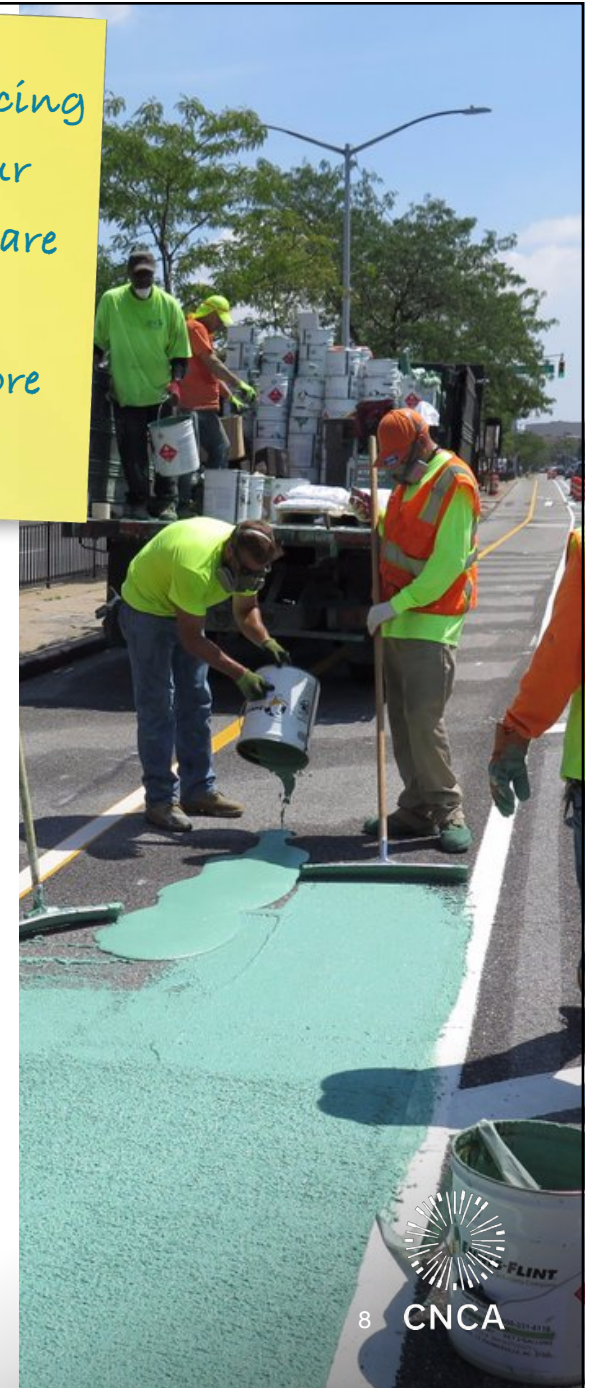
Breakout 1: City-led Green Recovery

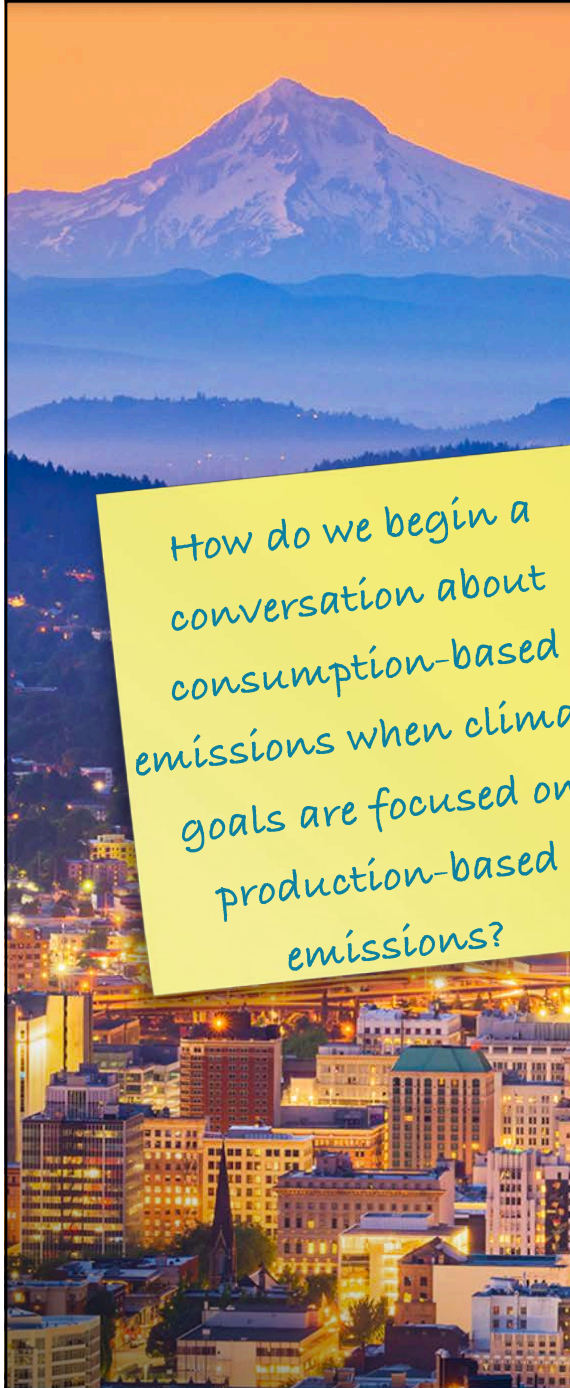
Conversation Starters: San Francisco and Glasgow

Key Topics & Takeaways:

- Cities are facing job loss, reduction in transit ridership and parking revenue, and impacts on businesses and vulnerable communities.
- Cities are trying to advance and amplify their pre-COVID values and ambitions: sustainability and social justice, climate emergency declarations, active mobility, zero waste, etc.
- Cities are putting new programs in place: free rides for frontline workers, “slow streets”, recovery roadmaps to advance Green Deals, circular economies, and net zero buildings.
- Cities need to rethink climate work as recovery and job creation, center vulnerable communities, and do better at communicating this to the public.

How are you balancing demands on your team as resources are strained and challenges get more complex?





How do we begin a conversation about consumption-based emissions when climate goals are focused on production-based emissions?

Breakout 2: City Governance in the New Normal

Conversation Starters: Portland and Copenhagen

Key Topics & Takeaways:

- Consumption-based emissions (CBE) emerged as a key governance challenge.
- CBE is challenging because it is difficult to differentiate between different groups: How to create movement among groups with larger footprints without alienating low-income communities?
- There is an urgent need to start this work now. We must avoid “paralysis by analysis”. Tools for measuring CBE are not perfect, and they can be developed while taking action.

Key Opportunities:

- Circular economy approaches are increasingly accepted across different communities; and
- Buildings/construction and food systems present timely opportunities to address CBE.



Breakout 3: Embedding Social Justice in Climate Action

Conversation Starters: New York City and Sydney

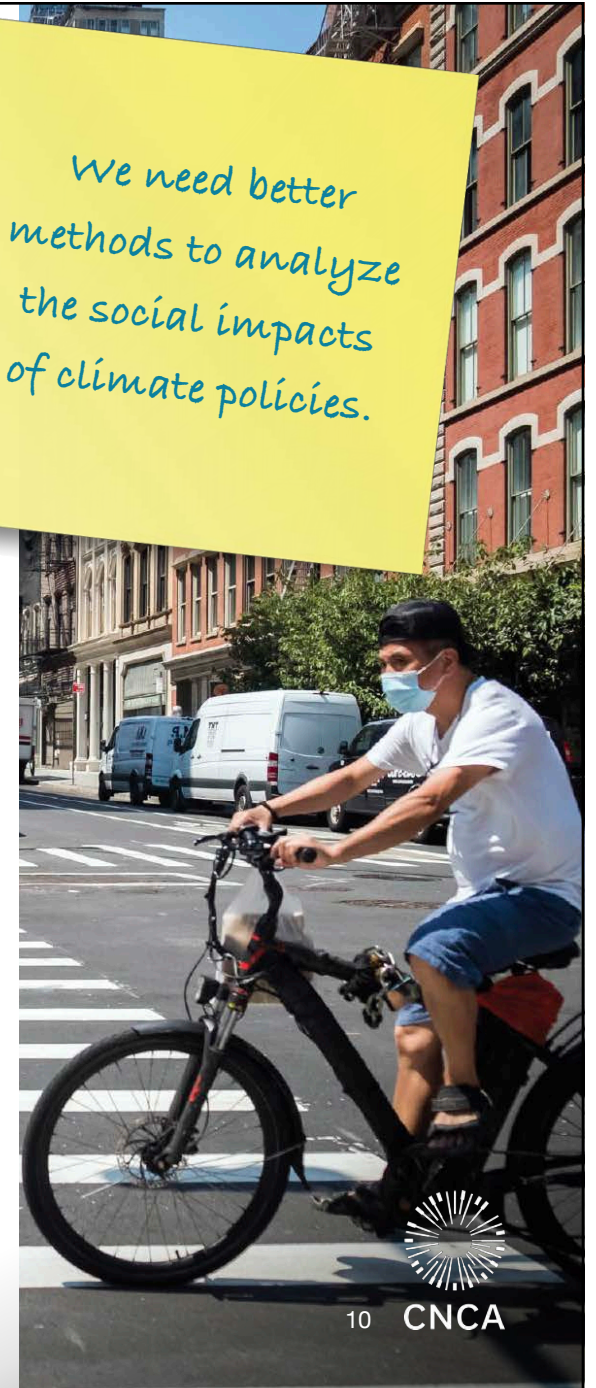
Key Topics:

- New York City shared its strategies for protecting low-income seniors during this summer's extreme heat, including the added pandemic-related challenges.
- Sydney's Indigenous Leadership and Engagement Senior Coordinator shared perspectives on designing policies that respect, empower, and benefit First Nations, including the opportunity to purchase offsets to benefit Indigenous Peoples.

Key Takeaways:

- It is important to understand the historical context and continued oppression of priority communities.
- It is imperative to approach this work with respect, humility, and a commitment to building trust and shifting power.

We need better methods to analyze the social impacts of climate policies.





'vehicle miles traveled' modeling frameworks don't account for disruptive technologies. Meanwhile, congestion and the explosion of e-goods continue.

Breakout 4: Decarbonizing Transport: Putting People's Needs at the Center

Conversation Starters: Seattle and Helsinki

Key Takeaways:

- How can cities keep transit afloat when there is very little ridership?
- How can cities get people back on transit when it is still not considered safe?
- How can cities make transit so attractive that people are willing to abandon their cars?
- Congestion pricing and low-emission zones are still very politically challenging; how can cities reduce the political risks?
- How can we avoid negative impacts of congestion pricing and low-emission zones on low-income households?
- How can we take back space from the car?



Breakout 5: Decarbonizing Buildings: Designing and Retrofitting Buildings Around People's Needs

Conversation Starters: Vancouver and Amsterdam

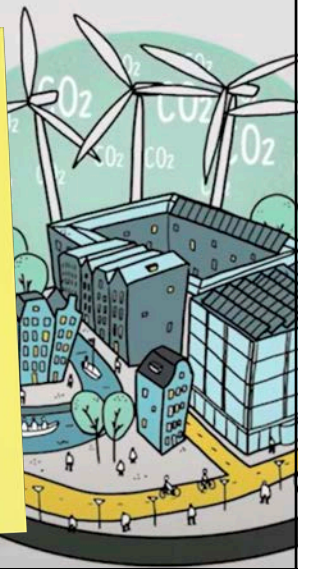
Key Topics:

- Cities are approaching building retrofits holistically. To become gas-free, must get buildings off fossil gas and make buildings as efficient as possible. Electrification without energy efficiency upgrades cannot meet demand.
- In addition to zero emission standards for new buildings, Vancouver is following New York City's retrofit program, requiring zero-emission space/water heating and increasing uptake of mass timber construction, which reduces embodied carbon 70%.

Key Takeaways:

- Solve electric network challenges of going big on electrification, share benefits and costs of retrofitting buildings equitably, and incentivize landlords to upgrade tenants without exacerbating rent costs.

How do we share the costs of and access to energy efficient buildings (new and existing) equitably?





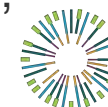
Communicating in Times of COVID

CNCA's Communications Director offered tips on creative COVID-responsive community engagement, messaging and storytelling strategies.



San Francisco and Washington DC shared their stories, and Amsterdam showcased its new website outreach tool, which it is using to engage its communities in the city's ambitious Climate Neutral Amsterdam strategies.

CNCA reminded members of the comms support it offers: Climate communications skills-building; climate campaign strategy and development; behavioral change science, assessment and design; COVID-climate narrative bridge-building and dot-connecting; and assistance with video storyboarding and production. This year, CNCA also began offering video storytelling training and guided practice.





CNCA's 2020 Communications Awards

Each year, CNCA announces Communications Awards to identify some of the best communications practices among its member cities.

Winners This Year Were:

- Bullhorn Award for exceptional organizational media leadership: London
- Spotlight Awards for exceptional campaign media leadership: Sydney and Copenhagen

Honorable Mentions:

- Minneapolis (for soliciting do-it-yourself community videos during COVID)
- San Francisco (for use of comedy)
- Yokohama (for kid-friendly communications)



CNCA 2021-2023 Strategic Plan

Members ratified CNCA's new 2021-2023 Strategic Plan, which was developed by the nine-member Strategic Planning Committee and CNCA staff with input from the entire membership over the past year.

CNCA members believe that the climate crisis requires a fundamental transformation of the systems that have caused the crisis. In this work CNCA's members – the “climate vanguard” cities of the world – are leading the way in taking the game-changing action required not only to survive climate impacts, but to become cities that thrive far into the future.

The Strategic Plan redefines CNCA's shared purpose – **to mobilize transformative climate action in cities in order to achieve prosperity, equity, resilience and better quality of life for all on a thriving planet** – and sets forth seven Strategic Goals for 2021-2023:

Strategic Goal 1

Mobilize Transformative Climate Action

by funding the development, adoption and implementation of game-changing climate policies in cities

Strategic Goal 2

Exert Collaborative Influence

on and advocate for policies from other decision-makers to reduce emissions not directly controlled by cities

Strategic Goal 3

Advance Methodologies, Standards and Governance Tools

for carbon neutrality planning, implementation, impact measurement and continuous improvement

Strategic Goal 4

Foster Peer Learning

among climate vanguard cities, so they can learn from each other and go further and faster together

Strategic Goal 5

Cultivate Transformational Leadership

so city sustainability directors can excel in their roles as change-makers

Strategic Goal 6

Help Cities Communicate More Effectively

to advance their carbon neutrality work

Strategic Goal 7

Prioritize a Just Carbon Neutral Future

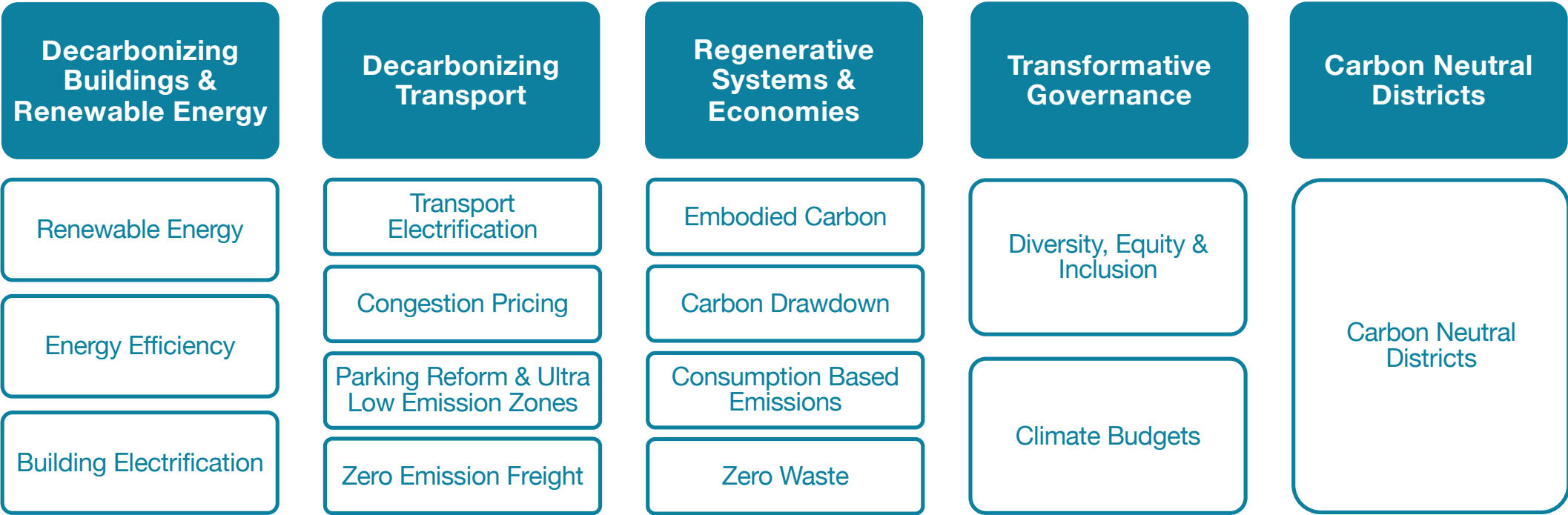
by integrating climate justice into ambitious climate action



CNCA Game Changer Fund

In 2021 CNCA will launch the “Game Changer Fund”, which will support the development, adoption and implementation of policies that have the highest potential to produce deep, durable GHG emissions reductions in key systems at a "transformational" scale.

In 2020 CNCA’s membership identified five categories of policies on which the Fund will focus in its inaugural three-year period. CNCA calls these “Game Changers”.



Game Changer Categories and Committees

Decarbonizing Buildings & Renewable Energy

Key Issues:

- Innovating scalable approaches
- Integrating grids
- Solving transmission issues
- Scaling storage
- Advancing deployment with regional agencies
- Bridging renewable location and demand

Success Factors:

- Minimizing emissions across building lifecycle; demonstrating job creation; allowing cities to innovate without direct control over grid

Decarbonizing Transport

Key Issues:

- Ensuring climate justice and equity when decarbonizing transport
- Financing transport electrification infrastructure
- Balancing transport electrification and congestion
- Enabling more active transport

Success Factors:

- Policies and incentives to prevent free-for-all
- Incentives for small business owners to electrify
- Additional options for light freight electric vehicles

CNCA Game Changer Committees

Each Game Changer Category is led by a Game Changer Committee of leading CNCA member cities and global subject matter experts that determines specific funding priorities and ensures that funded projects advance transformational, lasting change. Cities serving on the Committees discussed key priorities and what success will look like within each Game Changer.



Game Changer Categories and Committees

Regenerative Systems & Economies

Key Issues:

- Establishing Total Carbon Balance (embodied + drawdown + operational)
- Determining Co2e/m2 approach
- Changing upstream practices versus end-of-life
- Understanding what materials/practices cities influence

Success Factors:

- Language established, meaningful data gathered
- Buildings viewed as carbon sinks; urban forestry for sequestration
- Projects inform state of practice, endgame

Transformative Governance

Key Issues:

- Cost impacts can become an issue
- Climate budgets should apply to housing, planning, etc.
- Climate Justice evaluation frameworks should transform relationship between govt/priority communities – build trust, facilitate power in decision-making

Success Factors:

- Climate budget projects demonstrate benefits
- Climate budgets integrate equity and justice

Carbon Neutral Districts

Key Issues:

- Proving viability, establishing governance
- Monitoring and evaluation tools
- Communicating value
- Making the case, designing funding streams
- Identifying map for rezoning
- Demonstrating whole is more than sum

Success Factors:

- Energy, financing plans are established
- Community is engaged
- Shareable inspiring stories



Regional Priorities & Approaches

CNCA held regional sessions for members to have dedicated time with their peers in their region.

Australian members focused their conversation on the benefits and opportunities for closer coordination and collaboration on plan and policy development, communications, and ways to exert collective influence. Through bimonthly calls, cities will explore opportunities for plan/program peer consultation and the development of an advocacy strategy and collective action campaign.

European members are looking to learn from each other's green recovery work, find areas for collaboration to influence the EU, and develop joint projects. To achieve this, the European members decided to have regular calls going forward.

North American members discussed a number of priorities, including rethinking climate work as green recovery work; integrating equity into everything; parking reform; district energy; battery storage to facilitate moves toward electrification; public transit; and youth engagement. They identified getting off fossil gas as a top priority to work on together.



Regional Priorities & Approaches

Separate meetings were held with CNCA's Asian and Latin American members about their priorities and how CNCA can support their regions.

The **Rio de Janeiro** team discussed how the pandemic and economic downturn are affecting their climate action work, e.g. the roll-out of electric buses, the progress they are making on carbon neutral districts, and their pioneering work on involving children in climate action through art.

The **Yokohama** team discussed their priority to advance renewable energy and the challenges of moving citizens from awareness to action while helping businesses understand incentives and other benefits. Another challenge is the limited opportunity to install solar in dense urban areas and promote potential benefits throughout the region.



Amsterdam Livecast

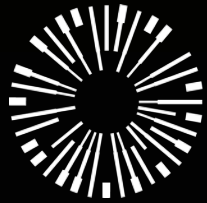
Major Cities Talk Green Recovery

On 22 September the City of Amsterdam, CNCA and Pakhuis de Zwijger – a platform for creation and innovation in Amsterdam – hosted a public forum to address how cities can recover from the current crisis and cut emissions at the same time. Featuring speakers from CNCA and CNCA member cities Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Hamburg, San Francisco and Vancouver, panelists discussed how cities can find and create opportunities to both reduce emissions and stimulate employment and economic growth.

Speakers explored how leading cities are acting and adapting to the current crisis and how they are integrating the greening of the economy with other pressing urban needs, like job creation, affordable housing and the struggle against inequality. Other topics included what can cities learn from each other and how does/can the state support city efforts.

A recording of the session is available at <https://dezwijger.nl/programma/carbon-neutral-cities-alliance>





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