

CITIES FORWARD: COMMITMENT TO ACTION



On April 27, 2023, the U.S. Department of State officially launched its flagship urban sustainability initiative – *Cities Forward* – at the Cities Summit of the Americas, fulfilling a U.S. government commitment made at the Ninth Summit of the Americas in June of 2022. The State Department selected a hemisphere-wide consortium led by ICLEI USA, ICLEI Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean, ICLEI South America and their partners Resilient Cities Catalyst, and the Institute of Americas to implement this transformative program which aims to help cities create the sustainable, inclusive, and resilient future they want.

OUR MISSION

The goal of the *Cities Forward* initiative is to help participating cities implement solutions that advance investments in urban services that promote sustainability, inclusivity, and resilience in neighborhoods and communities. *Cities Forward* advances this mission with our Western Hemisphere neighbors through collaboration that builds stronger and more equitable economic foundations, strengthens sustainability, and promotes a healthy environment for all. Through *Cities Forward*, local leaders will build capacity through shared knowledge to address common challenges. Participating cities in Latin America and the Caribbean will develop local sustainability action plans, reflecting their citizen’s highest priorities, particularly from underserved communities. *Cities Forward* will help build partnerships with local leaders and experts in the United States. In addition, the initiative will facilitate opportunities for cities to seek investments and financing to help implement their plans.



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OUR PRINCIPLES

These three key principles will guide *Cities Forward*:

- **City-led:** local stakeholders will lead action plan design and local project implementation.
- **Inclusive:** actions taken must benefit the cities' poor, underserved, and underrepresented residents.
- **Sustainable:** solutions must be environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable.

OUR ACTIONS

Cities Forward focuses on solving key sustainability, equity, and resilience issues through interconnected activities:

- Match 12 large, medium, and small U.S. cities with 12 counterparts in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) for peer-to-peer learning and connection.
- Host a series of multi-stakeholder needs-assessment charrettes, training sessions, and thematic workshops.
- Aid in project preparation to implement sustainability and resilience actions to accelerate investment and implementation in LAC cities.
- Connect cities and partnerships with sustainable technology solution providers, the research and academic community, philanthropies, NGOs, development finance entities, multilateral organizations, and U.S. government agencies.
- Host two Hemispheric Urban Dialogues, including one focused on environmental quality and one on sustainable technologies and solutions.
- Convene a culminating Marketplace event in Washington, D.C.
- Sustain momentum through a *Cities Forward Academy* to share outcomes and best practices with 50 additional cities.

For more information, please contact citiesforwardUSA@iclei.org

